Chapter 20

Positive Education

Visible Wellbeing and Positive Functioning in Students

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Introduction

According to the World Health Organization, "Health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and love" (WHO, 1986, p. v). Given that schools are institutions in which large numbers of children live out much of their everyday lives, schools are in a powerful position to promote wellbeing at a societal level if they infuse wellbeing principles into school curricula and cultures. The current chapter puts forward a new framework of psychosocial functioning that can be infused into schools to promote student wellbeing.

Schools as Wellbeing-Enhancing Institutions

Are schools the right place to teach wellbeing? From the standpoint of maximising reach and impact, the answer is yes. Schools are a major institution in both Western and Eastern societies that have contact with large numbers of children on a regular basis. From the standpoint of the moral behaviour that positive institutions can inspire in their members, the answer is also yes. Schools work with children across their formative developmental years, when lifelong habits may be established, and thus have the potential to cultivate moral goals that guide students to be caring, responsible and productive people in society.

Over the last two decades, student wellbeing has gained increased attention and focus. For example, student wellbeing has become a focus of international education policy as represented in the interagency initiative between the WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, Education International, Education Development Center, the Partnership for Child Development and the World Bank, and 'Focusing Resources for Effective School Health' (FRESH). The growth of research on student wellbeing is also evidenced by the number of review papers and meta-analyses on various aspects of wellbeing education that have been published over the last decade (Brunwasser et al., 2009; Durlak et al., 2011; Kavanagh et al., 2009; Kraag et al., 2006, Lovat et al., 2009; Sklad et al., 2012; Waters, 2011; Waters et al., 2015). The growth of research on student wellbeing suggests that it is increasingly being viewed as an important goal of education.

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Why Should Schools Teach Wellbeing? The Learning Case and the Mental Health Case

The increasing emphasis on wellbeing education has arisen for two major reasons: (1) the learning case and (2) the mental health case. With respect to the learning case, the evidence increasingly shows that academic learning is supported by wellbeing (Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2002; Meyer and Turner, 2006). In particular, the role that emotions play in learning and cognitive functioning has received considerable research interest (Pekrun et al., 2002). Although educationalists have traditionally viewed learning as a cognitive process, advances in neuroscience and psychology now show that learning is profoundly affected by our emotions (Immordino-Yang and Damasio, 2007; Jensen, 2008; Fredrickson, 2001, 2004). Indeed, all the information a student receives in class is routed through both the rational and emotional systems in his/her brain and the emotional climate of a classroom has a significant effect on the degree to which the material taught in class will be committed to memory (Jensen, 2008). As Professor Helen Immordino-Yang eloquently summarises, 'We feel, therefore we learn' (Immordino-Yang and Damasio, 2007).

It is no wonder that research has found a consistent link between wellbeing and academic achievement. For example, a meta-analysis by Durlak and colleagues (2011) of 213 studies involving 270,034 students from kindergarten through high school showed that, on the average, school students enrolled in a social and emotional learning program ranked 11 percentage points higher on achievement tests than school students who did not participate in such a program. In a large-scale study (N = 4,980) measuring the impact of a wellbeing intervention on academic performance for students in Australia, Dix et al. (2012) found that the program improved academic performance for students equal to that of six extra months of schooling by year 7 (ages 11–13). In a one-year longitudinal study of middle school students, Suldo et al. (2011) in the United States found that life satisfaction and positive affect significantly predicted objective measures of academic performance (e.g. grade point average) one year later.

As well as the learning case, the focus on wellbeing in schools has also been influenced by public health trends. Specifically, with the rise in youth mental illness,[1] schools now see themselves as being more than just academic institutions and recognise the important role that they can play as wellbeing-enabling institutions. From a health perspective, Seligman et al. (2009) suggest that wellbeing education is needed as an antidote to depression and a vehicle for increasing life satisfaction. Thus, Seligman et al. capture two types of public health approaches: the 'treatment/prevention approach' (treating and preventing depression; removing negative states) and the 'promotion approach' (promoting life satisfaction; increasing positive states).

Similarly, from a promotion approach, Waters (2014) argues that over time, wellbeing education builds a student's emotional intelligence and wellbeing literacy, which act as 'enhancing factors' that promote flourishing. From a prevention approach, Waters also argues that wellbeing education normalises conversations between students and teachers about mental health from a young age. These conversations serve as 'buffering factors' that assist in the prevention of illness and also allow teachers to engage in early detection of illness symptoms so that schools can provide extra support to at-risk students. Thus, schools have the potential to play a positive role in aspects of all areas: student wellbeing, recovery and mental health.

[1] World Health Organization statistics show that 20% of children and adolescents worldwide have mental disorders or problems (WHO, 2000).

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How Can Schools Support Student Wellbeing?

To build wellbeing, schools must be clear about the definition of wellbeing they are adopting. Definitions of wellbeing abound in the literature, and although it is not within the remit of this chapter to present all of the definitions, there is a consensus that wellbeing is a multidimensional concept that includes both the absence of negative states *and* the presence of positive states (CASEL, 2015; ERO, 2013; Keyes and Lopez, 2002; Noble and McGrath, 2008; Seligman, 2012). In this paper we adopt Huppert and Johnson's (2010) definition of well-being as 'the combination of feeling good and functioning well' (p. 264). To this definition we add the notion of 'doing good for others.' Thus, for the purposes of this chapter, wellbeing is conceptualised as the combination of feeling good, functioning well and doing good.

What do schools need to teach in order to help their students feel good, function well and do good? The opportunity for schools to transform themselves into wellbeing-enabling institutions has given rise to a number of key scholarly movements over the past two decades that have researched various aspects of student wellbeing. These movements include social–emotional learning (SEL; Durlak et al., 2011), emotional intelligence (Hagelskamp et al., 2013), resilience education (Brunwasser et al., 2009), values education (Nielsen, 2005, 2010), character education (Berkowitz and Bier, 2005), civics education (Cogan and Morris, 2001), self-regulated learning (Pintrich and DeGroot, 1990), positive youth development (Lerner et al., 2009), positive education (Seligman et al., 2009) and contemplative education (Broderick and Metz, 2009). Although each of these movements is concerned with student well-being, each has its own emphasis and unique frameworks, with examples shown in Table 20.1 below.

Table 20.1 has been organised from movements that are more focused on intrapersonal strengths to those that focus more on relationships with others and the community at large. These are summarized in Figure 20.1, which places the existing movements along a two-by-two axis with the horizontal axis spanning from movements that have an intrapersonal focus to movements that have an interpersonal focus. Resilience education, emotional intelligence, contemplative education and self-regulated learning tend to focus more on cultivating individual emotional and psychological strengths (i.e. *feeling good* and *functioning well*), whereas character education, values education and civics education take a broader, more interpersonal and values-based perspective towards positive human development (i.e. *doing good*). In between these extremes, social–emotional learning, positive youth development and positive education approaches incorporate both intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects.

The second axis considers the breadth of focus: whereas some movements focus specifically on one area (e.g. emotional intelligence, mindfulness), other movements, such as social–emotional learning, positive education and positive youth development, involve multidimensional components. For example, positive education focuses on cultivating positive states (e.g. gratitude, meaning), teaching positive practices (e.g. savouring, active-constructive responding) and building positive traits (e.g. character strengths and prosocial behaviour). The SEL movement typically includes self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making.

How, then, do educators choose from this proliferation of well-being movements? Given the multidimensional nature of wellbeing and the different needs of particular schools and settings, we argue that it seems unwise to adopt one particular wellbeing education movement exclusively. This is because adopting a single movement means that educators might

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Table 20.1 Focus and Dimensions of Student Wellbeing Movements

Movement	Focus	Example programs and competencies of focus
Emotional intelligence	Understanding and regulating own emotions and considering and empathising with how others are feeling	RULER Program (http://ei.yale.edu/ruler/ruler-overview/; Hagelskamp et al., 2013) • Recognising emotions in self and others • Understanding the causes and consequences of emotions • Labeling emotions accurately • Expressing emotions appropriately • Regulating emotions effectively
Resilience education	Cognitive reframing, bouncing back from adversity	• Penn Resiliency Program (Brunwasser et al., 2009) • Understanding the link between one's thoughts and feelings and behaviours • Identifying one's explanatory style • Generating alternative interpretations • Evaluating accuracy of one's interpretations using evidence • Putting the implications of negative events into perspective
Contemplative education	Attentional focus, self-awareness and emotion regulation	Learning to Breathe Program (Broderick, 2013) • Emotion regulation (major focus) • Stress management (major focus) • Attention (major focus) • Empathy (minor focus) • Relationship building (minor focus) • Responsible decision making (minor focus)
Self-regulated learning	Requiring students to manage their thoughts, behaviours and emotions and independently plan, monitor and assess their learning	Cyclical Model (Pintrich and Zusho, 2002; Zimmerman, 2000) • Forethought and planning: analyse learning task and set specific goals • Performance monitoring: employ strategies to make progress, monitor the effectiveness of the strategies and monitor motivation for completing the learning task • Reflections on performance: evaluate performance on the learning task and manage emotional responses related to the outcomes of the learning experience
Positive youth development	Building the personal strengths that create positive attributes in young people	Generic Youth Development Framework (Wierenga and Wyn, 2011) • Overarching values: valuing people, doing things of value • Principles: recognising strengths, building the team, looking out for each other, engaging with the real world, being active citizens, becoming reflective, resilient learners • Good practice: acknowledging participation, celebrating achievement, communication,

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Table 20.1 *(cont.)*

Movement	Focus	Example programs and competencies of focus
		supporting potential, growing partnerships, recognising diversity, strengthening protective behaviours, serving the community, building character and identity, supporting commitment, growing: resilience, skills, attitudes
Positive education	Increasing positive states and meaning through emotional and cognitive skills	The Positive Education Practices Framework (Noble and McGrath, 2008) • Positive emotions • Positive relationships • Engagement • Social–emotional competency • Meaning and purpose
Social–emotional learning	Emotional and social competency	CASEL Framework (CASEL, 2014a, 2014b) • Self-awareness • Self-management • Social awareness • Relationship skills • Responsible decision making
Character education	Development of positive personal strengths (virtues), good sense and practical wisdom	KIPP Character Approach (http://www.kipp.org/our-approach/character; http://characterlab.org/; Seider et al., 2013) • Focus on seven strengths that predict highly engaged, happy and successful lives: zest, grit, optimism, self-control, gratitude, social intelligence and curiosity
Values education	Understanding and knowledge of values and development of skills and disposition to enact particular values	Curriculum of Giving (Nielsen, 2010) • Self: learning to give to ourselves to have a surplus with which to give to others • Others: giving to those who are closest to us as well as strangers • Communities: expanding our field of generosity to people outside our immediate circle • Environment: giving back to the natural environment • Whole: giving to something "bigger than ourselves"
Civics education	Promoting students' participation in democracy through knowledge, skills, values and dispositions of active and informed citizenship	Australian Curriculum in Victoria (ACARA, 2012) • Civic knowledge and understanding: for example, nature of Australia's democracy, federal parliamentary system, multiculturalism • Community engagement: participation in school celebrations, developing and supporting class rules, understanding roles and responsibilities of leaders and democratic processes when engaging in school and community activities

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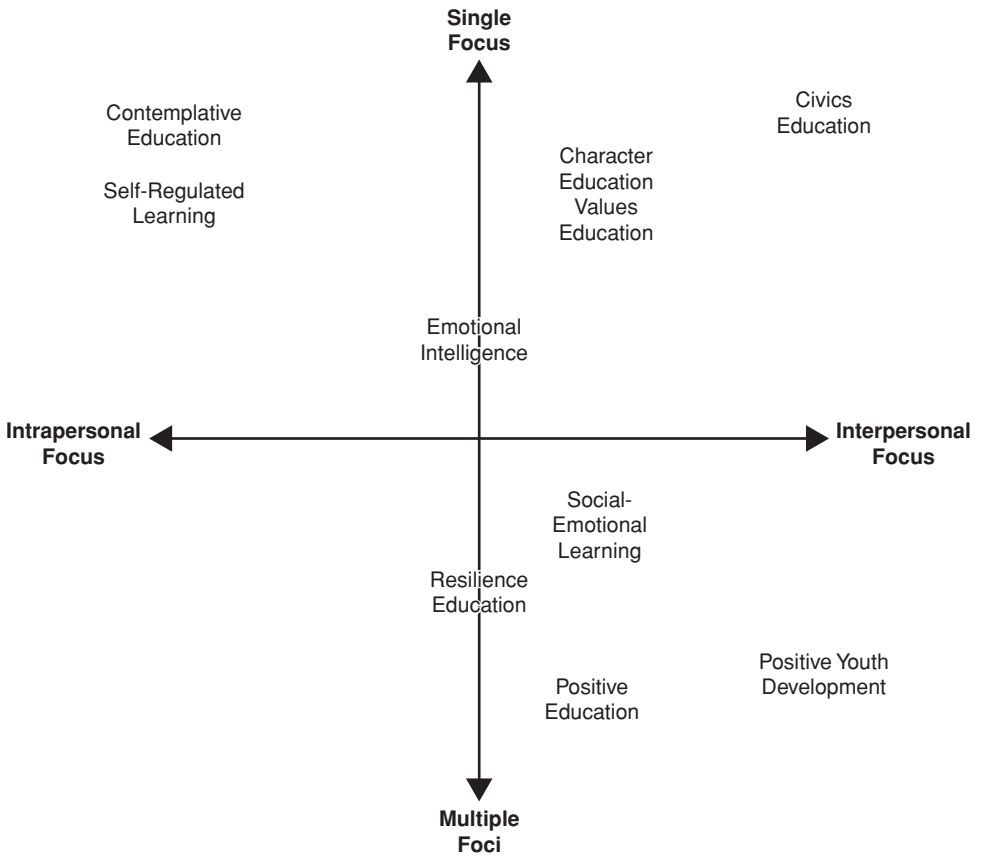

Figure 20.1 Placement of existing wellbeing movements along interpersonal–intrapersonal continuum and single–multiple program foci.

miss out on interventions that fall outside of the focus of that specific movement. For example, adopting the CASEL SEL model without considering other approaches could mean that schools neglect wellbeing interventions that are designed to build meaning and achievement. Similarly, adopting a civics education framework could mean that mindfulness and other meditative and contemplative school-based interventions may not be considered.

Instead of siding with one particular wellbeing movement, we propose the need for a new overarching framework that is broad enough to transcend the boundaries of each of the specific movements. This framework needs to allow schools to choose a specific movement if they wish while giving room for complementary or supplementary interventions from other movements and/or allowing schools to select aspects of various movements while still providing a unifying approach.

The Domains of Positive Functioning Framework

In this chapter we put forward the Domains of Positive Functioning Framework (DPF) as a useful, evidence-based framework for educators to adopt (Rusk and Waters, 2015). The DPF framework identifies the underlying aspects of optimal psychological functioning (e.g. thought processes, explanatory style, emotional understanding) and social functioning

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(e.g. empathy, social decision making, prosocial behaviour) that lead a person to feel good, function well and do good.

The framework was developed by a metasynthesis of over 18,400 peer-reviewed publications from fields such as psychology, education, public health, neuroscience and social science across an eighteen-year time frame (for further detail about how the framework was developed please refer to the full paper of Rusk and Waters, 2015). We see the fact that the framework was not solely devised within education (although it was informed by findings from education) as an advantage, because it means that the framework has not been restricted by educational ideologies and that the domains of positive functions identified are those that transcend context and are thus universal. Moreover, the fact that the data used to generate the DPF come from both youth and adult samples allows schools to be confident that, in building skills within the psychosocial domains of functioning, they are assisting students to achieve wellbeing now *and* also building the capabilities that will help students grow into well-adjusted, psychologically healthy adults.

The DPF framework identified five overarching domains that contribute to a person's psychosocial functioning: (1) awareness and attention, (2) emotion management, (3) comprehension and coping, (4) goals and habits and (5) virtues and relationships. In the fifth domain, 'virtues and relationships' were statistically clustered together due to the high probability that researchers who studied virtues typically did so in a relational context. While the algorithms in the metasynthesis clustered these two aspects of positive functioning into the one statistical domain, as the researchers who devised the DPF framework, we examined the *practical utility* of this statistical classification. More specifically, we wondered about how those virtues that are not strongly relational in nature, such as wisdom-related virtues (e.g. open-mindedness, critical thinking, problem solving) and some temperance-related virtues (e.g. self-regulation), could be taught if virtues and relationships were taught in a cojoined manner.

After careful deliberation, we decided that when wellbeing is taught in schools, the fifth domain of virtues and relationships has more real-world relevance if it is separated into two domains. The metasynthesis of Rusk and Waters (2015) shows that both virtues and relationships are important aspects of positive functioning in their own right, and education research has well-established ways to teach relationship skills (e.g. SEL), as well as teaching virtues in movements such as character and values education. Hence we propose a six-domain framework for the DPF: (1) awareness and attention, (2) emotion management, (3) comprehension and coping, (4) goals and habits, (5) virtues and (6) relationships (see Figure 20.2).

Domain 1: Attention and Awareness. Broadly speaking, attention has been defined as the ability to focus, either on inner aspects of self, such as emotions and physical sensations, or on external stimuli (e.g. the teacher's lesson in a classroom; Beauchemin et al., 2008; Steiner et al., 2013). According to Steiner et al. (2013), awareness refers to the ability to pay attention to a stimulus as it occurs. Wellbeing is improved when individuals can consciously control their attention and direct it towards particular aspects of sensory or cognitive information.

Domain 2: Emotion Management. Emotions are instinctive feelings that are accompanied by physiological changes. They are influenced by our circumstances, thoughts and physiology (Beck, 1995; Gross, 2002; Schachter and Singer, 1962; Damasio, 1996). Rusk and Waters (2015) showed that being present with one's emotions and being able to identify, understand and manage one's emotions (i.e. reduce negative emotions and increase positive emotions) are a key aspect of psychosocial functioning.

Domain 3: Comprehension and Coping. The DPF domain of comprehension and coping involves individuals being able to grasp the elements of a given situation and understand the attributions they make to their environments (e.g. their own thought processes, explanatory

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Figure 20.2 The six domains of positive functioning.

style and mindsets). This domain recognises the interplay between the demands placed upon an individual and the resources he/she has to manage those demands. The domain also includes the ways in which people cope with and grow from adversity and stressful life experiences, processes that can aid recovery and thus improve mental health.

Domain 4: Goals and Habits. Goals are the formal objects, achievements and endpoints that people desire and in which they are willing to invest effort (Snyder, 2002). Setting goals is a key component of a well-functioning life and provides children with a sense of purpose, mastery and direction (Madden et al., 2011). Rusk and Waters (2015) showed that this aspect of psychosocial functioning is improved when individuals are able to set goals that match their values and can be used to guide the selection of behaviour in enduring ways and form new skills. This domain also concerns the habits that people develop that allow them to reach their goals as well as to create behavioural change. Habits are patterns of thought and behavior that are acquired through frequent repetition (Costa and Kallick, 2009). People who develop healthy habits of mind and behaviour have higher levels of wellbeing (Costa and Kallick, 2009; Ryan and Deci, 2001; Hassmén et al., 2000). Healthy habits free up our cognitive resources, thus providing more conscious attention for student to focus on learning (Louis and Sutton, 1991)

Domain 5: Virtues. Virtues are defined as moral qualities in a person and are shown through one's thoughts and actions that are guided by moral and ethical principles. States of virtuousness, such as courage and wisdom, represent conditions of ennoblement and personal flourishing. Virtuous behaviour has been found to be associated with happiness, life meaning, physical health and resilience. Research themes that have been studied over the past eighteen years that came forward in the cluster analysis for this domain include honesty, ethics, humility, trust and philanthropy.

Domain 6: Relationships. A child's social skills play an important role in allowing him/her to develop nourishing relationships with others. Schnitzer et al. (2007) argue that strengthening a child's ability to understand, express and manage life's social aspects is critical for wellbeing. The DPF domain of relationships incorporates the skills required to sustain enduring social relationships, as well as capitalise on momentary social interactions.

The DPF framework having been established, Table 20.2 maps existing wellbeing education movements to these six domains to compare the skills that are being developed by

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Table 20.2 Links between the Domains of Positive Functioning and Existing Wellbeing Education Movements

Domain	Description	Links to wellbeing education movements	Example programs
Attention and awareness	The consciously controlled or automatic regulation of attention toward particular aspects of sensory or cognitive information, including novel aspects.	Contemplative Education	Learning to Breathe .b (Mindfulness in Schools Program) MindUp Teaching Happiness and Well-Being in Schools
Emotions	Present-moment experiences of emotion, identification of emotions, understanding emotional associations with stimuli and memories, cultivating positive emotions, reducing negative emotions.	SEL (emotion regulation) Resilience Education (link between thoughts and feelings) Contemplative Education (loving kindness meditation) Positive Education (positive emotions)	Penn Resiliency Program High School Positive Psychology Curriculum Bounce Back! RULER INTEMO MindUp Personal Well-Being Lessons for Secondary Schools Self Science Teaching Happiness and Well-Being in Schools
Comprehending and coping	Comprehend one's situation by using consciously controlled or automatic processes involved with identifying stimuli, determining processes and causal relations within past and present stimuli, and anticipating or predicting future possibilities. This domain includes the application of these comprehension processes to cope effectively with adversity.	Resilience Education Contemplative Education (stress management) Positive Education (positive thinking skills)	Penn Resiliency Program U.K. Resilience Program Optimism and Lifeskills Program Aussie Optimism: Positive Thinking Skills Program beyondblue Schools Intervention Resourceful Adolescent Program Fun FRIENDS Strong Kids High School Positive Psychology Curriculum Bounce Back! You Can Do It! Think Positively: Adolescent Coping MindUp Personal Well-Being Lessons for Secondary Schools Self Science Teaching Happiness and Well-Being in Schools Best of Coping Zippy's Friends

(cont.)

Table 20.2 *(cont.)*

Domain	Description	Links to wellbeing education movements	Example programs
Goals and habits	Enduring conscious or unconscious values, rules, principles and goals involved in guiding the selection of behaviour and the habits and skills involved in the execution of those behaviours.	Character Education (persistence) Positive Education (goal setting) SEL (organisation and decision-making skills)	Celebrating Strengths Personal Well-Being Lessons for Secondary Schools Going for the Goal Making Hope Happen Self Science Building Happiness, Resilience and Motivation in Adolescents Building Happiness, Resilience and Motivation in Adolescents Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment Curriculum Brainology Mental Contrasting with Implementation Intentions
Virtues	Thoughts and actions that are guided by moral and ethical principles	Contemplative Education (empathy and prosocial emotions) Positive Education (character) Civic education Values Education Character Education	Celebrating Strengths Bounce Back! MindUp Personal Well-Being Lessons for Secondary Schools Curriculum of Giving Self Science Teaching Happiness and Well-Being in Schools Building Happiness, Resilience and Motivation in Adolescents Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support
Relationships	Enduring social relationships and momentary social interactions, including family, friend, romantic, school, societal and spiritual levels	SEL (social awareness and relationship skills) Positive Education (relationships) Civic education Values Education Character Education	Bounce Back! Personal Well-Being Lessons for Secondary Schools Curriculum of Giving Teaching Happiness and Well-Being in Schools Building Happiness, Resilience and Motivation in Adolescents Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support Nurture Group

different movements. This is a useful way for educators and researchers alike to consider the strengths and gaps left by different approaches to student wellbeing and to aid strategic decisions about developing and implementing new programs.

As seen in Table 20.2, the existing well-being education movements, taken together, address skill development in the six domains of the DPF. However, programs may indirectly affect domains of functioning outside of their main focus, many of the existing movements tend to be situated mainly in one or two domains. For example, contemplative education aligns to the attention and awareness domain, values education appears to be exclusive to the Virtues domain, resilience education fits most strongly in the emotions and the coping and comprehension domains, and positive education focuses on emotions, virtues and relationships. Importantly, as can be seen in Table 20.2, no one movement fully addresses all six domains. Turning to the domains, Table 20.2 also reveals a substantial emphasis on emotions, comprehension and coping, virtues and relationships. This analysis highlights that that there is room for growth in programs that address the domains of attention and awareness and goals and habits.

The Relationship between a Wellbeing Intervention, Psychosocial Functioning and Wellbeing

For schools to prevent illbeing and foster wellbeing in their students, they need to help them to build skills in each of the six domains outlined by the DPF framework. This is because psychosocial functioning is the *pathway* that leads to wellbeing. That is, highly developed attentional skills, emotional capacities, coping skills, goal-setting skills and social skills help students to achieve optimal wellbeing. As shown in Figure 20.3, the relationship between a wellbeing intervention and wellbeing outcomes is influenced by the degree to which the wellbeing intervention improves a student's ability to function psychologically and socially.

This relationship will now be demonstrated using the example of a school-based mindfulness intervention. Mindfulness is a state of present-moment, nonjudgemental attention to one's thoughts, feelings and body sensations and can thus be understood as a type of self-observation (Kabat-Zinn, 1990, 2003; Sedlmeier et al., 2012). Mindfulness is contrasted to other types of attention that are not anchored in the present moment (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). For example, ruminating is a type of attention that is focused in the past and prospection is a type of attention that focuses on the future; both take people away from the present moment and hence do not constitute mindfulness (Brown and Ryan, 2003).

Over the past ten years, youth mindfulness programs have been developed in countries such as England (Mindfulness in Schools Project, DotB), the United States (Mindful Schools and MindUp), Canada (Mindful Education), Israel (The Mindfulness Language) and India (The Alice Project). These programs provide students with mindfulness exercises that help them to build up their 'attentional muscle' and gain awareness of themselves and others. The techniques typically involve a structured mental process where the students are given a target to focus their attention upon (e.g. music, their own breathing) and then asked to notice

Figure 20.3 The relationship between a wellbeing intervention, psychosocial functioning and wellbeing.

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when their attention has wandered away from the target and to bring the attention back to the target. Through this structured mental process, students learn how to take more deliberate control over what they pay attention to and how to pay attention for longer periods of time. Mindfulness techniques also build the students' self-awareness about their thought patterns and the physical and emotional sensations they experience.

A recent review of 15 meditation and mindfulness programs in schools provided support for the effectiveness of mindfulness programs in attaining student wellbeing outcomes, with effect sizes ranging from 0.28 to 0.61 (Waters et al., 2015). In other words, mindfulness interventions have been shown to help students feel good, function well and do good.

For example, compared with control groups, students who participate in mindfulness interventions at school report *feeling good* with increases in optimism, self-concept, self-acceptance, calm and general wellbeing (Kuyken et al., 2013; Broderick and Metz, 2009; Schonert-Reichl and Lawlor, 2010).

Mindfulness interventions also help students *function well.* For example, teachers report that students are more settled and focused in class after mindfulness sessions (Campion and Rocco, 2009). In Flook et al.'s (2010) eight-week mindfulness intervention with primary school children, children with poorer initial executive–cognitive functioning also showed improvements in executive–cognitive functioning after the mindfulness training.

Mindfulness also prompts children to *do good*, and in Campion and Rocco's (2009) qualitative exploration of a mindfulness program, students reported that the mindfulness techniques assisted them with anger management, which helped them to have better friendships and more positive interactions with others. This outcome was verified by the teachers, who reported seeing these positive changes in their students' relationships. Similarly, in Rosaen and Benn's (2006) qualitative study, students reported that meditation had helped them to be more socially skilled and to calm their antisocial tendencies. For example, one student commented, 'Like, I'm more nicer and mature … Like I can listen to them.' Another student reported, 'If I meditate, I feel calm and feel like I don't have to argue with anybody.'

The literature suggests that mindfulness interventions help students to feel good, function well and do good. But the question remains of *how* these mindful practices lead to wellbeing. We suggest that mindful practices enhance wellbeing because they build a student's attentional skills (Domain 1 in the DPF). When the ability to pay attention to the here and now (the psychosocial function) is strengthened, the student becomes relaxed and self-aware (the wellbeing outcome of feeling good) because he or she are not caught in rumination about the past or anxious about the future. Moreover, by teaching students how they can choose what to pay attention to and helping them build their capacity for sustained attention (the psychosocial function), these skills help students to selectively pay attention to the teacher's lesson (the wellbeing outcome of functioning well). In summary, mindfulness interventions foster wellbeing *because* they increase a student's ability to function in the domain of 'attention and awareness', as depicted in Figure 20.4.

The lesson from the mindfulness example above for school leaders and teachers is that when choosing a wellbeing program, they need to examine the degree to which the program is likely to *build underlying skills in psychosocial functioning*, rather than only focusing on the wellbeing outcomes of the program. Thus, effective wellbeing programs should cultivate enduring and generalisable *pathways* to build the many wellbeing outcomes, akin to study skills programs building transferable skills that students can apply to increase their learning across multiple academic disciplines.

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Figure 20.4 The relationship between a mindfulness intervention, psychosocial functioning and wellbeing.

Visible Wellbeing: How to Use the Domains of Positive Functioning Framework in Schools

The DPF is not a movement, nor does it suggest a specific program to be used in schools. Instead, the DPF provides educators with a rigorous, evidence-based, overarching framework that allows them to

a. develop a strategic whole-school wellbeing framework that incorporates the six domains of psychosocial functioning;
b. conduct an audit of their existing wellbeing education approach to analyse the degree to which it is building student skills in each of the six domains of psychosocial functioning;
c. evaluate the various wellbeing education movements with regard to the degree to which these movements support the functioning of students in each of the six domains;
d. implement specific programs with a deeper understanding of what aspects of the underlying domains of psychosocial functioning are being impacted within the program;
e. analyse the degree to which the school culture supports staff to develop their functioning in each of the six domains;
f. assist school psychologists and counsellors who are working with students in a more targeted manner to help them overcome mental ill health, relationship conflict or adjustment issues through enhancing students' psychosocial functioning in specific domains identified by the psychologist.

We suggest that Hattie's (2009) Visible Learning approach can be extended to foster 'Visible Wellbeing' and that the DPF provides a framework to make wellbeing visible. The visible learning approach encourages teachers and students to use data in ways that allow student learning to be tracked. Teachers can see if their teaching techniques are improving the learning outcomes in students by analysing the learning data, because the data become the visible marker of the learning process. Data move learning from being a process that takes place inside the student's own mind and make the learning visible (Hattie, 2009). Similarly, collecting data about a student's psychosocial functioning can help to shift wellbeing from being a subjective, internal experience within a student to being a tangible, measurable phenomenon that is visible to teachers and students.

A practitioner-friendly rubric of the six domains of positive psychosocial functioning is currently being developed by the first author of this chapter for use in schools as a way to foster 'Visible Wellbeing'. Teachers will be able to use the rubric on a regular basis for each of their classes to rate the degree to which students are displaying attentional skills, emotional awareness, coping skills, goal-driven behavior, virtuous behavior and relationship skills.

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Teachers will also be able to use the rubric to see if and how their teaching practices and curricula are building psychosocial functioning in their students.

In the first author's experience of delivering professional development to teachers on the topic of student and staff wellbeing, many teachers comment that they have an intuitive sense of the wellbeing of their students but do not have a brief, user-friendly, evidence-based tool to assess student wellbeing on a regular, ongoing basis. To address this issue, the Centre for Positive Psychology at the University of Melbourne has recently developed a Wellbeing Profiler for schools (http://www.wbprofiler.com.au). Teachers also remark that they do not have a framework within which to understand what leads to wellbeing, nor a language in which to have wellbeing-related conversations with their students. The DPF provides such a framework to help schools and teachers make student wellbeing visible.

Using the Domains of Positive Functioning Framework to Assist Students in Recovery

The current chapter has focused on schools as wellbeing-enhancing institutions and has concentrated on the idea of wellbeing promotion rather than recovery from illness. However, it is also worth considering how the DPF framework could be used to assist students who are recovering from mental illness or trauma. Indeed, schools play an important role for students in the recovery process, and classrooms can act as a therapeutic environment addressing the effects of adverse childhood experiences and encouraging post-traumatic growth, psychological wellbeing and academic aspirations for these students.

In a recent review of the field of trauma-informed education, Brunzell et al. (2015) identified that the two major educational approaches in working with trauma-affected students are (1) teaching in ways that repair regulatory abilities and (2) teaching in ways that repair disrupted attachments. These two approaches map onto the DPF domains of 'emotion management', 'comprehension and coping' and 'virtues and relationships'.

Adding to the two major approaches of trauma-informed education, Brunzell and colleagues (Brunzell et al., 2016a, 2016b) argue that the recovery journey for students should extend beyond *repair* (e.g. repairing PTSD) to also focus on *growth* (fostering post-traumatic growth where possible and wellbeing). Accordingly, Brunzell et al. (2015) suggest that teaching students about positive emotions is a critical healing ingredient for students in recovery. This can be done by explicitly naming and teaching positive emotions using a 'positivity toolkit' (see Fredrickson, 2009), using visual reminders to capitalise on positive experiences and adopting a 'what went well' routine (see Fox Eades, 2006). A strengths-based approach can also be used to assist students who are in the process of recovery. In particular, within the DPF domain of 'virtues and relationships', teachers can connect students with their character strengths so that students know what inner strengths/resources they can draw upon to help them recover and to also help them to aim for future success.

The DPF framework can also help students who may not necessarily be in recovery from trauma or mental illness, but who struggle with school because of special needs such as learning disorders (e.g. dyslexia, ADHD), disabilities (e.g. visual–hearing impairments, physical disabilities) and/or social–emotional–behavioural disorders (e.g. conduct disorder). The main body of evidence pertaining to wellbeing intervention in special needs students relates to the DPF domain of 'virtues and relationships' and has focused on the potential for peer mentoring programs to promote wellbeing (Cavell et al., 2009; Cavell and Hughes, 2000; Kam et al., 2004; Elledge et al., 2010; Hektner et al., 2003). Research shows

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that special needs students who go through peer mentoring programs report increases in social–emotional skills, perception and understanding of humour, increases in generating nonconfrontational solutions and reduction in anger (Kam et al., 2004; Jordans et al., 2010; Schnitzer et al., 2007).

It must be noted, however, that the programs are not universally successful (e.g. Cavell and Hughes, 2000) and mixed results have been found with respect to teacher-reported trajectories of social competence and social problem solving (August et al., 2001; Kam et al., 2004). Thus, more research is needed to enhance the effectiveness of the social functioning of students with special needs.

The other DPF domain that has received attention with special needs students is that of 'comprehension and coping.' Interventions designed to improve coping in these student samples include learning problem-solving skills (Cowen et al., 1995), creating and implementing a plan for graduated exposures to fear stimuli (Dadds et al., 1997), teaching cognitive behaviour therapy principles (Firth et al., 2013), activities and games such as dance, drama and drawing to learn stress inoculation techniques (Jordans et al., 2010), doing experiential activities to mobilise social supports (Slone and Shoshani, 2008), learning a coping-enhancing curriculum presented in letters sent by an imaginary character (Wolmer et al., 2011a) and relaxation training using mental imagery (Wolmer et al., 2011b).

Equipping students with skills that enhance their functioning with respect to comprehension and coping (e.g. problem-solving skills, cognitive behaviour skills, relaxation techniques, mobilising social support) has significant benefits for the wellbeing of students with special needs. Research shows that as a result of going through coping programs, students report improvement in hope, self-efficacy, self-control, realistic attributions, school connectedness and happiness, as well as reduction in anxiety and other measures of psychological distress (Cowen et al., 1995; Firth et al., 2013; Jordans et al., 2010; Slone and Shoshani, 2008).

We suggest that students recovering from mental illness or trauma and students who have special needs could benefit from wellbeing interventions that seek to build the psychosocial functioning capacity of students in all six of these domains. Yet, at present, the programs and research do not adequately cover all six domains of the DPF. Not surprisingly, given the healing nature of these programs, the domains that are best covered are emotional management, comprehension and coping and the relationships aspect of virtues and relationships. The domains of attention and awareness and goals and habits have received less focus; yet, given that the relative contributions of each domain are largely unknown, an important future direction is to investigate the extent to which programs that focus on these neglected domains can improve wellbeing for students in recovery or with special needs. Thus, educators and researchers could benefit from using the DPF as a framework with which to design, implement and evaluate wellbeing interventions for students in recovery or with special needs.

Conclusion

Schools serve as important social institutions with a huge potential to build wellbeing in large numbers of youth. The focus on wellbeing education has risen over the last two decades, based on research showing that wellbeing supports academic success (the learning case) and as a reaction to rising levels of youth mental illness, and with the realisation that schools can play a treatment, prevention and/or promotion role in youth mental health (the mental health case).

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For teachers to know how to successfully build student wellbeing, they need to be guided by an effective, evidence-based framework, as well as developing teacher effectiveness practices that allow them to collect and analyse real-time and ongoing data so that they know their impact on student wellbeing in a dynamic way across the academic year. The current chapter outlines such a framework, the Domains of Positive Functioning (DPF), and argues that student wellbeing is enhanced when schools teach students ways to improve their functioning across six key domains: (1) awareness and attention, (2) emotion management, (3) comprehension and coping, (4) goals and habits, (5) virtues and (6) relationships. The DPF framework can also be used to promote wellbeing in students who are recovering from illness and trauma, and in students who struggle with school due to learning disorders, disability and social–emotional–behavioural disorders. We offer the DPF framework to schools in the hope that it generates evidence-based approaches which will enhance wellbeing in large numbers of young people.

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