POSITIVE EDUCATION

where (and how) to start

Dr Justin Coulson, PhD

Are schools responsible for wellbeing?



WHAT IS POS ED?

We link academic skills with wellbeing skills

Eg. Reading, writing, and 'rithmetic with development of character, understanding and use of strengths, and resilience skills

IS YOUR SCHOOL READY TO IMPLEMENT POS ED?

a. To what extent is it the role of schools to tackle and teach mental health?

b. How does your staff respond to change?
What is the culture?

c. What strategies or programs do you have in place for improving wellbeing?

d. How literate is your staff when it comes to wellbeing?

e. To what extent are staff living well?

f. To what extent are students (and families) living well?

"There is substantial evidence from well controlled studies that skills that increase resilience, positive emotion, engagement, and meaning can be taught to school children."

(Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich, & Linkins, 2009.)



What are the **stumping blocks** to implementing Pos Psyc in schools?

| REASONS AGAINST | WHAT IS SAID IN THE SCHOOL HALLWAY | WHAT IT MEANS |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Financial | "We don't have any budget for any of that type of innovation!" | The perspective that a substantial budget is required to drive change and systems improvement |
| lt's marginal | "You want to focus on well-being? Where are the immediate benefits, what about teaching them to write!" | It is perceived as a marginal topic from serious mainstream educational improvement strategies |
| Either/or thinking | "Well you can't have your cake and eat it. It is either maths or making them feel good" | At a policy level is often seen through the lens of an either/or model: it's well-being or literacy, well-being or numeracy. It is rarely well-being and numeracy |
| Maverick providers | "I did the 3 day course let me tell you about my strategy for 1000 students" | Mavericks, swindlers and second tier training stand to make a huge amount of money from well-being training programs under the guide of various institutions promise to 'train' teachers in well-being |
| Scientism | "Well, according to the latest science" | It blindly can become scientism where the scientism method is seen as the most authoritative approach and can overlook underlying assumptions and philosophies |
| Not central to good governance | "Have you any idea what the unemployment rate is our district!" | Discussion about well-being is a distraction from much larger questions or policy including: productivity, healthcare and energy |
| The silver bullet | "You have ticked al the boxes well, if the well-being of teachers is right, the well-being of students is right—then they will be able to read better" | It can be sold as a silver bullet or Trojan Horse that can fix all of the challenges in education. This is sometimes characterised by the oversimplified statement "get their well-being right and then everything will follow" |
| Social economic status and culture | "All students are languishing, so how can they learn?" | Well-being is an excuse for policy makers not to address declining performance standards in reading, science and mathematics |

Where do we star?

LET'S GET STARTED.

What are the best experiences you've had implementing new ideas and programs into your school?

WITH YOU

WITH THE RESEARCH



- a. Use the right language
 - EG what is wellbeing?
- b. Rely on the evidence
- c. Find mentors and guides
- d. Complete a course or program

WITH A MODEL



- a. PERMA
- b. SDT
- c. 5 Ways to Wellbeing
- d. Build your own

WITH A TEAM OF LEADERS

PASSION LED US HERE



- a. Why focus on wellbeing?
- b. What are we doing with

wellbeing?

- c. What is our timeframe?
- d. How can we measure this?



WITH EXPERIENCED GUIDES

HOW TO **START**

- a. Slowly with staff and then beyond
- **b.** With the right information
- c. With ideas that are fresh, but familiar
 - I. Strengths
 - II. Mindfulness
 - III. Grit
 - IV. Gratitude
 - V. Hope

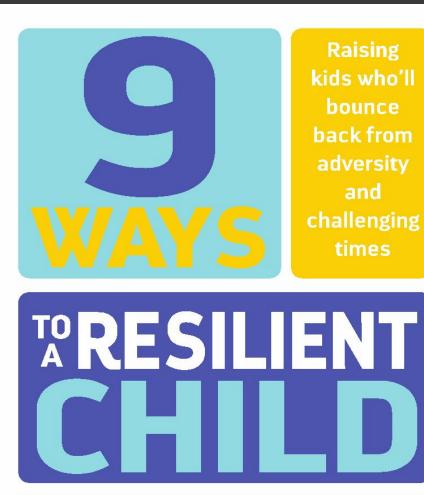
LEARN IT LIVE IT TEACH IT

Dr JUSTIN COULS

✓@JustinCoulson

- **f** /happyfamilies.au
- () justincoulson.com
- ≥info@justincoulson.com

Text "FAMILY" 0418 638 103



Dr JUSTIN COULSON, PhD KIDSPOT'S PARENTING EXPERT