

The First Australian Positive Psychology in Education Symposium



Date: 9th May 2009
Time: 8.00am. Registration
9:00am. – 5:00pm.
Venue: Veterinary Science Conference Centre
Regiment Drive
University of Sydney

Welcome to the First Australian Positive Psychology in Education Symposium, hosted by the Coaching Psychology Unit at the University of Sydney.

Conference Aims:

The aim of this conference is to foster the development of Positive Psychology in Education in Australia and globally and to provide a forum for Positive Psychology researchers, teachers, students and practitioners.

It seems that many of us rarely get a chance to interact and we hope that this conference will provide a stimulating forum to learn, exchange ideas, network and embrace positive psychology in education.

To facilitate this dialogue we would like to run each session in an interactive format wherever possible. The conference is designed to be academic and, at the same time, practical. *There will be no marketing of products or services within presentations.* Intelligent, critical self-reflection and information sharing is the central focus.

Seminar Rooms & Sessions attendance: Keynote sessions in the morning and afternoon will be held in the Webster Theatre. Six concurrent sessions will run between morning tea and lunch. Please register your session preference when you arrive to assist us with assigning rooms. We will do our best to meet your preferences; however, attendance at some of these sessions will be limited due to room capacity and on a first served basis. As a courtesy to other delegates and presenters and to facilitate group continuity, please remain seated in any session or specialised stream until its completion.

Conference Support Team: Volunteer support team members are wearing nametags with red dots. They are available to support you throughout the day.

Conference Evaluation: We take your feedback very seriously. Please complete the evaluation forms to be distributed before the close of the program.

Drinks: Please join us in the main lobby for drinks from 4.00pm at the conclusion of the final session.

We do look forward to your active participation. Enjoy!

The First Australian Positive Psychology in Education Symposium Program

8.00 am	Arrival – Registration & Session Sign up
9.00am	<p>Welcome: Dr Anthony Grant and Dr Suzy Green, Coaching Psychology Unit, University of Sydney</p> <p><i>Webster Theatre</i></p>
9.15am	<p>Keynote Speaker: Dr Matthew White, Director of Positive Education, Geelong Grammar. “Why bother teaching them to be happy? Positive education at Geelong Grammar School.”</p> <p><i>Webster Theatre</i></p>
10.00am	<p>Keynote Speaker: Dr Toni Noble, Australian Catholic University. “Applying positive psychology in education: A seven-year journey from 2002 to 2009.”</p> <p><i>Webster Theatre</i></p>
10.45am	Morning Tea - Ground Floor Lobby
11.15am	<p>Stream 1: Student and teacher well-being: Academic research Room A</p> <p>Presentation 1: Dr. Sue Roffey, University of Western Sydney. “A positive pedagogy for participation.”</p> <p>Presentation 2: Dr Kerry Howells, Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania. “Honouring the complexities when introducing gratitude into a school context.”</p> <p>Presentation 3: Jacolyn Norrish* and Dianne Vella-Brodrick. “Applying positive psychology with adolescents: Advice from young people”.</p>
	<p>Stream 2: Positive psychology in schools 1 Room B</p> <p>Presentation 1: Mac MacPherson, Scotch College, Adelaide. “Positive education at Scotch College”.</p> <p>Presentation 2: Anne Johnston, St Catherine’s School, Waverley. “Positive psychology in practice.”</p> <p>Presentation 3: Bernie Winters and Alex Gorman, St Ignatius College, Riverview. “Coaching psychology pilot program at Saint Ignatius’ College Riverview.”</p>
	<p>Stream 3 Positive psychology in schools 2 Room C</p> <p>Presentation 1: Judy King, Principal, Riverside Girls High School. “Riverside Girls High positively embracing positive psychology.”</p> <p>Presentation 2: Sue Martinov and Brian Plummer, Grays Pt Public School “Grays Pt P.S. Positive wellbeing project.”</p> <p>Presentation 3: Alyson Groom* “Celebrating strengths – Jenny Fox Eades’ whole school coaching programme.”</p>
	<p>Stream 4 Positive psychology in schools 3 ...Room D</p> <p>Presentation 1: Jane Sleeman, Megan Booth and Robert Phillips “From Strength to Strength; Developing a Positive School Philosophy at Hornsby Girls’ High School.”</p> <p>Presentation 2: Molly Nicholson and Dean Grimshaw “Positive psychology for the school counsellor”.</p> <p>Presentation 3: Ian Luscombe, Principal, Redbank School. “Being positive about negative behaviour”.</p>
	<p>Stream 5 Positive psychology in early childhood Room E</p> <p>Presentation 1: Anthony Semann, Colin Slattery and Lorraine Madden “Playing with positive psychology: an investigation into the application of positive psychology in early education programs”</p> <p>Presentation 2: Maria Pender, Ingrid Studholme and Nickolas Yu “Positive psychology in practice with staff at Clovelly Community Child Care”</p>
	<p>Stream 6 Positive psychology in higher education Room F</p> <p>Presentation 1: Jenny Clifton, Monash University “Moving towards evidence-based life coaching: what is the role of coaching for tertiary students?”</p> <p>Presentation 2: Lyn Page “Positive psychology in practice at TAFE NSW”.</p>
12.15pm	Lunch - Ground Floor Lobby

The First Australian Positive Psychology in Education Symposium Program (continued)

1.15pm	Lunch concludes.
1.15pm	<p>Keynote Speaker: Dr Helen McGrath, Deakin University "An evidence-based positive psychology approach to student wellbeing." <i>Webster Theatre</i></p>
2.00pm	<p>Keynote Speaker: Dr Suzy Green and Josephine Rynsaardt, University of Sydney. "Evidence-based coaching as applied positive psychology." <i>Webster Theatre</i></p>
2.45pm	<p>Keynote Speaker: Richard Eckersley, Visiting Fellow, Australian National University. "Teaching happiness: does it work and is it necessary?" <i>Webster Theatre</i></p>
3.30pm	<p>Closing Session: Dream Dr Anthony Grant & Dr Suzy Green <i>Webster Theatre</i></p>
4.00pm	4.00-5.00pm Symposium Drinks - Ground Floor Lobby

* denotes presenter.



The Second Australian Positive Psychology and Well-Being Conference

Will be held 12-13 February 2010 at Monash University, Caulfield campus, Melbourne. Information will be available in the next week or so from the APPA website:

www.positivepsychologyaustralia.org

The Australian Positive Psychology Association is an Australian on-line network of people interested in Positive Psychology. The mission of APPA is to

- promote the science of positive psychology and its research-based applications
- facilitate collaboration among researchers, teachers, students, and practitioners of positive psychology around the world and across academic disciplines
- share the findings of positive psychology with the broadest possible audience and with a strong focus on Australian and Australasian researchers and practitioners,
- foster dialogue with the international Positive Psychology community.

If you wish to formally join a Positive Psychology Association, we recommend you contact the International Positive Psychology Association.



IPPA was founded in 2007 with the mission to promote the science of positive psychology and its research-based applications; to facilitate collaboration among researchers, teachers, students, and practitioners of positive psychology around the world and across academic disciplines; and to share the findings of positive psychology with the broadest possible audience.

The First World Congress of Positive Psychology will be held June 18-21, 2009 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.

For further details, please visit www.ippanetwork.org

All biographies are listed alphabetically

Megan Booth

Megan is a Visual Arts teacher at Hornsby Girls' High School who has a passion for adolescent welfare and an interest in psychology. She has spent many years supporting and advocating for young people and their families. She is a co-founder of Hollyhox Positive Resources and has presented to numerous groups about youth issues and positive psychology. She is also working to attain a Masters in Art Therapy at the University of Western Sydney. She has been instrumental in the development of mentoring and wellness programs based on the principles of positive psychology.

Jenny Clifton

Jenny is a counselling psychologist, with experience across university and private practice settings. She currently works as a Counsellor at Monash University. Drawing from post Dr graduate training in psychodrama, coaching psychology and mindfulness-based practices, Jenny successfully adapted the coaching approach for tertiary students seeking to balance life and study demands through solution focussed goals.

Richard Eckersley

Richard's research explores progress and wellbeing, and includes: measures of national progress; the relationships between economic growth, quality of life and sustainability; the social and cultural determinants of health and happiness; visions of the future; and young people and their world. His work has been published in leading international scientific journals and major Australian newspapers, and has been brought together in a book, "Well & Good" (Text, 2004, 2005). He is a co-author of a national index of subjective wellbeing (the first of its kind in the world), and of the Australian Wellbeing Manifesto. He trained as a zoologist and has worked as a science journalist, policy and issue analyst, ministerial adviser and futurist. Richard is a founding director of Australia 21, a non-profit, public interest, research company, and a visiting fellow at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at the Australian National University, Canberra.

Jenny Fox Eades

Jenny is Director of the Celebrating Strengths Programme. She is an education advisor, works in schools with students and staff and runs training days and master classes in colleges and schools. Jenny trained as a special needs teacher, has qualifications in counselling, group therapy and a Masters in Psychoanalytic Observational Studies. She studied with Martin Seligman and is a founding member of Positive Workplace International. Jenny is the author of three books and has written for The Times, Junior Education and Early Years Educator.

Alex Gorman

Alex is an executive coach who holds an Honours degree in Social Work from the University of NSW, is a member of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) and Chair of the Centacare Advisory Council. She is also accredited as an executive coach with the Institute of Executive Coaching and the International Coaching Federation. Her current projects include training teachers to coach secondary students using a positive psychology approach. She is also writing and conducting programs that draw on the principles, tools and models inspired by several spiritual traditions, including wise decision making, heroic/legacy leadership, reflective practices, mindfulness and meditation. She enjoys working with people to identify their talents, develop their leadership skills, self-awareness, social awareness and overall performance.

Dr Anthony Grant

Anthony is a coaching psychologist. He holds a BA (Hons) (first class honours) in Psychology, a Masters of Arts in Behavioural Science and a PhD. The title of his PhD thesis was “Towards a psychology of coaching: The impact of coaching on meta-cognition, mental health and goal attainment” and is one of few doctoral theses that has explicitly examined coaching psychology. He is both a practitioner and an academic. Anthony left school at the age of fifteen with no qualifications, completed his training as a carpenter and ran his own contracting business. Embarking on a second career in direct sales and marketing, he began tertiary studies in 1993 as a mature age student and then commencing a third career in his 30's as a coaching psychologist. In January 2000, Anthony established the world's first Coaching Psychology Unit at the School of Psychology at Sydney University where he is the director. Anthony has coached many of Australia's leading executives and CEOs. He has co-written and co-edited five books on evidence-based coaching and has coaching-related publications in the peer-reviewed and professional press. His books on coaching have been translated into eight languages.

Dr Suzy Green

Suzy is a clinical and coaching psychologist (MAPS). She is a leader in the complementary fields of coaching psychology and positive psychology having conducted a world-first study on evidence-based coaching as an applied positive psychology. Suzy was the recipient of an International Positive Psychology Fellowship Award and published in the Journal of Positive Psychology. Suzy lectures on applied positive psychology as an adjunct lecturer in the Coaching Psychology Unit, University of Sydney. Suzy is also the founder of the “Positive Psychology Institute”, a Sydney-based business, providing individual clinical, counselling and coaching services and consultation on “applied positive psychology” for organisations and community services wishing to enhance performance and optimal functioning. Suzy is also an expert contributor to “Australian Womens Health” Magazine and writes a regular “stress-less” column.

Dean Grimshaw

Dean is an Intern Psychologist working with the NSW Department of Education and Training. Over the past three years, he has been working towards assisting schools and communities to develop positive inter-relationships through implementing federally funded projects such as KidsMatter and through working with schools and communities to identify shared strengths and visions; and to assist executive teams to develop effective change management practices. The VIA character strengths survey and underlying postulates of positive psychology have been used in combination with a goal-based intervention for students labelled “behaviourally difficult” for the past two years, the results of which are promising. Dean is due to graduate from the Masters of Applied Science (Psychology of Coaching) at the end of 2009.

Alyson Groom

Alyson has extensive knowledge of educational environments in Australia and the UK, with experience of leading three contrasting organisations as Principal of Canberra Girls' Grammar School and formerly as Principal of Toorak College, Mt Eliza, Victoria and Hulme Grammar School, England. Subsequent to these positions, Alyson has undertaken executive coaching and consultancy projects in educational organisations, the public service and businesses. With twenty years experience as a CEO, Alyson's leadership work focuses on the development of strong organisational cultures and effective empowerment of individuals and teams.

Dr Kerry Howells

Kerry currently teaches in the Bachelor of Teaching and Bachelor of Education programs at the University of Tasmania. Her teaching expertise covers the areas of professional studies, teacher identity, philosophy of education, teaching and learning strategies, contemporary curriculum issues, and transition from high school to university. Kerry has developed a unique approach to teacher and student reflection that encourages an inner attitude of gratitude. She has introduced this approach in a variety of educational settings: school leadership teams, university, secondary and primary teachers' professional development, high school and university students' learning, school and university counsellors, university first-year transition programmes, teacher-education, coaching, parent groups, and tutor training. Kerry's work on gratitude in these contexts has recently been recognised nationally in a 2008 Australian Learning and Teaching Council Award with a citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning.

Anne Johnstone

Anne is the head of Junior School at St Catherine's School, Waverley. Anne began her career as a lawyer before pursuing her passion for education. She is an experienced teacher who has taught at both school and university levels. Anne has also consulted extensively to schools and law firms in the areas of positive psychology, resilience, leadership and communication skills. In 2002, Anne was nominated for the National Excellence in Teaching Award and in 2003; she was awarded the NSW Teachers' Guild Award for Excellence in the Early Years of Teaching. She is also the recipient of a Winston Churchill Fellowship in exploring ways of fostering resilience in learning.

Judy King

Judy is currently the Principal of Riverside Girls High School at Gladesville in Sydney. In 2007, she received the Meritorious Service to Public Education Award from the NSW Department of Education for services to public education and in 2008 she was awarded life membership of the NSW Teachers Federation. Judy was a member of the executive of the Secondary Principals Council of NSW (SPC) from 1992-2006 including the last 6 years as deputy president (with the responsibility for public education advocacy) and in 2001 was awarded life membership of the SPC. Judy represented the SPC on the Board of Studies from 1998-2004 during the period of the introduction of the HSC in 2001. She currently represents NSW (secondary) on the National Principals Committee. Judy is very interested in educational leadership, all aspects of teaching and learning, assessment and reporting, technology in learning, and student welfare and wellbeing (especially building resilience).

Ian Luscombe

Ian has been in Special Education for over 20 years and has been Principal of Redbank School, Westmead for the last 7 years. Redbank is a joint Health and Education Departments facility for the treatment of children (preschool to yr 6) and adolescents (yrs 7 to 12), with emotional, psychiatric and / or behavioural difficulties. The length of stay of the students ranges from 10 to 20 weeks. Although the programs offered at Redbank are predominately for the children of the Western Sydney region, Redbank is a statewide resource for adolescents that may need intensive psychiatric care and for families of primary aged students that need a short intensive residential placement of no more than two weeks. At the beginning of last year, a class was established for violent and aggressive pre-schoolers. This initiative of Ian's, the only one of its type in Australia, received media attention across Australia and overseas, and is seen as an exemplar of a preventative mental health program. Ian has taught students with a large range of emotional and behavioural disorders. These disorders have included mood and anxiety disorders, psychosis, eating disorders, conduct disorder and aggressive and oppositional behaviours. He has taught all classes K-12 in a variety of settings; including tutorial centres and isolated ED classrooms as well as joint education and health facilities. Prior to becoming Principal, Ian was a teaching Assistant Principal at Redbank for 6 years. Ian has spoken extensively across Australia on practical behaviour management strategies and on ways to enhance teacher welfare in schools. He is still sane!

Dr Helen McGrath

Helen is an adjunct professor in the School of Education, RMIT University. She also lectures part time at Deakin University, has a practice as a counselling psychologist and consults with a wide range of organisations including schools, community, health and welfare groups, government agencies and educational systems. She is the author or co-author (mostly with Dr. Toni Noble) of many books that translate research in psychology and education into practice for teacher, psychologists and the general community. These include *Friendly Kids*, *Friendly Classrooms*, *Difficult Personalities*, *Bounce Back: A Classroom, Resilience Program*, *Bullying Solutions: An Evidence-based Approach to Bullying in Australian Schools* and *HITS and HOTS: High Impact Teaching Strategies, Higher-order Thinking Strategies (and Social Skills)*. She was chief investigator for several research studies conducted by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood (2005-2007) and collaborated with Dr. Toni Noble on DEEWR's Scoping Study on Student Wellbeing (2008). She is an executive member of the National Centre Against Bullying and was the advisor and evaluator of DEEWR's National Safe Schools Framework Best Practices Grants Programme. Currently she is also the research project director for the AMF's Cybersecurity Schools Accreditation Framework

Howard 'Mac' MacPherson

'Mac' is Head of Middle School and Head of the College Wellbeing Team at Scotch College, Adelaide. He has been teaching and managing in the education sector for twenty-five years. He has been a classroom teacher of English for nineteen of those, a Philosophy teacher, a part-time lecturer in a B Ed in-service course at the University of South Australia and a Head of School since 2005. His attendance at the Geelong Grammar School training in Positive Education run by the UPenn team - including Dr Martin Seligman and Dr Karen Reivich - ignited a passionate interest in the potential of positive psychology to reshape the student wellbeing programs offered at Scotch. The College Wellbeing Team he leads has set about introducing various programs in positive education since their return from Geelong Grammar School.

Lorraine Madden

Lorraine is a consultant at Semann & Slattery. For over twenty years, Lorraine has worked in the human services sector and held senior positions in a range of government and community organisations. Her counselling expertise has been sought by individuals and organisations seeking organisational and personal change. Lorraine has qualifications in Education, Counselling and Groupwork.

Sue Martinov

Sue is a registered psychologist and school counsellor who works for the Department of Education and Training in Sydney Region. She has a longstanding interest in positive approaches to supporting mental health and wellbeing. In 2007, she was awarded the Premier's Anika Foundation Scholarship, which enabled her to visit programs in England, Italy and the United States. Of particular interest was her visit to the Wellington College Wellbeing Program where she obtained advice and programs, which have informed her ongoing work. In 2009, she attended the Positive Education Conference at Geelong Grammar School, Victoria.

Molly Nicholson

An intern psychologist and associate member of the APS, Molly graduated from the University of Sydney with a double degree in Psychology (Honours Class I) and Education (Secondary). She has experience teaching in both the public and private school sectors. She is currently working as a school counsellor, based at Randwick Boys' High School, and completing a Masters in Coaching Psychology at the University of Sydney. Having recently attended the Positive Education Conference at Geelong Grammar School, Molly is passionate about positive psychology.

Dr Toni Noble

Toni is a former classroom teacher now working as a senior University lecturer in education and psychology at the Australian Catholic University National. She is widely known in the education arena as the co-author with Dr Helen McGrath of many practical best selling teacher resource books. These books include *Eight Ways At Once; Different Kids, Same Classroom* and the *BOUNCE BACK! A Classroom Resiliency Program*. The *BOUNCE BACK!* program is the 2003 winner of the Robin Winkler Award for Applied Research in Community Psychology awarded by the Australian Psychological Society. Toni is on the Advisory Board for the National Centre Against Bullying and is co-editor of *Bullying Solutions: Evidence-Based Approaches to Bullying*. Her newest book (in press) with Helen McGrath on student engagement is titled *HITS and HOTS (High Impact Teaching Strategies & Higher Order Thinking Strategies)*. As well as a university teacher educator, Toni is a psychologist and an educational consultant for all school systems. She has been awarded a Carrick Citation for her outstanding contributions to University teaching in the field of educational psychology and teacher education. Toni was also a principal Investigator on the Australian Government's (DEEWR) 2008 Scoping Study on Student Wellbeing. Toni is a member of the International Positive Psychology Association and has presented at three European positive psychology conferences.

Jacolyn Norrish

Jacolyn is currently working on a Ph.D. in positive psychology and adolescent well-being at Monash University, Australia. She is interested in how strengths, hope, engagement, and meaning can be used to enhance adolescents' mental health. Jacolyn has worked on several mental health projects including KidsMatter (The Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative), and DARE (The Depression Awareness Recovery Effectiveness project). Currently, Jacolyn is teaching positive psychology to undergraduate students at Monash University.

Lyn Page

Lyn is a Senior Counsellor at St George College, TAFE NSW-Sydney Institute. She started her career as a teacher, then school counsellor, completing the M.Psyc (Ed) at University of Newcastle in 1982. In the last ten years, she has implemented programs to engage youth in education (Journal of Australian and New Zealand Student Services Oct 2003). She was released to assist Dr John Franklin with his research in 2007 and started to look for ways to teach positive psychology skills in Tafe. She presented some early strategies (DET 15-19 year Conference 2007) and as a result, she was awarded innovation funding to develop resources to assist students and teachers use positive psychology skills in education. Over the past year, she has conducted a number of programs with students, staff and community agencies.

Maria Pender

Maria has been the director at Clovelly Child Care Centre for 24 years. Maria holds a Degree in Early Childhood and a Masters in Adult Education. She has lectured at Macquarie University's Institute of Early Childhood in the Bachelor of Teaching Program designed specifically for indigenous students. Maria is a life member of Community Child Care Cooperative and sits on their Board of Management. She is also a member of the Board at Macquarie University, Institute of Early Childhood. Clovelly Child Care Centre is a community based, not for profit, parent managed, long day care service. The Centre is licensed for 55 children and caters for 90 children and 75 families over the week.

Robert Phillips

Robert is the principal of Hornsby Girls' High School, an academically selective school for girls years 7 - 12, which has a strong tradition and an established heritage, spanning over 70 years. He has had extensive experience in a variety of school settings as both a teacher and school administrator. He is passionate about staff and student welfare and has been instrumental in the development and implementation of 'From Strength to Strength', a whole school philosophy based on the principles of positive psychology.

Brian Plummer

Brian is a registered psychologist and district guidance officer who works for the Department of Education and Training in Sydney Region. Brian holds a B.A. Dip. Ed. M.A. (School Counselling) and a Masters in Special Education. He has been a regular attendee at the Happiness Conference in Sydney over the past few years and has a strong interest in implementing positive psychology in education. He has presented to school staffs and principals on topics including resilience, mental health and whole school approaches. In 2008, he assisted in organising and presented at the Sydney Region School Counsellor Conference on this topic.

Dr. Sue Roffey

Sue is an educational psychologist, adjunct research fellow at the University of Western Sydney and consultant on student and school wellbeing. She writes prolifically on behaviour / wellbeing / connectedness in school and is in demand internationally as a presenter. She is currently editor of a special issue of Educational and Child Psychology on School Relationships and involved with Federal scoping studies on student wellbeing and social and emotional learning. Sue works with NAPCAN in developing projects to inhibit intergenerational violence and develop resilience. She is also a founder member of the Wellbeing Australia network.

Josephine Rynsaardt

Josephine is a registered psychologist who has worked for five years as school counsellor at MLC School, Burwood. As the first-appointed area manager for NSW Health's now State-wide School Link program, Josephine was instrumental in ensuring School Link resources would be available to schools of all denominations. Josephine spent nearly twenty years earlier in her career providing school counsellor services to numerous inner-western Sydney government schools. Josephine began her career after completing a B.A.Dip.Ed. at Macquarie University. More recently, she completed the University of Sydney's Masters degree in Coaching Psychology as well as a Graduate Diploma in Clinical Hypnosis.

Anthony Semann

Anthony is a Director at Semann & Slattery. Anthony has worked as an educator, innovator and advocate with a broad range of government and private organisations. His skills and expertise has seen him work across Australia and overseas as a presenter, facilitator and public speaker. Anthony has qualifications in education, sociology and social policy. Anthony is currently completing a PhD with a research focus on leadership and courage.

Colin Slattery

Colin is a Director at Semann & Slattery. Colin has held a range of senior executive positions with government agencies, the private sector and non-government organisations for 15 years. Colin works as a change facilitator and coach for individuals and organisations. Colin has qualifications in applied science, management and organisational coaching. These diverse qualifications strengthen Colin's skills as a consultant and facilitator.

Jane Sleeman

Jane is a registered psychologist in a private practice that specialises in depression and anxiety. She is a co-founder of Hollyhox Positive Resources and a Director of Inside Out Psychology. She has worked as a facilitator for the Black Dog Institute. Jane has a wealth of experience working with people and their families, having also worked as a teacher and school counsellor. Jane has presented extensively in Australia and overseas on a number of topical issues. In 2008, she was awarded the NSW Premier's 'Anika Foundation Youth Depression Scholarship' and studied the impact of youth depression in North America. Jane has been a serving board member of Mental Illness Education Australia and is currently involved in establishing a number of wellness programs in school settings.

Ingrid Studholme

Ingrid is a leadership development consultant and coach who applies a positive, strengths-based approach to her work with individuals and teams in the public and private sectors. Ingrid holds a Masters in Human Resource Management and Coaching from the University of Sydney and a Bachelor of Business with First Class Marketing Honours. Ingrid is a founding member of Nardoo Partnership, a team of senior organisational consultants who partner with community-based organisations like Clovelly Childcare Centre. Ingrid also works in the corporate sector. Ingrid is currently involved in the Australian Research Council Leadership and Research Project: Leadership in High Stress Workplaces.

Dianne Vella-Brodrick

Dianne completed her PhD in 1999. She is a registered psychologist and a member of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) and the APS College of Health Psychologists. Dianne is currently a senior lecturer in psychology at Monash University, Australia. She teaches positive psychology and supervises numerous postgraduate students in areas related to well-being. Dianne was Co-Director for the First Australian Positive Psychology and Well-Being Conference held in April, 2008. She also founded the Positive Psychology Network in Melbourne, Australia and is a member of the Board of Directors of the International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA). Dianne's current research projects focus on the development and evaluation of interventions aimed at enhancing well-being.

Dr Mathew White

Mathew is Head of Positive Education (HOPE) at Geelong Grammar School and a Fellow in the Melbourne Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne. Mathew has worked at Geelong Grammar School since 1998 and has held a number of administrative and pastoral leadership roles at the school. Dr White was admitted to the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Adelaide in 2004 for pioneering research on boarding education. He will participate in two international symposia panels considering the teaching of positive psychology in schools at the first World Congress on Positive Psychology in Philadelphia in June 2009. Dr White's recent external appointments include: member of the Australian Practitioners' Advisory Board for 2nd Australian Positive Psychology and Well-being Conference scheduled for Feb 12-13, 2010 at Monash University and a member of the course advisory panel for the Postgraduate Certificate in Educational Studies (International Baccalaureate) at the University of Melbourne.

Bernie Winters

Bernie Winters is a housemaster with responsibility for the pastoral care of 76 boys from Years 9 to 12. His qualifications include a Master of Education (Admin), Bachelor of Education, Diploma of Teaching and Teaching English Second Other Language (all from ACU). In 2004, Bernie completed the Diploma of Coaching Psychology as part of the first intake of students at the University of Sydney and has used his experience to develop a coaching program for students at the secondary level. He has applied his positive psychology training in the area of education as well as in the sporting arena, coaching the Riverview 2nds Basketball team to four GPS Premierships in 6 years - a record he (and the College) is proud of!

Nickolas Yu

Nickolas works as a coach, facilitator and consultant in health, education, community and corporate settings. For many years his practice has been informed by positive social science. This has seen him involved in development programmes for young people whose parents have mental health issues, leadership and facilitation programmes in healthcare, postgraduate teaching of coaching as part of health management and leadership studies at the University of Wollongong. Nickolas holds a Masters in Human Resource Management and Coaching from the University of Sydney and a Graduate Certificate in Child Adolescent Mental Health Care. Nickolas is currently completing a PhD from the University of Sydney where he is exploring the impact of coaching on the performance and wellbeing of health leaders. He is a founding member of Nardoo Partnership.

The First Australian Positive Psychology in Education Symposium



Abstracts by Session

Webster Theatre

• 9.00am - 9.15am

Welcome: Dr Anthony Grant and Dr Suzy Green

• 9.15am – 10.00am

Keynote Speaker: Dr Matthew White – Head of Positive Education, Geelong Grammar School.

“Why bother teaching them to be happy? Positive education at Geelong Grammar School.”

In recent years, discussion about adolescent health and wellbeing has received significant academic and media coverage. As an issue it is being discussed by parents, teachers and students and understandably so, as the rate of adolescent depression in Australia increases. Geelong Grammar School is Australia’s leading coeducational boarding and day school. Following the opening of the innovative Handbury Centre for Wellbeing, Geelong Grammar School commenced collaboration with Martin Seligman in 2007 and launched Positive Education - a whole school approach to teaching and learning from Kindergarten to the final years of senior school employing implicit and explicit teaching of Positive Psychology principles in curriculum, co curriculum and pastoral settings. Since 2007, the School has embarked on an ambitious project to incorporate Positive Psychology principles across all aspects of school life. In this presentation, Dr White will outline the structure, policies and procedures that are being employed in one of the most important whole school initiatives of Positive Psychology in Schools across the world.

• 10.00am – 10.45am

Keynote Speaker: Dr Toni Noble, Australian Catholic University

“Applying positive psychology in education: A seven year journey from 2002 to 2009.”

Positive psychology in education is an emerging discipline that offers new insights into school and classroom strategies to enhance students’ social and emotional wellbeing and their academic engagement and competence. Next to families, schools are the most likely place where students can experience positive environmental conditions and learn the personal skills that foster their wellbeing and resilience. Positive psychology in education offers opportunities to assist in our ongoing battle to prevent youth depression, suicide, self-harm, violence and problematic substance abuse. This keynote presentation explores a seven-year journey in applying the key principles of positive psychology in education. It addresses what works in embedding these principles in whole school and classroom practices.

The mid-morning session from 11.15am to 12.15pm includes six concurrent streams. As a courtesy to other delegates and presenters and to facilitate group continuity we ask you to please remain in one specialised stream.

Stream 1: Student and teacher well-being: Academic research

11.15am – 12.15pm

Room A

Presentation 1: Dr. Sue Roffey, University of Western Sydney

“A positive pedagogy for participation.”

Connection to school is increasingly acknowledged as an important factor in resilience and wellbeing. Connection is enhanced by being acknowledged, valued and being given opportunities to have your say and make a difference, to feel that you belong and matter. Circle Time Solutions is a framework for group interaction based in the principles of democracy, inclusion, respect and safety. It is positive experience, which emphasises strengths and solutions. Research in both the UK and Australia indicates that where facilitation is congruent with these principles Circle Time has the potential to change relationships, behaviour and engagement in the classroom. This presentation will give participants a brief demonstration of how this pedagogy works.

Presentation 2: Dr Kerry Howells, Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania

“Honouring the complexities when introducing gratitude into a school context.”

This session will invite participants to consider some of the complexities that may be embedded in the notion that gratitude has relevance to the everyday lives of teachers. While some teachers may already fully embrace gratitude as part of their teacher disposition, it is an aspect that is most under threat in a culture of complaint and the rising levels of teacher-burnout. For others, the weightiness and negative connotations associated with the notion of gratitude disables them from engaging in it. Participants will be offered some practical ways forward to address these complexities and to arrive at a definition of gratitude that is suitable to the modern-day, secular and pluralistic context of mainstream schools. The session will also present findings from teachers and school leaders who have taken up gratitude practices in the high school and primary school contexts.

Presentation 3: Jacolyn Norrish and Dianne Vella-Brodrick

“Applying positive psychology with adolescents: Advice from young people”.

This presentation is based on the recommendations and ideas of experts in the field of adolescent mental health: young people themselves. Australian adolescents (aged 14 to 17) took part in a two-stage study. First, 159 adolescents completed a battery of questionnaires that explored the relationships between positive psychology and mental health variables. Second, 28 adolescents took part in phone interviews that explored young peoples' ideas about happiness and their recommendations for programs that aim to promote mental health. This presentation will focus on the recommendations young people made relevant to educational settings. In addition, five strategies for enhancing adolescent mental health will be covered: (a) cultivating hope through setting goals; (b) helping individuals to identify and develop their strengths; (c) encouraging young people to develop positive relationships; (d) using gratitude; and (e) helping participants to explore sources of pleasure, engagement, and meaning in their lives.

Stream 2: Positive psychology in schools 1

11.15am – 12.15pm

Room B

Presentation 1: Mac McPherson, Scotch College, Adelaide

“Positive education at Scotch College”.

The College Wellbeing Team at Scotch Adelaide have delivered a derivative Positive Education program (over eight weeks) to the senior boarders and the boarding staff (Co Ed) and have also worked with the College Executive staff to recognise their own and each other’s strengths, with the aim of enhancing communication and collaboration between them. Additionally, Mac and his colleagues, Caroline Bates (College Psychologist) and Chris Reynolds (Wellbeing Coordinator) will outline other programs in the pipeline. Some resources will be available after the session.

Presentation 2: Anne Johnston, St Catherine’s School Waverley

“Positive psychology in practice”.

This presentation will explore how the principles of Positive Psychology have been implemented in a Junior School context. In particular, how Positive Psychology has been implemented through programmes such as Art and Personal Development and Health. Implementation of the principles of learned optimism in a Junior School setting will also be considered. Particular focus will be on how the strategies offered in these areas can contribute to fostering resilient learners.

Presentation 3: Bernie Winters and Alex Gorman, St Ignatius Riverview

“Coaching psychology pilot program at Saint Ignatius’ College, Riverview.”

Helping students to achieve academically, personally and spiritually is a challenge for staff and parents in the 21st century education environment. A two-day inservice program written by Mr Winters and Ms Gorman was held at Saint Ignatius’ College, Riverview, in Term 2 2008 to train teachers and counsellors from this and other interested schools in the science of positive psychology. The feedback was that this was an important tool, which could assist in many areas of education. Following this, the Riverview staff were invited to participate in a pilot program to act as coaches for a small number of Year 11 and 12 students. These boys selected were involved in six to eight face-to-face coaching sessions. The coach assisted the student in achieving one personal goal, one academic/study based goal and a spiritual goal. Staff were supported and mentored by Ms Gorman and Mr Winters. This was a new initiative of the College, which will be repeated again in Term 3, 2009. Ms Gorman and Mr Winters will share their insights into the inservice program and the pilot coaching program including the impact on both staff and students.

Stream 3: Positive psychology in schools 2

11.15am – 12.15pm

Room C

Presentation 1: Judy King, Principal, Riverside Girls High School

“Riverside Girls High positively embracing positive psychology.”

This presentation will provide an overview of the strategies Riverside Girls High School have implemented which fit under the umbrella of a positive psychology framework. In particular, in the last two years, RGHS, have been working in collaboration with Dr Suzy Green of the Positive Psychology Institute, to create a longer term applied positive psychology strategy. Judy King, the Principal of RHGS, will present on progress so far and issues which have emerged during the implementation of such strategies. RGHS is one of the first public high schools to be actively identifying and implementing research from the field of Positive Psychology.

Presentation 2: Sue Martinov and Brian Plummer, Grays Pt Public School

“Grays Pt P.S. Positive wellbeing project.”

Grays Pt Public School has introduced a positive well-being project, which aims to interconnect a number of new and existing programs to promote community wellbeing. In supporting this project, the presenters have been influenced by the growing research about Positive Psychology in education. Training and ideas have been generated from programs operating in the United States, England and Australia. The components of the project include: teacher professional learning, parent seminars, training of year 6 wellbeing leaders, classroom activities and whole school programs. The research-based elements, which are promoted throughout the school community, include: practicing mindfulness and savouring, gratitude and connectiveness exercises, recognising and building upon personal strengths and the study of meaningful lives. In keeping with current research, this program acknowledges the importance of building resilience in order to cope with normal negative emotions and negative life events. Examples of programs and activities include Playground Post, Friendship Tree and Term Character Theme. These will be outlined in this short presentation. In addition there will be brief discussion of practical issues associated with implementing a wellbeing program as well as future directions and plans to expand this project into the local school cluster.

Presentation 3: Alyson Groom

“Celebrating Strengths – Jenny Fox Eades’ whole school coaching programme.”

Jenny Fox Eades is a teacher and writer with a Masters Degree in Psychoanalytic Observation of Children and Families from the Tavistock Clinic in the UK. Jenny has developed a programme called Celebrating Strengths while working with teachers and students in deprived areas of the UK. Celebrating Strengths puts positive psychology into practice in the classroom through oral story telling, regular celebrations and a focus on the VIA strengths. A Celebrating Strengths Coach works with schools to help them implement the programme. The programme has been evaluated by The Centre For Applied Positive Psychology in the UK and results were very positive – teacher engagement improved, pupil confidence and behaviour improved and there was a positive effect on academic results too. In this session, Alyson Groom, Jenny’s colleague, will provide highlights of Jenny’s - Celebrating Strengths programme and how it is of interest to schools around the world.

Stream 4: Positive psychology in schools 3

11.15am – 12.15pm

Room D

Presentation 1: Jane Sleeman, Megan Booth and Robert Phillips

“From strength to strength: Developing a positive school philosophy at Hornsby Girls’ High School”.

There is great potential for the use of positive psychology in organisational settings such as schools. From ‘Strength to Strength’ is new positive psychology initiative that is currently being implemented, as part of the school’s three-year plan at Hornsby Girls’ High School. During the next three years, the aim is to work with the staff, students, parents and community to implement a positive school philosophy that underpins all aspects of school life. Educating teachers and school staff about the principles of positive psychology and giving them skills and strategies that will enable them to flourish is the first step in this process.

“Imagine a school filled with flourishing adult teachers. Those teachers who really connect are those who feel really connected in life. We need to find more ways to support teachers in their well-being...We are concerned with our kids. We know maternal depression affects kids. But we haven’t made the link about languishing teachers in the classroom nor about those teachers who drop out of the profession. I have a hunch that their leaving is probably connected to the kids in their classrooms, the mental states that the students bring to the school and the ability to connect or not connect to those students. We’re worried about exposing our kids to mental illness. We don’t yet get that the absence of flourishing is as serious as the presence of mental illness. Kids are exposed to too many adults who just aren’t doing well.” Dr. Corey Lee M. Keyes

Presentation 2: Molly Nicholson and Dean Grimshaw

“Positive psychology for the school counsellor”.

As School Counsellors, we believe we can do more than just assist students to cope with current adversities. We can also assist them to increase their happiness by bringing more pleasure, engagement and meaning into their lives. In this workshop, we will employ experimentation (and a lot of fun!) to explore two interventions designed to sustainably increase students’ positive emotion: ‘three good things’ and ‘savouring’. We will discuss how such activities might be used in individual work with students, as well as the important role the School Counsellor can play in assisting their school to integrate positive psychology into current teaching and learning practices.

Presentation 3: Ian Luscombe, Redbank School

“Being positive about negative behaviour”.

In this presentation, Ian will discuss ways of using positive psychology as a scaffold for managing students that have disturbed and disturbing behaviour. Chiefly, he will focus on the importance of both teachers and students as viewing misbehaviours as being temporary and hence amenable to change. Setbacks in academic and behavioural success also need to be viewed within the same framework. The following topics will be briefly discussed:

- how to avoid confirming a student’s dysfunctional view of the world and themselves
- how to talk to students with an emotional disturbance
- dealing with non-compliance
- why some students say nasty/hurtful things
- what to say when you don’t know what to say
- the importance of setting firm limits and what may happen if you don’t.

Stream 5: Positive psychology in early childhood
11.15am – 12.15pm
Room E

Presentation 1: Anthony Semann, Colin Slattery and Lorraine Madden

"Playing with positive psychology: an investigation into the application of positive psychology in early education programs".

This presentation will report on preliminary application of positive psychology constructs within the early education sector. The application of positive psychology constructs in early years education is relatively new and as such brings many challenges when such approaches sit diametrically opposed to traditional ideas pertaining to theories of management, leadership and change. This presentation will highlight the challenges, successes and debates, which arise from positive psychology when attempting to create change and enhance workplace relationships and productivity in a diverse workforce such as educational settings.

Presentation 2: Maria Pender, Ingrid Studholme and Nickolas Yu

"Positive psychology in practice with staff at Clovelly Community Child Care"

This presentation provides a snapshot of the application and impact of positive psychology with staff in community-based childcare. Initially, four programme outcomes were co-created with the Centre Director: cultivating and celebrating individual and collective strengths; building greater team positivity and shared purpose; helping the team to be the best they can be; and enabling the team to feel good about how they learn, develop, and do their work. A range of positive psychology principles and practices were used to achieve these outcomes, including the 'best self', team positivity (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005), and values clarification (Manley 1992). These provided the team with a platform from which to engage in facilitated reflective practice, and professional and team development. Preliminary findings indicate that the team is embracing these concepts practically in their day-to-day interactions with each other, and with children and parents. This is enabling the team to identify and better leverage individual and collective strengths; and cultivate more positive relations with each other, and with children and parents. This case study provides encouraging feedback that positive psychology has a valuable role to play in enriching child-care, because it has the potential to create conditions for human flourishing.

Stream 6: Positive psychology in higher education

11.15am – 12.15pm

Room F

Presentation 1: Jenny Clifton, Monash University

“Moving towards evidence-based life coaching: what is the role of coaching for tertiary students?”

This presentation looks at coaching as an application of positive psychology: what is the role for a group-based life-coaching program for tertiary students? Jenny has successfully run group-coaching programs for university students at Deakin University in Melbourne as well as more recently at Monash University with some good qualitative feedback. She is keen to further research the efficacy of the coaching model for young people in educational settings. Does life coaching have a role within a tertiary setting? How can students successfully juggle and excel at both their studies and life demands? Is there any evidence that supports these challenges? These are just some of the questions that Jenny successfully explored whilst developing and running a group coaching approach for University students at Deakin and Monash Universities. This is a session likely to be of interest to people assessing the value of life coaching to the tertiary sector as well as people considering adapting life coaching to an entirely new setting.

Presentation 2: Lyn Page

“Positive psychology in practice at TAFE NSW.”

In this session, Lyn will present a summary of the programs and resources she has developed and presented to students and teachers at TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute. The resources were designed to assist teachers create a positive classroom environment for students and to teach students specific skills such as more optimistic thinking about their past, present and future education. Innovative resources were developed to engage students, particularly with limited language skills and educational disadvantage. These resources have been used with a range of students in courses such as “Tertiary Preparation”, “Working with the Aged” and “Career Education for Women”. The resources have also been presented to Sydney Institute staff and to community agencies such as the Migrant Resource Centre at Rockdale. The goal of this work is to impart skills to staff and students in a proactive way to complement and hopefully reduce the reactive role of an educational counselling service. The main goal of this presentation is to share resources and experiences and to obtain feedback, ideas and hopefully partnerships with others about ways to drive positive psychology further into mainstream education and complement the reactive aspects of counselling in education.

Webster Theatre

• **1.15pm – 2.00pm**

Keynote Speaker: Dr Helen McGrath, Deakin University

“An evidence-based positive psychology approach to student wellbeing”.

Positive psychology has shifted the primary focus of those who work with young people away from their deficits, problems and treatment and towards prevention and the enhancement of life satisfaction. This keynote address identifies and elaborates on six evidence-based foundations of student wellbeing, which have been drawn not only from research and theory in positive psychology but also from research from other contemporary psychological and educational movements that are consistent with positive psychology such as The Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach. These six foundations are: a caring, respectful and inclusive learning environment, feeling safe at school, competency in social and emotional skills, knowing and using one's own strengths, having and living in accord with pro-social values and a sense of meaning and purpose.

2.00pm – 2.45pm

Keynote Speaker: Dr Suzy Green and Josephine Rynsaardt, University of Sydney

“Evidence-based coaching as applied positive psychology.”

Enhancing well-being in the community is one of our greatest challenges as a society. Mental health promotion is an important component in achieving this goal. Identifying platforms for applied positive psychology in the community is essential in terms of striving and maintaining a “life worth living”. This presentation wishes to extend the knowledge base on the use of evidence-based coaching as an applied positive psychology in the education sector, as a means to enhance well-being. A study by Green, Oades & Grant (2006) published in the Journal of Positive Psychology provided preliminary evidence that evidence-based life coaching can enhance well-being, both subjective and psychological, in a community sample. A further study by Green, Grant & Rynsaardt (2007) provided further evidence that evidence-based life coaching can also be effective when working with senior high school students. This study found that there were positive impacts on self-reported levels of hope and hardiness. Moreover, a further study building on this research has provided preliminary findings that evidence-based coaching can also be a useful and important intervention for teachers in the workplace. This presentation will provide an overview of the evidence so far, with practical implications discussed for those wanting to utilise evidence-based coaching in the education sector as an applied positive psychology.

• **2.45pm – 3.30pm**

Keynote Speaker: Richard Eckersley, Visiting Fellow, Australian National University

“Teaching happiness: does it work and is it necessary?”

There are two contentious dimensions to applying positive psychology in schools: whether it works and whether it is necessary. The first question concerns whether intervention is effective - or might even make matters worse. It is posed in the light of a possible 'backlash' against the recent surge in interest in positive psychology programs in schools. The second question relates to whether young people's psychological wellbeing is under threat and so justifies intervention. It will be explored in greater detail, given claims that today's so-called 'epidemic of depression' is an artifact of diagnosis, reflecting the medicalisation of 'normal sorrow'. Within this context, this presentation will focus on the broader, social aspects of wellbeing rather than the personal, and argue the need to make wellbeing a central purpose of all education, not just the aim of specific wellbeing programs.

• **3.30pm – 4.00pm**

Closing Session: Dream

Dr Anthony Grant & Dr Suzy Green

The First Australian Positive Psychology in Education Symposium

We would like to thank:

All enthusiastic presenters who have brought their work to life in the symposium!

All enthusiastic participants who have brought the symposium to life!

AND last but not least to all those who have made the symposium happen including our conference coordinator Ingrid Studholme and conference support team including Molly Nicholson, Josephine Rynsaardt, Athena Tselepi, Tanya Foran, Frank Berton, Mona Geppert, Debbie Arvanitis, Betsy Hill, Jane Spencer, Carly Ross and Heather.

For those interested in any ongoing discussions on the development of Positive Psychology in Education, please stay tuned to the APPA website www.psych.usyd.edu.au/coach/appa/index.htm.