



Pioneer to Post-Audit, 7 years on at Mt St Michael's College

At Mt St Michael's College, Ashgrove, Brisbane, we launched a positive education program in 2011 and now 7 years on we are still passionate about wellbeing for girls and passionate about positive education.

In 2015 we shared an article with PESA about our holistic approach to educating girls in developing resilience skills to lead flourishing lives in the Catholic faith tradition. Two years later, we are in the process of auditing the school-wide program to find out what is working, what is not, and reset the program for the next three to five years.

The audit is being steered by an outside coach working with the school. An appreciative Inquiry approach was used to devise a survey to gather data on the existing program. This survey was given to a random sample selection of classes, one per year level, 150 in total. Subsequently, the coach then examined the results and assisted our team in forming a direction for the audit to proceed. We are excited about what the audit has unfolded and have valued the outside expertise in moving forward.

Our College has always been active in gathering data about our positive education program. This year I will share the results with our staff of my own investigation of the program through undertaking a doctor of education on the topic: *Exploring the Impact of a Positive Education Program on the Wellbeing of Adolescent Girls*. This data was gathered on the first and second year of the program (2013, 2014) and the results also informed changes to the program prior to the audit.

COACHING INITIATIVE



An exciting initiative that is now embedded in our positive education program is the inclusion of coaching. Coaching psychology complements positive psychology, and it is recognized that these are complementary fields. There is limited research on the applications of coaching psychology and evidence-based coaching in the education area. Our positive education program uses a strategic approach in using both positive psychology and coaching psychology.

The Life Coaching Program is a 'solution focused' skills program where small groups of Year 11 girls work with a teacher trained in the GROW Coaching Model. Girls decide on 1 academic and 1 personal goal to work towards over 8 sessions. At the end of the 8 sessions, girls evaluate their goal striving, and recommit or refocus their goals for the remainder of the term and hopefully the rest of the year. What began as a trial is now firmly embedded in our program. Information about this trial is available in an article in the International Journal of Wellbeing: *Evidence-based coaching to enhance senior students' wellbeing and academic striving* (2016) Dulagil, A., Green, S., Ahern, M.



Later in the year, these Year 11 girls further consolidate their coaching skills by participating in a Coaching-Buddy Program with Year 7 girls over 4 sessions. As well as further developing their coaching skills, Year 11 girls forge close bonds

with the Year 7 girls, which assists Year 7 girls feeling more connected to the school.

As coaching has been part of the positive education program for several years now, another positive outcome of this initiative is that more and more teachers have now become trained in the GROW model of coaching. Teachers are then able to use these skills both in their own personal as well as professional lives.

