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Promoting Happiness in Elementary Schoolchildren: Evaluation of a Multitarget, Multicomponent Classwide Positive Psychology Intervention

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Promoting Happiness in Elementary Schoolchildren:
Evaluation of a Multitarget, Multicomponent Classwide Positive Psychology Intervention

by

Brittany V. Hearon

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in School Psychology
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College of Education
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Abstract

Youth psychological well-being has become increasingly acknowledged as not merely the absence of psychological distress, but the presence of positive indicators of optimal functioning. Students with complete mental health (i.e., low psychopathology and high well-being) demonstrate the best academic, social, and physical health outcomes. As such, there remains a need to address children's well-being through a holistic approach emphasizing the prevention of mental health problems and promotion of flourishing. Positive psychology interventions (PPIs) have emerged as a promising method of enhancing students' complete mental health. Previous investigations support the utility of multitarget PPIs with middle school students and single-target PPIs (e.g., character strengths, hope) with younger elementary students, though the extent to which comprehensive multitarget, multicomponent PPIs enhance classes of elementary students' outcomes relative to a control has not been examined. This study compared levels of subjective well-being, mental health problems, classroom social support, and classroom engagement between students in 6 classrooms randomly assigned to participate in a 10-week intervention targeting a variety of positive psychological constructs (i.e., positive relationships, gratitude, kindness, character strengths, hope) with parent and teacher components, and students in 7 classrooms randomly assigned to a delayed intervention control group. Follow-up analyses examined levels of outcomes of the immediate intervention group relative to the control group at post-intervention, as well as levels of outcomes in the intervention group three months after program completion. At post-intervention, classes of students participating in the immediate intervention group did not have significantly improved student-reported life

satisfaction, positive affect or negative affect, classmate or teacher support, emotional or behavioral engagement, nor teacher-reported relationship satisfaction, instrumental help, and emotional or behavioral engagement relative to the control classes. However, several trends were found: (a) students in the immediate intervention group had lower negative affect relative to the delayed intervention control among students with greater baseline negative affect levels, (b) students in the immediate intervention group had lower teacher-reported levels of instrumental help relative to the control among students with greater baseline instrumental help levels, and (c) students in the immediate intervention group reported lower levels of behavioral engagement relative to the delayed intervention control. Because of the lack of improvement in immediate intervention group outcomes relative to the control group at post-intervention, continuation of those anticipated improvements from post-intervention to 3-month follow-up could not be detected. However, there was a significant increase in teacher-reported internalizing symptoms from post-intervention to follow-up among the immediate intervention group (without comparison to a control). Overall, findings from this study do not provide empirical support for the efficacy of a multitarget, multicomponent PPI when delivered universally to classes of elementary students. Nevertheless, high levels of treatment acceptability and feasibility from students and teachers as well as limitations to the study design support the need for educational scholars and practitioners to continue exploring the impact of multitarget PPIs delivered to students in multiple formats and various age levels in order to promote complete mental health across tiers of support and thus optimize success for all students.

Chapter One: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Historically, mental health has been approached according to the medical model, viewing the absence of psychopathology as synonymous with psychological wellness (Keyes, 2005).

Since the inception of the positive psychology movement within the past few decades, advances in research have negated this limited viewpoint by demonstrating that mental health and mental illness are two distinct, however interrelated constructs (Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008). As such, there is a growing consensus within the field of psychology that efforts to diminish psychological problems must be coupled with initiatives to promote positive indicators of mental health in order to optimally enhance human functioning. Subjective well-being (SWB), deemed the “scientific term for happiness” (Diener, 2000), has emerged as a primary indicator of positive mental health in the study of children and adolescents. Findings suggest that youth with high SWB and low psychopathology demonstrate superior academic, social, and physical health outcomes relative to those without psychopathology but who also have low SWB (Antaramian, Huebner, Hills, & Valois, 2010; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008).

Additionally, longitudinal findings suggest that high subjective well-being may serve as a protective factor for youth with psychopathology, as they do not experience anticipated declines in academic performance over time (Lyons, Huebner, & Hills, 2013; Suldo, Thalji, & Ferron, 2011). This emerging evidence demonstrating the need to attend to both mental health problems and well-being has thus promoted educational scholars and practitioners to become increasingly

invested in identifying evidence-based strategies for promoting and addressing the complete mental health of students in schools.

Consistent with efforts to promote subjective well-being, Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade (2005) proposed an “architecture of sustainable happiness” based on extant literature to shed light on primary mechanisms effecting one’s chronic level of happiness. Their model postulates that an individual’s chronic level of happiness is determined by three unique components: genetic set point, life circumstances, and intentional activity. Although heritability accounts for the largest percent of variance between peoples’ happiness levels, a sizable portion (i.e., 40%) can be attributed to purposeful activities. A growing body of literature has provided support for this model, demonstrating that individuals who participate in brief, scripted activities designed to mimic the thoughts and behaviors of already happy people can in fact improve personal levels of happiness (Layous & Lyubomirsky, 2014; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). These activities, commonly referred to as positive psychology interventions (PPIs), engage individuals in behaviors that foster malleable factors (e.g., gratitude, optimism) associated with high well-being with the goal of generating a lasting impact on happiness.

Although evidence of the efficacy of PPIs among youth has trailed behind research with adults, advances within the past five years support the utility of PPIs in improving the mental health of children and adolescents in school settings. A majority of such research has utilized single-target PPIs related to a given psychological construct, such as gratitude (Froh, Sefick, & Emmons, 2008; Froh et al., 2009; Froh et al., 2014; McCabe-Fitch, 2009), kindness (Layous et al., 2012), character strengths (Proctor et al., 2011; Quinlan et al., 2015), hope and goal-directed thinking (Green, Grant, & Rynsaadt, 2008; Marques, Lopez, & Pais-Ribeiro, 2011; Owens & Patterson, 2013), or optimism (Brunswasser, Gillham, & Kim, 2009; Rooney et al., 2004).

Although multitarget interventions that engage secondary students in activities centered on two or more of these constructs have begun to surface within the literature (Gillham et al., 2013; Rashid et al., 2013; Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017; Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016; Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014), researchers have less information on the extent to which these multitarget interventions are effective in increasing subjective well-being of younger (elementary-age) students. Furthermore, few studies have examined the impact of incorporating intervention components beyond student-focused activities, such as teacher psychoeducation and team-building with peers, on students' outcomes (i.e., subjective well-being, or indicators of social-emotional and academic functioning). Research is thus needed to determine the efficacy of a classwide multitarget, multicomponent PPI on elementary school students' success.

Purpose of the Current Study

The purpose of this study was to empirically examine the efficacy of a classwide multitarget, multicomponent PPI on elementary students' subjective well-being, mental health problems, classroom relationships, and classroom engagement. The specific targets within that 10-week intervention included: positive relationships with the classroom teacher and classmates, gratitude, kindness, character strengths, and hope. This study aimed to advance a previous pilot investigation conducted by Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al. (2015) by including (a) random assignment of classrooms to an intervention or delayed intervention control group, (b) a larger sample of children, (c) an additional intervention target (i.e., hope and goal-directed thinking), (d) a parent psychoeducation component, and (e) a wider breadth of outcomes pertaining to social and academic functioning. Specifically, this study evaluated the differences in components of subjective well-being (i.e., life satisfaction, positive affect, negative affect), as well as

behavioral and emotional engagement and classroom social support between students who participated in a 10-week PPI targeting a variety of positive psychological constructs (e.g., gratitude, kindness, character strengths, hope) with parent and teacher components, and students assigned to a delayed intervention control. Efforts to improve youth happiness in schools are consistent with initiatives to address children's needs through a holistic approach emphasizing not only prevention or reduction of psychopathology, but also the promotion of positive indicators of psychological wellness. Previous investigations demonstrating that youth with high subjective well-being and low psychopathology experience superior outcomes relative to those without psychopathology but who also have low subjective well-being (Antaramian, Huebner, Hills, & Valois, 2010; Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008; Suldo, Thalji-Raitano, Kiefer, & Ferron, 2016), support the need for the identification of comprehensive universal interventions that promote students' complete mental health.

Definition of Key Terms

Mental health. Consistent with the dual-factor model, positive mental health in the present study refers to the concurrent absence of psychopathology and presence of positive indicators of psychological functioning, such as subjective well-being (Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008; Suldo et al., 2016). Psychopathology refers to symptoms of internalizing disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety) as well as externalizing disorders (e.g., oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder).

Subjective well-being. Subjective well-being is the scientific term for happiness, and is comprised of three distinct components: life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect (Diener, 2000).

Life satisfaction. Life satisfaction refers to one's cognitive appraisal of their life in a specific domain (e.g., friends, family, school) or as a whole (Diener, 2000; Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2009).

Positive affect. Positive affect is described as the frequency with which one experiences positive emotions (e.g., love, contentment; Diener, 2000).

Negative affect. Negative affect refers to the frequency with which one experiences negative emotions (e.g., sadness, disgust; Diener, 2000).

Positive psychology interventions. Positive psychology interventions (PPIs) refer to programs, practices, or activities designed to generate positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). These interventions engage individuals in brief, scripted activities that foster malleable factors (e.g., gratitude, kindness, hope) associated with high well-being with the goal of generating a lasting impact on happiness.

Multitarget. Multitarget in the current study refers to multiple foci of positive psychology intervention activities (i.e., gratitude, kindness, hope, character strengths, *and* positive relationships). Multitarget interventions are distinguished from single-target positive interventions which provide activities related to a specific positive psychology construct (e.g., gratitude *only*).

Gratitude. Gratitude refers to the emotional response to the perception of a positive personal outcome or benefit, that was not necessarily deserved or earned, due to the actions of another person (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Individuals with the tendency to recognize and respond to the benevolence of others have an affective trait referred to as a *grateful disposition* (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002).

Kindness. Kindness has been defined as a multidimensional construct consisting of three components: (a) the desire to be kind to others, (b) the recognition of kindness in others, and (c) the engagement in kind acts throughout one's daily life (Otake, Shimai, Tanaka-Matsumi, Otsui, & Fredrickson, 2006). Kind acts are those that an individual is not necessarily expected to perform and typically involve the sacrifice of personal effort, time, energy, or money (Sheldon, Boehm, & Lyubomirsky, 2012).

Character strengths. As defined within the VIA classification framework, character strengths refer to the set of 24 cross-culturally and morally valued individual positive traits (e.g., love, creativity, bravery) that can be categorized into six distinct virtues (e.g., transcendence, wisdom, knowledge; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Each individual possesses a profile of top signature strengths, which consists of the character strengths that are personally fulfilling and thus used most frequently (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Hope. Hope refers to one's perceived ability to successfully identify personal goals, plan pathways to achieve those goals, and maintain motivation to use those pathways through agency thinking (Snyder, et al., 1991).

Multicomponent. Multicomponent in the current study refers to the intervention content designed for delivery to multiple audiences (i.e., teacher, parent, *and* student), consistent with an ecological approach reflecting best practices in school-based mental health services.

Student success. Student success in the present study is defined broadly as positive outcomes related to both academic and social-emotional functioning. Indicators of academic functioning include behaviors and attitudes that enable students to engage in learning (e.g., behavioral and emotional forms of classroom engagement) so they may complete school (Doll, Spies, & Champion, 2012). Indicators of social-emotional functioning include thoughts,

feelings, and behaviors that promote optimal interpersonal relationships as well as personal well-being. Examples of such indicators include students' levels of perceived classroom social support or their levels of global life satisfaction (Suldo, Gormley, DuPaul, & Anderson-Butcher, 2014).

Classroom social support. Classroom social support is an index of classroom relationship quality and refers to an individual's perception of general support or specific behaviors fostering emotional, instrumental, informational, or appraisal support from others, which enhance their functioning (Malecki & Demaray, 2002). Within the classroom, social support may refer to the support provided by students to their teacher or peers, or by teachers to students.

Classroom engagement. Classroom engagement in the present study refers to emotional and behavioral participation in classroom learning activities (Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009). Emotional participation is exemplified by students' enthusiasm and interest in learning, while behavioral participation is reflected by indicators such as students' time on-task and persistence with difficult assignments.

Research Questions

This study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. Relative to a delayed intervention control group, is participation in a multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention associated with immediate changes in elementary school students':
 - a. Life satisfaction
 - b. Positive affect
 - c. Negative affect

- d. Internalizing problems
 - e. Externalizing problems
 - f. Classroom social support
 - g. Classroom engagement?
2. Is participation in a multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention associated with sustained changes in elementary school students’:
- a. Life satisfaction
 - b. Positive affect
 - c. Negative affect
 - d. Internalizing problems
 - e. Externalizing problems
 - f. Classroom social support
 - g. Classroom engagement?

Hypotheses

Regarding research question 1, it was hypothesized that elementary school students participating in the multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention would demonstrate improvements across all social-emotional and academic engagement outcomes investigated, relative to the delayed intervention control group. Specifically, it was hypothesized that students in the intervention would demonstrate significantly higher levels of life satisfaction, positive affect, perceived classroom social support, and classroom engagement, while reporting significantly lower levels of negative affect, and internalizing and externalizing symptoms at post-intervention. These hypotheses were consistent with findings from investigations in the literature review contained in Chapter 2, which suggest that students who

participate in universal positive psychology interventions experience improvements in aspects of subjective well-being, class cohesion, and emotional and behavioral engagement in learning (Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016; Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2015).

Regarding research question 2, it was hypothesized that elementary school students participating in the multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention would experience sustained improvements across all social-emotional and academic outcomes investigated. Specifically, it was hypothesized that students' anticipated increase in life satisfaction, positive affect, perceived classmate support, and classroom engagement, as well as decrease in negative affect and internalizing and externalizing symptoms would be maintained from post-intervention to 3-month follow-up. These hypotheses were derived from previous research presented in Chapter 2, which indicates that participation in multicomponent positive psychology interventions is related to sustained improvements evident during follow-up in terms of positive affect, life satisfaction, positive and negative emotions, class cohesion, and emotional and behavioral classroom engagement (Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015; Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017).

Importance of the Study to School Psychologists

By assessing positive indicators of students' well-being, school-based mental health providers are able to evaluate the full spectrum of psychological functioning and proactively address students' needs. As such, prevention and intervention supports can be designed to target *both* the presence of mental health problems and absence of psychological wellness so that students may achieve complete mental health. While reducing symptoms of psychopathology remains a critical pathway to enhancing mental health, studies supporting the dual-factor model

of mental health demonstrate that there are added benefits of directly improving positive indicators such as subjective well-being (Keyes, 2002). Case in point, students with low subjective well-being experience inferior outcomes relative to those with high subjective well-being (Suldo & Shaffer, 2008; Suldo et al., 2016). Interventions to improve student well-being may be best positioned as part of a school's universal (i.e., classwide, schoolwide) prevention efforts that proactively build the strengths and resources of all students, rather than reserving strategies to enhance well-being for indicated groups of students. Such universal mental wellness promotion efforts not only address issues of limited access and stigma associated with a traditional reactive approach to mental healthcare, but also reduce the likelihood that students will experience negative outcomes associated with diminished subjective well-being. By empirically testing the impact of a classwide multitarget, multicomponent PPI on indicators of students' success, this study aimed to inform school psychologists as well as other key stakeholders (e.g., parents, teachers, administrators) of an evidence-based intervention that may be added to their repertoire of comprehensive universal school-based mental health services. Furthermore, by including both parent and teacher components, in addition to the student-focused intervention activities, the intervention examined aligns with an ecological framework consistent with best practices in school psychology service delivery.

Contributions to the Literature

To date, there remain no published empirical investigations on the efficacy of a comprehensive multitarget, multicomponent classwide PPI with elementary students relative to a randomly assigned waitlist control condition. While research has demonstrated that a comprehensive multicomponent, multitarget PPI is effective in improving middle school students' subjective well-being (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017; Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014),

the extent to which these outcomes can be replicated in younger elementary students has yet to be studied. Furthermore, investigations with younger elementary students have suggested that single-target PPIs (e.g., character strengths, hope) are effective in improving elementary school students' positive affect, class cohesion, class engagement, and self-esteem (Owens & Patterson, 2013; Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015), however the potential additive effects of incorporating multiple targets remains unexplored. The current study thus addressed current gaps within the literature by building upon and extending a pilot study of a recently developed manualized PPI designed for elementary school students and teachers (Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2015). Specifically, this study enhanced the design of the pilot intervention evaluation by including (a) random assignment of classrooms to an intervention or delayed intervention control group, (b) a larger sample of classrooms, (c) an additional intervention target (i.e., a session targeting students' hope and goal-directed thinking), (d) an additional intervention component (i.e., parent psychoeducation), and (e) a wider breadth of outcome variables that address students' potential improvements in social and academic functioning (in addition to subjective well-being). Findings may be added to the growing body of literature on PPIs that may be applied to elementary students in schools.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

With the introduction of the positive psychology movement in recent decades, youth psychological well-being has become increasingly acknowledged as not merely the absence of psychological distress, but the presence of positive indicators of optimal functioning. As such, there remains a need to address children's well-being through a holistic approach emphasizing the prevention of mental health problems and promotion of flourishing. Recent advances in school mental health demonstrate that youth well-being can be enhanced through intentional activities learned through school-based positive psychology interventions. This chapter provides a review of the empirical research relevant to advances in a positive psychology approach, utility of examining positive indicators of mental health including subjective well-being, correlates and determinants of youth subjective well-being, positive psychology interventions for youth, and the significance of classroom relationships.

Advances in Positive Psychology

Following Martin Seligman's acquisition of the American Psychological Association presidency in 1998, he partnered with Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi to serve as a guest editor for a special millennial issue of the *American Psychologist*. In their seminal article, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) introduced positive psychology as the study of positive human functioning that would enable us to explore and understand the factors that promote individuals and societies to flourish. Rather than focusing on the treatment of mental illness and repairing problems consistent with a medical disease model, the authors called for emphasis on promotion of strengths and positive qualities that buffer against psychopathology. Furthermore, intentions

were not to deny the existence of distressing or negative aspects of life, but to acknowledge the lack of attention to pleasurable aspects of the human experience within the field of psychology (Gable & Haidt, 2005). Since this introduction, there has been tremendous growth in the positive psychology movement, with over 1,300 peer-reviewed publications through 2014 on positive psychology theory, principles, and interventions (Donaldson, Dollwet, & Rao, 2015). This growth has been warranted given the potential to proactively equip individuals with resources serving to *prevent* psychological problems and *promote* optimal functioning thus enabling people, groups, and institutions to thrive. While the traditional approach to mental health assumes that repairing psychological problems naturally leads to human flourishing, positive psychologists acknowledge that “mental health” and “mental illness” are two distinct constructs (Gilman, Huebner, & Furlong, 2014). Thus, efforts to diminish psychological problems must be coupled with initiatives to augment well-being in order to optimally enhance human functioning.

Within the positive psychology literature, a common indicator of optimal functioning includes *subjective well-being*, coined by Dr. Ed Diener as the “scientific term for happiness.” Subjective well-being is comprised of three distinct yet interrelated components: life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect (Diener, 2000). Life satisfaction is operationalized as one’s cognitive appraisal of their life, which may refer to a global evaluation of life overall or within a single domain such as family, friends, or school (Diener, 2000; Diener et al., 2009). Positive and negative affect are described as the frequency with which one experiences positive emotions such as joy, love, and contentment, and negative emotions including disgust, fear, and sadness. Individuals with high subjective well-being experience a higher ongoing frequency of positive emotions, relative to negative emotions, and have high satisfaction with their life as a whole (Long, Huebner, Wedell, & Hills, 2012). Perhaps because life satisfaction is a more stable

component of subjective well-being, it has been considered a primary indicator of positive psychological health (Park, 2004).

Although the majority of positive psychology research has included adult samples, more recent investigations have extended this body of work to youth. Notably, 16% of the 1,336 empirical and non-empirical articles included in Donaldson et al.'s (2015) recent review of the positive psychology literature pertained to children and adolescents. Such studies have demonstrated that, as with adults, psychological distress and well-being are discrete yet interrelated constructs within children and adolescents (Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2006; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008), warranting the need to address both in order to promote optimal functioning. Other investigations that have explored correlates and benefits associated with youth subjective well-being have served to inform the development of interventions designed to promote youth happiness, enabling children to thrive in their homes, schools, and communities. Although the field of positive psychology at large may still be considered emerging, research findings to date demonstrate promise for the utility of interventions rooted in this theoretical framework for enhancing subjective well-being and buffering against psychopathology in order to optimize youth development (Gilman, Huebner, & Furlong, 2014).

Emphasis on youth happiness in schools is consistent with efforts to view children holistically, rather than limiting focus to students with clinical levels of mental health problems. By assessing positive indicators of students' well-being, school-based mental health providers are able to evaluate the full spectrum of psychological functioning and pro-actively address students' needs. As such, prevention and intervention supports can be designed to target *both* the presence of mental health problems and absence of subjective well-being so that students may achieve optimal outcomes. While diminishing symptoms of psychological distress remains a

critical pathway to enhancing well-being, studies demonstrate that there are added benefits of directly improving positive indicators of mental health among youth (Keyes, 2002).

Interventions to improve student well-being may be best positioned as part of a school's universal (i.e., classwide, schoolwide) prevention efforts that proactively build the strengths and resources of all students, rather than reserving strategies to enhance well-being for indicated groups of students. Such universal mental wellness promotion efforts not only address issues of limited access and stigma associated with a traditional reactive approach to mental healthcare, but also reduce the likelihood that students will experience negative outcomes associated with diminished subjective well-being.

Utility of Examining Youth Subjective Well-Being Evidenced by the Dual-Factor Model

Research derived from the introduction of positive psychology has called into question the traditional one-dimensional approach to mental health indicating the absence of psychopathology equates with superior psychological functioning. The *dual-factor model* of mental health distinguishes between four distinct mental health groups determined by levels of psychopathology and subjective well-being, and provides for a more comprehensive understanding of youths' psychological functioning. Several studies have yielded evidence that the presence of indicators of subjective well-being have an additive value in enhancing outcomes of children (Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001), adolescents (Antaramian, Huebner, Hills, & Valois, 2010; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008; Suldo, Thalji-Raitano, Kiefer, & Ferron, 2016), and young adults (Eklund, Dowdy, Jones, & Furlong, 2011; Renshaw & Cohen, 2014). Specifically, youth experiencing complete mental health (i.e., low psychopathology and high subjective well-being) demonstrate superior academic outcomes, social functioning, and physical health relative to those without psychopathology but who also have low subjective well-being (Antaramian,

Huebner, Hills, & Valois, 2010; Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008; Suldo et al., 2016). Additionally, longitudinal investigations demonstrate that high subjective well-being may serve as a protective factor for youth with psychopathology, as they do not demonstrate anticipated sharp declines in academic performance over time (Lyons, Huebner, & Hills, 2013; Suldo, Thalji, & Ferron, 2011). Because of the emerging evidence indicative of the need to attend to both symptoms of youth distress and psychological wellness, educational scholars and practitioners have become increasingly interested in identifying evidence-based strategies for promoting complete mental health.

Benefits Associated with Youth Subjective Well-Being

Although subjective well-being has been investigated predominantly as an outcome of a variety of intrapersonal and environmental factors, there is also reason to believe that higher well-being is associated with desirable outcomes. Barbara Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions asserts that positive feelings such as joy, love, and hope broaden an individual's thought-action repertoire. Contrastingly, experiencing negative feelings including sadness, anger, and disgust, narrows one's range of perceptions, thoughts, and behaviors. Thus, by increasing the frequency of positive emotions we experience, we broaden our potential cognitive and behavioral responses, which can build a range of physical, psychological, and social resources; these resources, in turn, increase the experience of positive emotions and well-being over time (Cohn, Fredrickson, Brown, Mikels, & Conway, 2009). Put simply, positive emotions trigger an "upward spiral" towards sustained well-being. Despite considerable evidence for the broaden-and-build theory within the research literature (Fredrickson, 2013), its application to children in school remains somewhat understudied in comparison to adults (Stiglbauer, Gnamb, Gamsjäger, & Batinic, 2013). Nevertheless, recent

research applications of this theory with children and adolescents suggest there are positive relationships between subjective well-being and a host of positive indicators of youth functioning, including academic performance, social relationships, and physical and psychological health. Although most investigations have been cross-sectional in design, making it challenging to determine the direction of the relationship, emerging longitudinal studies have shed light on the positive outcomes associated with high youth subjective well-being.

Academic functioning. Studies exploring the relationship between subjective well-being and academic success have reported a modest to moderate relationship. Previous cross-sectional studies reveal that higher life satisfaction among students co-occurs with a number of positive indicators of school functioning, including high GPA among secondary (Gilman & Huebner, 2006; Suldo, Shaffer, & Riley, 2008) and elementary students (Quinn & Duckworth, 2007), better performance on standardized tests (Suldo & Shaffer, 2008), high perceptions of personal academic abilities and school social support (Danielsen, Samdal, Hetland, & Wold, 2009; Suldo & Huebner, 2006; Suldo, Shaffer, & Riley, 2008), greater participation in extracurricular (Gilman, 2001) and school-based activities (Vilhjalmsson & Thorlindsson, 1992), and high behavioral, cognitive, and affective engagement with school (Lewis, Huebner, Malone, & Valois, 2011). Regarding the affective component of well-being, research demonstrates similar positive associations with indicators of students' achievement, whereby more frequent experiences of positive emotions are related to higher engagement in learning and academic performance (Cheng & Furnham, 2002; Reschly, Huebner, Appleton, & Antaramian, 2008). To date, there remains a paucity of longitudinal studies that have explored the predictive relationships between well-being and subsequent objective markers of student success. Suldo, Thalji, and Ferron (2011) are among the few to investigate the extent to which students'

subjective well-being resulted subsequent in positive educational outcomes. Findings from their longitudinal study of 300 middle school students were consistent with previous investigations, in that students with high subjective well-being had significantly higher GPAs one year later. The predictive relationship between subjective well-being and indicators of student success was further supported through findings of Stiglbauer, Gnams, Gamsjäger, and Batinic's (2013) longitudinal study, which found that secondary students' positive school experiences (i.e., relationships with teachers and peers, appropriate level of challenge at school, and perceived freedom to pursue interest and values) had a stable lagged effect on students' subjective well-being, which, in turn had a positive effect on positive school experiences. Finally, Lyons, Huebner, and Hills' (2013) 5-month longitudinal study of school-related outcomes and subjective well-being demonstrated that students' levels of subjective well-being was a significant predictor of middle school students' emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement at school, above and beyond the variance in outcomes predicted by levels of psychopathology.

Physical and psychological health. Empirical investigations of youth subjective well-being and physical health indices support positive associations between the two constructs. Although the literature linking subjective well-being to physical health remains sparse, Shaffer-Hudkins, Suldo, Loker, and March (2010) found that all three components of subjective well-being (i.e., life satisfaction, positive, and negative affect) were unique predictors of adolescents' physical health perceptions; the composite of all three components explained 29% of the variance in those perceptions. Additionally, the authors found that indicators of subjective well-being accounted for almost 10% more of the variance in physical health than accounted for by psychopathology, suggesting the subjective well-being is more strongly associated with physical functioning than is mental health *problems*. With respect to relationships with psychopathology,

high subjective well-being has been associated with fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression, less delinquency and aggression, less internalizing and externalizing behavior, and increased self-efficacy and self-esteem (Gilman & Huebner, 2006; Huebner, 2004; Suldo & Huebner, 2006). Studies demonstrate that adolescent life satisfaction reports also *predict* lower levels of internalizing behaviors, including depression, anxiety, and social stress on comprehensive measures of adolescent psychopathology (Haranin, Huebner, & Suldo, 2007; Huebner, Funk & Gilman, 2000). These findings support that subjective well-being serves not only as an indicator of optimal functioning, but also an enabling factor that promotes psychological, as well as physical, health.

Social relationships. Studies investigating the relationship between subjective well-being and social functioning demonstrate that there are strong, positive associations between high well-being and levels of parental and teacher support, as well as peer positive peer relationships in adolescents (Dew & Huebner, 1994; Suldo & Huebner 2004; Suldo & Huebner, 2006). In a review of life satisfaction research including studies of children, Proctor et al. (2009) found that life satisfaction was positively associated with quality of relationships with parents, peers, teachers, and siblings. Longitudinal research remains limited, however findings to date demonstrate that low levels of life satisfaction precede decreases in adolescents parental support (Saha, Huebner, Suldo, & Valois, 2010), and increases in peer relational victimization (Martin, Huebner, & Valois, 2008). Happiness as an affective component of well-being has also been linked to perceived social support at school (Natvig, Albreksten, & Qvarnstrom, 2003). A more recent longitudinal investigation examining to reciprocal effects of positive school experiences and subjective well-being also demonstrated support for the upward spiral of positive school

experiences, which increase happiness, and in turn, improve students' relatedness among classmates and teachers (Stiglbauer, Gnams, Gamsjäger, & Batinic, 2013).

Primary Determinants of Happiness

Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade (2005) posit that an individual's chronic level of happiness is comprised of three unique components: genetic set point, life circumstances, and intentional activity. Study of these components has shed light on the factors that may be targeted to increase happiness.

Genetic set point. Within Lyubomirsky et al.'s (2005) framework, the genetic set point is the largest determinant of an individual's happiness, accounting for approximately 50% of the variance between people's happiness levels. The set point refers to the biological factors that are constant and stable throughout the lifespan, and are thus unamenable to change. More recently, Sheldon, Boehm, and Lyubomirsky (2013) have asserted that each individual has a distinct set *range* of subjective well-being states, thus we should prioritize uncovering methods to maintain happiness levels at the top of personal set range. This happiness set range is likely reflected by our personality traits (e.g., levels of extraversion and neuroticism) and temperament (e.g., high vs. low reactivity to a given stimuli), which are highly heritable and stagnant over time.

Life circumstances. Circumstances refer to the relatively stable conditions of life that can impact personal levels of happiness. Demographic features including gender, age, ethnicity, religious affiliation, and socio-economic status are included within this category, along with circumstances that one has greater control over, such as the neighborhood in which one lives, occupation held, and possessions owned. Although many individuals believe optimal happiness can be achieved through improved life circumstances such as having a better job or living in a nicer home, taken together these factors account for only 10% of the differences between

individuals' levels of happiness (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). This suggests that while there are some improvements in level of happiness based on life circumstances, most of what promotes individuals to achieve optimal happiness within their set range can be attributed to other factors.

Intentional activity. Intentional activities refer to the broad range of thoughts and behaviors one has in his or her daily life. Examples include spending time with loved ones, participating in recreational activities, and spiritual practices such as meditation, each of which promote varying degrees of pleasure. Because intentional activities reflect the actions in which one purposefully engages, this is arguably the most promising means of augmenting happiness. Upholding attitudes and engaging in goal-directed behaviors that co-occur with happiness are thus likely to be the best methods of achieving optimal happiness within a personal set range. Taken together, intentional activities account for approximately 40% of one's happiness level, indicating a sizeable portion may be improved through interventions (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005).

Genetic Set Point in Youth

Although Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade's (2005) framework for the determinants of happiness was based largely on research using samples of adults, empirical investigations demonstrate aspects of the model also apply to youth. To date, much of this research has unveiled the impact of genetic factors on children and adolescents' happiness.

Twin studies. The majority of empirical evidence demonstrating genetics play a role in happiness has primarily come from the study of twins. Bartels and Boomsma (2009) replicated previous research with adults in their investigation of subjective well-being in over 4,000 monozygotic and dizygotic twins (M age = 15.55, SD = 1.5), and nearly 1,000 of their singleton

siblings (M age = 17.09, SD = 3.1). Participants from 2,157 families registered with the Netherlands Twin Registry completed the Dutch Behavior Questionnaire, which includes four measures of subjective well-being; namely, quality of life overall, satisfaction with life, quality of life at the moment, and subjective happiness. Findings from multivariate genetic modeling revealed that up to half of the variance in adolescents' subjective well-being may be attributed to genetic factors. There was a moderate average correlation for monozygotic twins at about .42 (r ranged from .31 to .53 across all indicators of subjective well-being and both genders), while the average correlation for dizygotic and singleton siblings was only approximately .14 (r ranged from .08 to .26 across all indicators of subjective well-being and both genders). Because the correlation among monozygotic twins was stronger than that of the other two sibling groups on all four indicators of subjective well-being, findings from this study provide support for the genetic contributions of happiness in youth, similar to previous findings with adults.

Well-being of family members. Evidence of the genetic set point also stems from the strength of the relationships between indicators of happiness among families members who share biological compositions. To determine the extent to which parent and child subjective well-being are associated, Hoy, Suldo, and Raffaele Mendez (2012) explored the relationship between self-reported gratitude, hope, and life satisfaction among 148 fourth and fifth grade students and 246 of their biological parents. Both parents and children completed the Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6; McCullough et al., 2002), a brief 6-item measure that assesses the intensity, frequency, density, and span of gratitude one feels and shares. Additionally, parents completed the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, 1985), a 5-item measure of global life satisfaction in adults, and the Adult Hope Scale (AHD; Snyder et al., 1991), an 8-item measure yielding pathway and agency thinking as well as total hope subscales. Similarly, children completed the

Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS; Huebner, 1991), a 7-item measure of children's global life satisfaction, and the Children's Hope Scale (CHS; Snyder et al., 1997), a 6-item measure of goal-oriented pathway and agency thinking. Findings from bivariate analyses indicated that there were statistically significant relationships between mother and child gratitude ($r = 0.23$), as well as child's life satisfaction and both mother ($r = 0.26$) and father's life satisfaction ($r = 0.29$). There was not a significant relationship between child and parent levels of hope, however parental life satisfaction was significantly related to higher child hope. Findings from this study are consistent with other investigations demonstrating significant links parent and child indicators of well-being (e.g., Ben-Zur, 2003; Casas et al., 2008), even after the adult child no longer lives at home (Headey, Muffels, & Wagner, 2014).

Personality and well-being. A final source of support for the genetic set point apparent in youth happiness comes from the body of research on the relationship between personality and indicators of optimal functioning, including life satisfaction. Personality characteristics are considered to be a relatively stable collection of traits, as studies demonstrate early temperament is predictive of adult personality (Caspi, 2000). Suldo, Minch, and Hearon (2015) explored the relationship between the Big Five personality factors (i.e., openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism; Digman, 1990) and life satisfaction among a sample of 624 high school students. Participants completed the SLSS and Adolescent Personal Styles Inventory (APSI; Lounsbury et al., 2003), a 48-item measure of adolescent personality including subscales aligned with the Big Five. Results from simultaneous multiple regression analyses revealed that, taken together, the five personality factors accounted for approximately 47% of the variance in adolescents' life satisfaction. Four of the five personality factors emerged as unique predictors of life satisfaction after controlling for the commonality amongst other

personality factors. Neuroticism was the strongest predictor ($\beta = -.59$), followed by conscientiousness ($\beta = .12$), extraversion ($\beta = .10$), and openness to experience ($\beta = .08$). Although agreeableness was not a significant unique predictor in the whole sample, follow-up analyses revealed it was related to higher life satisfaction for girls, but not for boys. The finding that all personality traits are significantly related to students' life satisfaction was replicated by Weber and Huebner's (2015) investigation of early adolescents. A sample of 344 7th grade students completed the SLSS and a brief 30-item version of the Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS; Huebner, Zullig, & Sahs, 2012) to assess global and domain specific life satisfaction, respectively, as well as the APSI to assess personality. Results from hierarchical multiple regression analyses revealed that, taken together, the Big Five traits explained 33% of the variance in students' global life satisfaction. Neuroticism emerged as the strongest unique predictors, followed by conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion. With regard to domain-specific life satisfaction, the Big Five traits explained approximately 41%, 34%, 28%, 22%, and 19% of the variance in satisfaction with self, school, family life, living environment, and friendships, respectively. Additionally, the traits yielded different patterns as unique predictors of each domain. For instance, all of the Big Five traits, with the exception of extraversion, uniquely predicted family satisfaction, while all traits, with the exception of agreeableness predicted satisfaction with self.

The aforementioned evidence supports the genetic set point as a primary determinant of youth happiness. Fortunately for many, heritability is not all that determines a child or adolescent's happiness. A growing body of research demonstrates that happiness can be improved by participating in purposeful activities intended to increase positive emotions. The following section reviews research on interventions designed to improve subjective well-being.

Positive Psychology Interventions

Since the introduction of the field of positive psychology, rapid advances in empirical research have been made with respect to knowledge of what makes individuals happy and how psychologists may promote lasting effects on subjective well-being (Donaldson et al., 2015). Although originally tested among adult samples, brief scripted activities intended to replicate the thoughts and behaviors of people who are already happy have recently been demonstrated to improve youth happiness (Layous & Lyubomirsky, 2014; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009; Waters, 2011). These activities, categorized collectively as positive psychology interventions (PPIs), engage individuals in behaviors that foster malleable factors (e.g., gratitude, optimism) associated with high well-being with the goal of generating a lasting impact on happiness.

Evidence of the promise of PPIs in enhancing positive emotions has encouraged educational scholars and practitioners to identify evidence-based strategies for increasing youth well-being within the school setting. Such efforts are consistent with universal, preventive interventions in line with Tier I in a multi-tiered system of students' social-emotional supports to increase well-being and diminish risk for the development of mental health problems. Although most PPIs to date include the use of activities aimed at singular constructs related to students' improved well-being (e.g., hope, gratitude), comprehensive multitarget and/or multicomponent interventions have begun to surface within the empirical literature. Moreover, although most research on the efficacy of PPIs has included samples of secondary students, recent published studies and pilot investigations indicate PPIs can also effectively enhance the well-being of elementary students.

Single-target interventions. Within the growing body of research literature, single-target PPIs investigated in educational settings have most frequently targeted gratitude, kindness,

identification and use of character strengths, hope and goal-directed thinking, and optimistic thinking in order to ultimately improve students' subjective well-being.

Gratitude. Gratitude refers to an emotional response to the receipt of benefits provided by another individual that were not necessarily deserved or earned (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). One may feel grateful for a number of reasons, such as for material items given to them, everyday occurrences, and the quality of interpersonal relationships. Preliminary longitudinal research indicates that long-term benefits of gratitude among adolescents include fewer negative emotions and depression, and greater positive emotions and life satisfaction (Bono, Froh, & Emmons, 2012). PPIs aimed at enhancing gratitude among youth have included activities such as gratitude journaling (also referred to as counting one's blessings; Froh, Sefick, & Emmons, 2008), delivery of a written letter expressing gratitude to an individual through a gratitude visit (Froh, Kashdan, Ozimkowski, & Miller, 2009), and drawing a picture of something for which one is grateful that happened during the day (Owens & Patterson, 2013), as well as more comprehensive classroom-based grateful thinking curricula (Froh et al., 2014).

Froh, Sefick, and Emmons (2008) conducted one of the earliest school-based gratitude intervention evaluations in a sample of 221 sixth and seventh grade students enrolled in 11 classes. Classes were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: gratitude through which students counted their blessings through daily journaling of up to five things for which they were grateful ($n = 76$), hassles through which students used daily journaling to write about hassles in their life during the past day ($n = 80$), or a no-treatment control ($n = 65$). Measures the participants completed at pre-test, post-test and 3-week follow-up included the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule for Children (PANAS-C; Laurent et al., 1999), Brief Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS; Seligson, Huebner, & Valois, 2003), single-item

indicators of global life satisfaction and optimism, and the 3-item Grateful Adjectives Checklist (GAC; McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002). Results from ANCOVA analyses revealed that, relative to the hassles condition, there was a significant effect on gratitude and negative affect at both post-intervention and the 3-week follow-up. Additionally, relative to the hassles and treatment control conditions, the gratitude condition had significantly higher school satisfaction at post-intervention and 3-week follow-up. At post-intervention, however not at follow-up, the gratitude condition also had marginally greater life satisfaction relative to the hassles group. With regard to positive affect, no statistically significant changes were observed. These findings suggest that gratitude journaling, relative to journaling about hassles in particular, may be an effective means of increasing students positive feelings and life satisfaction. Furthermore, findings from this study suggest that promoting grateful thinking may also enhance students' satisfaction within specific domains of life (i.e., school).

Froh and colleagues (2009) also examined the impact of another gratitude-inducing activity, the gratitude visit, with 89 youth in third, eighth, and twelfth grade. Participants were randomly assigned to the gratitude visit condition ($n = 44$) or active control ($n = 45$) in which students journaled about daily life occurrences ($n = 45$). Students participated in five daily 10-15 minute writing sessions during which they wrote their gratitude letter or journaled. All participants completed the GAC and PANAS-C at pre-intervention, post-intervention, and 1- and 2-month follow-up. Results from hierarchical regression analyses revealed that youth with low positive affect in the gratitude condition, relative to the control condition, reported higher levels of gratitude at post-intervention and higher levels of positive affect at post-intervention as well as 2-month follow-up. No differences were observed in terms of participants' negative affect. Findings thus indicate that gratitude activities may be particularly effective for students already

experiencing negative emotions. It is important to note that the findings from this study differed from this research team's previous investigation demonstrating negative affect was reduced through participation in gratitude journaling, perhaps because the comparison group in the 2009 publication did not journal about hassles, but rather everyday life occurrences that did not necessarily have detrimental effects on negative affect. Thus, it is important to consider the nature of the activities assigned to students within the treatment comparison groups when drawing conclusions about the effects of gratitude interventions.

McCabe and colleagues' (2011) literature review on the promotion of happiness in schoolchildren featured McCabe-Fitch's (2009) study of fifty 7th and 8th grade students ages 12-14, who were randomly assigned to a gratitude ($n = 26$) or no-treatment control group ($n = 24$). Participants in the gratitude condition completed a gratitude letter through which they wrote to someone they had not properly thanked and then delivered it to them, as well as write about three good things that happened to them each night for one week. Participants in the control condition were instructed to write about any three details of their day, each day for one week. Measures of happiness including the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS; Lyubomisky & Lepper, 1999), SLSS, and PANAS-C were completed at pretest, posttest, and 2-month follow-up. Results from analyses revealed that, relative to the control group, participants in the gratitude condition experienced a small increase in happiness on the SHS at 2-month follow-up. There was also a small positive effect for positive affect at post-intervention and 2-month follow-up, however results should be interpreted with caution given the experimental condition's higher level of positive affect at baseline. No differences were evident for life satisfaction or negative affect. Findings from this study thus provide further evidence that participation in gratitude activities can produce desired effects on students' levels of happiness, however the extent to which the

activities in this investigation augmented participants' levels of gratitude as intended remains unknown.

Researchers have also explored the effect of a comprehensive classroom curriculum aimed at teaching elementary-age students about social-cognitive appraisals of benefit exchanges. Froh and colleagues (2014) first piloted the grateful thinking curriculum in a sample of 122 fourth grade students enrolled in 6 classes. Classes were randomly assigned to the treatment or control conditions, resulting in approximately even numbers of students in each ($n = 62$ and 60 , respectively). Participants in the treatment condition received structured lesson plans on benefit appraisals, which detailed the costs experienced by benefactors and benefits of receiving gifts or kind acts as a recipient, over the course of one week. Those in the attention-control condition also received structured lesson plans, however they focused on emotionally neutral topics. Measures used in this study included a benefit-appraisal vignette assessment that depicted three different helping situations in which students imagined themselves as the primary character and asked a variety of follow-up questions, the GAC, and behavioral assessment of gratitude which provided students the opportunity to write a thank-you note to the Parent-Teacher Association following a presentation. Results revealed that, relative to students in the attention-control condition, those participating in the gratitude curriculum reported increases in benefit appraisals and grateful mood, with small effect sizes of $d = 0.26$ and 0.38 , respectively. Students in the treatment group also completed 80% more thank you cards than those in the control group.

In their second study, Froh et al. (2014) extended research in the first investigation by implementing the sessions once weekly over the course of five weeks and including additional measures of positive and negative affect and overall life satisfaction. A total of 82 fourth and fifth grade students in four classes participated, and classes were randomly assigned to the same

benefit-appraisal or attention-control curricula used in the first study. Similar to the first study, participants completed benefit-appraisal vignette and the GAC, however they also completed the PANAS-C and BMSLSS. Data was collected at pre-intervention and post-intervention, as well as 7-week, 12-week, and 20-week follow-up. Results of multi-level analyses revealed that, as with the first study, students in the treatment condition demonstrated growth in benefit appraisal and gratitude over time, while students in the control condition did not. There was also a similar impact on students' subjective well-being, as indexed by positive affect, however there were no changes in negative affect or life satisfaction. Taken together, results from both of Froh and colleagues' (2014) studies of the impact of grateful thinking curriculum indicate that as with middle school students, elementary-age youth may benefit from participation in school-based PPIs targeting gratitude.

Kindness. Given the reciprocity of interpersonal behaviors, it is logical that engaging in an act that benefits someone else could increase personal happiness. Not only do happier people have a tendency to act more kindly (Dunn, Aknin, & Norton, 2008), but those who are kind also experience boosts in personal happiness (Buchanan & Bardi, 2010). Interestingly, reflecting on kind acts performed, without deliberately increasing the frequency of acts of kindness, also increases subjective happiness among adults (Otake, Shimai, Tanaka-Matsumi, Otsui, & Fredrickson, 2006). Research on kindness has included a variety of kind acts, ranging from brief behaviors that do not have a personal cost, such as holding a door open, or giving up one's seat, to those that require money and/or time, including buying a gift or helping a colleague with a work project.

To date, relatively few single-target PPIs conducted with students in schools have centered on kindness. In one example, Layous, Nelson, Oberle, Schonert-Reichl, and

Lyubomirsky (2012) investigated the impact of performing three acts of kindness (versus visiting three places) per week over the course of 4 weeks in a sample of 19 classrooms of students ages 9-11 in Vancouver, BC. Classrooms were randomly assigned to either perform three acts of kindness for others or visit three places once per week over the course of 4 weeks. Students recorded what they did each week using in-class surveys. Participants completed the Satisfaction With Life Scale adapted for children (SWLS-C; Gaderman, Schonert-Reichl, & Zumbo, 2010), Subjective Happiness Scale adapted for children (Holder & Klassen, 2010), and PANAS-C at pre- and post-intervention. Additionally, students were given a roster of their classmates' names and asked to circle students who they desired to be with in school activities, as an indicator of social acceptance during both rounds of data collection. Results from analyses using hierarchical linear modeling indicate that students in both conditions experienced significant improvements in levels of life satisfaction and positive affect, but no significant differences were observed between the two conditions. Students who performed acts of kindness increased significantly more than those who visited places in terms of peer acceptance, gaining an average of 1.5 friends. This effect remained significant after controlling for well-being, demonstrating that the effect of performing acts of kindness on peer acceptance was above and beyond changes in well-being. Findings from this study indicate that performing prosocial PPI activities such as acts of kindness can not only enhance youth well-being, but also increase popularity among peers, an invaluable asset to most preadolescents.

Use of character strengths. Building students' character has long been a goal in education. The field of positive psychology has enhanced the application of character strengths within the classroom by demonstrating that practicing strengths helps students to reap benefits in achievement and well-being. Peterson and Seligman (2004) conceptualize personal strengths as a

comprehensive set of 24 cross-culturally recognized, morally valued, and individually fulfilling character traits (e.g., love, creativity, bravery, and persistence) that can be categorized into six distinct virtues (e.g., transcendence, wisdom, and knowledge). In accordance with this theory, each person possesses an individual set of ‘top five’ signature strengths, which one may develop ownership over and use frequently (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Park and Peterson’s (2006) Values in Action Inventory of Strengths for Youth (VIA-IS-Youth) remains one of the primary measures of youth strengths. This 198-item survey has been validated for youth ages 10-17 and completion of the assessment yields an individual profile of character strengths representative of self-identified thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Recent applications of PPIs targeting strengths in youth have included identification of strengths based on the VIA-IS-Youth classification, then practice of strengths (often targeting one’s signature strengths) through various exercises.

In one such example, Proctor and colleagues (2011) investigated the effect of *Strengths Gym*, a comprehensive PPI that aims to encourage students to build personal strengths, learn new strengths, and recognize strengths in others. Participants included 319 8th and 9th grade students enrolled across two secondary schools in Great Britain. Classes were randomly assigned to *Strengths Gym* curriculum ($n = 218$), or the no-treatment control ($n = 101$). Students participating in the PPI learned about the entire VIA classification of character strengths then completed developmentally appropriate in-class activities, engaged in classwide discussions, and performed homework activities to independently practice the concepts and skills learned during the intervention sessions. At pre- and post-intervention, participants completed the SLSS, a modified version of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965), a brief, 10-item measure of self-esteem. Results from hierarchical linear modeling, accounting for the nested nature of the

data collected, revealed that adolescents who participated in the strengths-based activities had higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those who did not participate, after controlling for baseline life satisfaction, sex, age, school, and grade. Additionally, there was a marginally significant effect ($p = .084$) of the intervention on positive affect, but no effect on negative affect or self-esteem. Findings from this study support the use of comprehensive strengths-based curricula in school-based programming to increase students' well-being.

In a more recent study, Quinlan and colleagues (2015) investigated *Awesome Us*, a six-session classroom-based strengths curriculum designed to teach students to recognize strengths and practice strengths-related goal setting. Participants included nine classrooms of students ages 8-12 (with the majority of students 9-10 years-old), across five primary and one intermediate school in New Zealand. One class from each of the six schools received the intervention ($n = 140$), while three other classes from three of the schools were assigned to the control ($n = 56$); random assignment was not employed given the partner schools' desire to nominate classrooms for participation. Participants in both conditions completed self-report measures during the week before the intervention and at a 3-month follow-up. Specifically, students completed the SLSS, the 10-item International Positive and Negative Affect Schedule-Short Form (I-PANAS-SF; Thompson, 2007) to assess positive and negative emotions, the student report of the Engagement Versus Disaffection with Learning scale (EvsD-Student; Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009) to assess behavioral and emotional classroom engagement, the My Class Inventory (MCI; Fisher & Fraser, 1981) to assess class climate, the Children's Intrinsic Needs Satisfaction Scale (CINSS; Koestner & Veronneau, 2001) to assess aspects of intrinsic need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness), and the Strengths Use Scale (Govindji & Linley, 2007) to assess personal use of strengths. Results from mixed linear revealed that students

participating in the *Awesome Us* program reported significantly higher positive affect, classroom engagement, autonomy needs satisfaction, and strengths use, as well as higher class cohesion and need satisfaction and lower friction, than students in the control group during 3-month follow-up. This study is limited as data were not collected from teachers regarding outcomes they may be more objective raters of (i.e., engagement) and data were not collected at immediate post-intervention (only follow-up). However, findings from this investigation extend Proctor et al.'s previous research to demonstrate that strengths-based PPIs not only create benefits at the individual level in terms of one's personal happiness but also have the potential to improve class climate. Additionally, this study demonstrates that strengths-based intervention can be successfully employed with elementary-age youth in addition to secondary students.

Hope and goal-directed thinking. Snyder and colleagues (1991) have conceptualized hope as one's perceived ability to successfully identify personal goals, construct pathways to achieve those goals, and maintain motivation to use pathways through agency thinking. As a cognitive construct, hope develops early on; children as young as seven demonstrate hopeful thinking (Snyder, 2005), however improvements in cognitive abilities throughout the course of development improve youth's ability to think more abstractly about their ambitions and create, and adhere to, their plans to achieve them. Research demonstrates that, like adults, youth who have high levels of hope are more successful in obtaining their goals and subsequently experience more positive emotions and increased life satisfaction (Merkas & Brajsa-Zganec, 2011).

As with other single-target PPIs, most interventions designed to instill hope and goal-directed thinking have been conducted with secondary students. One example includes Marques, Lopez, and Pais-Ribeiro's (2011) evaluation of *Building Hope for the Future*, a curriculum

designed to teach students about the construct of hope then help them develop goals, create and pursue pathways to achieve them, and reframe potential barriers inhibiting their success through five weekly group sessions. Study participants included 62 sixth grade students ages 10-12 ($M = 10.96$). All participants were Caucasian and attended a single school in Portugal. Thirty-one participants were assigned to each condition, after being matched according to a number of variables (e.g., demographic and mental health characteristics). To evaluate participants' outcomes, students completed assessments at pre- and post-intervention, as well as 6- and 18-month follow-up. Measures included the Children's Hope Scale (CHS; Snyder, 1997) to assess hopeful thinking, the Self-Worth Sub-Scale (SWSS) on the Self Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985) to assess the extent to which children liked themselves and their self-worth, the Mental Health Inventory-5 (MHI-5) on the Short Form-36 Health Survey (SF-36; Ware et al., 1993) to assess mood over the past month, and the SLSS to assess global life satisfaction. Students' academic achievement data was also gathered from school records. Results from repeated measures ANOVAs revealed that students participating in the intervention reported significantly higher levels of hope, life satisfaction, and self-worth relative to those in the matched comparison group at post-intervention and both follow-up assessments. Analyses revealed no significant differences in terms of the mood and academic achievement of students in the intervention and control groups. Findings from this study indicate that a brief hope-centered intervention can not only enhance students' hope, but also aspects of well-being and self-worth, and that such improvements may be maintained over time.

Green, Grant, and Rynsaadt (2007) have also explored the utility of hope-centered interventions in school through their randomized control trial of a 10-session teacher-led life coaching program designed to build cognitive hardiness and hope among high school students.

Participants included 56 female students (ages 16-17) at a private girls' high school in Australia, who were randomly assigned to the intervention ($n = 28$) or a waitlist control group ($n = 28$). Students in the intervention group completed ten individual face-to-face coaching sessions with their respective teacher-coach over the course of 28 weeks. Throughout the intervention implementation, students identified personal and school related goals and systematically worked through the problem-solving process with the coach to achieve them, generating new goals as others were obtained. At pre- and post-intervention, participants completed the Trait Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991), Cognitive Hardiness Scale (Nowack, 1990), and the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). Results from repeated measures ANOVAs revealed that, relative to the waitlist control group, intervention participants experienced a significant increase in hope (agency and pathways thinking, as well as total hope) differences in stress or anxiety among the intervention and waitlist control groups. Findings thus indicate that coaching as an applied PPI may be an appropriate method of instilling hope and reducing psychopathology among high school students.

More recent investigations have also explored the utility of hope interventions with younger, elementary-aged youth. Given that researchers have argued that children are capable of conceptualizing their possible selves in the future as early as 4 years old (Hart, Fegley, & Brengelman, 1993), Owens and Patterson (2013) conducted a study to compare the outcomes of this PPI, as well as a gratitude-centered activity, among a sample of elementary students. Participants included 62 children ages 5-11 years ($M = 7.35$ years) recruited from one of five after-school programs or summer camps. Each after-school site and individual child from the summer camps was randomly assigned to one of three conditions: best possible selves ($n = 23$), gratitude ($n = 22$), or no-treatment control ($n = 17$). Participants in the best possible selves

condition were asked to draw pictures of an imagined situation in the future in which they were at the best they could possibly be. Similarly, those in the gratitude condition were asked to draw pictures of something for which they were thankful, while participants in the control condition were asked to draw a picture of something they had done during the day. After completing drawings, participants were asked to verbally describe what they had drawn. The small-group intervention meetings occurred weekly, and each participant completed a total of four to six sessions. Participants completed the PANAS-C, a modified version of the BMSLSS that included drawings of faces ranging from a very negative to very positive expression rather than the original Likert-type scale, and the Perceived Competence Scale for Children (Harter, 1982) to assess global self-esteem. Codes were developed for participants within each treatment condition to determine the categories of student drawings that occurred most often. The most frequent categories for best possible selves included personal descriptors (e.g., confidence or happiness), interest, and interpersonal relationships, while categories for the gratitude condition included activities, people, and pets or animals. These findings indicate that children as young as five are able to conceptualize their ideal self as well as things for which they are grateful, an important first step in benefitting from experiencing hope or gratitude. Regarding intervention efficacy, results from repeated measures ANOVAs revealed that the gratitude intervention did not appear to improve any outcomes, while participants in the best possible selves condition reported a significant increase in global self-esteem, but not life satisfaction or affect, from pre-to post-intervention. These findings indicate that the best possible selves activity is feasible for implementation among elementary-aged youth and that engaging in this PPI may be particularly helpful to their self-esteem.

Optimism. Optimism has been described as both (a) a general disposition related to expectations for the future (Scheier & Carver, 1985) and (b) a cognitive explanatory style encompassing the belief that future events are closely tied to the explanation of past events (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978). Earlier in his career, Seligman (1990) described a strategy for developing optimistic thinking, which he referred to as learned optimism. In this approach, individuals are taught to develop an optimistic explanatory style in which positive life events are viewed as permanent, personal, and pervasive, while negative life events are interpreted as temporary, external to oneself, and limited to the immediate incident (Seligman, Reivich, Jaycox, & Gillham, 1995). Earlier research with adults that has since been replicated with youth demonstrates positive outcomes associated with youth participation in PPIs targeting optimism. However notably, researchers examining the efficacy of such programs with elementary samples have identified their immature cognitive development as a potential barrier to sustained improvements, indicating children may experience difficulty engaging in abstract cognitive tasks independently (Johnstone, Rooney, Hassan, & Kane, 2014).

School-based initiatives to promote optimism include the Penn Resiliency Program (PRP; Gillham et al., 1990), a twelve 90-minute session depression prevention curriculum designed to train children (ages 10-13) to develop an optimistic explanatory style and positive social skills. Brunwasser, Gillham, and Kim (2009) conducted a meta-analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of the PRP in reducing depression symptoms among youth. A total of 2,498 youths ages 8 to 18 participated across the 17 studies included. Most studies employed random assignment ($k=14$; $n=2,281$) and evaluated the intervention as a targeted ($k=11$; $n=1,408$), rather than a universal, approach. Additionally, four of the studies compared the PRP to both a no-intervention treatment control and an active control condition. In all but one of the 17 studies, depressive symptoms

were measured with the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI; Kovacs, 2001). Results from analyses revealed that, compared to youth who did not receive the intervention, youth who participate in the PRP report reliably lower levels of depressive symptoms at 12-month follow-up. Similar to results from other depression prevention programs, effects from this meta-analysis were modest in size, ranging from .11 to .21. Furthermore, the PRP participants scored between 0.86 and 1.75 points lower on the CDI, indicative of a change in the intensity of depression symptomology. Individual studies have also found improvements in PRP participants' optimistic explanatory style for positive events over a two-year follow-up (Gillham, Hamilton, Freres, Patton, & Gallop, 2006). Taken together, these findings suggest that programs designed to build student optimism such as the PRP have the ability to not only build positive schema with the ability to buffer against the development of psychopathology but also may reduce pre-existing symptoms.

Another PPI targeting students' optimism includes the Aussie Optimism Program-Positive Thinking Skills (AOP-PTS; Rooney et al., 2004), a 10-module program designed to prevent depression among 4th and 5th grade students. Rooney, Hassan, Kane, Roberts, and Nesa (2013) investigated the impact of the program using a sample of 910 fourth grade students (mean age = 8.75) from 22 elementary schools. Schools were randomly selected from the largest and poorest schools in Australia then matched to a similar school and randomly assigned to treatment ($n = 467$) or control ($n = 443$) conditions. At baseline, post-test, and 6- and 18-month follow-up, participants completed the CDI, Spence Children's Anxiety Scale (SCAS; Spence, 1998) to assess symptoms of anxiety, and Children's Attributional Style Questionnaire (CASQ; Seligman et al., 1984) to assess attributional style for positive and negative events. Participants in the intervention completed ten hour-long weekly sessions delivered by the classroom teacher that

included cognitive-behavioral games and activities consistent with Seligman and colleagues' (1995) theory of optimism. Control group participants received general health education curriculum. Results from analyses revealed that participants in both conditions demonstrated a significant increase in optimism and decrease in symptoms of anxiety at post-intervention, which were sustained at 6- and 18-month follow-up. This suggests that intervention participants did not receive an advantage of the optimism curriculum in terms of optimism or anxiety. However, AOP-PTS participants did report a significant reduction in symptoms of depression, relative to the control group, at post-intervention. A further follow-up study conducted by Johnstone et al. (2014) demonstrated that there were no significant reductions in depressive and anxious symptoms, nor attributional style, evident at either 42- or 54-month follow-up. Thus, these findings suggest AOP-PTS has an immediate effect in terms of reducing mental health problems (depressive symptoms), however such improvements are not sustained long-term.

Multitarget interventions. Multitarget PPIs refer to those that include a variety of activities, targeting two or more internal assets and/or environmental resources associated well-being. To date, there remain relatively few published investigations of multitarget PPIs conducted with youth samples. As with research on single-target PPIs, studies of multitarget PPIs, which include positive psychotherapy (Rashid et al., 2013), the high school positive psychology program (Gillham et al., 2013), *Maytiv School Program* (Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016), and *Well-Being Promotion Program* (Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014; Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017), have largely included samples of middle and high school-aged students. While no randomized controlled studies of multitarget interventions with elementary students could be located, preliminary pilot work on the Well-

Being Promotion Program with younger students demonstrates promise (Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2015).

Positive psychotherapy. Positive psychotherapy (PPT) is a therapeutic approach aimed not only at diminishing psychopathology, but also at building strengths, positive emotions, and meaning (Rashid, 2015). PPT can be divided into three phases; the first phase promotes exploration of strengths and development of personal goals, the second phase involves focusing on creating positive emotions and coping with negative memories, and the third phase includes exercises to develop meaning and purpose. The 14-session PPT model includes exercises such as gratitude journaling, performing a gratitude visit, savoring, and considering when one door closes, others open, which enhance participants' positive emotions throughout the course of therapy (Rashid, 2015). More brief applications of PPT applied to youth in schools have included eight sessions which focus on identifying and practicing strengths, as well as spotting strengths in others (Rashid, 2015).

In one of the first investigations of PPT with students in schools, Rashid et al. (2013) used a small group of 6th grade students (sample size unspecified) randomly assigned to PPT or a no-intervention control group. Participants completed the VIA Youth Survey (Park & Peterson, 2006) in a group format then learned how to use their signature strengths across life domains through exercises during eight 90-minute weekly sessions. Specifically, students engaged in activities such as writing "you at your best" stories, discussing strengths with family members, spotting strengths in others, and problem-solving through strengths use. Gratitude and savoring were also addressed through specific exercises. At pre- and post-intervention, as well as 6-month follow-up, participants in both conditions completed the CDI, SLSS, and Positive Psychotherapy Inventory- Children Version (PPTI; Rashid & Anjum, 2007). Data were also collected from

parents and teachers using the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS; Gresham & Elliot, 1990). Results from analyses revealed that while no changes were observed in terms of depression and life satisfaction; significant differences were demonstrated on the students' self-reported measure of well-being (PPTI) and parent version of the social skills measure (SSRS), with large effect sizes of $d = .90$ and $d = 1.88$, respectively. At 6-month follow-up, gains were maintained in terms of students' well-being, however the treatment and control groups did not differ on the measure of social skills.

Given promising outcomes of the first PPT application, Rashid and colleagues (2013) replicated the study with a convenience sample of 6th grade students with academic and behavioral challenges at an inner-city school. Forty-three students were randomly assigned to PPT or a no-intervention control group. To address unique needs of this population, the research team added an intervention exercise related to students' negativity bias, and had the students complete the positive and negative impressions subscales on the Conners 3 (Conners, 2008), rather than the CDI. PPT was delivered during eight weekly sessions lasting 60-minutes. Results from analyses revealed that at post-intervention, treatment and control groups did not differ on outcome measures. The authors recognized that a number of challenges, including the teacher's limited involvement in the PPT, potential brevity of 8 sessions, and lack of parental involvement, may contribute to the non-significant findings. To address such barriers, Rashid et al. (2013) conducted a third yearlong study of with 59 6th grade students from two elementary schools (one treatment, one control) in Toronto. Parents of students in the intervention group received two workshops on character strengths and facilitation of their child's well-being. Students' composite strengths scores were derived from their self-reported strengths using the Signature Strengths Assessment of Youth (SSAY; Rashid et al., 2013) online, as well VIA strengths identified by

their parents, teacher, and one peer. Parents were involved throughout intervention implementation through evening workshops, while teachers focused on integrating strengths to curriculum and emphasized students' strengths to resolve problems. Results from this unique application of PPT demonstrated it was effective in improving teacher-reported academic performance, as well as social skills ($d = 1.12$) from pre- to post-intervention as measured by the Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS; Gresham & Elliot, 2008). Parents also reported improvements in terms of the Problem Behavior composite of the SSIS from pre- to post-intervention. In terms of students' self-report, participants did not differ on the measure of well-being (i.e., the PPTI). Although results across all three studies of PPT in schools revealed inconsistent findings, preliminary findings indicate that this form of treatment may be effective in improving students' social skills, academic performance, and well-being.

High school positive psychology program. The high school positive psychology program was developed as a complement to the Penn Resiliency Program described previously, as this program aims to enhance well-being in general and thus not necessarily in response to stressors (Gillham et al., 2013). The high school curriculum, which can be delivered in small-group or whole-class format, was designed in accordance with Seligman's (2002) framework for increasing happiness through the pleasant, engagement, and meaningful life. Lessons included in the first unit focus on increasing positive emotions through activities on savoring, gratitude, and optimism, which include writing and delivering a gratitude letter, maintain a gratitude journal, and utilizing an optimistic explanatory style. The second unit is centered on the promotion of students' strengths identified using the Values in Action Inventory for Youth (Park & Peterson, 2006), including developing strengths and reflecting on times when students were "at their best." The final unit in this curricula includes activities that encourage students to reflect on aspects of

life that give them purpose and meaning, which often center on the importance of connections to others.

Gillham et al. (2013) conducted a four-year longitudinal investigation of the high school positive psychology program with a sample of 347 9th grade students who were randomly assigned to a general language arts class, or one in which the teacher would deliver the PPI. Participants receiving the intervention completed 20-25 80-minute sessions throughout the school year, as well as corresponding homework activities to practice skills and journal entries to reflect on material learned. Preliminary analyses examining the intervention effects through 11th grade revealed that the program improved students' social skills (e.g., cooperation, empathy, and self-control) according to teachers' and parents' reports. Additionally, analyses demonstrated that intervention participants had higher levels of school engagement per teachers' reports. Although the high school positive psychology program did not enhance students' overall academic achievement, follow-up analyses suggest that the program significantly improved achievement in language arts for participants who started with low to average levels of achievement at baseline. Finally, there were no effects of the intervention on students' symptoms of anxiety or depression (positive indicators were not mentioned in the summary of the study findings in this book chapter). Findings from this investigation thus suggest that this multitarget PPI demonstrates potential in improving students' interpersonal and academic skills, however published findings to date do not suggest it enhances students' mental health.

Maytiv School Program. The *Maytiv School Program* (Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016) is a schoolwide initiative developed to improve the well-being of secondary students in Israel. Program targets include six key factors of well-being that have gleaned support within the positive psychology literature: positive emotions,

gratitude, goal setting and fulfillment, optimism, character strengths, and positive relationships. Teacher-delivered classroom lessons engage students in discussions, reading poems and stories, and watching clips of videos related to the core positive psychology constructs. Students also complete activities such as writing and delivering a gratitude letter and identifying long-term goals as well as short-term objectives to achieve them.

Shoshani and Steinmetz (2014) explored the effectiveness of the program using a sample of 547 7th-9th grade students ages 11-14 at a single intervention school, as compared to 501 students at a demographically similar control school. Participants completed a socio-demographic questionnaire, the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI; Derogatis & Spencer, 1982) to assess psychological symptoms, the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Zeidner et al., 1993) to assess self-efficacy in managing stressors, and the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R; Scheier et al., 1994) to assess optimism and pessimism, as well as the SWLS and the RSE at four time points across the two-year study. Results from hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) analyses demonstrated that from baseline to 1-year follow-up, intervention participants showed significant decreases in general distress, anxiety and depression, whereas symptoms among students in the control group increased significantly. Additionally, the students in the intervention condition improved in levels of self-esteem, self-efficacy and optimism, and reduced in interpersonal sensitivity symptoms, however no improvements were observed in terms of life satisfaction. Study findings thus indicate that multitarget PPIs may best be positioned as part of the whole school's initiative to improve students' mental health, given the variety of positive outcomes associated with student' participation.

These promising findings were echoed in Shoshani, Steinmetz, and Kanat-Maymon's (2016) larger scale follow-up study conducted with a sample of 2,517 7th-9th grade students in

one of 70 classes across 6 schools in Israel. Participants assigned to a treatment group or no-intervention control completed the SWLS, PANAS, and Friends subscale of the School Adjustment Report (Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group, 2001) as indicators of well-being, and the student- and teacher-report School Engagement Survey (Finlay & National Center for School Engagement, 2006) as an index of classroom engagement. Additionally, GPA and attendance data were gathered as measures of students' achievement. All data were gathered across four time points from pre-intervention to one-year follow-up. Results from hierarchical linear modeling revealed that participation in the *Maytiv School Program* was associated with an improvement in the students' SWB (i.e., increase in positive emotions, decrease in negative emotions) over time, whereas participation in the control group related to decrease or no change in the outcome variables. Peer relations, student and teacher-reported indices of engagement (i.e., emotional and cognitive engagement), and GPA also improved for the intervention group relative to the control group. The effect sizes (i.e, Cohen's *d*) across these outcomes (SWB indices: .26-.40, school engagement: .24-.71, and GPA: .30) support the utility of such universal PPI programming on broader scale with lasting effects.

Well-Being Promotion Program. The *Well-Being Promotion Program* (Suldo, 2016) was originally developed in 2007 in response to the emergence of empirical evidence indicating that addressing psychological distress was insufficient in promoting students' optimal outcomes. The program was designed in accordance with Seligman's (2002) framework for increasing happiness into upper ranges through intentional activities that evoke positive emotions related to the past, present, and future. Specifically, this program includes 10 60-minute small-group sessions incorporating activities designed to build students' gratitude, kindness, use of character strengths, optimism and hope. Throughout the intervention, students discuss each positive

psychological construct and how it relates to happiness, learn specific strategies to build the given constructs (i.e., you at your best, gratitude journaling, performing acts of kindness, using character strengths in new ways, savoring, optimistic thinking, and best possible selves), and practice independently by carrying out strategies learned for homework.

The *Well-Being Promotion Program* has been evaluated through two randomized controlled investigations with small groups of middle school students. The first study conducted by Suldo, Savage, and Mercer (2014) included a sample of 55 sixth grade students (M age = 11.43 years) who were randomly assigned to the intervention ($n = 28$) or waitlist control ($n = 27$). Inclusion criteria for this study included less than optimal life satisfaction (i.e., average BMSLSS score between 1 and 6 on a 7-point metric), thus students were first screened to determine eligibility for participation. At pre- and post-intervention, as well as 6-month follow-up, participants then completed the SLSS and PANAS-C, and the Youth Self Report of the Child Behavior Checklist (YSR; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001), a 112-item assessment of internalizing and externalizing behavior. Students' feedback was also collected via a one-page handout inquiring about the activities the intervention participants enjoyed the most and least, as well as those they hoped to continue. Repeated measures ANOVAs using sample of 40 participants matched on global life satisfaction according to propensity scores at baseline demonstrated that, relative to the control group ($n = 20$), intervention group participants ($n = 20$) reported a significant increase in life satisfaction. The gains experienced by the intervention group were maintained at 6-month follow-up, however students in the control group reported their own gains in life satisfaction during that period. Analyses revealed no significant intervention effects on positive or negative affect, or psychopathology.

The second evaluation of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* conducted by Roth, Suldo, and Ferron (2017) extended dose and components of the core manualized intervention described above through the addition of two follow-up sessions and a parent psychoeducational session. The sample included 42 7th grade students who were randomly assigned to the intervention ($n = 21$) or waitlist control ($n = 21$). As with the previous study, inclusion criteria included less than optimal life satisfaction (i.e., average BMSLSS score between 1 and 6 on a 7-point metric), thus the partner school screened all 7th grade students for potential participation in the study. At pre-intervention, post-intervention, and 2-month follow-up, participants completed the SLSS, PANAS-C, and Brief Problem Monitor-Youth (BPM-Y; Achenbach, McConaughy, Ivanova, & Rescorla, 2011), a 19-item measure of youths' internalizing, externalizing, and attention problems. Students in the intervention condition completed a total of 12 50-minute small-group sessions, including the two follow-up sessions that provided a review of activities learned throughout implementation. Results from piecewise growth modeling revealed that the intervention group reported significant increases in life satisfaction and positive affect, and reductions in negative affect, compared to the waitlist control group at immediate post-intervention. Additionally, the gains observed in positive affect were maintained at 2-month follow-up. Intervention participants' improvements in terms of internalizing and externalizing psychopathology were marginally significant ($p < .10$), with these small reductions in internalizing problems maintained at follow-up. In general, the positive intervention effects were more widespread (i.e., immediately apparent [growth from baseline to post-intervention] in a greater number of aspects of subjective well-being) and enduring in this version of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* that included the parent psychoeducation component, as compared to the student-focused predecessor.

Taken together, findings from both investigations of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* with middle school students support its utility as an evidence-based method for increasing subjective well-being, with the ability to generate lasting gains in students' positive affect. Given the effectiveness of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* with middle school students, Suldo, Hearon, Bander, and colleagues (2015) made developmentally appropriate modifications to this multitarget PPI to investigate its feasibility with elementary school-aged students. Such modifications were investigated through a pilot investigation conducted with a class of 12 fourth grade students and their classroom teacher, who served as a co-facilitator of all weekly classwide sessions. Changes to the original *Well-Being Promotion Program* (Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014) included the addition of two unique sessions to build student-teacher and student-student relationships. Specifically, a psychoeducation session was added to provide teachers with an overview of the program and offer evidence-based strategies to communicate support and care to students. A team-building session was also incorporated to foster a supportive group environment by identifying similarities among classmates and participating in teamwork activities. Classroom relationships were revisited throughout the intervention during group discussions of instances when others at school had done something particularly nice for them or they themselves have gone out of their way to demonstrate support to others in school. Other modifications included splitting the single session on the assessment of signature character strengths into two meetings, eliminating sessions centered on future-focused positive emotions (i.e., optimism and hope), and minor changes such as using more developmentally appropriate language for the discussion of key positive psychological constructs throughout sessions. A behavior management system was also integrated into the program manual, in accordance with the schoolwide positive behavior support procedures utilized by the partner school. At pre-

intervention, post-intervention and two-month follow-up, students completed the PANAS-C, MSLSS, and SLSS. Data on students' attendance and disciplinary history were also collected from school records. Results from paired-samples *t* tests from pre- to post-intervention revealed statistically significant increases in students' positive affect and satisfaction with self, with effect sizes of $d = .52$ and $.40$, respectively. Medium effects were also demonstrated for global life satisfaction ($d = .40$), and satisfaction with friends ($d = .43$) and living environment ($d = .52$), which analyses revealed were marginally significant ($p < .10$). All gains were maintained at the 2-month follow-up. Although no changes were observed for negative affect, satisfaction with family and school, or students' attendance or discipline referrals from pre- to post-intervention, analyses revealed a statistically significant positive change in mean levels of school satisfaction ($d = .68$) from post-intervention to follow-up.

The enduring gains in positive affect and life satisfaction provided evidence of promise that this PPI may positively impact the mental health of elementary school age children. Such preliminary promise in part justifies further study of this intervention in a study with a more rigorous design that addresses some of the limitations of this first pilot study. Those limitations include: use of a small, convenience sample without random assignment, no comparison condition, and limited outcome measures. Regarding the latter, while subjective well-being was measured comprehensively, academic functioning was assessed with rather broad and diffuse indicators (i.e., distal indicators of behavioral engagement) and social functioning in the classroom was not assessed. More sensitive indicators of academic functioning may entail students' and teachers' perceptions of behavioral and emotional engagement in classroom learning, as has been investigated in other recent PPIs with classes of elementary students (e.g., Quinlan et al., 2015). Similarly, social functioning may be indexed by students' and teachers'

perceptions of classroom social support and relationship quality, particularly because this is a primary focus of the elementary adaptation of the program. Future research on the *Well-Being Promotion Program* may consider adding intervention content that targets positive emotions in the future. Specifically, research demonstrates that activities pertaining to students' levels of hope and goal-directed thinking (i.e., Best Possible Selves) might be particularly effective with younger elementary age youth (Owens & Patterson, 2013).

Considerations for Positive Psychology Interventions with Elementary Students

A majority of the studies of PPI efficacy have been conducted with adults and adolescents; the few investigations including samples of children have shed light on considerations and subsequent modifications appropriate for elementary students. Suldo, Hearon, Dickinson, et al.'s (2015) article in the *Communique* revealed challenges their research team encountered when implementing a multitarget PPI with small pull-out groups of third, fourth, and fifth grade students. Primary barriers included participants' (a) aversion to tasks found to be academically challenging (i.e., reading aloud, writing), (b) limited understanding of cognitively complex concepts and activities (e.g., definitions of character strengths), and (c) difficulty completing intervention tasks independently (i.e., generating novel uses of character strengths). The authors addressed these concerns throughout implementation by making modifications such as providing students with the choice to write, dictate aloud, or draw for certain activities, providing developmentally-appropriate definitions of key concepts, and supporting students with more one-on-one guidance as necessary.

Beyond difficulties related to the academic demands of activities and particular positive psychology construct, the authors noted concerns related to students' off-task behavior and limited parent and teacher involvement. To increase students' engagement, the authors

implemented a behavior management system, such as utilizing schoolwide positive behavior support initiatives already in place, which included consistent verbal praise for participation and in some cases small tangible rewards. Limited teacher involvement was addressed by providing student participants' teachers with weekly handouts describing the intervention activities so that they could promote practice and generalization within the classroom environment. Although attempts were made to contact parents, few phone calls were returned, which the authors hypothesize may be due in part to the school's limited communication with families other than when disciplinary action is taken. Despite barriers encountered, Suldo, Hearon, Dickinson, et al. (2015) note that they were ultimately able to create statistically significant and clinically meaningful improvements in students' levels of life satisfaction.

These findings support the feasibility of PPI implementation with younger elementary students, however also underscore the importance of making developmentally appropriate changes to pre-existing PPI content, structure, and context to ensure students may successfully complete the activities so as to increase the likelihood of enhancing their subjective well-being. Such modifications may include simplifying the language, providing options to draw rather than write activities, incorporating additional activities related to more difficult concepts (e.g., graphical organizers) to ensure comprehension, and providing greater levels of individual support as needed. Findings from this pilot study also highlight the importance of including key stakeholders such as teachers and parents throughout the intervention implementation so that students may generalize skills learned in small groups to their home and classroom environments. One strategy for addressing this may include providing both parents and teachers with psychoeducation sessions that provide an overview of intervention activities prior to implementation, followed by weekly updates on concepts learned and corresponding homework

activities. Another strategy might include providing the intervention directly in the classroom context so that teachers can play a more direct role as a co-facilitator as well as play a more active role in building student-teacher and peer relationships.

Importance of Positive Classroom Relationships to Students' Well-Being

The quality of students' interpersonal relationships in school is a central predictor of youth happiness. Previous investigations have revealed that students with complete mental health perceive greater support from their teachers, classmates, and peers (Antaramian, Huebner, Hills, & Valois, 2010; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008), while supportive relationships at home and in school serve to maintain a flourishing mental health status, characterized by high subjective well-being, over time (Kelly, Hills, Huebner, & McQuillin, 2012). As such, strengthening the quality of students' interpersonal relationships may be a key pathway to facilitating youth subjective well-being. Children who report a secure sense of relatedness to school tend to be those who are more highly engaged and maintain high levels of academic motivation and performance (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Contrastingly, youth who report lower levels of school satisfaction attribute such feelings to poor student-teacher relationships and a reduced sense of school relatedness, ultimately producing detrimental effects on academic outcomes (Baker, 1999). Classroom-based PPIs that incorporate teacher and classmate components (as created and implemented in the version of the Well-Being Promotion Program piloted by Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2015) can thus serve to enhance relationships and capitalize on resources inherent to the school environment whilst enhancing other internal factors that optimize students' educational success.

Relationships with teachers. Former investigations of the links between students' mental health and various aspects of school climate revealed that positive student-teacher relationships emerged as a unique predictor of life satisfaction among samples of middle school

students (Suldo, Thalji-Raitano, Hasemeyer, Gelley, & Hoy, 2013), as well as high school girls (Suldo, McMahan, Chappel, & Loker, 2012). More detailed studies aiming to disentangle the aspects of student-teacher relationships contributing to student happiness indicated that adolescents with high life satisfaction perceived their teachers to provide greater levels of emotional support (e.g., demonstrated care and support) and instrumental support (e.g., provided tangible assistance to support learning), and reported a variety of ways in which the teachers showed support via open-ended questions (Suldo, Friedrich, White, Farmer, Minch, & Michalowski, 2009).

One strategy of facilitating positive student-teacher relationships is to involve teachers directly in intervention efforts as primary or co-facilitators. This is supported by Durlak and colleagues' (2011) meta-analysis of 213 school-based social-emotional learning programs evaluated with over 270,000 K-12 students, which demonstrated that programs delivered by classroom teachers effectively improved student outcomes. This finding indicates that universal social-emotional curricula can be integrated and sustained in routine classroom practices at all levels (e.g., elementary through high school) without assistance provided by outside personnel. Further support for the inclusion of teachers as co-facilitators has come from research investigations of universal multitarget positive psychology interventions. Specifically, Rashid et al. (2013) found that 6th grade students participating in a strengths-based intervention experienced improvements on a greater number of social-emotional and academic outcomes when character strengths were integrated into the classroom curriculum by the teacher, rather than delivered as sessions by the external research team in structured sessions. However, compared to the control, intervention participants did not experience statistically significant gains in satisfaction or well-being.

Relationships with classmates. Social relationships with peers also play a critical role in children's well-being, with the ability to produce positive or negative emotions depending on the valence of social interactions experienced. Case in point, researchers have linked negative experiences with classmates including loneliness (Asher & Paquette, 2003; Cillessen & Bellemore, 1999), peer rejection (Beeri & Lev-Wiesel, 2012), and victimization (Rigby, 2000) to psychological distress and diminished views of self. Additionally, longitudinal research has revealed that personal characteristics, including withdrawal and negative self-views *predict* peer victimization (Hodges & Perry, 1999), which serves to predict a host of other negative outcomes including symptoms of anxiety, depression, and aggression (Hanish & Guerra, 2002; Malti, Perren, & Buchmann, 2010).

Consistent with growth in the positive psychology movement, researchers have also investigated the impact of positive and negative peer experiences on students' subjective well-being. Guhn et al. (2013) conducted a population-based study on the association of victimization and relationships with children's life satisfaction and negative indicators of psychological functioning using a sample of 2,792 4th grade students nested in 201 classrooms across 72 schools in Canada. Results from multi-level analyses revealed that positive relationships with adults and peers were most strongly related to life satisfaction and self-esteem, while victimization had the strongest association with depressive symptoms and anxiety. Additionally, interaction effects revealed that victimization was most strongly associated with low life satisfaction, low self-esteem, and high depressive symptomology for girls with low connectedness to peers and adults. Research also demonstrates that positive peer relationships impact youth life satisfaction, despite having other personal and environmental assets. Using a sample of 1,402 4th-7th grade students across 25 schools in Canada, Oberle, Schonert-Reichel,

and Zumbo (2011) found that students who experienced higher life satisfaction reported more positive peer relationships and feelings of school connectedness, and also attended schools with higher mean levels of connectedness. These predictors remained significant after accounting for perceived levels of parental support and personal assets such as optimism. These findings suggest that improving the quality of peer relationships through classroom-based positive psychology interventions may be an appropriate method of enhancing students' subjective well-being, however few studies have tested this empirically. In one exception, Quinlan et al. (2015) investigated the impact of a classwide strengths intervention on 193 elementary school students' perceptions of class cohesion and friction, and well-being, among other outcomes. As noted previously, intervention participants scored significantly higher on class cohesion and positive affect, while scoring lower on class friction during 3-month follow-up. These findings provide evidence to suggest that engaging students in classwide positive psychology interventions may be an effective method of not only directly increasing well-being but indirectly improving positive emotions by enhancing the quality of classroom relationships.

Summary and Gaps in the Literature

Since the introduction of the positive psychology movement, youth psychological well-being has become increasingly acknowledged as not merely the absence of mental health problems, but the presence of positive indicators of functioning. The traditional one-dimensional model of mental health, which conceptualizes the reduction of distress as consistent with the promotion of well-being, has been called into question by research demonstrating mental health problems and well-being are separate yet interrelated constructs (Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008). This is supported by research demonstrating youth who experience complete mental health (i.e., low psychopathology and high subjective well-being) maintain

superior academic outcomes, social-emotional functioning, and physical health compared to those without psychopathology but who also have low subjective well-being (Antaramian, Huebner, Hills, & Valois, 2010; Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008). As such, educational scholars and practitioners have become increasingly interested in identifying evidence-based strategies for promoting complete mental health.

Although the genetic set point predicts the largest percent of variance in an individual's chronic level of happiness, research demonstrates that intentional activities also account for nearly 40%, indicating a sizeable portion may be improved through interventions (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). Research findings indicate that brief scripted activities designed to mimic the thoughts and behaviors of already happy individuals, commonly referred to as positive psychology interventions, have been effective in improving adults' well-being (Layous & Lyubomirsky, 2014). Increasingly in the last decade, researchers have extended studies of positive psychology interventions to samples of youth, including children and adolescents in school settings. The identification and implementation of evidence-based strategies to promote youth well-being is consistent with other proactive, universal supports designed to promote positive psychological functioning and prevent the development of mental health problems.

To date, the majority of positive psychology intervention studies conducted with youth have included the use of activities aimed at singular constructs related to improved well-being, including gratitude, kindness, use of character strengths, hope and goal-directed thinking, and optimism. The research on comprehensive multitarget interventions that engage youth in activities centered on two or more of these constructs lags behind in comparison. Additionally, most investigations have explored the utility of positive psychology interventions with secondary

students, leaving a need to determine the efficacy of such interventions in improving the well-being of younger (elementary-age) students.

Beyond the current paucity of research investigating comprehensive multitarget positive psychology interventions on elementary students' subjective well-being, there is little study of the impact of additional intervention components, such as team-building activities with classmates and psychoeducation with teachers, on students' well-being. Additionally, the extent to which incorporation of these components within the context of a positive psychology intervention results in improved student-teacher and peer relationships, as well as classroom engagement remains somewhat understudied.

Purpose of the Current Study

To date, there are no published investigations that examine the efficacy of a classwide multitarget PPI in enhancing elementary students' subjective well-being relative to a control condition. Given the growing consensus that psychological well-being is not merely the absence of mental health problems but presence of positive indicators of functioning, and the academic and social-emotional benefits realized by youth with complete mental health, there remains a need to promote such positive indicators within the school setting. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of a relatively recently developed classwide multitarget PPI on elementary students' subjective well-being, mental health problems, classroom relationships, and academic engagement. This study built upon and extended the evaluation of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* examined in only one previous pilot study conducted with a class of elementary students (Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2015). Improvements to the design of the evaluation include (a) random assignment of participating classrooms to an intervention group or delayed intervention control, (b) a larger sample of children included in the evaluation, (c) an

additional intervention target (i.e., a session targeting hope and goal-directed thinking), (d) an additional intervention component (i.e., parent psychoeducation), and (e) a wider breadth of outcome indicators, to include social and academic functioning (in addition to subjective well-being). This investigation was undertaken with the goal of determining whether or not the *Well-Being Promotion Program* positively impacts students' success so as to provide key stakeholders including teachers, parents, school psychologists, guidance counselors, and administrators with greater options for universal evidence-based interventions. In order to accomplish these research objectives, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. *Relative to a delayed intervention control group, is participation in a multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention associated with immediate changes in elementary school students':*
 - a. *Life satisfaction*
 - b. *Positive affect*
 - c. *Negative affect*
 - d. *Internalizing problems*
 - e. *Externalizing problems*
 - f. *Classroom social support*
 - g. *Classroom engagement?*

2. *Is participation in a multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention associated with sustained changes in elementary school students':*
 - a. *Life satisfaction*
 - b. *Positive affect*
 - c. *Negative affect*

- d. Internalizing problems*
- e. Externalizing problems*
- f. Classroom social support*
- g. Classroom engagement?*

Chapter Three: Method

The current study evaluated the impact of a comprehensive multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention on elementary students' social and emotional outcomes, as indicated by levels of life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, internalizing and externalizing problems, classroom social support, and classroom engagement. Consistent with an ecological approach to school mental health services, teachers and parents were involved in this intervention to help students practice and generalize the skills acquired. This chapter first describes the study's participants and procedures then describes the intervention that was implemented and evaluated. Next, the measures used to examine the outcome variables of interest are discussed. Finally, ethical considerations and data analysis procedures are described.

Participants

Teachers and students in classes of fourth and fifth grade at one large elementary school within an urban school district in a southeastern state were recruited for participation. Consistent with recommendations made by Suldo, Hearon, Dickinson, et al. (2015), this study recruited older elementary students given their ability to comprehend abstract concepts (e.g., signature character strengths, goal-directed thinking) more easily than younger students (i.e., K – 3).

The partnering school was selected based on the administration's interest in positive psychology; several teachers had recently participated successfully in a teacher-focused well-being program. After the school building's school psychologist indicated interest in implementing a student-focused initiative, this researcher and her major professor (Shannon Suldo, Professor, School Psychology Program) secured buy-in for this study through a meeting

(held in June 2015) with the school's principal, guidance counselor, and school psychologist. A handout was generated to provide the stakeholders with an overview of the study, including the weekly classwide activities (see Appendix A). All fourth and fifth grade classrooms were planned to participate in the intervention as part of the school's universal social-emotional programming to promote student well-being during 2015-2016. At the participating school, there were approximately 950 students, with nearly 300 of them enrolled across eight fourth grade classes and seven fifth grade classes. Of note, two classes were removed from recruitment in this evaluation because the teachers took part in a related well-being promotion intervention during the 2014-2015 school year, leaving 116 students enrolled in one of six fourth grade classes and 143 students enrolled in one of seven fifth grade classes as eligible for recruitment.

Procedures

Recruitment of participants. As part of the school's universal mental health efforts to promote student well-being, all fourth and fifth grade classes participated in the classwide well-being promotion intervention described in this chapter. Only students with active parent consent to participate in the evaluation of the intervention took part in this study through completion of self-report surveys used to evaluate the effect of the program participation. Two copies of parental consent forms (see Appendix B) that explain the purpose of the study were sent home with all fourth and fifth grade students via their homeroom teacher (one copy to be signed and returned to the school, the second copy is for the family's records). Incentives were provided to the fourth and fifth grade classrooms with the highest percentage of consent forms returned. Specifically, those classes received snacks (i.e., Oreo cookies) for all students. Recruitment was continued until at least 50% of students in each fourth and fifth grade class received consent to participate in this study.

Through these procedures, parental consent was attained for 180 of the total 259 eligible fourth and fifth grade students, which corresponds to a 69% participation rate. After recruitment was complete, students with consent completed a brief demographics survey and baseline self-report measures of subjective well-being (i.e., global life satisfaction, positive and negative affect), perceived classroom social support (i.e., support provided by teacher and classmates), and classroom engagement (i.e., behavioral and affective engagement and disaffection). Prior to completing these measures, a member of the research team read aloud the student assent form (see Appendix C). All but one of 180 students provided written assent and participated in the study data collection at baseline. Upon completion of baseline measures, students' classes were randomly assigned to receive the intervention immediately, or later in the school year (i.e., after the holiday break, during the second semester) as part of the delayed intervention control group.

Stratified random assignment was employed to ensure that approximately equal numbers of fourth and fifth grade classes were assigned to the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control conditions. Additionally, because the school utilized a co-teach model for some of the fourth and fifth grade students, whereby students receive instruction from one teacher for the first half of the day and from another teacher for the second half, some pairs of teachers had to be assigned to the same condition. This type of random assignment was utilized to ensure that the intervention and control groups had approximately equal numbers of classes with students in different grade levels, and classrooms with different teaching modalities (single teacher vs. co-taught). Students and teachers did not receive any incentives for participating in the study (i.e., completing student and teacher surveys at baseline, post-intervention, and follow-up).

Student survey administration. All student participants completed self-report measures during baseline assessment (September 2015) and immediate post-intervention assessment (December 2015). Additionally, the immediate intervention group completed these measures at 3-month follow-up (March 2016). For each data collection session, a list was compiled of all students (i.e., students in both intervention and delayed intervention control groups) who received parental consent to participate in the study. A member of the research team administered the self-report measures to these students within their class during school hours. Students were provided with a writing instrument, asked to sit at their desk, and asked not to speak to one another while completing their surveys in order to ensure privacy. A member of the research team read aloud the student assent form, notifying students that they may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Students who agreed to participate signed the assent form prior to completing the self-report measures. A member of the research team then provided instructions for the survey, reading aloud all items to student participants. The surveys took approximately 45 minutes to complete, with follow-up administrations taking approximately 30 minutes. Classes of students completed one of three separate versions of the survey packets, which were counterbalanced to control for order effects. Upon completion of the survey administration, a research team member visually scanned the packet for skipped items or response errors and students who responded with errors by mistake were asked to redo those items to reduce incomplete or missing data. Baseline assessment occurred the week after parental consent was provided in September, three weeks after the children began the school year. Then, classes were randomly assigned to condition. Post-intervention data collection occurred during the week after the intervention was completed (December), and follow-up (i.e., for the immediate intervention group only) occurred three month after the intervention finished (March).

Intervention implementation. The multicomponent intervention included sessions and materials for teachers, parents, and students as detailed below.

Teacher component. During the first week of the intervention, teachers of the classes assigned to the intervention group participated in a psychoeducation session (session 1a) led by the intervention leaders (including this researcher). The psychoeducation session was held with small groups of teachers who met at mutually agreeable times. The goals of this session were to establish rapport, introduce key positive psychological constructs, share strategies teachers can use to convey support to their students, and explain the intervention program and schedule for remaining program activities. A didactic PowerPoint presentation handout was used to deliver the content related to these goals. Additionally, teachers learned about their students' baseline subjective well-being scores using visual graphs that depicted class-level means on life satisfaction (see Appendix Q). Teachers learned anticipated benefits of program implementation. They also assisted in the planning and development of a behavioral management plan that was used throughout intervention implementation and learned about their role as co-facilitators. The psychoeducation concluded with time for the teachers to ask questions and problem-solve their anticipated concerns with the intervention leaders. After this first session, teachers were involved as co-facilitators for the classwide intervention sessions by assisting with behavior management, guiding students through the completion of program activities and reminding them about homework, and sharing ways in which students have demonstrated care and support to others in school. Teachers also received weekly handouts with reminders about the content covered during the intervention session that week, student homework activities, and strategies to further personal/class involvement in the session topic of the week (e.g., writing own "You at Your Best" story and sharing it with students). Co-facilitation of sessions and consistent between-

session communication between invention leaders and teachers was utilized to promote students' practice of skills learned in session and augment teachers' personal levels of well-being.

Parent component. During the fourth week of the intervention, parents of students in classrooms assigned to the immediate intervention group were invited to participate in a psychoeducation session (session 1b) led by the intervention leaders. This session was offered in the afternoon/evening that corresponded to the school's Parent Conference Night during which all parents were invited to campus to speak with their child's teacher and review progress. Parents were invited via handouts distributed the week prior (see Appendix R), as well as some of the teachers' personal Edsby websites. Members of the research team were available for two session presentations (at 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM) in the library. However, no parents attended either session.

The anticipated goals of this session had been to establish rapport with the parents, introduce them to the field of positive psychology, and explain the intervention program activities. Similar to the teacher psychoeducation, a didactic PowerPoint presentation was intended to guide delivery of content related to the goals. Parents in attendance would have learned about the importance of their personal happiness, as well as the happiness of their children, and asked to complete weekly exercises centered on session targets (e.g., acts of kindness) themselves. Additionally, parents would have had the opportunity to ask questions about the classwide program and the purpose of the program would have been clarified. Although information was not received by parents during this in-person session, a handout that summarized the session content was sent home via the children. Further, parents also received weekly handouts via hardcopy given to their children to bring home in their homework binder that provided an overview of the session activities that occurred each week, homework activities

to be completed by their children, and strategies to further personal or family involvement in the session topic of the week (e.g., writing own “You at Your Best” story and sharing it with their child). Regular provision of information to parents was intended to promote their child’s practice of skills learned in session and augment parents’ personal levels of well-being.

Student component. Seven classes (with data collected from six; the seventh was excluded due to participation in a related PPI the year prior) were assigned to immediately receive the intervention (beginning in late September). Intervention sessions were led by an intervention leader (i.e., this researcher, another doctoral candidate in the school psychology program at the University of South Florida [USF], and their major professor who is a licensed psychologist and developer of the *Well-Being Promotion Program*) and two co-facilitators (i.e., the classroom teacher and a trained graduate student in the school psychology program at USF). Each class received 12 intervention sessions, including the teacher psychoeducation session without the students present, over the course of 10 weeks. Classwide intervention sessions occurred once per week, with two exceptions: (a) during the first week of implementation, student session 1 occurred during the same week or the week following the teacher psychoeducation (1a), and (b) during the seventh week of implementation, student sessions 7a and 7b occurred during the same week. The intervention began in late September and sessions occurred on the same day at approximately the same time for each class each week. Attrition for the intervention group was relatively low, with only two students withdrawing over the course of intervention implementation. The delayed intervention control group received the intervention in the spring of the 2015-2016 school year after the follow-up data were collected (in December), with no planned exposure to the intervention activities or research team members, with the exception of baseline and post-intervention data collection.

Well-Being Promotion Program for Elementary Students

The intervention implemented and evaluated was an adaptation of a multitarget positive psychology intervention implemented with small groups of middle school students, described in Suldo, Savage, and Mercer (2014). The intervention manual was developed by the Positive Psychology Research Team within the School Psychology program at the University of South Florida in 2007 and updated for pilot applications with elementary school students in 2014 (Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2015; Suldo, Hearon, Dickinson et al., 2015). The intervention was created to be consistent with Seligman's (2002) framework for increasing happiness. Within this framework, people are capable of increasing their happiness levels into the upper range of their genetic set points through purposeful activities. Happiness is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct, with emotional aspects related to the past, present, and future. This has been supported through empirical investigations targeting gratitude, through which satisfaction is increased by targeting positive emotions related to things others have done to benefit you in the past (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). In terms of the present, Seligman suggests that people can make lasting improvements in their levels of happiness by identifying personal character strengths (e.g., kindness, bravery, love of learning) then enacting them in new ways. This has also been supported through research studies exploring the impact of using character strengths on indicators of happiness among adults (Seligman et al., 2005) and, more recently, children (Quinlan et al., 2015). With respect to the future, Seligman suggests individuals can augment happiness through learned optimism and adoption of an optimistic explanatory style. While strategies for optimistic thinking were eliminated from the first version of the elementary school version of the manual due to the cognitive complexity of the intervention activities and topics, a session on hope and goal-directed thinking was created and

intended for inclusion given the success of activities such as “best possible selves in the future” adapted for use with elementary age youth (Owens & Patterson, 2013).

The second version of the intervention for classes of elementary students is thus divided into sessions designed to increase positive emotions related to the past (e.g., gratitude), present (e.g., kindness, using signature strengths), and future (e.g., hope and goal-directed thinking). This version of the manual retains activities designed to improve the quality of classroom relationships (e.g., student-student, and student-teacher). In sum, the first version of the intervention for elementary students included 11 sessions (a teacher psychoeducation session followed by ten weekly classwide sessions), while the current (second) version included 13 sessions to be delivered over the course of 10 weeks. The additional session was the parent psychoeducation session (offered in this implementation, however not delivered to parents due to lack of attendance) and the classwide session targeting hope. The phases of the 13-session intervention are described in greater detail below.

Overview of sessions 1-2: Building positive relationships. The overarching goal of sessions 1a – 1c and 2 is to build students’ positive relationships with their teacher and classmates, as well as provide parents with psychoeducation about the program. As described above, teachers and parents learn about positive psychology and are provided with an overview of the remaining intervention sessions during sessions 1a and 1b, respectively. Teachers are also provided with strategies to convey support and care for their students based on the empirical findings of Suldo et al. (2009). During session 1c (the first classwide session), the intervention leader and co-facilitators engage the students in team building activities to identify commonalities among classmates. Additionally, students participate in “Creative Coloring,” (Jones, 1998) then reflect on the benefits of working with others through a group discussion.

During session 2, the students and teacher are asked separately to recall times when classmates were supportive of each other and when the teacher was supportive of his/her students, as well as when students demonstrated care for their teacher. The students then engage in “You at Your Best,” an activity that has been found to provide an initial boost in happiness among adults (Seligman et al., 2005). Students describe in writing the time when they felt like they were at their best (e.g., displaying a talent, creating something), then discuss their experience with peers who are encouraged to comment on the positives in each student’s story. They then learn about the purpose of the group, with emphasis on determinants of happiness (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005) and the ways happiness is augmented through purposeful activity.

Overview of sessions 3-4: Positive emotions about the past. The goal of sessions 3 and 4 is to create positive interpretation of past events. During session 3, students are introduced to the concept of gratitude and how it relates to their happiness. They then learn to practice gratitude journaling, a method of focusing on the things, people, and events for which they feel grateful. Students are instructed to write down five things for which they feel grateful (*“both small and large things, events, people, talents, or anything else you can think of”*) in daily entries. The frequency of journaling is high for the first week, in line with Emmons and McCullough’s (2003) finding that higher intensity of activities focused on feeling grateful lead to greater increased in indicators of happiness. Students are encouraged to complete gratitude journaling once per week in subsequent sessions. During session 4, students prepare to make their gratitude visit, a strategy intended to increase gratitude by intensifying the link between thankful thoughts, feelings, and behavior (Seligman, 2002). In session, students complete a one-page written letter through which they detail reasons they are grateful to someone who has been especially kind to them but who they haven’t properly thanked. Group leaders assist students in

selecting someone to whom they can deliver the letter in person so they may read it aloud to them during a gratitude visit. After completing the letter, students plan a day and time to make their gratitude visit, then report on their experience during the following session.

Overview of sessions 5-8: Positive emotions about the present. The primary goal of sessions 5-8 is to augment positive emotions related to the present by engaging students in activities through which they identify, interpret, and practice using character strengths. Students first learn that acts of kindness are behaviors that benefit others or make others happy at the cost of personal time or effort (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). They are then asked to perform five acts of kindness (e.g., washing dishes at home, helping classmates carry their books, passing out papers for the teacher) during one designated day per week over at least two weeks. Next, students learn about their personal signature strengths and complete the Values in Action Survey of Strengths for Youth online (VIA-Youth; Park & Peterson, 2006), ideally via the relatively new brief version available at viacharacter.org that contains 96 items (vs. the full 198-item version). During the following session held the same week, students review their computer-reported list of top 5 strengths from the objective assessment and select a signature strength to use in a new way each day for one week with the assistance of the intervention facilitators. Similarly, during the following session, students select a second strength to use in a new way each day across multiple life domains (e.g., family, friends, school) for the next week. Students are instructed to record their feelings after using their chosen signature strength in order to promote their understanding that positive thoughts, actions, and feelings are interrelated.

Overview of session 9: Positive emotions about the future. The goal of session 9 is to increase students' positive emotions related to the future by promoting hope and goal-directed thinking. Specifically, students learn the definition of hope and how it relates to their happiness,

then complete an activity through which they depict their best possible selves in the future through writing or a visual drawing. Students then share aloud methods of achieving their goals to motivate them and encourage hopeful thinking.

Overview of session 10: Termination and maintenance. The goal of the final session is to conclude the weekly meetings and promote students' continued use of the strategies learned throughout the program implementation. Students revisit the determinants of happiness (Lyumobirsky et al., 2005) and reflect on their progress over the past 10 weeks. Additionally, students complete a measure of treatment acceptability and discuss aloud the activities they plan to continue using. Students are awarded with a certificate of completion and program facilitators express gratitude for the students' efforts.

Data from School Records

Data collected from students' school records provided by the partnering school district included race/ethnicity and free or reduced lunch status.

Student Self-Report Measures

Demographics form. The demographics form (see Appendix H) used in the current study includes questions pertaining to students' gender, age, parents' marital status, and living situation (i.e., who they live with most of the time). All items on the demographics form included multiple choice response options.

Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS; Huebner, 1991). The SLSS is a 7-item self-report measure of youths' global life satisfaction (see Appendix I). Using a 6-point response metric from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*), children rate their agreement with statements pertaining to their lives (e.g., "I am pleased with my life," "I have what I want in

life’). After reverse scoring two items, higher mean scores represent greater global life satisfaction.

In the initial scale development with students in grades 4 – 8, Huebner (1991) reported strong internal consistency ($\alpha = .82$), high test-retest reliability after a 1-2 week interval ($r = .74$), and moderate to high associations between SLSS scores and other indicators of SWB (i.e., Piers-Harris Happiness subscale [Piers, 1984], Bradburn’s happiness item [Bradburn, 1976], and Andrews-Withey life satisfaction item [Andrews & Withey, 1976]). Internal consistency was also strong ($\alpha = .79$) in a study of 148 children in grades 4 and 5 (Hoy, Suldo, & Raffaele Mendez, 2013). The SLSS was the primary measure of students’ life satisfaction in this study, given its widespread usage and reliability in elementary-aged students.

Ten-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule for Children (10-item PANAS-C; Ebesutani et al., 2012). The 10-item PANAS-C is a shortened version of the 27-item PANAS-C (Laurent et al., 1999) measuring children’s positive and negative affect (see Appendix J). Respondents are asked to indicate on a 5-point response metric from 1 (*very slightly or not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*) the extent to which they have felt positive emotions (i.e., joyful, cheerful, happy, lively, proud) and negative emotions (i.e., miserable, mad, afraid, scared, sad) over the past few weeks. The five items comprising the positive and negative affect scales are averaged separately to obtain total scores for each scale.

In validation work using a sample of 799 children ages 6-18, Ebesutani et al. (2012) reported high internal consistency for the 5-item positive affect ($\alpha = .86$) and negative affect ($\alpha = .82$) scales, as well as convergent and divergent validity. Specifically, the positive and negative affect scales distinguished between youths with clinical levels of anxiety and depression according to the Anxiety Disorders Interview Schedule for DSM-IV- Child (ADIS-IV-C;

Silverman & Albano, 1996). Items selected for inclusion in the brief measure were determined using item response theory, whereby the slope parameters (α) from a graded response model were calculated separately for each of the available 12 positive affect and 15 negative affect items in the full PANAS-C to identify those that were the most discriminating (i.e., $\alpha > 1.7$). Due to the relatively recent publication of the brief 10-item PANAS-C, few research studies have utilized this measure. However, the authors note that it performs as well as the original measure in identifying youth in need of mental health services and thus is an appropriate time-sensitive assessment of youths' positive and negative emotions. The 10-item PANAS-C was the primary measure of positive and negative affect within this study given its promising psychometric properties and brevity.

Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (CASSS; Malecki, Demaray, & Elliot, 2000). The CASSS is a 60-item self-report measure of students' perceptions of support provided by five major sources including teachers, parents, classmates, close friends, and school (see Appendix K). Each source subscale measures emotional, instrumental, appraisal, and informational support. In the current study, the 12-item teacher and classmate support subscales were analyzed. Subscale scores are calculated by averaging students' rating of the frequency from 1 (*never*) to 6 (*always*) how often teachers, and classmates provide one of the four types of support; higher scores indicate a higher perception of support from each source.

Support for the reliability and validity of the CASSS has been provided by Malecki and Demaray's (2002) research including samples of elementary students as young as third grade. Although there were originally two forms of the CASSS, one for students in third through sixth grade and one for sixth through twelfth grade, the authors now recommend the same form can be use with youth in grades 3-12 (Malecki, Demaray, & Elliott, 2000). Regarding construct validity,

the teacher and classmate support scales of the CASSS have yielded moderate correlations ($r = .52-.59$) with teacher and classmate scales from Harter's (1985) Social Support Scale for Children (Malecki & Demaray, 2002). Additionally, high internal consistency of the teacher and classmate support subscales is supported by coefficient alphas of .88 and .93, respectively (Malecki & Demaray, 2002). The CASSS was the primary indicator of perceived classroom social support in this study, given its ability to measure support provided by both peers and teachers.

Engagement versus Disaffection with Learning- Student Report (EvsD-S; Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009). The 20-item student report of EvsD is used to assess students' perceived classroom behavioral and emotional engagement and disaffection (see Appendix L). The scale is comprised of four 5-item subscales related to students' behavioral engagement, behavioral disaffection, emotional engagement, and emotional disaffection. Students rate from 1 (*not at all true*) to 4 (*very true*) the extent to which they agree with statements assessing engagement (e.g., "I pay attention in class") and disaffection (e.g., "When I'm doing work in class, I feel bored"). The authors support combining the subscales in different ways; for example, the behavioral and emotional engagement subscales may be combined to yield a total engagement score, while the behavioral and emotional disaffection subscales can be combined to produce a total disaffection score. Additionally, both of the behavioral subscales, as well as both of the emotional subscales, can be combined yielding distinct aggregate scores (with disaffection reverse-coded; Skinner et al., 2009), as was done in this study.

In scale validation conducted with a sample of 1,018 third through sixth grade students, internal consistency reliabilities for each of the four subscales were generally high (.70 or above), with the exception of the four-item behavioral engagement subscale (coefficient alpha =

.61) during the first wave of data collection. Combined behavioral and emotional engagement subscales also yielded high internal consistent scores, with coefficient alphas of .79 and .86, respectively. Additionally, test-retest reliabilities revealed moderate stability across a single academic year ranging from $r = .53$ to $r = .68$ across subscales (Skinner, et al., 2009) for the student-report measure. Support for construct validity of student self-report scores has been demonstrated by findings that higher ratings of engagement have robust positive correlations with potential facilitators, including students' confidence in their capacities, intrinsic and identified regulatory styles, learning goals, optimism, and relatedness to others. The EvsD was the primary measure of student perceptions of classroom engagement in this study.

Teacher Report Measures

Student Internalizing Behavior Screener (SIBS; Cook et al., 2011). The SIBS is a 7-item screener designed to identify students at-risk for internalizing behavior disorders. Teachers are asked to provide a rating for all students for each internalizing behavior domain assessed (i.e., anxiety, bullying victimization, isolation or peer rejection, excessive time with adults over peers, withdrawal, sadness, and somatic complaints). Teachers are asked to indicate from 0 (*Never*) to 3 (*Frequently/Almost Always*) how often each student displays symptoms of internalizing problems. This response scale was revised (i.e., rating from 1 to 4) within the current study. Item ratings are added together for a total internalizing symptoms composite score. Students with higher scores on the SIBS demonstrate a greater number and/or frequency of internalizing symptoms.

Initial validation of the SIBS was conducted by Cook and colleagues (2011) with a sample of 1,357 students in the western US. Reliability of the SIBS was demonstrated by high internal consistency ($\alpha = .81$ and $.79$ in the fall and winter, respectively) and test-retest reliability

($r = .74$). Convergent and divergent validity were also established. Specifically, the SIBS had a strong positive correlation ($r = .82$) with the Internalizing Scale on the ASEBA Teacher Report Form (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001) measuring similar internalizing behaviors, and a moderate correlation ($r = .41$) with the Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS; Drummond, 1994) measuring different externalizing behaviors. Additionally, cutoff scores to accurately identify students at risk were established using the ASEBA Internalizing Scale.

Student Externalizing Behavior Screener (SEBS; Cook, Gresham, & Volpe, 2012).

The SEBS was created as a counterpart to the SIBS in order to assess a comprehensive range of students' mental health problems (a combined version of these measures is located in Appendix M). As with the SIBS, the SEBS is a 7-item screener to identify students at-risk for externalizing behavior disorders. Directions on the SEBS request that teachers provide a rating for all students for each externalizing behavior assessed (i.e., defiance or adult opposition, aggression, bullying, difficulty managing anger, lying, disruptive classroom behavior, hyperactivity). The SEBS response scale ranges from 0 (*Never*) to 3 (*Frequently/Almost Always*) for respondents to indicate how often each student displays symptoms of externalizing problems. This response scale was revised (i.e., rating from 1 to 4) within the current study. Item ratings are added together for a total externalizing symptoms composite score. As with the SIBS, students with higher scores on the SEBS demonstrate a greater number and/or frequency of internalizing symptoms.

A study by Cook and colleagues (2012) demonstrated that the SEBS also has high internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$ and $.84$ for elementary and secondary students, respectively) and test-retest reliability ($r = .92$ and $.88$, respectively). Convergent validity was also demonstrated by a strong positive correlation with the Externalizing Scale on the ASEBA Teacher Report Form (r

= .87; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001) and the SRSS ($r = .91$; Drummond, 1994). Additionally, there was a moderate correlation between the SEBS and SEBS ($r = .54$), which may be in part due to high levels of comorbidity between internalizing and externalizing problems.

Engagement versus Disaffection with Learning- Teacher Report (EvsD-T; Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009). Similar to the student report, the 16-item teacher report of the EvsD is used to assess students' behavioral and emotional engagement and disaffection in classroom learning (see Appendix N). The scale includes four 4-item subscales related to students' behavioral engagement (e.g., students' attention, effort put forth in learning activities), behavioral disaffection (e.g., withdrawal from learning activities), emotional engagement (e.g., motivation for learning), and emotional disaffection (e.g., withdrawal of motivation for learning). Teacher respondents are asked to indicate from 1 (*not at all true*) to 4 (*very true*) the extent to which items are representative of an individual student's engagement (e.g., "In my class, this student works as hard as he/she can") and disaffection (e.g., "When we start something new in class, this student doesn't pay attention"). As with the student report, the authors support combining subscales into aggregate scores according to engagement vs. disengagement, or behavior vs. emotion. The behavioral engagement and disaffection subscale scores were combined to yield a total behavioral score, as were the emotional subscale scores.

Scale validation of the teacher report using a sample of 53 teachers and 1,018 students revealed that there were high internal consistency reliabilities for behavioral engagement versus disaffection ($\alpha = .93$) and emotional engagement versus disaffection ($\alpha = .81$) across fall and spring waves of data collection. Furthermore, the cross-year stability was generally high from these behavioral and emotional indices of engagement, with correlations of .85 and .73, respectively. Regarding construct validity, teachers' ratings of students' engagement were

statistically significantly correlated with a subset of children's (i.e., 56 student participants) observed behavior (ranging from .35 to .40). Additionally, indicators of behavioral and engagement vs. disaffection and emotional engagement vs. disaffection were associated with individual and interpersonal predictors of engagement (e.g., effort capacity beliefs, identified self-regulatory style). Also of note, teachers' ratings were more highly correlated with students' ratings of behavioral engagement vs. disaffection ($r = .44$) than emotional engagement vs. disaffection ($r = .26$).

Teacher-Student Relationships Inventory (TSRI; Ang, 2005). The TSRI is a 14-item measure of teachers' perceptions of the quality of student-teacher relationships (see Appendix O). Teachers are asked to respond on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*almost never true*) to 5 (*almost always true*) the extent to which items pertain to a given student. The TSRI assesses three unique aspects of the student-teacher relationship, including Instrumental Help (5 items), Satisfaction (5 items), and Conflict (4 items). The Instrumental Help subscale measures the extent to which the teacher believes the student is willing to seek out their emotional support, advice, or help (e.g., "The student turns to me for a listening ear or for sympathy"). The Satisfaction subscale assesses the teacher's perception of how positive their relationship is with the student (e.g., "I am happy with my relationship with this student"). Finally, the Conflict subscale gauges the teacher's perception of how unpleasant the relationship with the student is (e.g., "If this student is absent, I feel relieved"). Although this researcher initially intended to analyze each score separately, the Conflict scale was not available because several teachers expressed discomfort completing the scale during baseline data collection. Thus, this scale was not utilized at post-intervention or follow-up.

In initial scale development with 19 teachers who rated a total of 428 4th-6th grade students in Singapore, Ang (2005) reported the Instrumental Help ($\alpha = .94$), Satisfaction ($\alpha = .84$), and Conflict ($\alpha = .81$) subscales to have strong internal consistency estimates. Additionally, all TSRI subscales together accounted for 23.3% of the variance in students' achievement, while Instrumental Help and Conflict each emerged as unique predictors. Satisfactory construct validity has been demonstrated using the TSRI and student-reported Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Warren, 2000) in a sample of 11 secondary teachers (each rating an average of 20 students) and 227 students in Singapore. Specifically, Ang (2005) found that the TSRI Conflict subscale scores were positively correlated students' aggression ($r = .21$), while the Satisfaction subscale scores were negatively correlated with aggression ($r = -.20$). A summary of all measures used within the current study is provided below in Table 1.

Ethical Considerations

Several precautions were taken to protect the rights of participants in this study. Specifically, prior to data collection and intervention implementation, this researcher was granted approval by the USF Institutional Review Board (eIRB #15094; see Appendix P) and the participating school district's Department of Assessment and Accountability. Additionally, all students were required to obtain written parental consent prior to study participation. The consent form provided the study purpose, potential risks and benefits associated with participation, and contact information of the research team so that parents could have questions and concerns about the study addressed. Students were also required to provide written assent prior to study participation. As with the parent form, the assent described the purpose of the study and details related to participation in the intervention. Students were notified that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Student participants were not asked to provide any identifying information during data collection; rather, each participant was assigned a code number to ensure confidentiality of their responses. Only approved members of the research team directly involved with intervention implementation and/or data entry and checking had access to electronic files linking participants' names and code numbers.

Table 1

Summary of Measures for Variables of Interest in the Study

| Construct | Measure(s) | Respondent(s) | Scale(s) Analyzed |
|--|--|------------------|---|
| Life Satisfaction | Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS; Huebner, 1991) | Student | Life Satisfaction composite |
| Positive and Negative Affect | 10-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule for Children (10-item PANAS-C; Ebesutani et al., 2012) | Student | Positive Affect subscale Negative Affect subscale |
| Internalizing and Externalizing Symptoms | Student Internalizing Behavior Screener (SIBS; Cook et al., 2011) | Teacher | Internalizing symptoms composite |
| | Student Externalizing Behavior Screener (SEBS; Cook, Gresham, & Volpe, 2012) | Teacher | Externalizing symptoms composite |
| Classroom Social Support | Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (CASSS; Malecki, Demaray, & Elliot, 2004) | Student | Teacher Support subscale Classmate Support subscale |
| | Teacher-Student Relationship Inventory (TSRI; Ang, 2005) | Teacher | Satisfaction subscale Instrumental Help subscale |
| Classroom Engagement | Engagement vs. Disaffection with Learning (EvsD; Skinner, Kindermann & Furrer, 2009) | Student, Teacher | Emotional Engagement + Disaffection composite Behavioral Engagement + Disaffection composite |

Overview of Analyses

A series of statistical analyses were performed to answer the research questions in this study. Data were first entered manually into Excel by this author, checked for data entry errors by other graduate research group members, and screened for systematic errors in participants' responses (e.g., circling the same response for an entire scale). Next, data were imported into SAS statistical software in order to run preliminary and primary analyses described below.

Preliminary analyses. Means, standard deviations, and additional descriptive data (e.g., skew, kurtosis, Cronbach's alpha) were calculated for all outcome variables of interest to help determine if any violations of assumptions have occurred. The dataset was also checked for missing data and outliers. Notably, six students withdrew between baseline and post-intervention data collection and were thus removed from the sample. Additionally, two students, one from the immediate intervention group and one from the delayed intervention control, were outliers (i.e., $> 3 SD$) on baseline life satisfaction and were thus removed from the sample. Finally, preliminary analyses revealed that the immediate intervention group began the study with significantly higher levels of life satisfaction than the control group; thus, an additional 43 students (25 from the intervention condition and 18 from the control condition) who began the study with very low (i.e., ≤ 2.0) or very high life satisfaction (> 5.5) were removed in order to make the groups more equitable so that differences in growth could be detected. Students with the highest life satisfaction scores were removed from the sample due to ceiling effects and limited potential for growth, while students with the lowest levels were removed because a greater proportion was within the delayed intervention control group. The final sample of 128 students ($n = 61$ immediate intervention; $n = 67$ delayed intervention control) was utilized for all post-intervention analyses to detect immediate effects. One student from the immediate

intervention group withdrew between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, thus the final sample for follow-up analyses to detect sustained effects included 60 students. Demographic characteristics for the sample of students, as well as this sample's classroom teachers, are provided in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2

Student Demographic Characteristics as a Percentage of the Sample (N = 128)

| Characteristic | Total Sample Retained for Data Analyses (N = 128) % | Immediate Intervention Group (n = 61) % | Delayed Intervention Control Group (n = 67) % |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Gender | | | |
| Male | 46.09 | 47.54 | 44.78 |
| Female | 53.91 | 52.46 | 55.22 |
| Grade | | | |
| Fourth | 48.44 | 45.90 | 50.75 |
| Fifth | 51.56 | 54.10 | 49.25 |
| Age (Years) | | | |
| 8 | 1.56 | 0.00 | 2.99 |
| 9 | 29.69 | 34.43 | 25.37 |
| 10 | 53.91 | 52.46 | 55.22 |
| 11 | 13.28 | 13.11 | 13.43 |
| 12 | 1.56 | 0.00 | 2.99 |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | |
| White | 55.47 | 63.93 | 47.76 |
| African-American | 4.69 | 8.20 | 1.49 |
| Hispanic | 25.00 | 14.75 | 34.33 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 3.13 | 0.00 | 5.97 |
| Multiracial | 11.72 | 13.11 | 10.45 |
| Free or Reduced-Price Lunch | | | |
| Not Eligible | 55.47 | 54.10 | 56.72 |
| Eligible | 44.53 | 45.90 | 43.28 |

Table 3

Teacher Demographic Characteristics as a Percentage of the Sample (N = 128)

| Characteristic | Total Sample (N = 13) % | Immediate Intervention Group (N = 6) % | Delayed Intervention Control Group (N = 7) % |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Gender | | | |
| Male | 15.38 | 33.33 | 0.00 |
| Female | 84.62 | 66.67 | 100.00 |
| Age (Years) | | | |
| <30 | 15.38 | 16.67 | 14.29 |
| 31-40 | 30.77 | 33.33 | 28.57 |
| 41-50 | 23.08 | 33.33 | 14.29 |
| >50 | 30.77 | 16.67 | 42.86 |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | |
| White | 92.31 | 100.00 | 85.71 |
| African-American | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Hispanic | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 7.69 | 0.00 | 14.29 |
| Multiracial | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Highest Degree Earned | | | |
| Bachelors | 69.23 | 66.67 | 71.43 |
| Masters | 30.77 | 33.33 | 28.57 |
| Years Teaching | | | |
| <5 | 7.69 | 0.00 | 14.29 |
| 5-10 | 46.15 | 50.00 | 42.85 |
| 11-15 | 7.69 | 0.00 | 14.29 |
| 16-20 | 15.38 | 16.67 | 14.29 |
| >20 | 23.08 | 33.33 | 14.29 |

Following these preliminary analyses, a series of statistical analyses were conducted to answer the research questions in the current study.

1. *Relative to a delayed intervention control group, is participation in a multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention associated with immediate changes in elementary school students':*
 - a. *Life satisfaction*
 - b. *Positive affect*
 - c. *Negative affect*
 - d. *Internalizing problems*
 - e. *Externalizing problems*
 - f. *Classroom social support*
 - g. *Classroom engagement?*

Immediate intervention effects. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was used to evaluate the immediate effects of the well-being promotion program to take into account the nested data structure of students being nested within classes. First, the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC), derived from the unconditional model with no within- and between-group predictors, was computed to detect the degree to which the classes differ with respect to each outcome in the investigation (Raudenbush, 1997). Next, thirteen separate models for the outcome variables of interest (i.e., life satisfaction, positive affect, negative affect, internalizing problems, externalizing problems, teacher support, classmate support, students' and teachers' perceived levels of behavioral and emotional classroom engagement, and teachers' perceived levels of satisfaction and instrumental help in the student-teacher relationship) were conducted to determine the treatment efficacy. In each model, both student- and class-level predictors were included, resulting in a two-level model. The student-level predictor consisted of the student's pre-test score on the respective outcome measure (group-mean centered). Class-level predictors

included treatment condition (tested using dummy codes for experimental conditions [1 = immediate intervention; 0 = delayed intervention control]) and class average pretest score for the respective outcome measure being evaluated (grand-mean centered). A sample full model for life satisfaction (labeled LS) is provided below.

$$PostLS_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} Intervention_j + \gamma_{02} ClassPreLS_j + \gamma_{10} PreLS_{ij} + \gamma_{11} Intervention_j * PreLS_{ij} + u_{0j} + r_{ij}$$

All parameter estimates for fixed effects and variances in each model are presented in Chapter 4, and fixed effects from the model are interpreted. The indicated precision of the estimates (e.g., standard error) and fit indices are also presented.

2. *Is participation in a multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention associated with sustained changes in elementary school students’:*
 - a. *Life satisfaction*
 - b. *Positive affect*
 - c. *Negative affect*
 - d. *Internalizing problems*
 - e. *Externalizing problems*
 - f. *Classroom social support*
 - g. *Classroom engagement?*

Sustained intervention effects. Similar to the exploration of immediate effects, the degree to which intervention effects were sustained over time (i.e., at 3-month follow-up) was investigated using HLM. First, the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated from each of the thirteen unconditional models representing gain scores in outcomes at post-intervention (Raudenbush, 1997). Next, thirteen separate models for the outcome variables of

interest (i.e., life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect, classmate and teacher support, student self-reported emotional and behavioral engagement, internalizing and externalizing problems, teacher-reported instrumental help and relationship satisfaction, and teacher-reported emotional and behavioral engagement) were conducted to determine the sustained intervention effects at 3-month follow-up. Both student- and class-level predictors were included as independent variables, resulting in a two-level model. The student-level predictor consisted of the students' post-intervention score on the respective outcome measure (group-mean centered), while the class-level predictor included the class average post-test score for the respective outcome measure being evaluated (grand-mean centered). A sample full model for life satisfaction (labeled LS) is provided below.

$$LSGainScore_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} ClassPostIntLS_j + \gamma_{10} PostIntLS_{ij} + u_{0j} + r_{ij}$$

As with the other HLM analyses, all parameter estimates for fixed effects and variances are presented in Chapter 4, and fixed effects from the model are interpreted. The indicated precision of the estimates (e.g., standard error) and fit indices are also presented.

Chapter Four: Results

This chapter presents the results from statistical analyses conducted to answer the research questions of this study. First, treatment integrity, acceptability, and dosage are described. Next, steps taken to screen the data and create variables that represent the constructs of interest are presented followed by results from preliminary analyses. Finally, the results of a series of hierarchical linear models are described to evaluate the changes in the outcomes of interest (i.e., life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, internalizing and externalizing problems, classroom social support, and classroom engagement) from pre-intervention to post-intervention for the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control groups, as well as from post-intervention to 3-month follow-up for only the immediate intervention group.

Treatment Integrity

In order to evaluate if the intervention evaluated in this study was implemented as intended, group co-facilitators completed a treatment integrity checklist (in the Appendix of the intervention manual located in Appendix D of this document) throughout the teacher and classwide sessions included in the *Well-Being Promotion Program*. The checklist measured the intervention facilitator's adherence to planned content elements (discussion and activities), expressed as the percentage of elements per session that the co-facilitator observed had occurred. The treatment integrity for the single teacher psychoeducation session, manual session 1A, was 100%. Across the 11 classwide sessions (involving all students and the teacher) implemented six times over again (in each classroom), treatment integrity averaged 99.1% (range from 91.7% to 100% per session). Two reasons that contributed to this high fidelity to implementation include

(a) use of facilitators who were extremely familiar with the intervention content (i.e., either developed it or had prior experience with implementation under supervision of the program developer in a different school), and (b) occasional extension of intervention periods beyond the 45 minute approximation. Regarding the latter point, classwide sessions ranged from 30 to 62 minutes in duration, with an average of 44.9 minutes.

Treatment Acceptability

To assess treatment acceptability, including the degree to which program participants found the intervention to be helpful, feedback was solicited during and immediately following the termination of the program. Specifically, teachers completed a Mid-Program Feedback Request form after the fifth classwide session and a Post-Program Feedback Request form (see both in Appendices in the intervention manual located in Appendix D in this document) following the eleventh classwide session to provide information regarding the intervention strategies they reviewed, practiced, and might continue with their class. Teachers also reported the aspects of the program they liked best and least, and were asked to suggest improvements. Students completed a Post-Program Feedback form to provide information about the things they learned, aspects of the program they liked and disliked, strategies they plan to continue, and suggestions for improvement (see Appendix in the intervention manual located in Appendix D).

Teacher program feedback. During collection of the mid-program feedback (covering Sessions 1a, 1c, 2, 3, 4, and 5: Building Strong Student-Teacher Relationships, Classmate Team-Building, You at Your Best, Gratitude Journaling, Gratitude Visit, and Acts of Kindness), four of six teachers returned completed forms. All teachers indicated they had reviewed two or more of the session summary teacher handouts (see Appendix in the intervention manual located in Appendix D in this document) distributed each week (three of four reviewed all handouts), three

of four teachers noted they had spent time personally completing program activities independently, and all four reported that they had spent two minutes or more discussing program activities with their students outside of the allotted program time (time ranged from 2-45 minutes per week). Three of four teachers reported that they intended to practice two or more intervention activities independently, while all teachers planned to continue at least one activity with their class (ranged from 1-6 activities). During the mid-program feedback, teachers reported (in response to open-ended questions) that the best aspect of the program was that students had time to reflect on the positive circumstances in their life (e.g., “I like how this program designates time that allows students to think about and act upon positive acts and circumstances in their lives”), enjoyed intervention participation (e.g., “The students have enjoyed the program-that was the best part”), learned gratitude journaling and gratitude visits (e.g., “I liked the gratitude journals and letter writing and that the materials were supplied for the students”), and enjoyed receiving edible treats and tangible rewards for activity completion (e.g., “The kids loved getting rewards”). Teachers also reported that their least preferred aspects of the program were the amount of written feedback and ratings they were asked to provide (e.g., “The amount of time I’ve had to spend on paperwork [presumably, baseline surveys of student functioning]”), scheduling issues (e.g., “Scheduling- 4th grade has a hard schedule to work around”), and length of the sessions (e.g., “It seems like the sessions could be shorter”). Their recommendations for improvement included shortening the data collection surveys and session length, as well as using small group (vs. whole group) discussion of homework, providing reminders for homework for students’ agendas, and simplifying the parent consent letter.

During collection of the post-program feedback (covering Sessions 6-10: Introduction to Character Strengths, Identifying Signature Strengths, Using My Signature Strengths in New

Ways, Using Another Signature Strength in New Ways, Best Possible Self in the Future, and Program Review), five of six teachers returned completed forms. All teachers reported they had reviewed two or more session summary teacher handouts (see Appendix in the intervention manual located in Appendix D in this document) distributed each week (four of five teachers reviewed all handouts). Four of five teachers indicated they spent time personally completing program activities independently, while four of five reported spending time engaging in or discussing program activities with their class outside of the allotted program time (ranged from 2-20 minutes). Three of five teachers indicated they were likely to continue one or more program activities on their own, while four of five indicated they would continue one or more program activities with their class (ranged from 2 to 4 activities). At post-intervention, teachers reported (in response to open-ended questions) that the best aspect of the program was that students recognized positive interactions (e.g., “Students identifying times when others (and myself) were helpful to them”), learned emotion management strategies (e.g., “It made them aware of things they can do to make themselves and other people happy by giving concrete examples”), enjoyed participation in program content (e.g., “The students enjoyed the activities and looked forward to the time they got to participate each week”) and gained strategies that will help them appraise life more positively (e.g., “Students gained skills and strategies that will help them improve their outlook in a positive way”). Teachers reported that their least preferred aspects of the program included the paperwork (presumably baseline assessments of student functioning), loss of instructional time (e.g., “Amount of time (academic) I’ve lost”), session length (e.g., “Having to give up more than 45 min. a week”), survey items related to conflict in the student-teacher relationship during pre-intervention data collection (e.g., “I did not like some of the survey items on the student surveys I completed at the beginning”), and logistics of scheduling their

curriculum around the program (e.g., “Scheduling was difficult for teachers because of the amount of work we are expected to cover”). Recommendations for improvement included setting expectations for students for their length of task completion so sessions would not run overtime, providing stickers for students to put in their agendas reminding them of their program homework, changing the schedule for intervention implementation to the spring (after statewide testing), providing a more detailed schedule of intervention activities, and shortening session length to under 45 minutes.

Student program feedback. Students also provided post-intervention feedback (covering the entire program). Because all students within each of the six classes in the immediate intervention group participated in the Well-Being Promotion Program, regardless of having consent for study participation (i.e., completion of baseline and follow-up outcome measures administered to evaluate the effects of the program), the feedback forms which were embedded in activities for the final classwide session were distributed to both study participants and non-participants and it was impossible to remove data from children not enrolled in the intervention due to the anonymous nature of form completion. A total of 91 out of 117 (78%) students participating in the program in the Fall completed and returned feedback forms (the anonymous nature of form completion limits understanding of the distribution of missing feedback data amongst the classes). Students expressed considerable interest in and enjoyment of the program activities through statements to open-ended items such as “I loved the program and it helped me realize how grateful I am for many things and how much I mean to my friends and family when I do acts of kindness” and “I liked this program a lot! [The counselors] Ms. Hearon and Mr. Rubio were very nice and positive and I learned things that I wouldn’t have learned without their help!” Regarding the most important aspect of the program, students’ hand-written

responses differed, however most students referred to a specific intervention target or activity. Specifically, students indicated learning or practicing gratitude (41% of participants), kindness (32% of participants), hope (17% of participants), relationship building (10% of participants), and character strengths (7% of participants) were the most important aspects of the program. Other responses included students' feeling happier or more positive and confident in themselves (e.g., "I think the most important things I learned about the program is learning ways I can be happier and more confident;" 21% of participants), and feeling better able to express or control their emotions (e.g., "Some of the most important things I learned is how to really express my emotions;" 3% of participants). In terms of the best aspect of the program, students reported on an open-ended item that a particular intervention activity (e.g., gratitude journal, best possible self in the future story, performing acts of kindness; 35% of participants), activities with classmates and building relationships (e.g. "I liked when we did the team building activities;" 25% of participants), all intervention activities (17% of participants), the "treats"—tangible rewards provided contingent on session participation and/or homework completion (12% of participants), and the counselors (10% of participants) were preferred.

Regarding their least preferred aspect of the program, most students indicated there was nothing they didn't enjoy or left the item blank (e.g., "I like everything about this program;" 47% of participants did not indicate anything as less preferred). Other hand-written responses included a specific intervention activity (e.g., "Me at My Best," "taking the [character strength] quiz on the computer;" 22% of participants), homework/practice activities (e.g., "Homework because sometimes I would forget;" 15% of participants), and completion of surveys for the baseline assessment (e.g., "I didn't really like the survey test because some [items] I didn't know about [how to answer];" 4% of participants). Two students reported that their least favorite

aspect of the program was that there were not *more* sessions (e.g., “What I didn’t like as much was that you guys can’t stay for the rest of the year.”). Two other students indicated that they did not like when the interventionists asked for teacher input (e.g., “What I didn’t really like about the program was the turn to our teachers.”). In terms of their recommendations for improvement, many students reported that they did not have any suggestions or left the item blank (e.g., “Nothing, it’s perfect;” 33% of participants). Additionally, students recommended including more team-building activities or games (e.g., “A suggestion that I have is spend more time on working together as a team;” 19% of participants), more treats (e.g., “Get two pieces of candy at the end;” 10% of participants), more sessions and activities (e.g. “Maybe have more games that go with being kind;” 10% of participants), and less writing or work to complete (e.g., “Kids don’t right [sic] as much;” 9% of participants). Notably, 8% of students (n = 7) had difficulty comprehending this question and reported what they had personally improved on through program participation, rather than offering a recommendation for program improvement (e.g., “[What] I improved in this program was making me a better person.”).

With respect to the activities students planned to continue on their own, all but three students (97% of responders) checked at least one activity. The largest proportion of students (68%) indicated they plan to continue coloring as a team, followed by acts of kindness (52%), utilizing signature strengths in new ways (48%), gratitude journaling (45%), writing a Me at My Best story (40%), performing a gratitude visit (38%), and writing a Best Possible Self in the Future story (32%).

Treatment Dosage

Treatment dosage for student participants was calculated using two indices of participation in weekly sessions. Namely, session attendance (coded as 0 = absent, 1 = present)

and homework completion (coded as 0 = did not complete; 1 = partial/full completion) were recorded by co-facilitators for student participants at the start of each intervention session (see Appendices E-F). Regarding attendance, 69% of students attended all 11 classwide sessions, while the average number of sessions attended was 10.51 ($SD = .87$) with a range from 7 to 11 sessions. With respect to homework completion, students earned a mean score of 5.41 ($SD = 2.06$), with a range of 1 to 8 assignments completed out of a total of 8 (for sessions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7b, 8, 9). Taken together, these data suggest that treatment dosage for student participants was relatively high, facilitated by remarkably high attendance at the participating school.

Treatment dosage for teacher participants serving as co-interventionists was also calculated. Session co-facilitators recorded teachers' attendance at the start of each weekly session (coded as 0 = absent, 1 = present). A total of four out of six (67%) teachers were physically present in the class for all 12 sessions (1 teacher psychoeducation session + 11 classwide sessions), while two of six teachers (33%) participated in 10 sessions. On average, teachers participated in 11.33 ($SD = 1.03$) sessions. These data indicate that the treatment dosage for teachers participating as (at least relatively passive) co-facilitators was high.

Student Outcomes: Data Screening

Data entry. Raw student self-report and teacher-report data were entered into Microsoft Excel by the author. Pairs of two IRB-approved research study staff members reviewed the data for entry errors. Data entry accuracy checks were completed on the entire survey packets at each time point for 14% of participants. A total of only 5 errors were identified, indicating 99.99% accuracy of data reviewed and thus very high accuracy (trustworthiness) of the data entered. After the few errors identified had been corrected, data were transferred to SPSS then converted to a portable file compatible with SAS for subsequent data analysis.

Missing data. No demographic data were missing from students' school records. Rates of missing data on student self-report surveys were very low, largely due to the data collection procedures in which research team members visually scanned survey packets and immediately prompted students to complete items that appeared accidentally skipped or answered incorrectly. Six students had missing data for all surveys at the second time point (post-intervention) because they had withdrawn from the participating school and were thus removed from the sample. One student withdrew from the school between the second time point and third time point (follow-up), however this student's data were retained for the analyses at the first and second time point. Rates of missing data on teacher-report surveys were low on all surveys except the TSRI, as teachers expressed discomfort responding to items that inquired about conflict within their relationships with students at the time of data collection. As a result, the Conflict subscale of the TSRI was not retained for analysis. Additionally, one teacher did not provide ratings of students' internalizing problems (only answered items 8-14 pertaining to externalizing problems) at pre-intervention, however she provided these ratings at post-intervention and follow-up. One teacher did not complete the TSRI (i.e., provide ratings of the student-teacher relationship) at pre-intervention or follow-up, while two others did not complete the TSRI at 3-month follow-up (but completed the measure at pre- and post-intervention).

Because this student sample was already reduced to create more equitable levels of baseline life satisfaction between the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control groups (i.e., restricted the range of baseline SLSS scores to at or greater than 2.0 and less than 5.5 as described in Chapter 3), further reduction of the sample was avoided in order to maintain power for subsequent analyses. In order to retain the largest sample size possible, students' self-report and teacher-report scale scores were included in the analyses as long as the student

completed 80% or more of the self-report items on a given scale between pre-intervention and post-intervention, regardless of having complete teacher-report data at each time point. All student participants, with the exception of the six who withdrew before post-intervention, completed at least 80% of the items on all scales and thus composite scores for all but one subscale (i.e., Conflict subscale of TSRI) were computed and analyzed. This resulted in data from a final sample of 128 (61 intervention from 6 classes, 67 control from 7 classes) available for analyses conducted to evaluate immediate effect of the intervention, and data from 60 students (from the 6 intervention classes) available for analyses conducted to assess stability in student outcomes following the conclusion of the intervention. However, the student sample size varied for the teacher-report variables given the inconsistency in teacher response rates across classes, as well as time points.

Variable Creation

Student self-report measures. Composite scale and subscale scores were created from raw item scores to enable analyses across the student-reported constructs of interest, including life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, classroom social support, and classroom engagement. Specifically, student participants' global life satisfaction scores for each data collection time point were calculated by averaging together all seven items on the SLSS, after reverse-scoring items 3 and 4. Similarly, participants' positive and negative affect scores were calculated for each time point by averaging together the five positive affect scale items and, separately, five negative affect scale items on the 10-item PANAS-C (no items had to be reverse scored). Classroom social support scores were calculated by averaging students' responses on the 12-item Teacher Support subscale and 12-item Classmate Support subscale of the CASSS, separately; the CASSS has no items to reverse score. Finally, participants' classroom

engagement scores were calculated by reverse-scoring emotional disaffection scores (items 6-10) and behavioral disaffection scores (items 16-20) on the EvsD-Student, then calculating a mean score on items assessing emotional engagement (10 items across the emotional disaffection and emotional engagement scales) and behavioral engagement (10 items across the behavioral disaffection and behavioral engagement scales) subscales separately.

Teacher-report measures. Similarly, composite scale and subscale scores were created from raw item scores to permit analyses across the teacher-reported constructs of interest, including student internalizing and externalizing problems, classroom social support (from teachers), and student classroom engagement. Student participants' internalizing and externalizing problem scores were calculated by adding together the teachers' ratings for each of the seven items on the SIBS and SEBS, respectively. Teachers' ratings of teacher support were calculated by averaging together the 5-item Satisfaction and Instrumental Help subscales of the TSRI, respectively. Finally, teacher ratings of students' classroom engagement were calculated by reverse-scoring emotional disaffection scores (items 6-10) and behavioral disaffection scores (items 16-20) on the EvsD-Student, then averaging together the emotional and behavioral engagement subscales separately.

Preliminary Analyses

Preliminary analyses included calculating (a) measure reliability using Cronbach's alpha for all scales and subscales, (b) descriptive statistics (i.e., means, standard deviations, skewness, kurtosis) for all variables of interest, and (c) correlations between key variables.

Measure reliability. The internal consistency was computed for all multi-item scales and composites (i.e., SLSS, Negative Affect scale of the 10-item PANAS-C, Positive Affect scale of the 10-item PANAS-C, SIBS, SEBS, Classmate Support scale of the CASSS, Teacher Support

scale of the CASSS, Satisfaction scale of the TSRI, Emotional Engagement composite of the EvsD-Student, Behavioral Engagement composite of the EvsD-Student, Emotional Engagement composite of the EvsD-Teacher, and Behavioral Engagement composite of the EvsD-Teacher) for each time point, as summarized below in Table 4.

The internal consistency for all student self-report scales and composites are considered to be in the acceptable to excellent ranges, with the exception of the SLSS during baseline data collection ($\alpha = .66$), likely given that the range of scores included in this study was restricted (i.e., $2.0 \leq \text{baseline SLSS score} < 5.5$). For the 7-item SLSS, the coefficient alpha ranged from .66 (pre-intervention) to .81 (3-month follow-up). Internal consistency for the 5-item Positive Affect scale of the 10-item PANAS-C ranged from .79 (immediate post-intervention) to .87 (3-month follow-up). On the 5-item Negative Affect scale, coefficient alphas ranged from .70 (pre-intervention) to .86 (3-month follow-up). With respect to the CASSS, the internal consistency for the 12-item Classmate Support scale ranged from .90 (pre-intervention) to .91 (3-month follow-up), while coefficient alphas for the 12-item Teacher Support scale ranged from .86 (pre-intervention) to .91 (immediate post-intervention). Lastly, for the EvsD, coefficient alphas for the 10-item Emotional Engagement composite ranged from .77 (3-month follow-up) to .82 (post-intervention), while alphas for the Behavioral Engagement composite ranged from .79 (post-intervention) to .84 (pre-intervention and 3-month follow-up).

With respect to the teacher-report scales and subscales, coefficient alphas were also within the acceptable to excellent range, with the exception of the SIBS ($\alpha = .69$), which is considered to be in the questionable range (George & Mallery, 2003). In particular, internal consistency for the 7-item SIBS ranged from .69 (post-intervention and 3-month follow-up) to .70 (pre-intervention). Coefficient alphas for the 7-item SEBS were higher, ranging from .77

(post-intervention and 3-month follow-up) to .83 (pre-intervention). Regarding the TSRI, the internal consistency for the 5-item Satisfaction scale ranged from .85 (pre-intervention) to .97 (3-month follow-up), and alpha values for the 5-item Instrumental Help scale ranged from .85 (pre-intervention) to .92 (3-month follow-up). Coefficient alpha values for the 10-item Emotional Engagement composite ranged from .92 (pre- and post-intervention) to .95 (3-month follow-up), and alpha values for the Behavioral Engagement composite were .95 at each time point.

Table 4

Internal Consistency of Scales and Composites from Measures at Each Time Point

| Measure | Time Point | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | Baseline (<i>N</i> = 128) | Post-Intervention (<i>N</i> = 128) | Follow-Up (<i>N</i> = 60) |
| <i>Student-Report</i> | | | |
| SLSS | .66 | .75 | .81 |
| 10-item PANAS-C: Positive Affect | .85 | .79 | .87 |
| 10-item PANAS-C: Negative Affect | .70 | .79 | .86 |
| CASSS: Classmate Support | .90 | .91 | .92 |
| CASSS: Teacher Support | .86 | .91 | .90 |
| EvsD-S: Emotional Engagement | .84 | .79 | .84 |
| EvsD-S: Behavioral Engagement | .79 | .82 | .77 |
| <i>Teacher-Report</i> | | | |
| SIBS | .70 | .69 | .69 |
| SEBS | .83 | .77 | .77 |
| TSRI: Satisfaction | .85 | .91 | .97 |
| TSRI: Instrumental Help | .85 | .91 | .92 |
| EvsD-T: Emotional Engagement | .92 | .92 | .95 |
| EvsD-T: Behavioral Engagement | .95 | .95 | .95 |

Note. SLSS = Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (Huebner, 1991), 10-item PANAS-C = 10-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule for Children (Ebesutani et al., 2012), CASSS = Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (Malecki, Demaray, & Elliot, 2004), EvsD-S = Engagement vs. Disaffection with Learning- Student (Skinner, Kindermann & Furrer, 2009), SIBS = Student Internalizing Behavior Screener (Cook et al., 2011), SEBS = Student Externalizing Behavior Screener (Cook et al., 2012), TSRI = Teacher Student Relationship Inventory (Ang, 2005), EvsD-T = Engagement vs. Disaffection with Learning- Teacher (Skinner et al., 2009)

Descriptive analyses. Descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, standard deviation) for all outcome variables were calculated for the immediate intervention and delayed intervention

control groups at each time point. To assess normality, skewness and kurtosis were also calculated for each outcome variable. Results from these analyses are included in Tables 5, 6, and 7 below. Most of the variables had an approximately normal distribution (skew and kurtosis between -2.00 and +2.00) across time points, however there were exceptions to this at each time point for both the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control groups. In particular, for the immediate intervention group at pre-intervention (baseline), the Classmate Support and Teacher Support subscales of the CASSS (kurtosis = 2.33 and 4.65, respectively), and Externalizing Problems measured by the SEBS (skew = 2.54, kurtosis = 7.36) were outside the normal range. For the delayed intervention control group, both Internalizing and Externalizing Problems were outside of the range of normal distribution (kurtosis = 3.84 and 2.64, respectively). At post-intervention, Externalizing Problems on the SEBS (kurtosis = 3.44) and Relationship Satisfaction on the TSRI (skew = -2.11, kurtosis = 4.76) were outside the normal range for the immediate intervention group, while Teacher Support on the CASSS (kurtosis = 2.38) and Internalizing Problems on the SIBS (kurtosis = 2.79) were outside of this range. Finally, at post-intervention, the immediate intervention group had elevated kurtosis on the Positive Affect (kurtosis = 3.30) and Negative Affect (kurtosis = 3.63) scales of the 10-item PANAS-C, Teacher Support scale of the CASSS (kurtosis = 2.47), Internalizing Problems on the SIBS (kurtosis = 2.30), and Relationship Satisfaction on the TSRI (kurtosis = 2.48). Despite skew and kurtosis being outside the range of normality, simulation studies have demonstrated that 2-level hierarchical linear models are relatively robust to non-normally distributed variables under a variety of conditions (Cheong, Fotiu, & Raudenbush, 2001; Maas & Hox, 2004; Zhang, 2005).

Comparison of baseline levels of student outcomes between conditions. Despite using random assignment and then restricting the sample with respect to baseline life satisfaction so that scores were more similar between the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control groups (as described in Chapter 3), baseline levels of student outcomes varied between conditions. Notably, preliminary multilevel analyses of the restricted sample revealed that the treatment group started with significantly higher levels of outcomes variables the intervention aimed to increase, and a lower level of an outcome variable the program aimed to decrease, relative to the control group. Specifically, at pre-intervention the group mean among the immediate intervention group was significantly higher on positive affect ($p < .05$) and classmate support ($p = .001$), and significantly lower on negative affect ($p < .05$). Such differences at baseline may contribute to greater difficulty detecting positive intervention effects given that the treatment condition had more limited room for improvement across these outcomes of interest, even within a restricted sample that purposefully removed from the dataset youth who reported minimal or no room for growth on a key indicator of subjective well-being (i.e., life satisfaction) at baseline.

Correlational analyses. Pearson product-moment correlational analyses were conducted to determine the bivariate relationships between all outcome variables for both the immediate intervention group and delayed intervention control group at each point of data collection. Tables 8, 9, and 10 present the results from correlational analyses at pre-intervention, post-intervention, and 3-month follow-up. An alpha level of .05 was used to determine statistical significance.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Outcome Variables at Baseline

| Variable | <i>N</i> | Min. | Max. | <i>M</i> | (<i>SD</i>) | Skew | Kurt. |
|------------------------------------|----------|------|-------|----------|---------------|-------|-------|
| Immediate Intervention Group | | | | | | | |
| <i>Student-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 61 | 2.86 | 5.43 | 4.65 | 0.65 | -0.95 | 0.32 |
| Positive Affect | 61 | 1.60 | 5.00 | 4.16 | 0.85 | -1.24 | 1.02 |
| Negative Affect | 61 | 1.00 | 4.00 | 1.69 | 0.72 | 1.26 | 1.32 |
| Classmate Support | 61 | 1.17 | 5.92 | 4.71 | 0.97 | -1.38 | 2.33 |
| Teacher Support | 61 | 3.17 | 6.00 | 5.44 | 0.57 | -1.91 | 4.65 |
| Emotional Engagement | 61 | 1.78 | 4.00 | 3.40 | 0.57 | -1.14 | 0.46 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 61 | 2.50 | 4.00 | 3.47 | 0.41 | -0.53 | -0.68 |
| <i>Teacher-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems | 49 | 7.00 | 13.00 | 8.16 | 1.62 | 1.46 | 1.53 |
| Externalizing Problems | 61 | 7.00 | 18.00 | 8.13 | 2.17 | 2.54 | 7.36 |
| Relationship Satisfaction | 59 | 2.50 | 5.00 | 4.47 | 0.66 | -1.32 | 1.05 |
| Instrumental Help | 61 | 1.40 | 5.00 | 3.20 | 1.02 | 0.30 | -0.74 |
| Emotional Engagement | 61 | 1.80 | 4.00 | 3.46 | 0.56 | -0.90 | 0.04 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 61 | 1.60 | 4.00 | 3.16 | 0.73 | -0.50 | -0.85 |
| Delayed Intervention Control Group | | | | | | | |
| <i>Student-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 67 | 2.86 | 5.43 | 4.45 | 0.76 | -0.53 | -0.80 |
| Positive Affect | 67 | 1.80 | 5.00 | 3.86 | 0.89 | -0.68 | -0.47 |
| Negative Affect | 67 | 1.00 | 4.20 | 2.01 | 0.76 | 0.87 | 0.33 |
| Classmate Support | 67 | 1.42 | 5.92 | 4.12 | 1.04 | -0.31 | -0.44 |
| Teacher Support | 67 | 3.17 | 6.00 | 5.28 | 0.64 | -1.34 | 1.35 |
| Emotional Engagement | 67 | 1.60 | 4.00 | 3.25 | 0.54 | -0.88 | 0.54 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 67 | 2.30 | 4.00 | 3.37 | 0.47 | -0.58 | -0.82 |
| <i>Teacher-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems | 66 | 7.00 | 20.00 | 8.97 | 2.75 | 1.84 | 3.84 |
| Externalizing Problems | 66 | 7.00 | 21.00 | 9.20 | 3.58 | 1.85 | 2.64 |
| Relationship Satisfaction | 59 | 2.60 | 5.00 | 4.41 | 0.67 | -1.00 | 0.12 |
| Instrumental Help | 59 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.82 | 1.06 | 0.10 | -0.61 |
| Emotional Engagement | 66 | 1.70 | 4.00 | 3.23 | 0.66 | -0.35 | -1.01 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 66 | 1.20 | 4.00 | 3.09 | 0.81 | -0.67 | -0.56 |

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Outcome Variables at Post-Intervention

| Variable | <i>N</i> | Min. | Max. | <i>M</i> | (<i>SD</i>) | Skew | Kurt. |
|------------------------------------|----------|------|-------|----------|---------------|-------|-------|
| Immediate Intervention Group | | | | | | | |
| <i>Student-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 61 | 3.14 | 5.86 | 4.72 | 0.70 | -0.44 | -0.55 |
| Positive Affect | 61 | 2.40 | 5.00 | 4.28 | 0.63 | -0.93 | 0.64 |
| Negative Affect | 61 | 1.00 | 3.40 | 1.61 | 0.58 | 1.09 | 0.96 |
| Classmate Support | 61 | 1.33 | 6.00 | 4.42 | 1.08 | -0.61 | -0.09 |
| Teacher Support | 61 | 3.25 | 6.00 | 5.34 | 0.66 | -1.43 | 1.99 |
| Emotional Engagement | 61 | 2.30 | 4.00 | 3.35 | 0.44 | -0.55 | -0.64 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 61 | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.33 | 0.47 | -0.69 | 0.05 |
| <i>Teacher-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems | 61 | 7.00 | 14.00 | 8.15 | 1.84 | 1.63 | 1.94 |
| Externalizing Problems | 61 | 7.00 | 18.00 | 8.46 | 2.70 | 2.00 | 3.44 |
| Relationship Satisfaction | 54 | 3.20 | 5.00 | 4.79 | 0.38 | -2.11 | 4.76 |
| Instrumental Help | 54 | 1.80 | 5.00 | 3.68 | 0.99 | -0.19 | -0.98 |
| Emotional Engagement | 60 | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.43 | 0.55 | -0.61 | -0.67 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 60 | 1.30 | 4.00 | 3.21 | 0.69 | -0.45 | -0.66 |
| Delayed Intervention Control Group | | | | | | | |
| <i>Student-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 67 | 3.00 | 6.00 | 4.64 | 0.78 | -0.37 | -0.77 |
| Positive Affect | 67 | 1.40 | 5.00 | 4.02 | 0.79 | -1.05 | 0.94 |
| Negative Affect | 67 | 1.00 | 4.80 | 1.89 | 0.85 | 1.39 | 1.88 |
| Classmate Support | 67 | 1.25 | 6.00 | 3.94 | 1.11 | -0.37 | -0.63 |
| Teacher Support | 67 | 2.33 | 6.00 | 5.22 | 0.80 | -1.56 | 2.38 |
| Emotional Engagement | 67 | 2.10 | 4.00 | 3.26 | 0.49 | -0.44 | -0.59 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 67 | 2.50 | 4.00 | 3.40 | 0.39 | -0.17 | -0.94 |
| <i>Teacher-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems | 66 | 7.00 | 17.00 | 8.64 | 2.35 | 1.80 | 2.79 |
| Externalizing Problems | 66 | 7.00 | 18.00 | 9.82 | 2.96 | 0.92 | 0.13 |
| Relationship Satisfaction | 47 | 3.00 | 5.00 | 4.51 | 0.54 | -0.78 | -0.22 |
| Instrumental Help | 47 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.41 | 1.02 | -0.43 | -0.31 |
| Emotional Engagement | 61 | 1.30 | 4.00 | 3.13 | 0.76 | -0.66 | -0.41 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 61 | 1.20 | 4.00 | 2.94 | 0.88 | -0.36 | -1.27 |

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Outcome Variables at 3-Month Follow-Up

| Variable | <i>N</i> | Min. | Max. | <i>M</i> | (<i>SD</i>) | Skew | Kurt. |
|------------------------------|----------|------|-------|----------|---------------|-------|-------|
| Immediate Intervention Group | | | | | | | |
| <i>Student-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 60 | 2.14 | 6.00 | 4.69 | 0.89 | -1.16 | 1.05 |
| Positive Affect | 60 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 4.04 | 0.89 | -1.64 | 3.30 |
| Negative Affect | 60 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 1.83 | 0.93 | 1.87 | 3.63 |
| Classmate Support | 60 | 1.58 | 6.00 | 4.34 | 1.19 | -0.56 | -0.78 |
| Teacher Support | 60 | 2.58 | 6.00 | 5.28 | 0.85 | -1.68 | 2.47 |
| Emotional Engagement | 60 | 2.10 | 4.00 | 3.34 | 0.54 | -0.67 | -0.64 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 60 | 2.40 | 4.00 | 3.38 | 0.37 | -0.76 | 0.33 |
| <i>Teacher-Report</i> | | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems | 60 | 7.00 | 17.00 | 8.49 | 2.47 | 1.75 | 2.30 |
| Externalizing Problems | 60 | 7.00 | 16.00 | 8.39 | 2.27 | 1.71 | 1.98 |
| Relationship Satisfaction | 60 | 3.00 | 5.00 | 4.74 | 0.53 | -1.91 | 2.48 |
| Instrumental Help | 60 | 1.60 | 5.00 | 3.44 | 1.22 | 0.15 | -1.53 |
| Emotional Engagement | 60 | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.45 | 0.55 | -1.00 | 0.25 |
| Behavioral Engagement | 60 | 1.60 | 4.00 | 3.24 | 0.67 | -0.40 | -1.02 |

Immediate Intervention Effects

Intraclass correlations. Given the nested structure of the data due to student membership within distinct classrooms, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was utilized to calculate immediate intervention effects of the well-being promotion program. First, the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated from each of the thirteen unconditional models representing outcomes at post-intervention (see Table 11 below). Among the student-reported variables of interest, ICCs ranged from .00 (Life Satisfaction) to .11 (Teacher Support), indicating that relatively little (i.e., 0-11%) of the variance in each outcome occurred between classes. Among the teacher-reported variables, ICCs ranged from .04 (Behavioral Engagement) to .52 (Relationship Satisfaction). Notably, Relationship Satisfaction demonstrated the only ICC above .50, suggesting that for all other teacher-reported variables most of the variance occurred within, rather than between, classes.

Table 8

Correlation Matrix for Outcome Variables at Pre-Intervention (N = 128)

| Variable | LS | PA | NA | CS | TS | EE-S | BE-S | IP | EP | RS | IH | EE-T | BE-T |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| Immediate Intervention Group (<i>n</i> = 61) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction (LS) | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Positive Affect (PA) | .39* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Negative Affect (NA) | -.52* | -.45* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classmate Support (CS) | .19 | .46* | -.31* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| Teacher Support (TS) | .13 | .44* | -.32* | .46* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Emotional Eng- Student (EE-S) | .37* | .38* | -.48* | .34* | .40* | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| Behavioral Eng- Student (BE-S) | .23 | .22 | -.27* | .36* | .32* | .69* | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems (IP) | .16 | -.04 | .03 | -.03 | .05 | -.02 | -.05 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| Externalizing Problems (EP) | .09 | .01 | -.07 | -.28* | -.18 | -.12 | -.31* | .12 | 1.00 | | | | |
| Relationship Satisfaction (RS) | -.09 | -.01 | .16 | -.11 | -.05 | -.11 | .02 | -.15 | -.27* | 1.00 | | | |
| Instrumental Help (IH) | -.12 | -.13 | .21 | -.20 | -.25* | -.27* | -.01 | -.05 | -.11 | .22 | 1.00 | | |
| Emotional Eng- Teacher (EE-T) | .08 | .21 | -.05 | .01 | .05 | .15 | .22 | -.42* | -.34* | .55* | .36* | 1.00 | |
| Behavioral Eng- Teacher (BE-T) | .19 | .19 | .03 | .14 | .14 | .17 | .32* | -.34* | -.44* | .59* | .30* | .83* | 1.00 |
| Delayed Intervention Control Group (<i>n</i> = 67) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction (LS) | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Positive Affect (PA) | .35* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Negative Affect (NA) | -.41* | -.12 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classmate Support (CS) | .33* | .42* | -.23 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| Teacher Support (TS) | .22 | .34* | .02 | .43* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Emotional Eng- Student (EE-S) | .29* | .27* | -.36* | .27* | .31* | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| Behavioral Eng- Student (BE-S) | .28* | .25 | -.21 | .11 | .27* | .45* | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems (IP) | -.11 | -.07 | .20 | -.21 | .11 | -.05 | -.10 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| Externalizing Problems (EP) | -.13 | -.03 | .23 | -.35* | -.21 | -.09 | -.36* | .40* | 1.00 | | | | |
| Relationship Satisfaction (RS) | .30* | .02 | -.02 | .16 | .35* | .06 | .34* | -.23 | -.58* | 1.00 | | | |
| Instrumental Help (IH) | .25 | .14 | .09 | .08 | .13 | .15 | .32* | -.34* | -.38* | .60* | 1.00 | | |
| Emotional Eng- Teacher (EE-T) | .17 | .09 | -.09 | -.08 | -.11 | -.02 | .27* | -.51* | -.35* | .50* | .57* | 1.00 | |
| Behavioral Eng- Teacher (BE-T) | .21 | .03 | -.07 | .02 | -.01 | -.04 | .31* | -.39* | -.48* | .71* | .62* | .88* | 1.00 |

Table 9

Correlation Matrix for Outcome Variables at Post-Intervention (N = 128)

| Variable | LS | PA | NA | CS | TS | EE-S | BE-S | IP | EP | RS | IH | EE-T | BE-T |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| Immediate Intervention Group (<i>n</i> = 61) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction (LS) | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Positive Affect (PA) | .22 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Negative Affect (NA) | -.41* | -.16 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classmate Support (CS) | .36* | .41* | -.24 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| Teacher Support (TS) | .23 | .45* | -.04 | .51* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Emotional Eng- Student (EE-S) | .30* | .25* | -.20 | .30* | .47* | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| Behavioral Eng- Student (BE-S) | .30* | .15 | -.21 | .27* | .26* | .74* | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems (IP) | -.03 | -.13 | .06 | -.22 | .04 | .05 | -.01 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| Externalizing Problems (EP) | -.12 | .14 | .03 | -.27* | .06 | -.18 | -.14 | .56* | 1.00 | | | | |
| Relationship Satisfaction (RS) | .24 | -.02 | .06 | .29* | .12 | .05 | .11 | -.30* | -.44* | 1.00 | | | |
| Instrumental Help (IH) | .09 | -.06 | .00 | .05 | -.12 | -.06 | .14 | -.39* | -.23 | .20 | 1.00 | | |
| Emotional Eng- Teacher (EE-T) | .31* | .00 | .00 | .20 | .17 | .27* | .39* | -.42* | -.50* | .60* | .37* | 1.00 | |
| Behavioral Eng- Teacher (BE-T) | .33* | -.03 | .02 | .15 | .17 | .35* | .48* | -.17 | -.37* | .34* | .28* | .86* | 1.00 |
| Delayed Intervention Control Group (<i>n</i> = 67) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction (LS) | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Positive Affect (PA) | .41* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Negative Affect (NA) | -.27* | -.34* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classmate Support (CS) | .23 | .22 | -.35* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| Teacher Support (TS) | .08 | .12 | .07 | .42* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Emotional Eng- Student (EE-S) | .28* | .43* | -.40* | .45* | .27* | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| Behavioral Eng- Student (BE-S) | .35* | .22 | -.19 | .22 | .16 | .60* | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems (IP) | .11 | .03 | .23 | -.10 | .05 | -.18 | -.04 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| Externalizing Problems (EP) | .19 | .08 | .00 | -.16 | -.21 | -.08 | -.23 | .42* | 1.00 | | | | |
| Relationship Satisfaction (RS) | .01 | -.05 | .00 | .07 | .19 | .01 | .29* | -.38* | -.60* | 1.00 | | | |
| Instrumental Help (IH) | .17 | .38* | -.11 | .15 | .30* | .16 | .21 | -.19 | -.27 | .40* | 1.00 | | |
| Emotional Eng- Teacher (EE-T) | .03 | .13 | -.03 | .01 | .13 | .13 | .26* | -.54* | -.38* | .39* | .55* | 1.00 | |
| Behavioral Eng- Teacher (BE-T) | .07 | .11 | .02 | .02 | .21 | .14 | .34* | -.44* | -.54* | .64* | .48* | .82* | 1.00 |

Table 10

Correlation Matrix for Outcome Variables at 3-month Follow-Up (N = 60)

| Variable | LS | PA | NA | CS | TS | EE-S | BE-S | IP | EP | RS | IH | EE-T | BE-T |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------|-------|-------|------|------|------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| | Immediate Intervention Group | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Life Satisfaction (LS) | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Positive Affect (PA) | .65* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Negative Affect (NA) | -.53* | -.68 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classmate Support (CS) | .22 | .47* | -.35* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| Teacher Support (TS) | .19 | .23 | -.09 | .37* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Emotional Eng- Student (EE-S) | .39* | .53* | -.50* | .42* | .65* | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| Behavioral Eng- Student (BE-S) | .28* | .22 | -.32* | .18 | .31* | .60* | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| Internalizing Problems (IP) | -.05 | -.01 | .00 | -.28* | -.02 | .00 | .09 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| Externalizing Problems (EP) | .04 | -.02 | .17 | -.21 | -.10 | -.10 | -.05 | .35* | 1.00 | | | | |
| Relationship Satisfaction (RS) | .06 | .18 | -.06 | .18 | .26* | .21 | .03 | -.29* | -.37* | 1.00 | | | |
| Instrumental Help (IH) | .17 | .11 | -.07 | .11 | .18 | .15 | .19 | -.30* | -.29* | .26* | 1.00 | | |
| Emotional Eng- Teacher (EE-T) | .22 | .19 | -.11 | .12 | .27* | .27* | .36* | -.36* | -.48* | .73* | .35* | 1.00 | |
| Behavioral Eng- Teacher (BE-T) | .22 | .04 | -.11 | .06 | .31* | .34* | .53* | -.13 | -.40* | .33* | .45* | .74* | 1.00 |

Table 11

Intraclass Correlation Coefficients for Unconditional Models at Post-Intervention

| Variable | ICC |
|---------------------------|-----|
| <i>Student-Report</i> | |
| Life Satisfaction | .00 |
| Positive Affect | .02 |
| Negative Affect | .01 |
| Classmate Support | .04 |
| Teacher Support | .11 |
| Emotional Engagement | .01 |
| Behavioral Engagement | .01 |
| <i>Teacher-Report</i> | |
| Internalizing Problems | .10 |
| Externalizing Problems | .09 |
| Relationship Satisfaction | .29 |
| Instrumental Help | .52 |
| Emotional Engagement | .15 |
| Behavioral Engagement | .04 |

Two-level hierarchical linear models. Thirteen separate models for the outcome variables of interest (i.e., life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect, classmate and teacher support, student self-reported emotional and behavioral engagement, internalizing and externalizing problems, teacher-reported instrumental help and relationship satisfaction, and teacher-reported emotional and behavioral engagement) were conducted to determine the immediate intervention effects. In each model, both student- and class-level predictors were included, resulting in a two-level model. The student-level predictor consisted of the students' baseline score on the respective outcome measure (group-mean centered). Class-level predictors included the treatment condition (tested using dummy codes for experimental conditions [1 = immediate intervention; 0 = delayed intervention control]) and the class average pretest score for the respective outcome measure being evaluated (grand-mean centered). Results from all thirteen models are presented in Table 12 and described below.

For each model in the table, the fixed effects may be interpreted as follows: *Intercept* (γ_{00}) represents the predicted outcome variable score (e.g., life satisfaction) for a student in the control group, who has an average individual baseline variable score, and who is from a class with an average baseline variable score (i.e., a student with a value of “zero” for all predictors); *Baseline* (γ_{10}) represents the predicted change in a control group member’s outcome variable score for a one unit change in the baseline variable score, holding all other predictors constant; *Int Group* (γ_{01}) represents the difference in predicted outcome scores for a student in the treatment (intervention) group and a student in the control group, assuming the students have average baseline variable scores, and are from classes with average baseline variable scores (i.e., the treatment effect); *Class Baseline* (γ_{02}) represents the predicted change in a control group member’s outcome variable score for a one unit change in the class baseline variable score, holding all other predictors constant; and *Int Group*Baseline* (γ_{11}) represents the predicted change in the treatment effect (i.e., difference between the outcome scores for a student in the intervention group and student in the control group) for a one unit change in individual baseline score, holding all other predictors constant.

Life satisfaction. Results from the life satisfaction model indicate that the main effect of individual baseline life satisfaction was significantly related to post-intervention life satisfaction ($p = .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average life satisfaction that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .56 higher in life satisfaction score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not significant differences in levels of life satisfaction between the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Positive affect. Results from the positive affect model indicate that the main effects of individual and class baseline positive affect were both statistically significant ($p < .001$, $p = .013$, respectively). This indicates that for each unit above the class average that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .53 points higher in positive affect score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. Additionally, for each unit above the total sample average that a student's class scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .62 points higher in post-intervention positive affect score, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not significant differences in levels of positive affect between the immediate and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Negative affect. Results from the negative affect model indicate that the main effect of individual baseline negative affect was significantly related to post-intervention life satisfaction ($p < .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average negative affect that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .63 higher in negative affect at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, however the interaction effect approached statistical significance ($p = .072$). This can be interpreted to indicate that the difference between the treatment and control group depends on the level of baseline negative affect. The negative affect of students in the immediate intervention group becomes lower (i.e., by .27) relative to that of the control group as baseline negative affect increases.

Classmate support. Results from the classmate support model indicate that the main effects of individual and class baseline classmate support were both statistically significant ($p < .001$, $p = .001$, respectively). This indicates that for each unit above the class average that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .65 points higher in classmate support score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. Additionally, for each unit above the total sample average that a student's class scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .85 points higher in post-intervention classmate support score, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not significant differences in levels of classmate support between the immediate and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Teacher support. Results from the teacher support model indicate that the main effects of individual and class baseline teacher support were both statistically significant ($p < .001$ for both models). This indicates that for each unit above the class average that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .68 points higher in teacher support score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. Additionally, for each unit above the total sample average that a student's class scores at baseline, the student is expected to score 1.27 points higher in post-intervention teacher support score, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not significant differences in levels of teacher support between the immediate and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Emotional engagement – student. Results from the student self-reported emotional engagement model indicate that the main effects of individual and class baseline emotional engagement were both statistically significant ($p < .001$, $p = .048$, respectively). This indicates that for each unit above the class average that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .45 points higher in emotional engagement score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. Additionally, for each unit above the total sample average that a student's class scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .49 points higher in post-intervention emotional engagement score, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not significant differences in levels of student self-reported emotional engagement between the immediate and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Behavioral engagement – student. Results from the student self-reported behavioral engagement model indicate that the main effects of individual and class baseline behavioral engagement, as well as intervention group were statistically significant ($p < .001$, $p = .001$, and .029 respectively). This indicates that for each unit above the class average that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .61 points higher in behavioral engagement score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. Additionally, for each unit above the total sample average that a student's class scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .73 points higher in post-intervention behavioral engagement score, holding all other model predictors constant. It can be interpreted that students within the immediate intervention group are expected to score .14 points lower on behavioral engagement than students in the delayed intervention control group at post-intervention, holding

all other model predictors constant. Notably, this treatment effect is the opposite from what was hypothesized. Because this finding appeared aberrant, additional analyses were conducted to determine if the result was stable across methodologies with different centering procedures. When a grand mean centering approach was used, the effect was no longer statistically significant. Regardless of centering procedures used, the post-intervention means on these variables are comparable between the groups (as opposed to one group being particular elevated at that time point). The aforementioned statistically significant effect of intervention group is thus not concerning given that given that (a) the trend in the data was not replicated with another informant on the same construct (see section “*behavioral engagement- teacher*” below), (b) sample means at post-test are comparable, (c) the “effect” seems sensitive to the centering procedure used, and (d) the likelihood of a Type 1 error is high given the number of outcomes examined. Finally, the interaction effect was not statistically significant, indicating that students’ individual behavioral engagement scores at baseline did not significantly impact the difference in post-intervention scores between the immediate intervention group and delayed intervention control group.

Internalizing problems. Results from the internalizing problems model indicate that the main effect of individual baseline internalizing problems was significantly related to the internalizing problems score at post-intervention ($p < .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average internalizing problems score that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .39 higher in internalizing problems score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not

significant differences in levels of internalizing problems between the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Externalizing problems. Results from the internalizing problems model indicate that the main effect of individual baseline externalizing problems was significantly related to the externalizing problems score at post-intervention ($p < .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average externalizing problems score that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .50 higher in externalizing problems at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not significant differences in levels of externalizing problems between the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Relationship satisfaction. Results from the teacher-reported relationship satisfaction model indicate that the main effects of individual and class baseline relationship satisfaction were both statistically significant ($p < .001$, $p = .041$, respectively). This indicates that for each unit above the class average that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .48 points higher in relationship satisfaction score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. Additionally, for each unit above the total sample average that a student's class scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .61 points higher in post-intervention relationship satisfaction score, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not significant differences in levels of teacher-reported relationship satisfaction between the immediate and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Instrumental help. Results from the teacher-reported instrumental help model indicate that the main effect of individual baseline instrumental help was significantly related to post-intervention instrumental help ($p < .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average instrumental help that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .66 higher in instrumental help at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, however the interaction effect approached statistical significance ($p = .060$). This can be interpreted to indicate that the difference between the treatment and control group depends on the level of baseline instrumental help. The instrumental help of the immediate intervention group becomes lower (i.e., by .31) relative to the control group for each unit increase in baseline instrumental help.

Emotional engagement – teacher. Results from the teacher-reported emotional engagement model indicate that the main effects of individual and class baseline relationship satisfaction were both statistically significant ($p < .001$, $p = .049$, respectively). This indicates that for each unit above the class average that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .71 points higher in emotional engagement score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. Additionally, for each unit above the total sample average that a student's class scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .76 points higher in post-intervention emotional engagement score, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not significant differences in levels of teacher-reported emotional engagement between the immediate and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Behavioral engagement – teacher. Results from the teacher-reported behavioral engagement model indicate that the main effect of individual baseline behavioral engagement was statistically significant ($p < .001$, $p = .041$, respectively). This indicates that for each unit above the class average that a student in the delayed intervention control group scores at baseline, the student is expected to score .78 points higher in behavioral engagement score at post-intervention, holding all other model predictors constant. The other main effects and interaction effect were not statistically significant, indicating that there were not significant differences in levels of teacher-reported behavioral engagement between the immediate and delayed intervention control groups at post-intervention.

Table 12

Two-Level Hierarchical Linear Models for Outcome Variables at Post-Intervention

| Model | Parameter | Parameter Estimate | Standard Error | <i>p</i> | |
|------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------|----------|--|
| Life Satisfaction (LS) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 4.79 | 0.09 | <.001 | |
| | Baseline LS (γ_{10}) | 0.56 | 0.11 | .001 | |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | -0.04 | 0.15 | .767 | |
| | Class Baseline LS (γ_{02}) | 0.41 | 0.28 | .143 | |
| | Int Group*Baseline LS (γ_{11}) | -0.23 | 0.17 | .181 | |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | -- | -- | |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.05 | 0.06 | <.001 | |
| | | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | | 268.5 | 269.1 | |
| Positive Affect (PA) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 4.13 | 0.08 | <.001 | |
| | Baseline PA (γ_{10}) | 0.53 | 0.09 | <.001 | |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | 0.07 | 0.13 | .577 | |
| | Class Baseline PA (γ_{02}) | 0.62 | 0.25 | .013 | |
| | Int Group*Baseline PA (γ_{11}) | -0.15 | 0.12 | .222 | |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | -- | -- | |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.35 | 0.04 | <.001 | |
| | | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | | 238.3 | 238.9 | |

Table 12 (Continued)

| Model | Parameter | Parameter Estimate | Standard Error | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------|----------|
| Negative Affect (NA) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 1.82 | 0.14 | <.001 |
| | Baseline NA (γ_{10}) | 0.63 | 0.10 | <.001 |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | -0.20 | 0.26 | .469 |
| | Class Baseline NA (γ_{02}) | 0.26 | 0.56 | .655 |
| | Int Group*Baseline NA (γ_{11}) | -0.27 | 0.15 | .072 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.02 | 0.03 | .277 |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.38 | 0.05 | <.001 |
| | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | 238.3 | 238.9 | |
| Classmate Support (CS) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 4.17 | 0.12 | <.001 |
| | Baseline CS (γ_{10}) | 0.65 | 0.10 | <.001 |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | 0.01 | 0.19 | .964 |
| | Class Baseline CS (γ_{02}) | 0.85 | 0.25 | .001 |
| | Int Group*Baseline CS (γ_{11}) | 0.05 | 0.16 | .736 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | -- | -- |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.75 | 0.10 | <.001 |
| | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | 334.1 | 334.7 | |
| Teacher Support (TS) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 5.36 | 0.08 | <.001 |
| | Baseline TS (γ_{10}) | 0.68 | 0.11 | <.001 |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | -0.14 | 0.12 | .248 |
| | Class Baseline TS (γ_{02}) | 1.27 | 0.25 | <.001 |
| | Int Group*Baseline TS (γ_{11}) | -0.06 | 0.19 | .752 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | -- | -- |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.34 | 0.04 | <.001 |
| | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | 235.8 | 236.3 | |
| Emotional Engagement-Student (EE-S) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 3.31 | 0.05 | <.001 |
| | Baseline EE-S (γ_{10}) | 0.45 | 0.09 | <.001 |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | 0.03 | 0.09 | .772 |
| | Class Baseline EE-S (γ_{02}) | 0.49 | 0.23 | .048 |
| | Int Group*Baseline EE-S (γ_{11}) | 0.16 | 0.13 | .197 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | 0.01 | .355 |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.14 | 0.02 | <.001 |
| | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | 124.8 | 125.9 | |

Table 12 (Continued)

| Model | Parameter | Parameter Estimate | Standard Error | <i>p</i> | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------|----------|--|
| Behavioral Engagement-Student (BE-S) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 3.45 | 0.04 | <.001 | |
| | Baseline BE-S (γ_{10}) | 0.61 | 0.10 | <.001 | |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | -0.14 | 0.07 | .029 | |
| | Class Baseline BE-S (γ_{02}) | 0.73 | 0.20 | .001 | |
| | Int Group*Baseline BE-S (γ_{11}) | 0.06 | 0.14 | .682 | |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | -- | -- | |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.11 | 0.01 | <.001 | |
| | | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | | 92.6 | 93.2 | |
| Internalizing Problems (IP) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 8.55 | 0.39 | <.001 | |
| | Baseline IP (γ_{10}) | 0.39 | 0.09 | <.001 | |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | -0.11 | 0.63 | .868 | |
| | Class Baseline IP (γ_{02}) | 0.17 | 0.34 | .632 | |
| | Int Group*Baseline IP (γ_{11}) | -0.19 | 0.21 | .363 | |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.53 | 0.43 | .109 | |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 3.86 | 0.54 | <.001 | |
| | | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | | 495.2 | 496.2 | |
| Externalizing Problems (EP) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 9.77 | 0.48 | <.001 | |
| | Baseline EP (γ_{10}) | 0.50 | 0.09 | <.001 | |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | -1.25 | 0.71 | .106 | |
| | Class Baseline EP (γ_{02}) | -0.09 | 0.24 | .709 | |
| | Int Group*Baseline EP (γ_{11}) | 0.17 | 0.18 | .347 | |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.87 | 0.62 | .080 | |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 5.47 | 0.73 | <.001 | |
| | | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | | 592.3 | 593.4 | |
| Relationship Satisfaction (RS) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 4.52 | 0.09 | <.001 | |
| | Baseline RS (γ_{10}) | 0.48 | 0.09 | <.001 | |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | 0.15 | 0.13 | .282 | |
| | Class Baseline RS (γ_{02}) | 0.61 | 0.23 | .041 | |
| | Int Group*Baseline RS (γ_{11}) | 0.07 | 0.19 | .699 | |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.02 | 0.02 | .141 | |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.12 | 0.02 | <.001 | |
| | | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | | 93.5 | 94.5 | |

Table 12 (Continued)

| Model | Parameter | Parameter Estimate | Standard Error | <i>p</i> | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------|----------|--|
| Instrumental Help (IH) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 3.45 | 0.348 | <.001 | |
| | Baseline IH γ_{10} | 0.66 | 0.11 | <.001 | |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | 0.15 | 0.50 | .765 | |
| | Class Baseline IH (γ_{02}) | 0.54 | 0.33 | .152 | |
| | Int Group*Baseline IH (γ_{11}) | -0.31 | 0.17 | .060 | |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.51 | 0.30 | .045 | |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.40 | 0.06 | <.001 | |
| | | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | | 223.6 | 224.5 | |
| Emotional Engagement-Teacher (EE-T) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 3.26 | 0.10 | <.001 | |
| | Baseline EE-T γ_{10} | 0.71 | 0.09 | <.001 | |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | 0.09 | 0.15 | .560 | |
| | Class Baseline EE-T (γ_{02}) | 0.76 | 0.33 | .049 | |
| | Int Group*Baseline EE-T (γ_{11}) | 0.11 | 0.15 | .458 | |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.04 | 0.03 | .092 | |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.20 | 0.03 | <.001 | |
| | | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | | 174.8 | 175.9 | |
| Behavioral Engagement-Teacher (BE-T) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 3.05 | 0.10 | <.001 | |
| | Baseline BE-T γ_{10} | 0.78 | 0.09 | <.001 | |
| | Int Group (γ_{01}) | 0.17 | 0.14 | .262 | |
| | Class Baseline BE-T (γ_{02}) | 0.45 | 0.30 | .171 | |
| | Int Group*Baseline BE-T (γ_{11}) | -0.03 | 0.14 | .815 | |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.03 | 0.03 | .157 | |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.29 | 0.04 | <.001 | |
| | | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | | 212.3 | 213.5 | |

Sustained Intervention Effects

Intraclass correlations. Given the nested structure of the data due to student membership within distinct classrooms, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was also utilized to calculate sustained intervention effects of the well-being promotion program. First, the intraclass

correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated from each of the thirteen unconditional models representing gain scores in outcomes at post-intervention (see Table 13 below). Among the student-reported variables of interest, ICCs ranged from .00 (Life Satisfaction, Positive and Negative Affect, Behavioral Engagement) to .09 (Teacher Support), indicating that relatively little (i.e., 0-9%) of the variance in each outcome occurred between classes. Among the teacher-reported variables, ICCs ranged from .00 (Externalizing Problems, Behavioral Engagement) to .82 (Relationship Satisfaction). Notably, Relationship Satisfaction demonstrated the only ICC above .50, suggesting that for all other teacher-reported variables most of the variance occurred within, rather than between, classes.

Table 13

Intraclass Correlation Coefficients for Unconditional Models at 3-Month Follow-Up

| Variable | ICC |
|---------------------------|-----|
| <i>Student-Report</i> | |
| Life Satisfaction | .00 |
| Positive Affect | .00 |
| Negative Affect | .00 |
| Classmate Support | .01 |
| Teacher Support | .09 |
| Emotional Engagement | .01 |
| Behavioral Engagement | .00 |
| <i>Teacher-Report</i> | |
| Internalizing Problems | .21 |
| Externalizing Problems | .00 |
| Relationship Satisfaction | .82 |
| Instrumental Help | .33 |
| Emotional Engagement | .18 |
| Behavioral Engagement | .00 |

Two-level hierarchical linear models. Next, thirteen separate models for the outcome variables of interest (i.e., life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect, classmate and teacher support, student self-reported emotional and behavioral engagement, internalizing and

externalizing problems, teacher-reported instrumental help and relationship satisfaction, and teacher-reported emotional and behavioral engagement) were conducted to determine the sustained intervention effects. Specifically, the dependent variable for each model was a gain score (i.e., post-intervention score – follow-up score) to detect the impact of the post-intervention score on the change, or lack thereof, at follow-up. Both student- and class-level predictors were included as independent variables, resulting in a two-level model. The student-level predictor consisted of the students' post-intervention score on the respective outcome measure (group-mean centered), while the class-level predictor included the class average post-test score for the respective outcome measure being evaluated (grand-mean centered). Because data were not collected from the delayed intervention control group during follow-up (largely because this group began receiving the intervention in the spring semester, as planned), the control condition was not included in these models. Results from all thirteen models are presented in Table 14 and described below.

For each model in the table, the fixed effects may be interpreted as follows: *Intercept* (γ_{00}) represents the average change in the outcome variable score (e.g., life satisfaction) between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up among students in the intervention group, or the degree to which improvements were maintained or not; *Post-Int* (γ_{10}) represents the impact of the individual post-intervention score on the follow-up score, or predicted change in the outcome variable score at follow-up for a one unit change in the individual student's post-intervention variable score, holding other predictors constant; *Class Post-Int* represents the impact of the class post-intervention score on the follow-up score, or predicted change in the outcome variable score at follow-up for a one unit change in the class post-intervention variable score, holding other predictors constant.

Life satisfaction. Results indicate that the average change in life satisfaction score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention life satisfaction was significantly related to the life satisfaction gain score at follow-up ($p = .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average life satisfaction that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .55 higher gain in life satisfaction score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention life satisfaction score was not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Positive affect. Results indicate that the average change in positive affect score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. However, the main effect of individual post-intervention positive affect was significantly related to the positive affect gain score at follow-up ($p = .021$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average positive affect that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .40 higher gain in score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention positive affect score was not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Negative affect. Results indicate that the average change in negative affect score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. Additionally, the main effects of individual post-intervention and class post-intervention life satisfaction scores were not statistically significant, indicating that these predictors did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Classmate support. Results indicate that the average change in classmate support score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention classmate support was significantly related to the classmate support gain score at follow-up ($p = .008$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average classmate satisfaction that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .32 higher gain in classmate support score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention classmate support score was not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Teacher support. Results indicate that the average change in teacher support score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention teacher support was not significantly related to the teacher support gain score at follow-up given traditional levels of significance (i.e., $\alpha = .05$), however it was approaching significance ($p = .096$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average teacher support that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .22 higher gain in life satisfaction score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention teacher support score was not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Emotional engagement – student. Results indicate that the average change in student-reported emotional engagement score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention emotional engagement was not statistically significantly related to the emotional

engagement gain score at follow-up, however the main effect for class emotional engagement approached statistical significance ($p = .098$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the sample average emotional engagement that a class in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the students are expected to decline by .90 at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant.

Behavioral engagement – student. Results indicate that the average change in positive affect score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention positive affect was significantly related to the behavioral engagement gain score at follow-up ($p < .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average behavioral engagement that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .44 higher gain in score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention behavioral engagement score was not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Internalizing problems. Results indicate that the average change in teacher-reported internalizing problems score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was statistically significant. Because the gain score was negative, this suggests that students increased on average .57 in internalizing problems between post-intervention and follow-up. The main effect of individual post-intervention internalizing problems was significantly related to the internalizing problems gain score at follow-up ($p = .022$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average internalizing problems that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .28 higher gain in score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of

class post-intervention internalizing problems was also significantly related to the gain score at follow-up ($p = .033$), indicating that for each unit above the sample average internalizing problems that a class in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the students are expected to decline by .60 at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant.

Externalizing problems. Results indicate that the average change in teacher-reported externalizing problems score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention externalizing problems was significantly related to the externalizing problems gain score at follow-up ($p < .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average behavioral engagement that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .44 higher gain in score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention externalizing problems score was not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Relationship satisfaction. Results indicate that the average change in teacher-reported relationship satisfaction score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention relationship satisfaction was significantly related to the relationship satisfaction gain score at follow-up ($p < .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average relationship satisfaction that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .29 higher gain in score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention relationship satisfaction score was

not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Instrumental help. Results indicate that the average change in instrumental help score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention instrumental help was significantly related to the instrumental help gain score at follow-up ($p = .009$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average instrumental help that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .37 higher gain in score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention instrumental help score was not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Emotional engagement – teacher. Results indicate that the average change in teacher-reported emotional engagement score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up, represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention emotional engagement was significantly related to the emotional engagement gain score at follow-up ($p < .001$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average emotional engagement that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .24 higher gain in score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention emotional engagement score was not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Behavioral engagement – teacher. Results indicate that the average change in teacher-reported behavioral engagement score between post-intervention and 3-month follow-up,

represented by the intercept, was not statistically significant. The main effect of individual post-intervention behavioral engagement was significantly related to the behavioral engagement gain score at follow-up ($p = .004$). It can be inferred that for each unit above the class average behavioral engagement that a student in the immediate intervention group scored at post-intervention, the student is expected to have a .26 higher gain in score at follow-up, holding all other model predictors constant. The main effect of class post-intervention behavioral engagement score was not statistically significant, indicating that this class score did not affect students' individual gain scores at follow-up.

Table 14

Two-Level Hierarchical Linear Models for Outcome Variables at 3-Month Follow-Up

| Model | Parameter | Parameter Estimate | Standard Error | p |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-------|
| Life Satisfaction (LS) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 0.14 | 0.13 | .340 |
| | Post-Int LS (γ_{10}) | 0.55 | 0.16 | .001 |
| | Class Post-Int LS (γ_{01}) | -0.63 | 1.22 | .625 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.01 | 0.04 | .494 |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.69 | 0.13 | <.001 |
| | <i>Fit Indices</i> | | | |
| | AIC | 151.6 | BIC | 152.7 |
| | Positive Affect (PA) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | |
| Intercept (γ_{00}) | | 0.25 | 0.15 | .103 |
| Post-Int PA (γ_{10}) | | 0.40 | 0.17 | .021 |
| Class Post-Int PA (γ_{02}) | | -0.25 | 1.05 | .817 |
| <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| Intercept (τ_{00}) | | 0.00 | -- | -- |
| Residual (σ^2) | | 0.66 | 0.12 | <.001 |
| <i>Fit Indices</i> | | | | |
| AIC | | 147.2 | BIC | 147.7 |
| Negative Affect (NA) | | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | -0.18 | 0.11 | .115 |
| | Post-Int NA (γ_{10}) | 0.08 | 0.18 | .651 |
| | Class Post-Int NA (γ_{02}) | 0.37 | 0.48 | .441 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | -- | -- |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.61 | 0.11 | <.001 |
| | <i>Fit Indices</i> | | | |
| | AIC | 143.8 | BIC | 144.3 |

Table 14 (Continued)

| Model | Parameter | Parameter Estimate | Standard Error | <i>p</i> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------|
| Classmate Support (CS) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 0.10 | 0.17 | .576 |
| | Post-Int CS (γ_{10}) | 0.32 | 0.12 | .008 |
| | Class Post-Int CS (γ_{02}) | 0.01 | 0.42 | .986 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.02 | 0.07 | .380 |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.86 | 0.17 | <.001 |
| | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | 168.1 | 169.3 | |
| | | <i>Fit Indices</i> | | |
| Teacher Support (TS) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 0.10 | 0.11 | .449 |
| | Post-Int TS (γ_{10}) | 0.22 | 0.13 | .096 |
| | Class Post-Int TS (γ_{02}) | -0.31 | 0.38 | .472 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.03 | 0.05 | .249 |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.35 | 0.07 | <.001 |
| | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | 116.7 | 117.8 | |
| | | <i>Fit Indices</i> | | |
| Emotional Engagement- Student (EE-S) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 0.07 | 0.05 | .220 |
| | Post-Int EE-S (γ_{10}) | 0.19 | 0.12 | .106 |
| | Class Post-Int EE-S (γ_{02}) | -0.90 | 0.53 | .098 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | -- | -- |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.14 | 0.03 | <.001 |
| | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | 57.4 | 58.0 | |
| | | <i>Fit Indices</i> | | |
| Behavioral Engagement- Student (BE-S) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | -0.02 | 0.04 | .537 |
| | Post-Int BE-S (γ_{10}) | 0.44 | 0.08 | <.001 |
| | Class Post-Int BE-S (γ_{02}) | 0.31 | 0.31 | .319 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | -- | -- |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.07 | 0.01 | <.001 |
| | | AIC | BIC | |
| | | 22.3 | 22.9 | |
| | | <i>Fit Indices</i> | | |

Table 14 (Continued)

| Model | Parameter | Parameter Estimate | Standard Error | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------|
| Internalizing Problems (IP) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | -0.57 | 0.20 | .046 |
| | Post-Int IP (γ_{10}) | 0.28 | 0.12 | .022 |
| | Class Post-Int IP (γ_{02}) | -0.60 | 0.17 | .033 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.03 | 0.16 | .419 |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 1.85 | 0.36 | <.001 |
| | <i>Fit Indices</i> | | | |
| | AIC | 218.3 | BIC | 219.5 |
| | Externalizing Problems (EP) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | |
| Intercept (γ_{00}) | 0.15 | 0.22 | .530 | |
| Post-Int EP (γ_{10}) | 0.44 | 0.08 | <.001 | |
| Class Post-Int EP (γ_{02}) | 0.11 | 0.16 | .550 | |
| <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.03 | 0.17 | .437 | |
| Residual (σ^2) | 2.16 | 0.42 | <.001 | |
| <i>Fit Indices</i> | | | | |
| AIC | 228.4 | BIC | 229.5 | |
| Relationship Satisfaction (RS) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 0.08 | 0.26 | .773 |
| | Post-Int RS (γ_{10}) | 0.29 | 0.07 | <.001 |
| | Class Post-Int RS (γ_{02}) | -0.23 | 1.06 | 0.84 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.23 | 0.19 | 0.11 |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.03 | 0.01 | <.001 |
| | <i>Fit Indices</i> | | | |
| | AIC | -10.3 | BIC | -9.7 |
| | Instrumental Help (IH) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | |
| Intercept (γ_{00}) | | 0.40 | 0.25 | .209 |
| Post-Int IH (γ_{10}) | | 0.37 | 0.13 | .009 |
| Class Post-Int IH (γ_{02}) | | -0.09 | 0.28 | .758 |
| <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | | |
| Intercept (τ_{00}) | | 0.26 | 0.23 | .132 |
| Residual (σ^2) | | 0.29 | 0.06 | <.001 |
| <i>Fit Indices</i> | | | | |
| AIC | | 101.6 | BIC | 102.2 |

Table 14 (Continued)

| Model | Parameter | Parameter Estimate | Standard Error | <i>p</i> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------|
| Emotional Engagement-Teacher (EE-T) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | 0.08 | 0.09 | .419 |
| | Post-Int EE-T (γ_{10}) | 0.24 | 0.07 | .001 |
| | Class Post-Int EE-T (γ_{02}) | -0.32 | 0.30 | .346 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.02 | 0.02 | .147 |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.07 | 0.01 | <.001 |
| | AIC | | BIC | |
| | <i>Fit Indices</i> | 27.2 | 28.3 | |
| Behavioral Engagement-Teacher (BE-T) | <i>Fixed Effects</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (γ_{00}) | -0.03 | 0.07 | .629 |
| | Post-Int BE-T (γ_{10}) | 0.26 | 0.09 | .004 |
| | Class Post-Int BE-T (γ_{02}) | 0.12 | 0.25 | .648 |
| | <i>Variance Estimates</i> | | | |
| | Intercept (τ_{00}) | 0.00 | 0.02 | .445 |
| | Residual (σ^2) | 0.19 | 0.04 | <.001 |
| | AIC | | BIC | |
| | <i>Fit Indices</i> | 78.6 | 79.7 | |

Summary of Findings

The present study explored the immediate and sustained changes in elementary students' mental health (subjective well-being: life satisfaction, positive and negative affect; psychopathology symptoms: internalizing and externalizing problems), classroom social support, and classroom engagement associated with participation in a multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention. Primary analyses were within a reduced sample that excluded 43 participants (25 from the intervention condition and 18 from the control condition) who began the study with very low ($n = 1$ from intervention, $n = 2$ from control) or very high ($n = 24$ from intervention, $n = 16$ from control) life satisfaction in an attempt to make the groups more equitable (and to remove students with little to no room for growth in SWB [life satisfaction] at baseline) so that differences in growth could be detected. Even after removal of these relatively extreme cases, the intervention and control groups differed at baseline in

unanticipated ways (i.e., significantly higher levels of positive affect and classmate support, and lower levels of negative affect in the intervention group), which may have contributed to greater difficulty finding improvement in outcomes given the more limited room for growth among the intervention group.

In spite of teacher and student reports at the end of intervention that many children in the intervention condition appeared to actively take part in learning- and intended to continue using- various positive psychology strategies, findings from hierarchical linear models did not support immediate significant improvement in student outcomes in the intervention condition relative to change in the control condition. Instead, none of the anticipated improvements occurred in the intervention group relative to the delayed intervention control across the outcomes of interest at post-intervention. However, there was a trend whereby students who participated in the intervention had lower negative affect relative to the delayed intervention control at post-intervention as baseline negative affect increased, suggesting that the intervention may be most beneficial for students with the highest levels of negative affect at baseline. Unexpectedly, students within the immediate intervention group reported a decline in behavioral engagement relative to the control group at post-intervention. Aforementioned, this effect was not overly concerning given that given that follow-up analyses revealed the trend in the data was not replicated with another informant on the same construct, the sample means at post-test are comparable across the two groups, the “effect” seems sensitive to centering procedure used, and the likelihood of a Type 1 error is high given the number of outcomes examined. Additionally, there was an unanticipated trend whereby intervention participants had lower teacher-reported levels of instrumental help relative to the control group participants as baseline instrumental help increased. Findings from analyses also revealed that there were not sustained improvements (i.e.,

no change in predicted outcome scores between post-intervention and follow-up for score improvements demonstrated between baseline and post-intervention) nor delayed improvements (i.e., improvements in predicted outcome scores between post-intervention and follow-up despite no change in scores between baseline and post-intervention) in any outcomes of interest for the immediate intervention group at 3-month follow-up. However, there was a significant increase in teacher-reported internalizing symptoms from post-intervention to follow-up; it is unknown if that reflects greater teacher familiarity with students' feelings through increased contact with children over time, or more actual development of students' internalizing symptoms (given the absence of a comparison group at follow-up, it is unknown if elementary school students in general tend to increase in internalizing symptoms from the holiday to spring break periods, regardless or not if participation in a positive psychology program). Several limitations that may contribute to the unanticipated findings within this study are detailed in the following chapter.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to empirically examine the efficacy of a multitarget, multicomponent classwide positive psychology intervention in improving elementary school students' outcomes. Specifically, this study evaluated levels of indicators of students' mental health (i.e., subjective well-being: life satisfaction, positive and negative affect; psychopathology: internalizing and externalizing problems), classroom engagement, and classroom social support between students participating in a 10-week intervention targeting a variety of positive psychological constructs (i.e., positive relationships, gratitude, kindness, character strengths, hope) with parent and teacher components, and students in a delayed intervention control group.

This chapter first summarizes the results of the current study and key findings within the context of the existing research literature. Implications of findings for school psychologists and other key stakeholders involved in the education of elementary school students are then discussed. This chapter concludes with a review of the study's limitations and provides recommendations for future research on positive psychology interventions (PPIs) delivered in school settings.

Immediate Intervention Effects

The purpose of the first research question was to identify the group differences between students randomly assigned to an immediate intervention group and delayed intervention control group in terms of their mental health (i.e., subjective well-being: life satisfaction, positive and negative affect; psychopathology: internalizing and externalizing problems), classroom

engagement, and classroom social support. The following is a summary of findings that address this question within the broader body of literature.

Life satisfaction. In the current study, it was hypothesized that students who participated in the intervention would demonstrate significantly higher levels of life satisfaction relative to those in the delayed intervention control group at post-intervention. This hypothesis was not supported by findings in this study, as growth among the immediate intervention group was not significantly greater than that of the control group. This finding is discrepant from previous investigations of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* when delivered to small groups of older middle school students demonstrating that students participating in a treatment group experienced a significant increase in life satisfaction relative to a control (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017; Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014). However, this finding is consistent with results from other single-target PPIs (i.e., targeting gratitude, kindness, hope, use of character strengths) with elementary school students, which demonstrate that intervention participants did not improve in life satisfaction relative to a differing or no-intervention control group (Layous, Nelson, Oberle, Schonert-Reichl, & Lyubomirsky, 2012; Owens & Patterson, 2013; Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015).

As with other PPI studies including elementary student participants, it may be argued that the baseline life satisfaction scores in the current study were at a level that provided limited room for improvement, thus findings may be attributed to ceiling effects. Even after reducing the sample to have more similar levels of baseline life satisfaction between the treatment and control groups by excluding students with extreme levels of life satisfaction, students within the immediate intervention group had higher levels of baseline subjective well-being (more positive affect, less negative affect), limiting the growth of this group more than the delayed intervention

control group. Despite limited room for growth, it may be noted that mean levels of life satisfaction increased for both groups from pre- to post-intervention. This may be due, in part, to schoolwide positive psychology initiatives implemented concurrently by the partner school's guidance department. Specifically, all students in the school participated in monthly character building days wherein they performed acts of kindness (e.g., reading to students in a lower grade level, cleaning the school campus), practiced the identification of others' kind acts through a positive behavior support initiative, and decorated kindness posters which were then hung around the school.

Positive affect and negative affect. In the current study it was hypothesized that students within the immediate intervention group would increase in levels of positive affect and decrease in levels of negative affect, relative to the delayed intervention control group. Because the immediate intervention group did not improve in positive or negative affect relative to the delayed intervention control using a traditional threshold of significance ($p < .05$), this hypothesis was not supported. It may be noted, however, that the immediate and delayed intervention control groups differed with respect to change in negative affect scores ($p < .10$) such that the immediate intervention group's negative affect is expected to become lower relative to the control group's as baseline negative affect increases. The finding that the groups did not have significant differences in levels of positive affect at post-intervention varies from the most recent investigation of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* with middle school students demonstrating that students participating in the immediate intervention group experienced a significant increase in positive affect relative to the waitlist control (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017). Furthermore, the finding for positive affect differs from previous investigations of single-target PPIs on gratitude and character strengths with elementary-age students (Froh et al., 2014;

Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015) and a multitarget PPI with older middle school students (Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016). However, this finding is consistent with studies of PPIs targeting kindness and hope with elementary youth, which did not demonstrate treatment and control group difference at post-intervention (Layous, Nelson, Oberle, Schonert-Reichl, & Lyubomirsky, 2012; Owens & Patterson, 2013).

With regard to negative affect, this study demonstrates that students in the immediate intervention group are expected to have declines in negative affect relative to those in the delayed intervention control as baseline negative affect increases. This indicates that the program participants who reported the greatest frequency of negative emotions at baseline were likely to experience declines relative to those with high negative affect at baseline in the control. While this effect related to baseline negative affect has not been observed in previous investigations, the most recent study of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* with older students demonstrated a decrease in negative affect among the intervention group relative to the waitlist control (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017). Single-target PPI investigations including elementary students have found that there were not significant differences in levels of negative affect between the treatment and control groups at post-intervention (Froh et al., 2009; Froh et al., 2014, Owens & Patterson; Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015), however other investigations of social-emotional learning curricula with elementary students and PPIs with secondary students have demonstrated significant intervention effects on negative emotionality between conditions (e.g., Froh, Sefick, & Emmons, 2008; Low, Cook, Smolkowski, & Buntain-Ricklefs, 2015).

In sum, as with life satisfaction, it may be that the baseline positive affect scores of students in the current study limited room for growth, thus findings may be in part due to ceiling effects. Furthermore, students in classes randomly assigned to the immediate intervention group

had higher levels of positive affect at baseline than those assigned to the delayed intervention control group, limiting room for growth of the immediate intervention group over that of the control. Additionally, students in both groups increased in reported positive affect between pre- and post-intervention, which may in part due to aforementioned schoolwide positive psychology initiatives or other schoolwide initiatives within this relatively high-performing school, currently at a “B” rated performance grade, that is led by a principal who expressed a commitment to improving student and staff emotional well-being. With respect to negative affect, this study demonstrated that students with higher levels of negative affect are anticipated to have sharper declines as a result of intervention participation than those with lower levels of negative affect. This indicates that participation in the *Well-Being Promotion Program* may be particularly beneficial to students who more frequently experience negative emotions to begin with.

Internalizing and externalizing problems. The current investigation hypothesized that students in the immediate intervention group would decrease in teacher-reported symptoms of internalizing and externalizing problems, relative to those in the delayed intervention control group. This hypothesis was not supported; students in the immediate intervention group decreased in both internalizing and externalizing problems, however they did not experience statistically significant declines relative to students in the control group. This finding was consistent with that of previous studies of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* with older middle school students demonstrating that declines in psychopathology were not significantly steeper among the intervention group (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017; Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014). However notably, this finding varies from those of single-target PPI investigations (e.g., hope, optimism) with elementary (Rooney, Hassan, Kane, Roberts, & Nesa, 2013) and secondary students (Brunwasser, Gillham, & Kim, 2009; Green, Grant, & Rynsaardt, 2007) demonstrating

significant declines in internalizing symptoms (i.e., depression, anxiety) among intervention participants relative to a control at post-intervention. Additionally, the finding in this study is inconsistent with results from investigations of multitarget PPIs implemented with elementary and middle school youth, which have demonstrated that participants improved in internalizing and externalizing behaviors, including self-reported general distress, anxiety, and depression, as well as parent- and teacher-reported problem behaviors and social skills (Rashid et al., 2013; Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016). It may be that this particular PPI curricula varies from others such that it doesn't incorporate activities that directly address symptoms of psychopathology in addition to those that promote well-being. Furthermore, differences in internalizing and externalizing problems among the treatment and control groups were difficult to detect in the current investigation given the limited sample size, and the reliance on teacher report of student symptoms.

Classroom engagement. This researcher hypothesized that students in the immediate intervention group would increase in emotional and behavioral engagement relative to students in the delayed intervention control. This hypothesis was not supported, as neither students nor teachers ratings of student engagement supported an increase in engagement for students in the immediate intervention group relative to those in the control. Unexpectedly, students in the immediate intervention group reported experiencing a decline in behavioral engagement at post-intervention, as analyses revealed they were expected to score .14 lower than students in the control group. However, teachers ratings did not support such a decline in behavioral engagement. Also, student-rated post-intervention scores among the treatment and control groups were similar, and follow-up analyses revealed the effect may be attributed to centering procedures. Although engagement has not been extensively explored within the positive

psychology research literature, the finding in this study did differ from that of another single-target PPI on character strengths implemented with classes of elementary students found that intervention participants increased in classroom engagement at 3-month follow-up, indexed by emotional and behavioral engagement as within the current study, relative to classes in the control (Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015). Studies of secondary students participating in multitarget PPIs also demonstrated improvements in student- and/or teacher-rated engagement (Gillham et al., 2013; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016).

Although students participating in the *Well-Being Promotion Program* did not improve in classroom engagement relative to the control group, it should be noted that previous research has demonstrated a trend whereby students decrease in engagement throughout the school year (Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009). Additionally, results from a pilot investigation of this program also indicated that elementary participants decreased in indices of school engagement across the course of program implementation despite improving in mental health outcomes (Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2014).

Classroom social support. In the current study, it was hypothesized that students in the immediate intervention group would increase in indicators of classroom social support relative to students in the delayed intervention control. Such indicators included both students' self-reported classmate and teacher support and teacher-reported relationship satisfaction and instrumental help. This hypothesis was not supported, as students in the immediate intervention group did not demonstrate statistically significant growth in teacher or classmate support, or teacher-reported relationship satisfaction or instrumental help, relative to students in the delayed intervention control group at immediate post-intervention. Of note, there was a significant interaction effect for instrumental help indicating that the difference between the treatment and control group

depends on the level of baseline instrumental help. Notably, the teacher-reported instrumental help of students in the immediate intervention group becomes lower (i.e., by .31) relative to that of the control group as baseline instrumental help increases, suggesting a decline in students' help-seeking behavior among those who did so most frequently to begin with. As with classroom engagement, classroom social support has been less extensively studied within the research literature given that few studies have been implemented and evaluated at a classwide level. In one exception, Quinlan et al. (2015) found that classes of elementary students who participated in a strengths-based intervention increased in class cohesion relative to students within a control. Additionally, Layous and colleagues (2012) found that students participating in three acts of kindness increased in peer acceptance relative to students instructed to visit three places.

Although students participating in the *Well-Being Promotion Program* did not report increased feelings of classroom support relative to the control, it should be noted that only one session specifically targeted team-building and peer relationships. Interestingly, a quarter of students reported that the team-building activities were their favorite, while two-thirds of students indicated they planned to continue the teamwork activities after program completion. Thus, this single session was particularly well-received and memorable. It may be that the single session aimed at improving the quality of classroom relationships was insufficient in generating increased feelings of classmate support; however with a change in design that allows for continued practice throughout the course of implementation this intervention may produce desired improvements. Additionally, the unanticipated finding that teachers reported a trend for lower instrumental help among some intervention participants relative to the control as baseline instrumental help increased may indicate that students requiring the most emotional support from

teachers developed coping and problem-solving strategies through program participation and thus required less assistance.

Sustained Intervention Effects

The original purpose of the second research question was to determine if the anticipated immediate gains in mental health and academic outcomes among students who participated in the intervention would sustain- or further improve- at 3-month follow-up. Unfortunately, the lack of relative gains (i.e., unsupported hypotheses regarding effects at post-intervention) made this set of analyses a bit challenging coupled with the problem that there was not a control group available to compare student change from post-intervention to follow-up since the control group began the intervention just after post-intervention data collection. Thus, this set of analyses focused only on trends in outcomes among the intervention condition from post to follow-up, in the absence of a comparison group that might demonstrate typical changes in outcomes among students at this school. A summary of findings that address the second research question within the extant body of literature is presented.

Life satisfaction. This study hypothesized that expected improvements in life satisfaction among the immediate intervention group at post-intervention would be maintained, rather than decline, at 3-month follow-up. Findings demonstrate that this hypothesis was not supported, as students participating the immediate intervention group did not improve in life satisfaction relative to those in the control at post-intervention, nor did they experience a delayed improvement from post-intervention to follow-up; instead, their level of life satisfaction remained stable from post-intervention to follow-up. This finding is discrepant from previous investigations of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* with middle school students, demonstrating that the immediate treatment groups maintained growth in life satisfaction at 7-week and 6-

month follow-up (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017; Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014). Additionally, this finding varies from investigations of single-target PPIs implemented with elementary and middle school students, such as the strengths-based *Awesome Us* and *Building Hope for the Future*, which demonstrated that participants had higher life satisfaction than those in control conditions at 3-month, and 6- and 18-month follow-up, respectively (Marques, Lopez, & Pais-Ribeiro, 2011; Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015).

Although these findings indicate that some PPIs have yielded success in promoting lasting improvements in youth life satisfaction, it should be noted that other investigations have less promising findings, demonstrating no growth at post-intervention or diminished growth by follow-up (Froh, Sefick, & Emmons, 2008; Rashid et al., 2013; Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014). While research has not explained why some but not all PPIs produce sustained improvements in life satisfaction, typically viewed as the most stable indicator of subjective well-being, the most recent investigation of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* revealed that booster sessions offered approximately monthly were helpful in maintaining students' heightened life satisfaction nearly 2-months after program completion (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017). Thus, incorporation of periodic classwide sessions in which content from the core program is reviewed and rehearsed may be helpful in generating sustained growth among participants in this multitarget, multicomponent PPI.

Positive and negative affect. As with life satisfaction, it was hypothesized that anticipated improvements in positive and negative affect at post-intervention would be sustained at 3-month follow-up. This hypothesis was not supported, as students participating in the immediate intervention group did not have significantly higher positive affect nor lower negative affect than those in the control at post-intervention. Additionally, students in the immediate

intervention group did not experience significant changes in affect from post-intervention to 3-month follow-up. Although there was trend at post-intervention whereby students in the immediate intervention group decreased in negative affect relative to those in the control as baseline negative affect increased, within the total intervention sample negative affect did not change from post-intervention to 3-month follow-up. Findings in this study are inconsistent with a former investigation of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* which demonstrated that students in the treatment condition had significantly higher positive affect than those in the control at post-intervention and such differences were sustained at 7-week follow-up (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017). Additionally, this previous investigation of the program found that students in the intervention group had significantly lower negative affect at post-intervention, and although the control group also declined in negative affect at follow-up, the decrease that intervention group experienced was maintained seven weeks following program participation. Studies of other single-target PPIs, including gratitude, kindness, and character strengths, demonstrate that improvements in positive affect, but not negative affect, were maintained at follow-up (Froh et al., 2009, Froh et al., 2014; Layous, Nelson, Oberle, Schonert-Reichl, & Lyubomirsky, 2012; McCabe et al., 2011; Quinlan et al., 2015). Because there was not an immediate effect on participants' affect following program completion, this lack of growth at follow-up was somewhat anticipated as previous PPI studies have not demonstrated delayed effects. As with life satisfaction, it should be noted that this study did not incorporate booster sessions that have been shown to generate lasting improvements in student affect (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017).

Internalizing and externalizing problems. The current study hypothesized that expected declines in teacher-reported internalizing and externalizing symptoms among the immediate intervention group at post-intervention would be sustained during 3-month follow-up.

This hypothesis was not supported, as teachers did not report that students in the immediate intervention group had significantly lower levels of these problems relative to the control at post-intervention, nor were lower levels observed at follow-up. However, this study found that teachers reported an increase in students' internalizing symptoms from post-intervention to follow-up, a finding restricted to the intervention sample given the lack of a control sample that would indicate typical development at the partner elementary school. The finding that students did not improve in symptoms of mental health problems is consistent with the first investigation of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* conducted with small groups of middle school students, demonstrating that the treatment and control groups did not differ in student-reported psychopathology at post-intervention or at 6-month follow-up (Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014). However, findings in the current study vary from a more recent study of this program with middle school students, which found marginally significant improvements in student-reported internalizing and externalizing at post-intervention among the treatment group, relative to the control, as well as sustained improvements in internalizing symptoms at 7-week follow-up (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017). Other investigations of single-target PPIs, such as optimism, conducted with elementary students also demonstrate sustained improvements in internalizing symptoms (i.e., anxiety and depression) at 6- and 18-month follow-up, however not at 42- or 54-month follow-up (Rooney et al., 2013). Multi-target PPIs have yielded mixed findings for internalizing and externalizing symptoms. For example, Rashid and colleagues (2013) have found that elementary student participants did not decline in self-reported internalizing symptoms at post-intervention, however did improve in parent-reported externalizing symptoms at post-intervention but not at follow-up. Additionally, Shoshani and Steinmetz (2014) demonstrated that secondary students participating in a schoolwide multi-target PPI decreased in general

distress, anxiety, and depression, while those in a control condition increased in internalizing symptoms, during one-year follow-up. While correlational research within the broader field of positive psychology suggests that having high levels of life satisfaction may prevent the future development of psychopathology (Suldo & Huebner, 2004), this study found that participating in a multitarget PPI did not lead to reduced symptoms 3-months later. However, this program did not incorporate activities specifically targeting internalizing nor externalizing symptoms, thus an intervention designed to reduce mental health problems may be implemented in conjunction with the PPI promoting well-being in order to address both factors comprising students' complete mental health. Additionally, the teacher-reported increase in internalizing symptoms may reflect greater teacher familiarity with students' feelings through increased contact with children over time, rather than actual development of students' internalizing symptoms.

Classroom engagement. This study hypothesized that anticipated improvements in classroom engagement among the immediate intervention group at post-intervention would be sustained at 3-month follow-up. This hypothesis was not supported, as students in the immediate intervention group did not improve in student- or teacher-reported emotional or behavioral engagement at post-intervention, nor demonstrate improvements at 3-month follow-up. While this was the first investigation of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* to include engagement as an outcome, a study of a classwide single-target PPI demonstrated improvements in elementary students' engagement at 3-month follow-up (Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015). One potential reason for the lack of increased classroom engagement at post-intervention and follow-up may be that the intervention facilitators included members of the Positive Psychology Research Team at USF (vs. asking teachers to be responsible for program

implementation). Thus anticipated improvements in engagement during enjoyable session activities may not have generalized to typical classroom learning activities.

Classroom social support. In the current study, it was hypothesized that expected improvements in indicators of classroom social support among the immediate intervention group at post-intervention would be maintained at 3-month follow-up. Because students within the immediate intervention group did not improve in student-reported classmate or teacher support, nor teacher-reported relationship satisfaction or instrumental help from pre- to post-intervention or post-intervention to follow-up, this hypothesis was not supported. This finding differed from that of a previous study of a strengths-based PPI implemented with classes of elementary students, which demonstrated that participants reported greater class cohesion at 3-month follow-up than students in a control (Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015). This discrepancy may be due to less emphasis on relationships throughout the course of intervention implementation. Namely, the program evaluated in this study included a single session aimed at building students' classroom relationships. Although small group activities were incorporated throughout the implementation, students were completing independent, rather than group assignments. Incorporation of more group-centered activities with peers as well as the classroom teacher may have resulted in lasting improvements in perceived classroom social support.

Implications for School Psychologists

A growing body of literature demonstrates that the one-dimensional approach to mental health aimed at reducing psychopathology falls short in terms of facilitating the best student outcomes, as students with complete mental health (i.e., low psychopathology *and* high subjective well-being) experience the most success in school and beyond (Antaramian, Huebner, Hills, & Valois, 2010; Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008; Suldo, Thalji-

Raitano, Kiefer, & Ferron, 2017). Furthermore, schools are increasingly adopting a public health approach to mental health service delivery, offering a continuum of supports ranging from universal well-being promotion and mental illness prevention for all to intensive individualized services for few (Barrett, Eber, & Weist, 2013; Doll, Cummings, & Chapla, 2014). As such, school-based mental health providers including school psychologists should be concerned with identifying universal evidence-based programs for promoting students' complete mental health. Previous research demonstrates that although subjective well-being is relatively stable, participation in brief activities, or PPIs, designed to foster malleable factors (e.g., gratitude, optimism) associated with high well-being can create lasting improvements in youth happiness (Layous & Lyubomirsky, 2014; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009; Waters, 2011). Although most investigations of PPIs have targeted small groups of secondary students, there is some evidence that entire classes of younger elementary students may benefit from participation in universal PPIs with all peers (Froh et al., 2014; Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015). Additionally, while most previous studies of PPIs include activities centered on a single target, such as gratitude, kindness, hope, or character strengths (e.g., Froh et al., 2009; Layous, Nelson, Oberle, Schonert-Reichl, & Lyubomirsky, 2012; Marques, Lopez, & Pais-Ribeiro, 2011; Quinlan, Swain, Cameron, & Vella-Brodrick, 2015), there is preliminary support for more comprehensive multitarget programs including several PPIs in a sequential order (e.g., Rashid et al., 2013; Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017; Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016). Finally, empirical evidence suggests that school-based mental health programming that includes components for key stakeholders such as teachers and parents may result in even greater mental health outcomes among students (e.g., Durlak et al., 2011; Roth,

Suldo, & Ferron, 2017). However, the efficacy of a comprehensive multitarget, multicomponent classwide PPI with elementary students remained unexplored prior to the current investigation.

This study attempted to provide strong empirical support for an evidence-based program that may be added to school psychologists' toolkits of comprehensive universal programs designed to promote complete mental health. The universal program was originally conceptualized by this researcher as promising and likely evidence-based because the *Well-Being Promotion Program* is grounded in strong theory regarding how to increase youth happiness (i.e., by strengthening relationships and facilitating positive emotions about the past, present, and future; Seligman, 2002; Suldo, 2016) and a pilot study of a universal application with elementary school students tracked positive improvements in subjective well-being from baseline to post-intervention to follow-up although within a study within a comparison group (Suldo, Hearon, Bander et al., 2015). However, findings from this first randomized control trial of a universal application of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* with elementary school students do not provide support for an immediate or delayed positive effect of intervention on student mental health, classroom relationships, or classroom engagement. Instead, the results might suggest that the modality tested may not be the best method of delivery or best age group with whom to deliver this program. Former investigations of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* support its effectiveness with small groups of older middle school students identified from universal screenings as having room for growth in subjective well-being (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017; Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014) and even among a class of elementary students with lower levels of subjective well-being at baseline (Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2015). This program may thus be a better fit for vulnerable students, defined by Suldo and Shaffer (2008) as those with low psychopathology but also low levels of happiness and thus perhaps at-risk for the

development of mental health problems. Additionally, it may be more efficacious for older middle school students who are capable of understanding more complex concepts (i.e., character strengths) and understand the benefits of engaging in intervention activities more readily. Notably, studies of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* have yielded larger effect sizes among 7th grade program participants relative to 6th grade participants, when intervention groups were compared to a delayed-treatment control (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017; Suldo, Savage, & Mercer, 2014).

Furthermore, this study proposed that program participants would benefit by including teachers and parents through components including psychoeducation sessions, weekly handouts for practicing strategies at home and in school, and teacher co-implementation of sessions. Although there was a high level of teacher participation in terms of attendance at each session, reviewing weekly handouts, and reportedly bringing up program content outside of sessions, the extent to which this impacted students' outcomes remains unknown as a previous investigation of the elementary *Well-Being Promotion Program* with teacher components demonstrated significant intervention effects (Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2015). A previous study of this program implemented with middle school students also demonstrated that the parent components enhanced student outcomes when compared to a study with a similar sample that did not provide psychoeducation and weekly handouts (Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017). However, the extent to which this parent component enhanced outcomes of students in the current study remains unknown given zero attendance at the parent psychoeducation session and lack of data regarding parents' consumption of information in weekly handouts.

Contributions to the Literature

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on interventions designed to promote students' happiness within the school setting. Most extant PPI efficacy trials have included older samples of youth, utilized single-target PPIs, targeted small groups of students, and excluded components for key stakeholders such as teachers and parents. Given the promise of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* in a previous pilot study with elementary students (Suldo, Hearon, Bander, et al., 2015), the current investigation aimed to enhance the design and extend the findings to increase confidence that this program may be used as a universal evidence-based intervention for enhancing students' complete mental health. Feasibility and acceptability data collected during the current study support the notion that the program is able to be integrated into the classroom context as teachers willingly provided class time to permit implementation of a universal program to improve youth happiness and perceived positive changes in students as well as class climate that they attributed to program participation. Students also provided overwhelmingly positive feedback regarding their experiences in the program, with 97% of students indicating they planned to continue at least one program activity after implementation and over half suggesting there was nothing about the program they disliked. Given that both students and teachers evaluated the program positively and it was feasibly implemented with fidelity through 45-minute sessions over 10 weeks, future research may wish to explore this program with a larger sample of classes or perhaps those demonstrating greater need for improvement in the outcomes of interest (e.g., subjective well-being, psychopathology, classroom engagement, and classroom relationships).

Despite this promising feasibility and acceptability data, the findings regarding efficacy in terms of change in student outcomes do not support the immediate utility of this program delivered in a universal format with younger elementary students. It may be that this particular

multitarget PPI may be more effective with older students with higher levels of cognitive functioning and/or any age sample with lower levels of subjective well-being prior to participating. Given the limited power in multilevel model analyses, potential ceiling effects, and concurrent schoolwide positive psychology initiatives in this study, it is possible that the benefits of program participation on student outcomes were not fully ascertained. Thus, future research may wish to replicate the current study with a larger sample of classes of students who are matched on baseline life satisfaction prior to random assignment and not currently participating in schoolwide positive psychology programming to detect intervention effects.

Limitations

Although precautions were taken to minimize threats to the reliability and validity of this study, there are several limitations that should be noted. First, this study was conducted with a convenience sample, with a partner school whose administration expressed interest in positive psychology and desired to implement a universal well-being curricula with all fourth and fifth grade classes. Thus, this sampling method poses as a threat to the population validity as random sampling could have resulted in higher generalizability of findings.

Second, the sample size ($N = 13$ classrooms) was smaller than ideal, which made it more difficult to detect differences between the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control groups on the outcomes of interest. However, all fourth and fifth grade classes at the school participated, and students in the 4th and 5th grade levels were viewed by this researcher as the best intervention candidates at the school given their more advanced cognitive abilities compared to the younger elementary students and thus presumably greater ability to grasp the *Well-Being Promotion Program* concepts such as character strengths.

A third limitation of this study is that improvements in program participants' indicators of subjective well-being (i.e., life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect) were likely more difficult to detect due to ceiling effects, because of the elementary students already high level of well-being as reported on the SLSS and PANAS-C-10. This investigation of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* was the first randomized control trial to recruit entire classes of students, regardless of their baseline life satisfaction, thus there was more limited room for growth. Specifically, program participants had an average baseline life satisfaction score of 4.92 (out of 6.00) before reducing the sample so that the immediate intervention and delayed intervention control groups would be more similar; this restriction of sample was viewed as necessary since the immediate intervention group initially started with significantly higher life satisfaction than the delayed intervention control group at baseline. Even after reducing the sample, the average baseline life satisfaction scores were 4.65 and 4.45 for the treatment and control groups, respectively. These scores are higher than baseline life satisfaction scores among other samples of youth who completed the SLSS, which ranged from 3.30 (on a scale out of 4.00) to 4.54 for elementary students (Hoy, Suldo, & Raffaele Mendez, 2012; Quinlan et al., 2015) and 4.15 to 4.17 among slightly older 6th grade students (Marques, Lopez, Pais-Riberio, 2011; Rashid et al., 2013). Such high baseline life satisfaction among the sample in this study thus calls into question the room for growth as compared to former PPI investigations.

A fourth limitation of this study is that data gathered may have been impacted by schoolwide positive psychology initiatives which were taking place concurrently at the partner school. After attending the study information session provided by the research team at the start of the school year, the school counselor designed schoolwide initiatives to promote gratitude and acts of kindness, which were implemented during the program evaluation. Such efforts included

classwide gratitude journals for students in grades K-3 and a catching kindness initiative whereby all students in grades K-5 were instructed to pass out paper feathers (that could be exchanged for tangible reinforcers) to friends engaged in kind acts. These initiatives took place even after research team members' requests to delay implementation until after post-intervention data collection. Thus, it is possible that exposure to or participation in those schoolwide PPIs had an effect on the delayed intervention control group students' well-being at post-intervention, making it difficult to detect this study's intervention effects.

Another limitation of this study is the departure from the initial plan to deliver session 1B to all (or at least most) parents to provide for a discussion and answer questions. Due to zero attendance of student participants' parents at the parent information session held during the school's open house night, information was only transmitted to parents through written, weekly handouts (in the Appendix of the intervention manual located in Appendix D of this document). The extent to which parents discussed the intervention topics or engaged in the activities with their children at home was not measured. Thus, the impact of varying levels of parental involvement in the program on students' outcomes remains unknown.

Additionally, this study is limited due to the timing of the post-intervention data collection, as students in the immediate intervention group and delayed intervention control completed post-intervention measures 7-10 days prior to their two-week long winter break. Anecdotally, students mentioned that they were looking forward to travel during their break, receiving Christmas presents, having a break from school and homework, etc. It is possible that all students, regardless of being assigned to the treatment or control condition, were positively anticipating their winter break and subsequently experienced a similar boost in their well-being when completing self-report rating scales.

A final limitation of this study relates to the timing of follow-up data collection, as the delayed intervention control group had started program participation at the time of the follow-up thus control data could not be collected to detect differences in potential sustained intervention effects. Because the partner school participated in standardized state assessments in mid-spring, they requested for our delayed intervention control group to complete program participation as early as possible. As a result, sustained intervention effects only examined the difference between post-intervention and follow-up scores for the immediate intervention group who completed the program in the fall. Furthermore, follow-up data were collected just 3 months after completion of the intervention, thus the intended promotion effects of the well-being program may not have been detected. Other investigations of universal social-emotional learning that have not demonstrated improved differences between the treatment and control group immediately following the intervention when considering main effects (i.e., utilizing HLM as in the current study) have detected differences in developmental trajectories over time. That is, students who participated in preventive programming experienced improvements in indicators of their social-emotional functioning (e.g., social competence, aggressive behavior, learning engagement) relative to students within a control condition from preschool through third grade (Greenberg, 2016). While the promotion effects described by Greenberg were detected through multi-year longitudinal data collection, the extent to which students participating in the *Well-Being Promotion Program* experienced similar promotion effects remains unknown given the proximity of follow-up data collection to program completion.

Future Directions

In order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how PPIs operate and may enhance student outcomes, there are several directions for future research that flow from lessons

learned- and findings yielded from- this study. Although findings from this study might suggest that perhaps a classwide model is not the most suitable delivery format for improving student outcomes, future research may stratify the sample by pairing classes based on baseline life satisfaction then randomly assigning one class to the experimental group in order to more readily detect intervention effects. This was not feasible within the current study as teachers co-taught two classes of students (i.e., one taught all students math and science, one taught language arts and social studies), thus pairs of classes had to be assigned to the same condition based on the teachers they shared regardless of baseline life satisfaction.

Future research may also consider altering this design to evaluate the intervention with small, targeted groups of elementary students with suboptimal life satisfaction at baseline, as other efficacy trials of the *Well-Being Promotion Program* have demonstrated more promising outcomes when targeting groups of students demonstrating greater need for well-being improvement. Additionally, research may consider recruiting multiple elementary schools to have all of their fourth and fifth graders participate, then randomly assigning schools to the treatment or control condition, given that results of the current study may have been impacted by schoolwide initiatives that were taking place. Another potential future direction for recruitment is to solicit participation from a partner school with a greater number of classes in order to increase the sample size and thus increase statistical power so that it is easier to detect differences between the treatment and control groups.

Although this study demonstrates that overall, participation in this multitarget PPI did not result in improved outcomes, it may be that the intervention was more beneficial for some students than others, thus future directions may include to further explore which groups of students (e.g., males vs. females, 4th vs. 5th graders, high vs. low socio-economic status,

exceptional student education vs. general education participants) benefit most. Additionally, this study could be replicated with entire classes of older middle school students, given some previous evidence that some of the concepts in the *Well-Being Promotion Program* were somewhat challenging for elementary students to grasp (Suldo, Hearon, Dickinson, et al., 2015). Finally, in the event change is detected in a future study, it would be advantageous to explore potential mediators and moderators of change. Despite the current study demonstrating a lack of improvements in the immediate intervention group above and beyond that of the delayed intervention control, student participants did improve relative to baseline scores on some of the outcomes of interest. Thus, it would be interesting to explore which intervention targets (e.g., increased gratitude, use of character strengths, hope) had the greatest impact on improvements in well-being.

Summary

In conclusion, the current study has augmented extant research literature by investigating the efficacy of a multitarget, multicomponent classwide PPI on elementary students' social-emotional and behavioral outcomes. Specifically, this study compared levels of life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, internalizing and externalizing problems, classroom social support, and classroom engagement between students in 6 classrooms randomly assigned to participate in a 10-week intervention targeting a variety of positive psychological constructs (i.e., positive relationships, gratitude, kindness, character strengths, hope) with parent and teacher components, as compared to students in 7 classrooms randomly assigned to a delayed intervention control group. Aside from a single pilot investigation ($n = 12$ students in 1 classroom) conducted by the current author and the USF Positive Psychology Research Team, this is the first known study of a multitarget, multicomponent PPI delivered universally to classes of elementary students.

At immediate post-intervention, classes of students participating in the *Well-Being Promotion Program* did not have significantly improved student-reported life satisfaction, positive affect or negative affect, classmate or teacher support, emotional or behavioral engagement, nor teacher-reported relationship satisfaction, instrumental help, and emotional or behavioral engagement relative to the control classes. However, there was a trend whereby students receiving the intervention did have lower negative affect relative to the delayed intervention control at post-intervention among students with greater baseline negative affect levels. This suggests that the intervention was perhaps most beneficial for students experiencing a higher frequency of negative emotions at the start of the school year. Additionally, there was an unanticipated trend whereby intervention participants had lower teacher-reported levels of instrumental help relative to the control group participants as baseline instrumental help increased. However, it could be that students who most often relied on the teacher for support at the beginning of the year felt more equipped to manage problems independently and thus relied on teachers less as a result of intervention participation. Finally, students who participated in the intervention reported lower levels of behavioral engagement relative to the delayed intervention control group. While this finding was unanticipated given the success of other classwide PPIs in increasing elementary students' engagement (Quinlan et al., 2015), it was not concerning due to the lack of such declines in engagement reported by teachers, varying findings as centering procedures changed, and commensurate levels of this variable between the treatment and control groups at post-intervention.

Because of the lack of improvement in immediate intervention group outcomes relative to the control group at post-intervention, continuation of those anticipated improvements from post-intervention to follow-up could not be detected. However, there was a significant increase in

teacher-reported internalizing symptoms from post-intervention to follow-up. This finding is inconsistent with previous investigations demonstrating improvements in internalizing symptoms were sustained months after participation (e.g., Roth, Suldo, & Ferron, 2017). Notably, the control group was not included as a comparison group as they had started program participation at the time of data collection, thus the changes relative to a control remain unknown.

Additionally, it is unknown if the reported increase reflects teachers' greater awareness of students' feelings through increased contact with children over time, or more actual development of students' internalizing symptoms; future studies that include student reports of psychopathology could shed light on the accuracy of teacher reports at various points in the school year. Collectively, findings from this study do not provide empirical support for the efficacy of a multitarget, multicomponent PPI when delivered universally to classes of elementary students. However, there were several design limitations to this investigation that support the need for educational scholars and practitioners to continue studying the impact of multitarget PPIs delivered to students in multiple formats in order to foster their complete mental health across all tiers of support and thus optimize their outcomes in school and beyond.

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Appendix A: School Leadership Team Handout

USF Positive Psychology Research Team Intervention Plan Brooker Elementary: 2015-2016 Academic Year

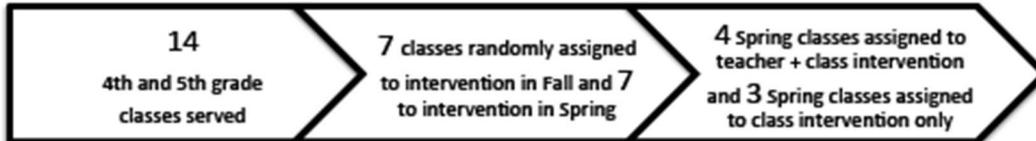
What is the Well-Being Promotion Program?

- A comprehensive 11-week classwide positive psychology program developed by Dr. Shannon Suldo and graduate students at USF that is designed to increase elementary school students' happiness through evidence-based activities targeting students' gratitude, kindness, character strengths, and hope

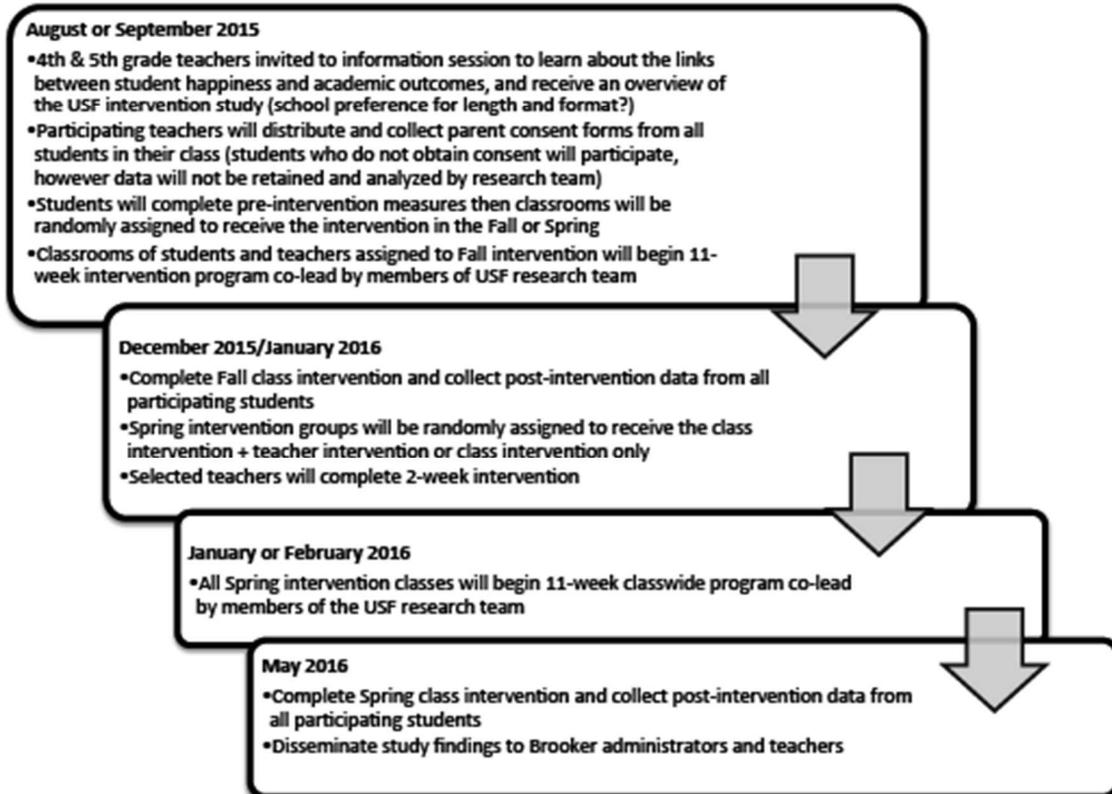
Why should schools implement the Well-Being Promotion Program?

- Preliminary research indicates program participation is associated with significant improvements in students' positive emotions and overall satisfaction with life, as well as satisfaction with family, friends, school, and self
- Previous findings demonstrate the students with more frequent positive emotions and high life satisfaction are less likely to develop mental health problems and are more likely to experience success in school

General Study Design



Proposed Timeline of Intervention Activities



Overview of 11-Week Classwide Intervention to Promote Students' Well-Being

| Meeting | Target | Strategies |
|---------|--|--|
| #1 | Positive Relationships: Student-Teacher | Teacher Information: Strategies for Conveying Social Support to Students |
| #2 | Positive Relationships: Student-Student | Team-Building |
| #3 | Positive Introduction; Character Strengths | You at Your Best |
| #4 | Gratitude | Gratitude Journals |
| #5 | Gratitude | Gratitude Visit |
| #6 | Kindness | Acts of Kindness |
| #7 | Character Strengths | Introduction to Character Strengths |
| #8 | Character Strengths | Character Strengths Assessment; Apply Signature Strength 1 in New Ways |
| #9 | Character Strengths | Apply Signature Strength 2 in New Ways |
| #10 | Hope | Best Possible Self in the Future |
| #11 | All | Termination; Review of Strategies and Plan for Future Use |

Overview of 2-Week Individualized Intervention to Promote Teachers' Well-Being

| Meeting | Activities |
|---------|---|
| #1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce the 24 character strengths within the VIA classification system• Teacher generates a list of strengths that he or she believes he or she possesses and discusses why• Describe how character strengths are related to happiness |
| #2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher completes the VIA online, learns top five "signature" strengths• Review signature strengths; evaluate them in terms of compatibility and recent uses across primary domains of life (family, friends, work)• Select signature strength to use in new and different ways for 5 work days• Brainstorm ways to apply the selected strength within the classroom and/or school context• Show how to complete a journal to track use of signature strength in new and different ways |
| #3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss progress in completing daily intervention task (use a signature strength in a new and different way at school)• As needed, problem-solve any barriers to strengths application• Reflection on experience; share success with application of strength• Develop a plan for using a second signature strength in new and different ways during this second week of the intervention period |
| #4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss progress in completing daily intervention task (use second signature strength in a new and different way at school)• As needed, problem-solve any barriers to strengths application• Reflection on experience; share success with application of strength• Plan for continued application of strengths at work• Receive a celebratory certificate of intervention completion• Complete measures of intervention acceptability and well-being. |

Anticipated Outcomes to be Measured:

- **Student:** Life satisfaction, positive affect, negative affect, and perceived teacher and classmate support
- **Teacher:** Life satisfaction, positive affect, negative affect, emotional distress, occupational burnout, and class climate

USF Research Team Contact Information:

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Mollie McCullough mmccullough@mail.usf.edu (863) 944-3029

Appendix B: Parent Consent Form

Dear Parent or Caregiver:

This letter provides information about a research study that will be conducted in your child's school by investigators from the University of South Florida (USF). Prior research has found that happy students and teachers create a classroom climate that promotes academic learning. Students who are happiest achieve the best in school, have the best attitudes towards learning, and the healthiest social relationships. Therefore, Brooker Elementary School will be implementing a well-being promotion program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms during the 2015-2016 school year. The program is intended to improve students' relationships with teachers and classmates, as well as teach students strategies for increasing their personal happiness. You will be invited to learn more about the program when your classroom is set to begin the curriculum. This letter provides information about the evaluation we will conduct to determine the effect of the well-being promotion program on students' emotional and academic well-being.

- ✓ **Who We Are:** The research team is led by Dr. Shannon Suldo, a Professor in the School Psychology Program at USF, and doctoral students Brittany Hearon and Mollie McCullough. We are planning the study with Brooker administrators to ensure that the study provides information that will be helpful to the school.
- ✓ **Why We are Requesting Your Child's Participation:** This study is being conducted as part of a project entitled, "Improving the Happiness of Elementary School Students and Teachers." Your child is being asked to participate in this project because he or she is enrolled in fourth or fifth grade.
- ✓ **Why Your Child Should Participate:** Schools need evidence-based strategies to promote students' social and emotional well-being, and prevent mental health problems. To address this need, we are evaluating a well-being promotion program implemented in all fourth and fifth grade classrooms at Brooker Elementary School. Classroom-level results of the study will be shared with the student services staff, teachers, and administrators at Brooker in order to increase their knowledge of activities that promote emotional well-being in students. Please note that neither you nor your child will be paid for your child's participation in this study. However, the fourth and fifth grade classrooms with the highest percentage of returned parent permission (consent) forms will receive a snack party.
- ✓ **What Participation Requires:** All fourth and fifth grade classes will take part in the well-being promotion program during the 2015-2016 school year. Some classrooms will take part toward the beginning of the year, and other classrooms will start later in the year. Children with permission to participate in this study will complete several paper-and-pencil surveys on five occasions throughout the school year. These surveys will ask about your child's thoughts, behaviors, and attitudes towards life, as well as well-being and classroom relationships. Completion of surveys is expected to take about 45 minutes on each of five occasions. We will administer the surveys at Brooker, during regular school hours, to groups of students in the class who have parent permission to take part. Your child's teacher will also rate your child's engagement in the classroom and teacher-student relationship quality. Another part of participation involves a review of your child's school records. Under the supervision of school administrators, we will retrieve this information: grades earned in classes, FSA scores, attendance, and number of discipline referrals incurred. In total, participation will take about four hours of your child's time.
- ✓ **Please Note:** Your decision to allow your child to participate in this research study must be completely voluntary. You or your child's decision to participate, not to participate, or to withdraw participation at any point during the study will no way affect your child's student status, his or her grades, or your relationship with Brooker, USF, or any other party.
- ✓ **Confidentiality of Your Child's Responses:** There is minimal risk to your child for participating in this research. Your child's privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the extent of the law. Authorized research personnel, employees of the Department of Health and Human Services, the USF Institutional Review Board and its staff, and other individuals acting on behalf of USF may inspect the records from this research project, but

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your child's individual responses will not be shared with school system personnel or anyone other than us and our research assistants. Your child's completed surveys will be assigned a code number to protect the confidentiality of his or her responses. Only we will have access to the locked file cabinet stored at USF that will contain: 1) all records linking code numbers to participants' names, and 2) all information gathered from school records. All records from the study (completed surveys, information from school records) will be destroyed five years after the study is completed. Please note that although your child's specific responses will not be shared with school staff, if your child's responses on specific surveys indicate extreme emotional distress, we will contact district mental health counselors to ensure your child's safety as well as the safety of others.

- ✓ **What We'll Do With Your Child's Responses:** We plan to use the information from this study to inform educators and school mental health providers about activities that foster feelings of happiness in youth, and educate others about the link between happiness and school success. The results of this study may be published. However, the data obtained from your child will be combined with data from other people in the publication. The published results will not include your child's name or any other information that would in any way personally identify your child.
- ✓ **Questions?** If you have any questions about this research study, please contact Dr. Suldo at (813) 974-2223. If you have questions about your child's rights as a person who is taking part in a research study, you may contact a member of The Office of Research Integrity and Compliance at the University of South Florida at 813-974-5638, and refer to eIRB # 23292.
- ✓ **Want Your Child to Participate?** To permit your child to participate in this study, complete the consent form below (titled "Consent to Take Part in this Research Study") and have your child turn it in to his or her teacher. Please keep the other copy of this form for your records.

Sincerely,

Shannon Suldo, Ph.D. Brittany Hearon, M.A. Mollie McCullough, M.A.
 Professor of School Psychology School Psychology Doctoral Student School Psychology Doctoral Student
 Department of Educational and Psychological Studies, College of Education

Consent for Child to Take Part in this Research Study

I freely give my permission to let my child take part in this study. I understand that this is research. I have received a copy of this letter and consent form for my records.

 Printed name of child

 Grade level of child

 Teacher

 Signature of parent of child taking
 part in the study

 Printed name of parent

 Date

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I certify that participants have been provided with an informed consent form that has been approved by the University of South Florida's Institutional Review Board and that explains the nature, demands, risks, and benefits involved in participating in this study. I further certify that a phone number has been provided in the event of additional questions.

 Signature of person
 obtaining consent

 Printed name of person
 obtaining consent

 Date

Appendix C: Student Assent Form

Dear Student:

You are being asked to take part in a research study to determine the effect of a well-being promotion program on students' happiness and performance at school. The title of the study is "Improving the Happiness of Elementary School Students and Teachers." The goal of this study is to learn more about activities that increase students' happiness. This is important because students who are happy earn better grades, have better social relationships, and have the best attitudes towards school. The fourth and fifth grade classes at your school will take part in the well-being promotion program. You are being asked to take part in this study because you are a fourth or fifth grade student. Your parent/guardian has already said it is okay for you to take part in this study.

To participate in this study, you will be asked to fill-out brief surveys now and a few more times throughout the school year. These surveys will ask you questions about your thoughts, beliefs and attitudes towards life. Other surveys will ask about your happiness and relationships in the classroom. Your answers will stay private unless you are in danger, then we will have to get help to make sure you stay safe. If you decide to take part in the study you still have the right to change your mind later. No one will think badly of you if you decide to stop.

Assent to Take Part in this Research Study

I understand what the person running this study is asking me to do. I have thought about this and agree to take part in this study.

Name of person agreeing to take part in the study

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Name of person providing information to child

Signature of person providing information to child

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Appendix D: Intervention Manual

Well-Being Promotion Program
Classwide Curriculum for Elementary Students 2.0

Procedures Manual
2015

Shannon M. Suldo, Brittany V. Hearon, Mollie McCullough, Jessica Savage, and
the USF School Psychology Positive Psychology Research Group
(Bryan Bander, Jeff Garofano, Rachel Roth, & Sim Yin Tan)
University of South Florida

Psychoeducation for Teachers

Session 1a: Teacher

- Goals**
- Establish rapport with teacher
 - Introduce teacher to the field of positive psychology and key constructs
 - Discuss baseline level of subjective well-being among target students
 - Convey importance of positive teacher-student relationships
 - Share strategies for teachers to communicate support
 - Introduce teacher to content of student intervention
 - Address questions and clarify misconceptions (as needed)

- Overview of Procedures**
- A. Presentation and Discussion: Positive Psychology and Teacher-Student Relationships
 - B. Feedback- Baseline Level of Student Subjective Well-Being
 - C. Clarify Purpose of Program
 - D. Overview of Student Intervention
 - E. Plan for Behavior Management during Classwide or Small Group Sessions
 - F. Homework: Teacher Preparation for Participation
 - G. Concerns and Questions

- Materials**
- Teacher handout: Overview of Program Activities
 - Teacher handout: Building Strong Student-Teacher Relationships
 - Copy of Intervention Manual
 - (*If baseline measure administered and scored*): Graphed Average Student Subjective Well-Being Levels
-

Procedures Defined

A. Brief Presentation: Positive Psychology and Key Constructs in Intervention

Welcome the teacher, provide a copy of the teacher handouts, and thank him or her for making time to participate in the program. Introduce self and other co-facilitators, such as other mental health providers or trainees at your school, before beginning the presentation.

In order to provide you with a better understanding of the kinds of concepts and activities that your students will be learning and engaging in throughout participation in the well-being promotion program, we will first share you with information related to the field the program is based upon- positive psychology. We will also share some strategies for what you can do outside of our weekly meetings with the students, in order to improve your own happiness and strengthen your relationships with your students.

Deliver the PowerPoint presentation that you prepared in advance. Presentation goals:

- Communicate the importance of students' happiness
- Introduce positive psychology and define key targets
- Explain what positive psychology interventions are, and outline which are targeted with students in the subsequent sessions of the program
- Convey the importance of classroom relationships to students' happiness; share the research-based ties between teacher social support and student subjective well-being
- Discuss how teachers currently communicate support and care to students
- Suggest strategies for conveying support as suggested by prior research (specifically, Suldo, Friedrich, White, Farmer, Minch, & Michalowski, 2009)

- Encourage teachers to complete the weekly exercises along with their students

As a summary of the presentation content, for teacher reference after the informational meeting, distribute the handouts “Overview of Program Activities” and “Building Strong Student-Teacher Relationships” that are provided in the Appendix.

If presentation equipment is unavailable, consider allowing the teacher to reference the handouts through the discussion (rather than focus on a presentation screen). Use the handouts as an outline and guide for the discussion; the goals for the discussion remain the same as above

Throughout and once completed, provide opportunity to pose questions.

B. Baseline Subjective Well-Being of Target Students for Program

Before this first meeting, administer and score baseline measure(s) of subjective well-being to students targeted for inclusion. Commonly used measures of global life satisfaction and satisfaction in primary domains of life include:

- Students Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS; 7-items; global)
- Multidimensional Students’ Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS; 40 items across 5 domains)
- Brief Multidimensional Students’ Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS; 6 items- 5 domain-specific and 1 global)

All are available free from the author (Scott Huebner): http://www.psych.sc.edu/faculty/Scott_Huebner

- If the program is intended as a Tier 2 intervention for students with room for growth in life satisfaction, then data from the schoolwide screening (e.g., via the BMSLSS) conducted to identify the targeted students should be graphed.
- If the program is intended to be administered classwide (e.g., as a Tier 1 wellness-promotion program for all students), consider administering more comprehensive measures such as the SLSS and MSLSS to all students in the class.
- The PANAS-C (Laurent et al., 1999) can also be used to index positive and negative affect.

Share with the teacher graphed averages that contain his/her students’ current (i.e., pre-intervention, baseline) levels of life satisfaction, and highlight domains that are relatively high and low. Note these measures will be re-administered at the program conclusion. Average scores pre- and post-intervention will be compared in order to evaluate students’ level of response.

C. Clarify Purpose of Program

Ensure that the teacher understands that the well-being promotion program was designed to maximize students’ happiness and overall well-being. Explain:

Optimal well-being involves being happy (satisfied with life) in addition to not having mental health problems. The well-being promotion program that we are implementing with your students was designed to maximize students’ happiness, not to intervene with mental health problems. Research tells us that we all have genetically set ranges of happiness, and the key to increasing happiness within our range is through purposeful

activities. The purpose of the well-being promotion program is to increase your students' happiness by talking about key concepts we covered in the presentation and engaging in activities focused on them, such as gratitude and character strengths.

D. Provide Overview of Student-Focused Intervention

Describe the main components of the well-being promotion program. Explain:

The happiness-increasing interventions we will teach your students will be taught in a class-wide format, with one leader (me) and co-facilitators (you). [If applicable, also identify the mental health provider or trainee at your school who may also assist in a co-facilitator role]. We will meet once weekly during one period of the school day, for ten weeks. The first meeting is just between us (the current meeting). After that, the weekly meetings with the students will include leader-guided group discussions and activities. Students will also be assigned homework at the conclusion of each meeting in order to facilitate further practice with concepts and skills learned. Regarding the focus of the meetings, the first two student meetings are mainly focused on establishing team-building, a positive group environment, and introducing the students to the program. The third and fourth meetings focus on gratitude and include activities such as students writing about things they're grateful for and expressing thanks to people who have been kind to them in the past. The fifth meeting focuses on acts of kindness and includes activities such as increasing the frequency of performing kind acts. The sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth meetings focus mainly on identifying one's character strengths and include activities such as identifying perceived strengths, objectively identifying them through completing a survey, and using strengths in new ways. The tenth meeting focuses on hope and goal-directed thinking. The eleventh and final meeting includes a review of the program, including activities and skills learned in the program.

E. Plan for Behavior Management during Classwide or Small Group Sessions

Given the young developmental stage that is the intervention target, and the fact that groups can be as large as entire classrooms (pending sufficient availability of group co-leaders), it is advisable to develop an explicit behavior management system for use during the student sessions (meetings 2 – 11). This can entail extension of a current classwide system perceived by teachers as effective, or development of a new strategy for use only during the program meetings.

- To develop a behavioral management system for use prior to session 2, inquire:
 - *What are the current classroom/school rules?*
 - *What behavior management system is currently in place in the classroom or school?*
 - *How often is feedback provided to students regarding compliance with classroom rules?*
 - *What incentives/tangibles do students seem to find motivating? Which of the options are acceptable to the classroom teacher(s)?*

F. Homework: Teacher Preparation for Participation

To prepare for participation as a co-facilitator of the well-being promotion program throughout the intervention period, encourage the teacher to become further familiar with the positive psychology constructs covered during the PowerPoint.

- Distribute the full text article from Suldo et al. (2009) in *School Psychology Review*

- Encourage teacher to plan strategies (new ones introduced weekly) for communicating teacher support
- Encourage teachers to visit viacharacter.org
 - *Personal levels of subjective well-being, gratitude, hope?*
 - *Own signature strengths?*
- Provide teacher with complete intervention manual
 - Discuss plan for reading, and communicating about, session plans in advance of group leaders/facilitators meetings with students

G. Provide Time for Expression of Questions and Concerns

Ensure several minutes to recap the information shared today, answer any of the teacher's remaining questions, problem-solve concerns, and establish most effective methods for communication between student meetings.

| Psychoeducation for Parents | | <i>Session 1b: Parent</i> |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish rapport with parents • Introduce parents to the field of positive psychology and key constructs • Introduce parents to content of student intervention • Address questions and clarify misconceptions (as needed) | |
| Overview of Procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Presentation and Discussion: Positive Psychology and Key Targets of Intervention for Youth B. Clarify Purpose of Program C. Concerns and Questions | |
| Materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer, projector and screen for presentation • Parent handout: What is Positive Psychology? How Does it Relate to my Child? • Copy of Intervention Manual | |

Procedures Defined

A. Brief Presentation: Positive Psychology and Key Targets in Intervention

Welcome parents, and note which are in attendance. Once all have arrived, give parents a copy of the parent handout and thank them for attending the informational session. Introduce self and other program leaders to parents before beginning the presentation.

To give you a better understanding of the kinds of concepts and activities that your children will be learning and engaging in throughout participation in the well-being promotion program, we will first share with you information related to the field the program is based upon- positive psychology.

Deliver the PowerPoint presentation that you prepared in advance. Presentation goals:

- Communicate the importance of parents' and children's happiness
- Introduce positive psychology and define key targets
- Explain what positive psychology interventions are, then demonstrate by leading the parents to complete one (e.g., gratitude journaling, acts of kindness planning)
- Encourage parents to complete the weekly exercises at home along with their child
- Outline the positive psychology targets their child will focus on each week in the program

As a summary of the presentation content, for parent reference after the informational meeting, distribute the handout "Overview of Positive Psychology and Program Activities."

If presentation equipment is unavailable, consider allowing parents to reference the handout through the discussion (rather than focus on a presentation screen). Use the handout as an outline and guide for the discussion; the goals for the discussion remain the same as above

Throughout presentation and once completed, provide opportunity for parents to pose questions.

B. Clarify Purpose of Program

Ensure that parents understand that their child's classroom is participating in program in order to maximize students' happiness and overall well-being, not because they have been identified as mentally ill, for instance with elevated levels of depression or other problems. Sample script:

Optimal well-being involves both being happy (satisfied with life) in addition to not having mental health problems. Your child's class is participating in the program in order to maximize the students' happiness, not because of mental health problems. Research tells us that we all have genetically set ranges of happiness, and the key to increasing happiness within our range is through purposeful activities. The purpose of the weekly classwide sessions is to increase your children's happiness to the top of his or her possible range by talking about key concepts we covered in the presentation, and doing exercises focused on those targets, such as gratitude, character strengths, optimism, and hope.

C. Provide Overview of Student-Focused Intervention

Describe the main components of the well-being promotion program. Sample script:

The happiness-increasing interventions we will teach your children will be taught in a classwide format by a leader, and their classroom teacher will serve as a co-leader. All leaders are trained in the program and are mental health practitioners or trainees. For example, I am a school psychologist [school social worker, counselor] trainee from the University of South Florida. Your children and their classmates will meet for the intervention sessions once weekly during a period of the school day, for eleven weeks. The weekly meetings will include leader-guided group discussions and activities. Students will also be assigned homework at the end of each meeting, intended to provide more practice with concepts and skills learned.

In order to keep you informed of what your children are learning, each week you will receive a handout via email or a hard copy that will be sent home with your child. The handout of the week will provide an overview of the skills learned and types of activities performed that week in the student meetings, as well as tell you the homework tasks assigned. It will also provide suggestions for things you can do and talk about at home to help your children further acquire the skills taught in the meetings.

Regarding the focus of the meetings, the main goal of the first is to provide information about the program to parents and teachers, as we are doing with you this evening. The second and third meetings establish a positive group environment and introduce the students to the program. The fourth and fifth meetings focus on gratitude and include activities such as students writing about things they're grateful for and expressing thanks to people who have been kind to them in the past. The sixth meeting focuses on acts of kindness and includes activities such as increasing the frequency of performing kind acts. The seventh, eighth and ninth meetings focus mainly on identifying and using one's character strengths. These meetings include activities such as identifying perceived strengths, objectively identifying them through completing a survey, and using strengths in new ways. The tenth meeting focuses on hope and includes an activity in which students write about their best possible selves in the future, including their personal goals and paths to attaining these goals. The eleventh and final meeting provides a review of the program, including activities and skills learned in the program.

Encourage parents to ask questions about the intervention. Provide more details about the scheduling logistic or intervention content as necessary to address questions.

Getting to Know You Through Team-Building

Session 1c: Class

- Goals**
- Establish a supportive group environment with clear behavioral expectations.
 - Identify classmates' common life experiences
 - Learn to work together and contribute to a group project
 - Understand the importance of working in a team and supporting each other.
 - Underscore ties between social relationships and personal happiness.
-

- Overview of Procedures**
- A. Introduction to Leaders and Rules
 - B. Get to Know You Exercise: Commonalities between Classmates
 - C. Team-Building Exercise: Creative Coloring
 - D. Group Discussion: Challenges and Benefits to Working Together
 - E. Introduction to Well-Being Promotion Program
-

- Materials**
- Different colored markers, crayons, or colored pencils for each student
 - A large sheet of paper
-

Procedures Defined

A. Introduction to Leaders and Rules

- Introduction to Leaders**
- Explain to students who you are, and overview why you are there.
Hello! [Each facilitator provides name and explains professional role at the school] We have the same goal- increasing all children's happiness. We'll be with you each [specify regular meeting time, such as Friday afternoon] for the next several weeks to talk about happiness. We'll help you do activities that have been shown to help all kinds of young people feel better about their lives. We'll talk more about those types of activities next week. Today, we're hoping to just get to know each other better.
-

- Establish Behavioral Expectations**
- Below is an example behavior management system aligned with the larger school positive behavioral intervention and support system
But first, we want to give you some tips on how to behave during our meetings so that you'll get the most benefit from the activities, and earn rewards for good behavior. The CHAMPS for this lesson are:
C- Conversation level is a "2"- we'll be doing group work.
H- To ask for help, please raise your hand.
Activity: listen to the adult speaking (leader or your teacher) or the classmate we've asked to share, or do the activity we assign.
M- Movement... please sit at your desk until we ask you to move.
P- Participation looks like eyes on the speaker or assignment.
And that's how you'll be Successful 😊
Every 5 minutes, we will put stars next to the names of the students who are following those champs. At the end of our meeting, all students who have earned at least 5 stars will get a reward- stickers or candy! Any questions?
-

B. Get to Know You Exercise: Commonalities between Classmates

This first exercise is an ice-breaker designed to help participants get to know some of the things they have in common with their peers. The potential commonalities start with innocuous situations, and progress to more sensitive situations. Point out how no student is ever alone; there is almost always at least one other person who shares their unique situation.

**Commonalities
between
Classmates**

We would like to do an activity to help us get to know each other. I know you guys know each other, but you're new to us. And, you may discover some situations you have in common with each other that you weren't aware of.

- Ask students to stand in a large circle or in a line. Then, they should take a step forward if their answer is “yes” to a situation.
- *Take a step forward if you...*
 - *Have a pet*
 - *You have at least 1 brother or sister*
 - *Like to play sports*
 - *Like videogames*
 - *Like to sing or dance*
 - *Have a nick name*
 - *Have ever gotten into an argument with a friend*
 - *Have ever been picked on or teased*
 - *Have ever been unfriendly to another kid*
 - *Have ever felt really happy*
 - *Have ever felt really unhappy*
- Along the way, ask students if they knew they had that in common with their classmate; they can tell you more about their classmate's situation if they're aware of details
- Initiate reflections from students with regard to asking them if they realized they had so much in common with each other, and surprising identifications between classmates.

C. Team-Building Exercise: Creative Coloring

The next activity was design to increase cooperative play between small groups of children.

**Creative
Coloring**
(Jones, 1998)

Sometimes in life we must accept help from others or rely on our friends and family for help if we are to get it done well. Think about suppertime or a big holiday dinner. If one person tries to make dinner and clean up, there is a lot of work to be done and it's a hard task. But when a whole team of people pitch in and help, making dinner and cleaning can be done in no time. Each person is a part of the puzzle and can offer different talents to use in the mealtime process.

In this activity, each student will be a part of a team that can make a big project easy. Each student will contribute his or her own skills to create the big picture.

- In each small group, give each student a different colored marker, crayon, or colored pencil.
- Tell students that the color they have will be the only color they can use for the project.

Your group must create a picture, using all the colors. Each student may only use his or her color. You are not allowed to share or trade. Work together to create a nice picture, with each student using only the crayon in your hand.

- **Modifications:**
 - For smaller groups, each student may have more than one color.
 - Rather than creating own picture, have the group color in a page from a coloring book.
 - For added teamwork, ask the group to decide how to determine which color each person will use.

D. Group Discussion: Challenges and Benefits to Working Together

Pose the following thought questions:

- a. *Was this a difficult project for the group? Why or why not?*
 - b. *How did you work as a team to complete the project?*
 - c. *How does everyone in the team feel about the picture that was created?*
 - d. *Is it easier to do things on your own or with others?*
 - e. *Why is it important to be able to work with and support others as members of a team?*
-

E. Introduction to Well-Being Promotion Program

We are going to be spending some time with your class over the next few months. In our time together, we'll talk about ways to feel happier by acting differently, including by supporting each other and noticing nice things about the people in our class, including our teachers and classmates. Each meeting, we look forward to hearing about the ways that working together and treating each other kindly has made you feel happier. Your teacher is also going to point out (and tell us about) times where you have treated each other particularly nicely, or worked together successfully. Scientists know that happier people are especially close to many people; happy people's close friends include people in their school, like classmates and teachers, and people at home, like parents and brothers and sisters. So it's important to us that you care for each other, and let others know about that care.

| You at Your Best | | Session 2: Class |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce importance of strong relationships • Increase awareness of subjective well-being • Help students share examples of situations in which they have excelled • Continue to foster a safe classroom/group environment | |
| Overview of Procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships B. Get to Know You Activity: You at Your Best C. Group Discussion: Initial Definition and Importance of Happiness D. Clarify Purpose of Program E. Establish Group Norms F. Homework: You at Your Best | |
| Materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Binder</u> to hold documents provided and created throughout the program; to stay in the practitioner's possession for ready access at the beginning of each session • <u>Folder</u> in which students can transport program homework assignments; to stay in the student's possession for ready access between program meetings • Whiteboard or easel • <i>What Determines Happiness?</i> figure • <i>What Determines Happiness?</i> handout • <i>Confidentiality</i> handout | |

Procedures Defined

| A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships | |
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| Teacher Support | <p>Immediately before or after this session, check in with the students' teacher(s) regarding the ways in which they conveyed support to their students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How did students respond to intentional displays of teacher support and care?</i> • <i>Which strategies appeared effective in conveying support?</i> • <i>Any noticeable differences in classroom climate or relationships with specific students following purposeful communications of support or care?</i> |
| Classmate Support | <p>Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Last week we discussed how working together cooperatively and treating each other kindly makes people feel happier. Since our last meeting, tell us about some times you've seen your classmates be particularly nice to you or another student, or times you've gone out of your way to help or support a classmate.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Praise students for sharing • <i>Mr./Mrs. ____ (teacher), thinking over the past week, when have you noticed your students treated each other particularly nicely, or worked together cooperatively?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask students to recall how they felt during that event (happier? Like school was more enjoyable?) • <i>Happy children also feel close to adults at school. What nice or supportive things have you noticed your teacher do or say? Other kind behaviors or actions from other people at the school?</i> |

B. Get to Know You Activity: You at Your Best

This activity provides an initial boost of happiness (Seligman et al., 2005). It is included here as an introductory exercise in part to enhance engagement and to amplify effects of later activities.

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| Set the Stage | <i>Before we talk about why we're providing this program, I'd like to do an activity to help us get to know each other, in particular what we are each good at.</i> |
| Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide students with a plain sheet of lined paper • Ask them to write about a time when they were at their best <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ doing something really well ○ going above and beyond for someone else ○ displaying a talent ○ creating something |
| Personal Reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once completed, ask them to take a few minutes to reflect on the story <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ remember the feelings of that day ○ identify the personal strengths they displayed in the story ○ think about the time, effort, and creativity that comprised such an accomplishment |
| Shared Reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to share their story and one or two reflections • Initiate reflections on each student's story with identifications or reaffirmations of strengths displayed within the story • Encourage students to reflect on the positives in each other's stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ something they admired or liked in the story ○ strengths the presenter demonstrated in the story ○ a quality they share with the presenter |
| Retain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With your phone, take a picture of the You at Your Best stories • Keep the copy of the story somewhere you would have it for future reference by you or the student, such as in the event the student forgets to bring his or her homework folder back the next session • Place the original story in a folder the student will use to keep their homework assignments for, and notes from, the well-being promotion program |

C. Group Discussion: Initial Definition and Importance of Happiness

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| Set the Stage | <p><i>What do you think this program is all about?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once answers are received, state that the program is about happiness. |
| Introduction to Happiness | <p>Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When someone says they are "happy," what do they mean? What does "happiness" mean to you?</i> • <i>Why is being happy important? Why is happiness important to you?</i> • <i>What do you do to increase your own happiness?</i> <p>No specific answers are necessary. Simply facilitate students' thoughts and discussions on these topics. Participate in the discussion as well with examples from your own life in order to develop a relationship with the group.</p> |

D. Clarify Purpose of Program

This discussion will introduce students to the purpose of the program: to use our power to change our personal happiness to the upper bounds of our set point through building purposeful thoughts and activities that move us towards the upper part of our emotional range

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|---|---|
| Introduce the Determinants of Happiness Theory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the "<i>What Determines Happiness</i>" figure in this book • Explain that happiness is determined by three things: our genetics, our life circumstances, and our purposeful activities. Example script: <i>Look at the graph "What Determines Happiness?" Happiness is made up of three things: a genetic set point (genetics refer to the things that we're born with, like our hair and eye color), purposeful activity, and life circumstances. The set point, or</i> |
|---|---|

range of happiness we are born with, is the biggest cause of our everyday happiness. We can move around within our happiness range we're born with. Let's use the ruler and pretend that people can be happy on a scale of 1-6. Some people's ranges are naturally high, so even when they are at their lowest happy level, they may seem a lot happier than other people. In that case, their range could be 4-6. However, some people's ranges are lower, so they don't seem happy that often. They may have a range of 0-2. A person's set point is the level of happiness they usually have within their range. For example, a person could have a range of 3-5 but are usually at a 4 level of happiness. It is a good thing that the stuff we're born with isn't the only thing that makes up happiness, or else we wouldn't be able to get any happier. Changes in life circumstances and purposeful ways of thinking and acting help us to move our level of happiness within our ranges. Circumstances are facts of life, such as the state you live in, your age, how much money you have, and the school you go to. These are things that we usually can't change or can't do so very easily. The key to increasing happiness within our ranges is purposeful activity; in other words, what you choose to do or think. Purposeful activity includes the things you do, the way you think, your attitudes, and your goals. Everyone has the opportunity to increase their level of happiness through purposeful activities and that's what we'll be talking about in the program. The purpose of this program is to increase your happiness by talking about good attitudes, feelings, thoughts, and activities from your past, present, and future. During our meetings, we'll learn how to make our purposeful activities (those things we choose to do and think about) more in line with activities seen in people who feel pretty happy with their lives. What questions do you have?

Check for Comprehension

- Distribute *Overview of Program Activities* handout
 - Ask students to complete the key for the graph (3 determinants of happiness) and the first question regarding the focus of program meetings (answer: purposeful activities)
 - Reinforce effort; guide students to correct answers as needed
-

E. Establish Group Norms

Provide clear expectations for appropriate behavior during meetings. Behavior should convey respect for classmates and maximize opportunities to engage with the activities and thereby increase personal happiness.

Set the Stage

- Discuss the logistics of program meetings. When, how often, and where students will meet with the leader; how the group leader will coordinate this schedule with classroom teachers, use of hall passes, etc. Example script:
We'll meet once each week, for about eight more weeks, in your classroom, at this time.
 - Revisit *Overview of Program Activities* handout; complete questions 2 – 4
 - File completed worksheet in students' folders for their future reference
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Confidentiality

- Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:
 - *Have you heard the word "confidentiality" before?*
 - *How would you define confidentiality for this group?* (e.g., confidential = private or secret)
 - Compile students' ideas into a confidentiality definition on the board. Make sure that it includes the following components:
 - Respect for others' privacy outside of program meetings
 - Times when the leader will have to break confidentiality (e.g., danger to self, danger to others, student is in danger)
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any other concerns students express ● Distribute the <i>Confidentiality</i> handout ● Ask students to write the definition on the worksheet ● File completed worksheet in students' folders for future reference |
| Develop Additional Group Rules for Behavior | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a short list of group rules. These rules are intended to facilitate an atmosphere of trust and engagement. Rules for appropriate behavior in the classwide meetings should also be consistent with existing school rules and behavioral expectations, such as those rules that are explicated in the school's positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) program. ● Record and post rules for future reference. |

F. Homework: You at Your Best

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| Set the Stage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss specific incentives that will be provided weekly for completion of program homework, such as school supplies, stickers, candy, tickets toward rewards used in the school's PBIS program, etc. |
| Assign | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For each night this week, students should read their story and think about the strengths they demonstrated in the story. ● Encourage students to add more details and length to the story. ● They can share the story with family members or someone else if they like. |
| Looking Ahead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A brief discussion in the next session will touch on student follow through with homework and resulting feelings of happiness. |

Gratitude Journals

Session 3: Class

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| Goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore students' current levels of gratitude.• Define gratitude and how it can impact happiness.• Learn a method of using gratitude to focus on positive interpretations of past events. |
|--------------|---|

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Overview of Procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Strengthen Classroom RelationshipsB. Review Homework: You at Your BestC. Group Discussion: Initial Definition and Importance of GratitudeD. Gratitude JournalsE. Homework: Gratitude Journal on a Daily Basis |
|-------------------------------|--|

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|------------------|---|
| Materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tangible rewards for homework completion (<u>stickers</u>, candy, pencils, etc.)• Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel• Small squares of paper for students to note self-identified ratings• Notebook or journal with blank cover to be inserted in program folders• Pens, pencils, <u>markers</u>, or other colorful supplies to decorate journals |
|------------------|---|

Procedures Defined

A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships

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|------------------------|---|
| Teacher Support | <p>Immediately before or after this session, check in with the students' teacher(s) regarding the ways in which they conveyed support to their students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What did you do or say to show support/care to your students?</i>• <i>How did students respond to such intentional displays of teacher support and care?</i>• <i>Which strategies appeared effective in conveying support?</i>• <i>Any noticeable differences in classroom climate or relationships with specific students following purposeful communications of support or care?</i> |
|------------------------|---|

- | | |
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| Classmate Support | <p>Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>In a previous lesson, we discussed how working together cooperatively & treating each other kindly makes people feel happier. Since our last meeting, tell us about some <u>times you've seen your classmates be particularly nice to you or another student, or times you've gone out of your way to help or support a classmate.</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Praise students for sharing• <i>Mr./Ms. (Teacher) thinking over the past week, when have you noticed your <u>students treated each other particularly nicely, or worked together cooperatively?</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ask students to recall how they felt during that event (happier? Like school was more enjoyable?)• <i>Happy children also feel close to adults at school. What <u>nice or supportive things have you noticed your teacher(s) do or say?</u> Other kind behaviors or actions from other people at the school?</i> |
|--------------------------|--|

B. Review Homework Assignment: You at Your Best

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|---|---|
| Assignment Completion and Reward | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students <u>how often they read their "You at Your Best" stories.</u>• Provide a small tangible reward (e.g., sticker) for homework completion.• If students did not comply with the daily requirement, stress the importance of <u>daily effort for changes in happiness to occur.</u> |
| Reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to share any new reflections (ideas, realizations, connections) that |

they had over the week when revisiting their You at Your Best Story.

- Ask students to share if they felt any difference in happiness since our last meeting.
-

C. Group Discussion: Initial Definition and Importance of Gratitude

Set the Stage *What is Gratitude?*

- Facilitate a brief discussion on what students think constitutes gratitude
- Record students' responses on the board. Circle and discuss key terms, phrases, and or themes. Provide a common definition, such as:

You feel gratitude (thanks, appreciation, grateful) when you recognize that you received an intentional act of kindness from another person. More specifically, you feel gratitude after gaining a benefit that you view as valuable, that was provided intentionally and altruistically (not for ulterior motives), and occurred at some cost to the person who provided the benefit.

Rate Your Gratitude *We are going to rate our own level of gratitude.*

- Draw a number line from 0-10 on a whiteboard
- Distribute small, blank pieces of paper

Think about how often you have felt grateful in the past few months. On a scale from 0 to 10 with 0 being never grateful, 5 being sometimes grateful, and 10 being always grateful, rate your gratitude.

- Ask students to write their ratings on a piece of paper and fold it over
-

Shared Reflection • In a round robin fashion (within their small group seating arrangements), ask a student from each group to share their number and the reason they have chosen it

Introduce Links between Gratitude and Happiness *Why may Gratitude be Important?*

- *Why is it important or not important to have gratitude in your life?*
 - *Do you think being grateful can increase happiness? Why or why not?*
 - Discuss how gratitude helps us focus our emotions on the positive parts of our pasts as related to school, friendships, and in family life
 - Provide a personal example of a time in which you have felt grateful and how that refocused your attention on a positive experience
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D. Gratitude Journals

Emmons and McCullough (2003) found that daily attention to grateful thoughts increased happiness. Gratitude journals are a method of focusing student thoughts on things, people, and events for which they are grateful. The intensity is high for the first week, in that students are asked to journal daily. This is in line with Emmons and McCullough's finding that higher intensity led to greater happiness gains. Later, journaling is suggested on a once per week basis.

- Create Gratitude Journal**
- Provide each student with a plain cover journal or notebook
 - Ask them to use the writing/art materials to design a cover that shows something positive about their history
 - Something they have done, was given to them, part of a family event, or any other kind of experience valued as positive
 - Encourage them to draw a picture, write, or use a combination of writing and drawings/symbols
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- Use the Gratitude Journal**
- After the time to decorate the journals is over, explain their intended use.
I want you to take five minutes, think about your day, and write down five things in your life that you are grateful for, including both small and large things, events, people, talents, or anything else you think of. Some examples may include: generosity of my friends, my teacher giving me extra help, family dinner, your favorite band/singer, etc. [Provide examples relevant to your students that you are aware of]
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help students complete an initial entry during the program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Give students about 5 minutes to list 5 things for which they are currently grateful ○ Explain that a variety of responses is acceptable and expected | |
| <p>Shared Reflection</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the independent writing time is over, prompt each student to share 1 – 2 of their responses with the group • In light of students’ typically relatively low satisfaction with school, draw particular attention to things or people pertinent to school that students comment on in a positive manner. |

E. Homework: Gratitude Journal on a Daily Basis

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| <p>Assign</p> | <p><i>For each night this week, I want you to set aside five minutes before you go to sleep. At that time, think about your day and write down five things in your life that you are grateful for, just like we did here today in your journals. Remember that you can include events, people, talents, or anything else you think of, whether it is large or small. Also, you can repeat some things if they are really important to you. But also try to think of different ones as well.</i></p> |
| <p>Looking Ahead</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain students will never be asked to share all of their responses, but to become comfortable with sharing 2-3 of their recorded responses in the next program meeting • Students should leave the meeting with the decorated notebooks added to their homework folder • Remind students of the incentives they can receive contingent on homework completion and return of the gratitude journal |

| Gratitude Visits | | Session 4: Class |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore students' experiences with gratitude journals • Make connections between grateful thoughts and positive feelings about the past • Learn to incorporate actions/expressions of gratitude. | |
| Overview of Procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships B. Review Homework: Gratitude Journals C. Gratitude Visit D. Group Discussion: Positive Feelings about the Past E. Homework: Carry Out the Gratitude Visit | |
| Materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.) • Access to computer lab or letter stationary • Letter size envelopes • <i>What Determines Happiness?</i> figure • <i>Gratitude Visit Planning Form</i> handout | |

Procedures Defined

| A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships | |
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| Teacher Support | <p>Immediately before or after this session, check in with the students' teacher(s) regarding the ways in which they conveyed support to their students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How did students respond to intentional displays of teacher support and care?</i> • <i>Which strategies appeared effective in conveying support?</i> • <i>Any noticeable differences in classroom climate or relationships with specific students following purposeful communications of support or care?</i> |
| Classmate Support | <p>Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Earlier, we discussed how working together cooperatively and treating each other kindly makes people feel happier. Since our last meeting, tell us about some times you've seen your classmates be particularly nice to you or another student, or times you've gone out of your way to help or support a classmate.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Praise students for sharing • <i>Mr./Ms. (Teacher) thinking over the past week, when have you noticed your students treated each other particularly nicely, or worked together cooperatively?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask students to recall how they felt during that event (happier? Like school was more enjoyable?) • <i>Happy children also feel close to adults at school. What nice or supportive things have you noticed your teacher(s) do or say? Other kind behaviors or actions from other people at the school?</i> |
| B. Review Homework Assignment: Gratitude Journals | |
| Assignment Completion and Reward | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students how often they completed the gratitude journals • Provide a small tangible reward (e.g., pencil, sticker) for homework completion • If students did not journal regularly, stress the importance of daily effort for changes in happiness to occur. |
| Reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the students pick 2-3 things for which they recorded being grateful to share with the class |

- Discuss the significance of gratitude for these things in terms of positive feelings about the past
- Ask students to share any changes in feelings of gratitude or happiness

C. Gratitude Visit

Completion of a gratitude visit is associated with positive, enduring changes in happiness (Seligman et al., 2005). The activity below is adapted from that original research.

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| Set the Stage | <i>We all have people in our lives that have helped us in some way. This helping can be part of someone’s job, like a teacher or parent, or help that someone gives without being required to. Even when people’s kindness or help is provided as part of their job, the help can be important because of the way they did it or how it benefited us so much. Sometimes other people’s kindness towards us goes unnoticed or unrecognized.</i> |
| Identify People to Whom We Are Grateful | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide some examples of people who were particularly kind or helpful to you during childhood that were never properly thanked • Distribute the Gratitude Visit Planning form • Ask students to write a list of people who had been especially kind to them but may not have been properly thanked |
| Identify Way to Express Felt Gratitude | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a round robin fashion, ask students to share at least one story about how one person has helped them • Explain a strategy for communicating gratitude to the benefactor. <i>“Gratitude visits” are when you express this gratitude in a letter and deliver the letter to the person who has been especially kind to you</i> |
| Plan a Gratitude Visit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help students identify someone from their list of people to whom they are grateful that they could feasibly meet in person to deliver such a letter • Assist students in composing a one-page letter that described the reason(s) why they are grateful to this person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Secure access to computers in advance if students prefer to type • Assist students in planning a day and time during which they will read the letter aloud to the person (complete the Gratitude Visit Planning Form) • Instruct students to read aloud the letter slowly with expression and eye contact during a face-to-face visit • Ask students not to reveal the reason why they want to meet with the person; instead, simply make plans to spend time with the person |

D. Group Discussion: Positive Feelings about the Past

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| Introduce the Thoughts-Feelings Connection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the connection between their thoughts of the past and current affect <i>How has gratitude—noticing, writing about, and talking about the good things in your life, and thinking about the people to whom you are thankful—refocused your thoughts and changed feelings?</i> |
| Revisit the Determinants of Happiness Theory: Emphasis Purposeful Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the “What Determines Happiness?” graph and discuss how grateful thinking is a purposeful activity. Example script: <i>Doing things like gratitude journaling and visits refocuses thoughts on the positive parts of your past, which increases positive attitudes about your history and your life (brings you into the upper range of your set point [reference ruler]). Such activities can even help you feel more confident in your goals because you <u>recognized people in your life who are there to help you</u></i> |

E. Homework: Carry Out the Gratitude Visit

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| Assign #1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before the next program meeting, students should carry out the gratitude visit• Note. In situations in which the student does not have means to meet with someone to whom they're grateful, or cannot identify a person, ask the student to continue daily gratitude journals as done the previous week |
| Assign #2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask all students to complete at least one gratitude journal entry at some point during the week before the next session. |
| Looking Ahead | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students should leave the meeting with the completed Gratitude Visit Planning Form and the decorated notebooks in their homework folders• Remind students of the incentives they can receive contingent on homework completion and return of the gratitude journal |

| Acts of Kindness | | Session 5: Class |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define kindness (i.e., a character strength), and how it can impact happiness • Explore students' current frequency of kind acts • Learn a method of using kindness to create a focus on positive interpretations of present events. | |
| Overview of Procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships B. Review Homework: Gratitude Visits and/or Gratitude Journals C. Group Discussion: Initial Definition and Importance of Kindness D. Student Estimations of Acts of Kindness E. Homework: Performing Acts of Kindness | |
| Materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, pencils, etc.) • Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel • <i>What Determines Happiness?</i> figure • <i>Performing Acts of Kindness Record Form</i> handout | |

Procedures Defined

| A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships | |
|--|--|
| Teacher Support | <p>Immediately before or after this session, check in with the students' teacher(s) regarding the ways in which they conveyed support to their students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How did students respond to intentional displays of teacher support and care?</i> • <i>Which strategies appeared effective in conveying support?</i> • <i>Any noticeable differences in classroom climate or relationships with specific students following purposeful communications of support or care?</i> |
| Classmate Support | <p>Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Earlier, we discussed how working together cooperatively and treating each other kindly makes people feel happier. Since our last meeting, tell us about some times you've seen your classmates be particularly nice to you or another student, or times you've gone out of your way to help or support a classmate.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Praise students for sharing • <i>Mr./Ms. (Teacher) thinking over the past week, when have you noticed your students treated each other particularly nicely, or worked together cooperatively?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask students to recall how they felt during that event (happier? Like school was more enjoyable?) • <i>Happy children also feel close to adults at school. What nice or supportive things have you noticed your teacher(s) do or say? Other kind behaviors or actions from other people at the school?</i> |

| B. Review Homework Assignment: Gratitude Visits and/or Journals | |
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| Assignment Completion and Reward | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students about their progress with carrying out the gratitude visit. • Ask students about their progress with completing one or more gratitude journal entry. • Provide a small tangible reward (e.g., candy) for homework completion • If students did not complete the gratitude visit as assigned, problem-solve barriers and create a plan for a visit this week. Stress the importance of continued effort |

between sessions for changes in happiness to occur.

- Reflection**
- Ask students to share their experiences during and after the gratitude visits
 - *How did the recipients of the visit respond?*
 - *How did they and you feel following the visit?*
 - For students who continued to complete gratitude journals, ask them to select and share one entry with the class
 - Ask students to share any changes in happiness since last meeting
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C. Group Discussion: Initial Definition and Importance of Kindness

Acts of kindness provide a way to boost moods and make long-lasting changes in well-being through satisfying basic human needs of relatedness (Lyubomirsky et al., 2004). Kindness has been defined as a character strength, which causes and stems from happiness (Otake et al., 2006; Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004). The following discussion is based on this research.

Set the Stage; Define *What is Kindness? What do you think of when someone is called a kind person? What specifically is that person doing?*

- Kindness as a Virtue Related to Happiness**
- Facilitate a brief discussion on what students think constitutes kindness
 - Record students' responses on the board. Circle and discuss key terms, phrases, and or themes. Provide a common definition, such as:
Acts of kindness are behaviors that benefit other people or make others happy, typically at the cost of your time and effort. When a person consistently performs these acts of kindness, we say they are kind, or they possess the virtue of kindness. A virtue, also called strength of character, is a moral strength that people do by choice. We'll talk more about character strengths next week.
-

- Introduce Links between Kindness and Happiness** *Why may this particular virtue— Kindness – be important?*
- *Why is it important to display kindness in your life?*
 - *Do you think being kind can impact happiness? Why or why not?*
 - Discuss how kindness helps us focus our emotions on the positive parts of our present lives, for example through:
 - Creating a positive view of others and the community
 - Increased cooperation
 - Awareness of your own good fortune
 - Seeing yourself as helpful
 - Increased confidence and optimism about being able to help others
 - Getting others to know and like us
 - Receipt of appreciation and gratitude
 - Others reciprocating kindness and friendship to you
 - Provide an example of a time when you have been kind to someone, and how that refocused your attention on a positive situation
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D. Student Estimations of Acts of Kindness

Otake et al. (2006) found that happiness could be increased through simply counting the acts of kindness that one performs over a week's time. The basis of that research is used in this preparatory exercise for the upcoming assignment to enact acts of kindness for homework.

- Identify Acts of Kindness**
- Facilitate a discussion of various acts of kindness performed by you, youth and adults in the students' lives, then the students themselves
 - Begin by providing some examples of acts of kindness that you have performed recently, focusing mainly on the past week.
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- Make sure that you provide a wide range of acts of kindness that are authentic to you but also relatable to the class
- Give yourself a loose estimate of the amount of kind acts you perform in a week (e.g., 3-5, 4-6, or 7-10)
- Ask the students to think about the people in their lives such as family, classmates, other friends, and teachers
 - Ask them to provide a few examples of kind acts they observed by these significant figures in their lives during the past week
 - Ask them to provide a weekly estimate of how often an identified person demonstrates such kind acts

Rate Your Kindness

We are going to think about kind acts we have demonstrated, and estimate our own typical kind acts

- Ask students to provide some examples of acts of kindness that they have performed in the past week. If it is too difficult for students to think of acts of kindness limited to this time frame, they can think back to the past 2 or 3 weeks.
- Keep in mind that kindness was described as a moral virtue, and thus it can be interpreted as negative, perhaps even shameful, if a student shares they have low levels of kind acts. Facilitate climate of openness and nonjudgmental attitudes.

Example script:

People vary in the amount of kind acts they perform. This is not a reflection on the quality of their moral character. As will be examined in the next session, moral strengths come in many forms. People are stronger than others in different areas.

- Distribute small, blank pieces of paper
- Ask students to give themselves a weekly estimate of personal kind acts; they can write this on the piece of paper and fold it over
- Explain we are going to aim to increase this number in the coming week, through performing five acts of kindness on a single day

E. Homework: Performing Acts of Kindness

Lyubomirsky and colleagues (2004) found that people who performed five acts of kindness in one day, each week for six weeks, showed a significant increase in well-being. This week's homework assignment is based on that and subsequent research.

Assign

I want you to pick a day this week to perform five acts of kindness. As we talked about, acts of kindness are behaviors that benefit other people or make others happy, typically at the cost of your time and effort. They can range from small acts, like giving a complement or holding a door, to large acts like helping your dad wash his car.

- Help the students brainstorm some ideas of the acts of kindness they might like to perform
 - Which can they do at school? [In the classroom? Before school or during lunch?]
 - Which can they do at home?
- Distribute the *Acts of Kindness Record Form* to jot down their plans as well as record additional kind acts after they have been performed
- Ask students to decide on a date to perform the acts

Looking Ahead

- Explain students will never be asked to share all of their responses, but to become comfortable with sharing 2-3 of their acts of kindness, and related feelings, in the next program meeting
- Students should leave the meeting with the *Acts of Kindness Record Form* added

to their homework folder

- Remind students of the incentives they can receive contingent on homework completion and return of the *Acts of Kindness Record Form*
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Introduction to Character Strengths

Session 6: Class

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| Goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define character strengths and virtues, and how use of strengths can impact feelings of happiness in the present• Explore students' perceived character strengths• Reinforce acts of kindness |
| Overview of Procedures | <ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Review Homework: Performing Acts of KindnessB. Group Discussion: Character Strengths and VirtuesC. Student Identification of Perceived Character StrengthsD. Group Discussion: Positive Feelings in the PresentE. Homework: Continue Performing Acts of Kindness |
| Materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tangible rewards for homework completion (candy, stickers, etc.)• Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel• Lined paper• <i>Classification of 24 Character Strengths</i> handout• <i>Performing Acts of Kindness Record Form</i> handout |

Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework Assignment: Performing Acts of Kindness

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| Assignment Completion and Reward | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students their progress with completing all five acts of kindness during the week• Provide a small tangible reward (e.g., candy) for homework completion• If students did not perform the acts of kindness as planned, problem-solve barriers and explain they will have another opportunity to do so this week. Stress the importance of continued effort between sessions for changes in happiness to occur. |
| Reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to share 2 to 3 acts of kindness they carried out• Discuss the significance of acts of kindness in terms of positive feelings about the present, ensuring that the acts performed benefited someone else at the cost of the student's time and/or effort<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>How did the people who benefitted from your kind act(s) respond?</i>○ <i>How did you feel following the kind act(s)?</i>• Inform students that their homework for this week will be to continue doing acts of kindness in the same manner. |

B. Group Discussion: Character Strengths and Virtues

Park, Peterson, and Seligman (2004) defined character strengths as "traits that reflect thoughts, feelings, and behaviors" (p. 603). These strengths are identifiable but related and used voluntarily in differing degrees by individuals. Strengths are dispositions to act that require judgment and enable people to thrive. On this basis, lead the following discussion.

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| Set the Stage; | <i>How would you define a character strength or virtue of a person?</i> |
| Distinguish Character Strength from Talent | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage an active discussion of the meanings of these words• Be sure to discuss that character strengths are moral strengths done by choice, which is different from talents: <i>Talents are qualities that you are born with but may be improved somewhat by purposeful actions (e.g., perfect pitch in your singing voice, rhythm in dance, running speed). However, character strengths are moral virtues that are built-up and used by</i> |

choice (integrity, kindness, fairness, originality)

- Provide examples of your own talents vs. moral strengths.

Introduce the VIA Classification System for Strengths

- Distribute the “Classification of 24 Character Strengths” handout
- Interactively discuss the meanings of each of the 24 identified strengths
- With a round robin method, ask each student to read aloud one of the character strength definitions and say what that means to them; ensure that students understand meanings by clarifying definitions as necessary. The list below provides developmentally appropriate definitions that may useful for younger students.
- Describe each category before students read and discuss the strengths that comprise them. This will give the character strengths context and clarify that the broad virtue categories are more general, not character strengths in themselves.
- Continue the round robin to ensure each student has several turns to define and discuss character strengths.

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Creativity | Thinks of new ways to do things; has unique ideas |
| Curiosity | Interested in exploring and discovering things |
| Love of Learning | Likes to become an expert in things; enjoys learning in school |
| Open-Mindedness | Doesn't jump to conclusions; thinks things through |
| Perspective | Understands both sides of the story; offers good advice to others |
| Authenticity | Tells the truth; doesn't pretend to be something he/she is not |
| Bravery | Speaks up for what is right; stands up to threats |
| Perseverance | Hard-working; likes completing tasks |
| Zest | Energetic and full of excitement |
| Kindness | Does nice things for other people; helps and takes care of others |
| Love | Values close relationships with other people |
| Social Intelligence | Knows how other people think and feel |
| Fairness | Treats all people the same; doesn't judge people |
| Leadership | Organizes group activities and makes sure things get done |
| Teamwork | Works well with others and does their share of the work |
| Forgiveness | Gives people a second chance when they do something wrong |
| Modesty/Humility | Doesn't brag about accomplishments; doesn't think he/she is better than everyone else |
| Prudence | Careful about making choices; doesn't do things he/she will regret |
| Self-Regulation | In control of one's emotions |
| Appreciates Beauty/Excellence | Notices beautiful things in the world (nature, art, science) |
| Gratitude | Aware and thankful for good things that happen; gives thanks |
| Hope | Believes that good things will happen in the future |
| Humor | Likes to laugh and bring smiles to other people |
| Spirituality | Has beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe |

C. Student Identification of Perceived Character Strengths

Strengths Spotting

- Retrieve students' completed “You at Your Best” activity (from leader binder or student folder) from the first program session
- Ask students to reread their stories to themselves
- Briefly summarize the You at Your Best story you shared earlier, and suggest some character strengths (consistent with the terminology used in the “VIA

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| | <p>Classification of 24 Character Strengths”) of your own that you demonstrated in that story</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to identify which strengths listed on the “Classification of 24 Character Strengths” handout they personally demonstrated in the context of their You at Your Best stories • Ask students to discuss strengths they have seen the other students in their group display in the context of the program meetings or elsewhere, such as in class or in another situation at school |
| Identify Perceived Top 5 Character Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering these strengths that students have noticed in themselves, or that their peers have recognized in them, ask students to identify what they believe are their Top Five strengths, as selected from the “VIA Classification of 24 Character Strengths”. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask each student to write down his or her own identified strengths on a piece of lined paper ○ Ask students to share the strengths they chose for themselves and write them out on the white board ○ Assist the group look at strengths shared by different group members |

D. Group Discussion: Positive Feelings in the Present

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| Introduce the Actions-Feelings Connection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the connection between how using character strengths may relate to feelings of happiness in the present (your day-to-day life): <i>When you are using your character strengths in everyday life, what are your thoughts and feelings typically like?</i> • Record students’ ideas on the board. Add and discuss these ideas as needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus on current efforts; Concentration ○ Engaging in a challenges that build on abilities and skills ○ Absorption in a task where time flies by ○ Creating and working on clear goals ○ Immediate feedback from others and yourself ○ Sense of self-control |
| Revisit the Determinants of Happiness Theory: Emphasis on Purposeful Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the “What Determines Happiness?” graph and discuss how good feelings resulting from use of character strengths are due to the choice and effort in using them; thus, enacting character strengths is another example of a purposeful activity tied to happiness. Provide an example: <i>A cashier undercharges you for your order. Although you think that the items are overpriced and you really want to keep the extra money, you tell the cashier that you owe more than he stated. (or: You are walking behind a man at the mall. A 20 dollar bill falls to the ground. Although you have something you would like to buy and you really want to keep the extra money, you call out “Hey mister, you dropped some money” and run after him with the \$20 you picked up). You feel good about yourself afterward because you chose to exercise your character strength of honesty.</i> • Ask students to pick one of the strengths they listed for themselves and explain to the group how it may take effort to use it • Explain that the next few sessions will focus more on discovering and using top character strengths |
| Prepare for Focus on Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect each student’s list of self-identified strengths, store in your program binder for reference during the next session • Explain students will complete an online survey to identify their character strengths in the next session, and compare the strengths they chose for themselves |

with the survey results

E. Homework: Continue Performing Acts of Kindness

Assign *Just like last week, I want you to pick a day this week to perform five acts of kindness. Remember, changes in happiness occur with repeated use of exercises such as performing acts of kindness.*

- Distribute an *Acts of Kindness Record Form* to jot down their plans as well as to record additional kind acts after they have been performed
 - Ask students to decide on a date to perform five acts of kindness.
 - Remind students that acts of kindness are small to large actions that benefit or make others happy, typically at the cost of your time and effort.
-

Looking Ahead

- Inform students they will be asked to share 2-3 of their acts of kindness, and related feelings, in the next program meeting
- Students should leave the meeting with the *Acts of Kindness Record Form* added to their homework folder
- Remind students of the incentives they can receive contingent on homework completion and return of the *Acts of Kindness Record Form*

Assessment of Signature Character Strengths

*Session 7a:
Class*

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| Goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify students' signature strengths through a survey that assesses multiple aspects of each strength.• Reinforce acts of kindness |
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| Overview of Procedures | A. Homework Check: Performing Acts of Kindness B. Survey Assessment of Character Strengths |
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| Materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tangible rewards for homework completion (candy, stickers, etc.)• Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel• Students' handwritten lists of self-identified strengths created in the previous session• Lined paper• Access to computer lab and the internet: www.viacharacter.org• <i>Classification of 24 Character Strengths</i> handout |
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Procedures Defined

A. Homework Check: Performing Acts of Kindness

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| Assignment Check-in and Encourage Continuation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students about their progress with completing all five acts of kindness during the week.• If students did not perform the acts of kindness as planned, problem-solve barriers. Stress the importance of continued effort between sessions for changes in happiness to occur.• Remind students they will receive tangible reward if they complete their five acts in a single day by the next meeting, which will occur later in the week. |
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B. Survey Assessment of Character Strengths

The VIA Inventory of Strengths for Youth (VIA-Youth) was developed by Park and Peterson in 2006 as an extension of their original adult version. The aim of this assessment is to identify individual adolescents' personal ranking of the 24 character strengths with particular emphasis on their top 5 strengths, known as signature character strengths. The VIA Institute recently developed a more brief assessment of the 24 character strengths in youth ages 10-17. Seligman (2011) discussed how use of one's signature strengths is a key route to sustainable increases in happiness.

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| Prepare | Prior to this session, register on the website www.viacharacter.org . This will permit you access to the online version of the VIA Youth Survey. You can logon multiple child users on separate computers, simultaneously under your account/logon, thus precluding the child from having to enter personal information or create his or her own account on a website. |
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| Complete the VIA-Youth | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain that researchers have developed a survey that helps people identify and rank their character strengths. The top five strengths are called <i>signature character strengths</i>• Explain there is a website on the internet site designed to help define their signature strengths, specifically www.viacharacter.org [alternative full-length (198-item) youth VIA survey can be access at www.authentic happiness.org]<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Once on the website, scroll down and click on "Take Survey"○ Select the link for the VIA Survey for Youth○ Follow the online instructions for registering the child and entering the survey |
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- Read aloud the instructions for completing the questions provided online
 - Monitor students as they individually complete the survey; answer questions as necessary and provide encouragement to complete the survey, which may take 15 – 45 minutes depending on youth reading speed and version of survey selected (brief or original)
 - As a student completes the online survey, print out his or her top 5 signature character strengths. If a printer is not available, circle the signature strengths on the “*Classification of 24 Character Strengths*” sheet; number them from 1-5 as indicated by the website feedback.
 - *Note:* If a student expresses disagreement with a top 5 strength as “not true for me,” click on the display all strengths option and replace the disputed strength with the 6th (or 7th if needed) strength identified in the assessment
 - Explain to child that you will discuss this list more fully in the next meeting, to occur later this week (perhaps later the same day, the day following, or anytime that week)
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Use of First Signature Strength in New Ways

*Session 7b:
Class*

Goals

- Discuss students' individual signature character strengths.
- Explore new ways to use one signature strength.
- Develop individualized plan for new uses of one signature strength.

Overview of Procedures

- A. Review Homework: Performing Acts of Kindness
- B. Strengthen Classroom Relationships
- C. Discussion: Expected vs. Survey-Identified Signature Strengths
- D. Homework: Use Signature Strength in New Ways

Materials

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (candy, stickers, etc.)
 - Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel
 - Students' handwritten lists of self-identified strengths created in session 6
 - Print-out or list of signature character strengths as identified in online survey completed in session 7a
 - Lined paper
 - *Classification of 24 Character Strengths* handout
 - *New Uses of My First Signature Strength* handout
 - *Performing Acts of Kindness Record Form* handout
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Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework Assignment: Performing Acts of Kindness

Assignment Completion and Reward

- Ask students about their progress with completing all five acts of kindness during the week.
- Provide a small tangible reward (e.g., candy) for homework completion.
- If students did not perform the acts of kindness as planned, problem-solve barriers. Stress the importance of continued effort between sessions for changes in happiness to occur.

Reflection

- Ask students to share 1 or 2 acts of kindness they carried out.
 - Discuss the significance of acts of kindness in terms of positive feelings about the present; emphasize the benefit to others that came at the cost of the student's time and/or effort.
 - *How did the people who benefitted from your kind act(s) respond?*
 - *How did you feel following the kind act(s)?*
 - Inform students that their homework for this week will have two parts, one of which they will plan today (use of character strengths in new ways). For the second part, students are encouraged to continue completing activities that increase their happiness by choosing between continuing Acts of Kindness or returning to their Gratitude Journal.
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B. Strengthen Classroom Relationships

Teacher Support

- Immediately before or after this session, check in with the students' teacher(s) regarding the ways in which they conveyed support to their students.
- *How did students respond to intentional displays of teacher support and care?*
 - *Which strategies appeared effective in conveying support?*
 - *Any noticeable differences in classroom climate or relationships with specific students following purposeful communications of support or care?*
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| Classmate Support | <p>Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In a prior lesson, we discussed how working together cooperatively and treating each other kindly makes people feel happier. Since our last meeting, tell us about some times you've seen your classmates be particularly nice to you or another student, or times you've gone out of your way to help or support a classmate.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Praise students for sharing • <i>Mr./Ms. (Teacher) thinking over the past week, when have you noticed your students treated each other particularly nicely, or worked together cooperatively?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask students to recall how they felt during that event (happier? Like school was more enjoyable?) • <i>Happy children also feel close to adults at school. What nice or supportive things have you noticed your teacher(s) do or say? Other kind behaviors or actions from other people at the school?</i> |
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C. Discussion: Expected versus Survey-Identified Signature Strengths

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| Review of Top Character Strengths Yielded from the VIA-Youth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give students an opportunity to review the print-out from the VIA survey completed during class session 7a (or individualized “<i>Classification of 24 Character Strengths</i>” sheet) and their hand written lists of self-identified strengths (as completed during class session 6) • On an individual and/or small group level (depending on students’ rate of survey completion), discuss the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Are your signature strengths from the survey the same or different from the strengths you wrote about yourself before we went online?</i> ○ <i>Reactions to your computer-generated signature strengths?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expect: surprise, expected, happy, disappointed, or curious |
| Identify Signature Character Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce notion of “Signature Strengths” <i>Sometimes the computer generated strengths don't feel like they are a good fit. That's okay; you just don't concentrate on using them. Instead, think about how you use the strengths that do fit you. The ones that fit may just feel right, may be exciting to use, may help you to do well in new activities, may be something you enjoy doing, may be something that gets you pumped up, or something you want to try using in different ways.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example of Leadership as a signature strength: <i>You may be the kind of person who thinks that being a leader is something you can do well, you get excited about the chance to lead groups in class work, in sports, or on trips, or you may already be a leader on your football team but you also want to be student government present and lead a food drive at school for Thanksgiving. Being a leader just feels like it is right for you.</i> • <i>Are there any strengths that you feel just don't fit you? Why?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examples of ways strengths may not fit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strength doesn't feel "like me" ○ Not comfortable using the strength ○ Can't think of example situations they could use the strength • Assist the students cross off from their printout any strengths that don't seem to fit, as these are not signature strengths |
| Current and Future Strengths Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Which of your signature strengths do you use often?</i> • <i>Can you think of ways you have used your signature strengths recently?</i> • Ask students to pick one strength they would like to work on this week and give an example of one way they already use that strength |

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- Explain homework assignment to individual or small groups of students
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D. Homework: Use First Signature Strength in New Way

Assign #1 *I want you to use the signature strength you picked in new ways each day of the upcoming week.*

- Help the student brainstorm ideas of new ways to use the strength; other students can offer ideas, especially if they chose the same strength to target
 - Distribute the *New Uses of My First Signature Strength* record form to jot down their plans. Ask students to write down the feelings they had after they used their strength each day, as well as record additional different ways that they used the strength during the week.
 - Encourage students to try a different way to use the character strength if they encounter obstacles with the plan on their record form.
 - Store copies of VIA-Youth results, lists of perceived strengths, and *New Uses of My First Signature Strength* planning form in the program binder
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**Assign #2
(Optional)**

- Ask students to choose whether they will continue doing acts of kindness or return to their gratitude journal. Note their selection so you can follow-up appropriately next session.
 - Distribute an *Acts of Kindness Record Form* if relevant
 - Review procedures for gratitude journaling if relevant
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Looking Ahead

- Inform students they will be asked to share their signature strengths, and 2 new uses and related feelings, in the next program meeting
 - Students should leave the meeting with the *New Uses of My First Signature Strength* record form, as well as the print out with their *Top 5 Signature Strengths*, added to their homework folder
 - Remind students of the incentives they can receive contingent on homework completion and return of the *New Uses of My First Signature Strength* record form
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Use of Second Signature Strength in New Ways

**Session 8:
Class**

Goals

- Explore students' use of their signature strengths in new ways and problem-solve obstacles
- Make connections between activities that use signature strengths and positive feelings
- Explore new ways to use signature strengths across life domains

Overview of Procedures

- A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships
- B. Review Homework: New Uses of First Signature Strength
- C. Explore and Plan Use of Signature Strengths in New Ways across Life Domains
- D. Homework: Use of Second Signature Strength in New Ways

Materials

- Tangible rewards for homework completion (candy, stickers, etc.)
 - Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel
 - List of Signature Character Strengths from the previous session
 - *Classification of 24 Character Strengths* handout
 - *New Uses of My Second Signature Strength* handout
 - *Performing Acts of Kindness Record Form* handout
-

Procedures Defined

A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships

Teacher Support

- Immediately before or after this session, check in with the students' teacher(s) regarding the ways in which they conveyed support to their students.
- *How did students respond to intentional displays of teacher support and care?*
 - *Which strategies appeared effective in conveying support?*
 - *Any noticeable differences in classroom climate or relationships with specific students following purposeful communications of support or care?*

Classmate Support

- Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:
- *Earlier, we discussed how working together cooperatively and treating each other kindly makes people feel happier. Since our last meeting, tell us about some times you've seen your classmates be particularly nice to you or another student, or times you've gone out of your way to help or support a classmate.*
 - Praise students for sharing
 - *Mr./Ms. (Teacher) thinking over the past week, when have you noticed your students treated each other particularly nicely, or worked together cooperatively?*
 - Ask students to recall how they felt during that event (happier? Like school was more enjoyable?)
 - *Happy children also feel close to adults at school. What nice or supportive things have you noticed your teacher(s) do or say? Other kind behaviors or actions from other people at the school?*
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B. Review Homework Assignment: New Uses of First Signature Strength

Assignment Completion and Reward

- Ask students their progress with Acts of Kindness or Gratitude Journaling
 - Ask students about their progress with using a signature strength in new ways each day since the last session
 - Provide a small tangible reward (e.g., candy) for homework completion
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If students did not use their character strength as planned, or complete the record form, problem-solve barriers. Stress the importance of continued effort between sessions for changes in happiness to occur. |
| Reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to share 1 act of kindness <i>or</i> 1 item on a gratitude entry • Ask students to share with the group their signature strengths from the online survey, and how well that matched up to the ones they wrote for themselves (refer students to the copies of their VIA-Youth results and their self-generated lists of strengths in the binder if needed) • Ask students to get into pairs and interview their partner about the signature strength they chose to enact for homework. • Each partner should talk about two examples of new ways they used their chosen signature strength during last week, and share their feelings related to use of strengths. The partners will then report to the group. • If challenges to using a strength arise, lead problem-solving discussion with the group regarding how to overcome and avoid identified obstacles |

C. Explore and Plan New Uses of Signature Strengths across Life Domains

People who use their signature strengths in new ways show some of the greatest and most ensuring gains in happiness, even compared to the effects of other positive psychology interventions (Seligman et al., 2005). Lasting happiness comes from using signature strengths across life domains. For youth, we focus on school, friendships, and family.

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| Explore | <i>In which ways do you currently use your signature strengths?</i> |
| Current Use of Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt students to pick two strengths (different than the one they worked on for homework) and share examples of how they have shown that strength in school, friendships, and/or with family • Use a round robin method so each student has an opportunity to share • Explain that research finding show that use of character strengths <u>in new ways</u> is a good way to increase happiness in the present (emphasis on not just using strengths more, but in <u>new and different ways</u> than ever before) |
| Domains of Life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that there are three important areas of life for students their age, including school, friendship, and family. To maximize happiness, utilize character strengths in new ways in each area of life. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide an example: <i>A student whose signature strength is creativity can use it in school by joining the art club or organizing the layout of the school newspaper, in friendship by thinking of new activities friends can do together, and with family by coming up with new ways to save family memories, such as in a scrapbook.</i> |
| Plan Future Strengths Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to pick a signature strength that they would like to work on this week (which may not be the same as last week's homework) • Distribute lined paper; ask students to independently make a list of ways to use this signature strength that are unique or different from prior usage • Monitor the lists to ensure activities listed are manageable and concrete. For instance, if a student's character strength is "fairness," maybe she can intervene when she sees a younger or smaller sibling getting taken advantage of by an older relative. Such a plan is more feasible than joining the student council between meetings. • Write the life domain categories on the board • Ask for two volunteers to share their lists with the class |

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- Ask an individual volunteer to state the signature strength and ways in which (s)he has thought about using it differently. For each suggested use, ask the class which life domain category the activity would go under—record the activity under the appropriate heading on the board.
 - Ask the class to brainstorm other ideas for use of this strength; add them to the board under the appropriate life domain.
 - Clarify any suggestions that may stray from the meaning of the strength and guide students to more targeted suggestions. Keep the *Classification of 24 Character Strengths* handout accessible in the event students need help remembering the meanings of the strengths
 - Distribute the *New Uses of My Second Signature Strength* record form
 - Ask the volunteer student to write down the ideas that appeal to him or her on the “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form, making sure to note the life domain. Do not plan the days just yet.
 - Ask the volunteer student to identify potential obstacles to carrying out the strength use plan this week. Problem solve with the class in terms of how those obstacles could be addressed or avoided.
 - Time permitting, repeat this process with a second volunteer
 - Ask students to form small groups, preferably that include students who selected the same strength to target. Members of the group should help each other complete their “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form by going through their prepared lists of uses of strengths and determining domains as well as brainstorming other ideas and problem-solving potential obstacles. Ideally, each small group is facilitated by a co-leader and assisted by the student volunteer(s) who has already prepared his or her record form.
 - Once each student in the small group has prepared their record form, tell students to write in days this week they think they can do each of the ways to use their strengths. The days do not have to be in order, but each day of the week should be designated for use of strength.
 - Make a copy of each students “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form
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D. Homework: Use of Second Signature Strength in New Ways

Assign #1 *I want you to use the signature strength you picked in new ways each day of the upcoming week, across life domains as you prepared on the “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form*

- Ask students to use their record form to write down the feelings they had after they used their strength each day, and to record additional different ways that they used the strength during the week.
- Encourage students to try a different way to use the character strength if they encounter obstacles with the plan on their record form.
- Store copy of *New Uses of My Second Signature Strength* planning form in the program binder.

Assign #2 (Optional) • Ask students to choose whether they will perform acts of kindness or complete a gratitude journal. Note their selection so you can follow-up appropriately next session.

- Distribute an *Acts of Kindness Record Form* if relevant
- Review procedures for gratitude journaling if relevant

Looking Ahead • Inform students they will be asked to share 1 to 2 new uses of the strength and

related feelings in the next program meeting

- Students should leave the meeting with the *New Uses of My Second Signature Strength* record form added to their homework folder
 - Remind students of the incentives they can receive contingent on homework completion and return of the *New Uses of My Second Signature Strength* record form
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Hope and Goal-Directed Thinking

Session 9: Class

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| Goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make connections between activities that use signature strengths and positive feelings• Define hope (i.e., goal-directed) and how it can impact happiness as related to the future.• Learn method for developing hope by envisioning goals, paths to achieve goals, and motivation for success. |
| Overview of Procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Strengthen Classroom RelationshipsB. Review Homework: Use of Second Signature Strength in New WaysC. Initial Appraisal of HopeD. Group Discussion: Definition and Importance of HopeE. Writing Activity: Best Possible Self in the FutureF. Homework: Best Possible Self in the Future (expanded) |
| Materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, candy, pencils, etc.)• Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel• Lined paper• <i>Best Possible Self in the Future</i> handout• <i>Examples of Optimistic Thinking</i> handout• <i>New Uses of My Third Signature Strength Record Form</i> handout• <i>Acts of Kindness Record Form</i> handout |

Procedures Defined

A. Strengthen Classroom Relationships

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| Teacher Support | <p>Immediately before or after this session, check in with the students' teacher(s) regarding the ways in which they conveyed support to their students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How did students respond to intentional displays of teacher support and care?</i>• <i>Which strategies appeared effective in conveying support?</i>• <i>Any noticeable differences in classroom climate or relationships with specific students following purposeful communications of support or care?</i> |
| Classmate Support | <p>Pose these questions to the group and facilitate a brief discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Since our last meeting, tell us about some times you've seen your classmates be particularly nice to you or another student, or times you've gone out of your way to help or support a classmate.</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Praise students for sharing• <i>Mr./Ms. (Teacher) thinking over the past week, when have you noticed your students treated each other particularly nicely, or worked together cooperatively?</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ask students to recall how they felt during that event (happier? Like school was more enjoyable?)• <i>Happy children also feel close to adults at school. What nice or supportive things have you noticed your teacher(s) do or say? Other kind behaviors or actions from other people at the school?</i> |

B. Review Homework Assignment: Use of Second Signature Strength in New Ways

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| Assignment Completion | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students their progress with Acts of Kindness or Gratitude Journaling• Ask students about their progress with using a signature strength in new ways each |
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| and Reward | <p>day since the last session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a small tangible reward (e.g., candy) for homework completion • If students did not use their character strength as planned, or complete the record form, problem-solve barriers. Stress the importance of continued effort between sessions for changes in happiness to occur. |
| Reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to share 1 act of kindness <i>or</i> 1 item on a gratitude entry • Ask students to provide 1 to 2 examples of ways they used the signature strength they chose to enact for homework. • Encourage reflection on their feelings related to use of strengths • Ask students how that may have enhanced positive feelings • Facilitate group discussion and encouragement over each other's use of strengths • If challenges to using a strength arose, lead problem-solving discussion with the group regarding how to overcome and avoid identified obstacles • Ask students to pick a different signature strength to target for homework, and independently complete the "Uses of My Third Signature Strength" record form during this week (applying process learned last week) |

C. Initial Appraisal of Hope

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| Set the Stage | <p><i>What is Hope?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate a brief discussion on what students think constitutes hope • Can provide students with brief definition of hope as "feeling that something desired may happen" or "wishing that certain things will happen" • Record students' response on the board. • Hope will be defined more extensively in the next section. |
| Rate Your Hope | <p><i>We are going to rate our own level of hope.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw a number line from 0-10 on a board • Distribute small, blank pieces of paper <p><i>Think about how often you have felt hope in the past few months. On a scale from 0 to 10 with 0 being never hopeful, 5 being sometimes hopeful, and 10 being always hopeful, rate your level of hope.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to write their ratings on a piece of paper and fold it over. |
| Shared Reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In small groups, ask each to student share their number and the reason they have chosen it |

D. Group Discussion: Definition and Importance of Hope

Snyder and colleagues (2005) define hopeful thinking as comprising both the ability to envision viable methods for goal attainment and belief in one's ability to utilize those methods in reaching specific goals. The following discussion is based on their work.

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| Present Definition in Line with Hope Theory | <p><i>Now that we have shared our ideas about "what is hope," I'm going to talk in greater details about how psychologists have defined hope:</i></p> <p><i>Having hope means believing that you can become motivated and find ways to meet your goals. This is like telling yourself, "I'll find a way to get this done or make this happen!" When an obstacle gets in your way, having hope means believing you can find another way to meet your needs and coming up with ideas on what those other ways might be. When you are hopeful, you believe that you can reach your goals because you have the ability and can get the resources – you are motivated. You might say to yourself "Nothing can stop me!" For example, if you want to play basketball but you don't make the school team, then you may organize a recreational team in your</i></p> |
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neighborhood so that you can play and practice somewhere besides school. Or, if you want to make a new friend and the first person you ask to go to the movies says “no,” then you identify another classmate and try a different approach.

Introduce Links between Hope and Happiness

Present discussion questions to the class and ensure the topics below the questions are a part of the conversation:

Thinking about hope like this, how can it be important or not important in your life? In school? In friendships? With family?

- School:
 - Motivation to do well, work harder, be more successful
 - Find different ways to meet goals such as get better grades
- Sports:
 - Greater performance because get “psyched” that you can win, compete, or make it to the end
 - Greater confidence and willingness to practice harder because you think it will help you win
- Social Relationships:
 - Make new friends
 - Work to maintain positive relationships with family and friends
- Emotions:
 - Good feelings about yourself and beliefs that you can do well because you are motivated and believe you can find ways to meet your goals
 - Develop strategies to deal with stress and are motivated to use them because you believe one way will work
 - More likely to problem-solve when difficult situations occur

How do you think hope could impact people’s happiness?

- Allow a few minutes for student volunteers to offer ideas.
 - Summarize student responses: *Hope can help us focus on positive goals for our future. It limits feelings of helplessness through believing that there are ways to meet goals.*
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E. Writing Activity: Best Possible Self in the Future

Envisioning and writing or drawing about life goals through an exercise termed one’s “best possible self” (a version of the future self that accomplished desired goals) leads to greater happiness (King, 2001; Owens & Patterson, 2013; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006). This activity focuses on goals, paths to achieve goals, and motivation that provides a concrete way of practicing hopeful thinking.

Provide Rationale

- Remind students that they have the ability to change their levels of hope by using hopeful thinking about their futures.
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Write about Best Possible Self in the Future

• Introduce activity:
I would like you to think about your life in the future. Take a few minutes to imagine that everything has gone as well as it possibly could. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing all of your life goals. [Pause ~2 minutes]

Now draw a picture or write about what you imagined (adapted from King, 2001; Owens & Patterson, 2013).

- Provide students with the “Best Possible Self in the Future” handout/worksheet
 - Allow about 5 minutes for them to use the empty box in the center of the handout to draw or write their future life, a version in which all goals were accomplished. Then, ask the students to share what they have envisioned so far with the class
 - Encourage students to provide more detail in describing how they will meet their goals, and write those plans in the bulleted lines at the box at the bottom of the
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page. Direct students to also use the back of the page to detail the steps they will take to meet the goals depicted in the box.

- Make copies of what they have written thus far; retain copy in program binder and return original to students for storage in their program folder.
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F. Homework: Best Possible Self in the Future (expanded)

Assign #1 *I want you to continue writing about your best possible selves in the future. Review your story each night and add new thoughts and ideas. You can also make changes to what you have already written. Focus on identifying ways you can achieve the goals you imagine for your future.*

Assign #2

- Ask students to select an additional positive psychology activity that they have found to be most personally meaningful.
- Offer these choices: acts of kindness, gratitude journals, or use a third signature strength in a new way each day. Note their selection so you can follow-up appropriately next session.
- Distribute the corresponding record form as relevant

Looking Ahead

- Inform students they will be asked to share at least 1 goal and 1 to 2 ideas for how to reach that goal in the next program meeting
- Students should leave the meeting with the best possible self in the future story and whatever record form is needed to complete the 2nd assignment added to their homework folder
- Remind students of incentives they can receive contingent on homework completion and return of their enhanced best possible future self story

Program Termination

Session 10: Class

- Goals**
- Make connections between goal-directed thoughts and positive feelings
 - Review theoretical framework for increasing personal happiness
 - Review activities and exercises learned in the program
 - Encourage a personal reflection
 - Gather student feedback on exercises perceived to be most helpful and activities they plan to continue

- Overview of Procedures**
- A. Review Homework: Best Possible Self in the Future and Self-Selected Activity
 - B. Group Discussion: Review of Happiness Framework
 - C. Personal Reflection: Progress During the Program
 - D. Wrap-Up and Solicit Student Feedback

- Materials**
- Tangible rewards for homework completion (stickers, candy, pencils, etc.)
 - Blackboard, whiteboard, or easel
 - Lined paper
 - *What Determines Happiness?* figure
 - *Happiness Flow Chart* figure
 - *Well-Being Promotion Program Summary* handout
 - *Certificate of Completion*
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Procedures Defined

A. Review Homework Assignment: Best Possible Self in the Future and Self-Selected Activity

- Assignment Completion and Reward**
- Ask students their progress with the self-selected activity (use strength in new ways; acts of kindness; gratitude journaling)
 - Briefly check progress with reviewing and adding to best possible self in the future story (this is discussed in greater detail during the reflection)
 - Provide a small tangible reward (e.g., candy) for homework completion
 - If students did not revisit their best possible self in the future, problem-solve barriers and explain they will have another opportunity to do so now, at the start of the session. Stress the importance of continued activity practice outside program meetings for changes in happiness to occur.
- Reflection, Part 1: Hope**
- Ask students take a few minutes to reread their updated “Best Possible Self in the Future” writing/drawing activity and reflect on their feelings, strengths, plans, accomplishments, and so forth
 - Ask students to share their stories with the class, with 1 to 2 reflections
 - Point out the multiple domains of life in which they envisioned their best possible future selves (e.g., school, athletics, physical health, emotions, relationships)
 - *What changes/additions to your ideas about your best possible self in the future occurred since last session?*
 - *Which goals in life seem most important to you? What ways can you go about achieving those goals?*
 - Ask if students felt any different after thinking about their future in a positive manner
 - More motivated to work on future goals?
 - Initiate reflections on students’ stories with identifications or reaffirmations
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| | of motivations and goal orientation within the story |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage students to reflect on the positives features of each other’s stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Something they admired or liked in the story ○ Goals they share with the presenter ○ Other ideas for ways of achieving goals • Once each student has had a turn, ask students how this activity has impacted their hope for the future, if at all |
| Reflection, Part 2: Independence with Positive Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to share 1-2 examples of the activity they chose to do for the second part of homework (gratitude journal, acts of kindness, character strengths) • Why did they choose that activity? • What changes in mood occurred with or after that activity? <p><i>You were successful in purposefully selecting and completing a positive activity all on your own, through practicing the strategies you learned in this program. Today is the end of the well-being promotion program. Your success between our meetings shows how you are ready to continuing practicing the positive activities in your daily life.</i></p> |

B. Group Discussion: Review of the Happiness Framework

The goal of this program wrap-up is to review some of the primary concepts taught:

- Happiness can be best increased through the purposeful activities that we do each day (show *What Determines Happiness?* figure)
- Lasting happiness comes from positive thoughts and feelings about one’s past experiences, present behaviors, and positive views of the future (show the *Happiness Flow Chart* figure)
- Specific activities learned in this program create the positive thoughts and feelings that lead to lasting happiness
- Continued practice of these activities (purposeful behaviors!), in particular the ones that the student felt “fit” him or her best, is essential to maintain gains in happiness

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| Group Review and Reflection | <p><i>In the past 10 meetings, we have completed multiple exercises that were designed to improve happiness by changing the activities (thoughts and behaviors) that we do on purpose [show <i>What Determines Happiness</i> figure]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the exercises on the board, for students to access during this discussion (list: Me at My Best, Gratitude Journaling, Gratitude Visits, Acts of Kindness, Using Signature Strengths in New Ways, and Best Possible Self in the Future) <p><i>Which exercises are meant to promote positive feelings about one’s past?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gratitude journaling • Gratitude visits • *Me at My Best (*could also fit with present, to identify strengths) <p><i>How did gratitude improve your satisfaction with your past?</i></p> <p><i>Which exercises are intended to promote positive emotions in the present?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts of kindness • Using signature character strengths in new ways <p><i>How did these activities make you feel happier in the moment, feel better about your current life?</i></p> <p><i>Which exercises are meant to improve your view of the future?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope (Best Possible Self in Future) <p><i>How did these exercises improve your feelings about the future?</i></p> |
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| Application to Future Situations; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute the “Well-Being Promotion Program Summary Sheet.” To promote application of learned material to future situations, ask the students to identify situations/times in which it would be a good idea to use the activities to |
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Summarize Activities

- increase positive thoughts about past, present, and future in their own future lives (i.e., upon completion of the program).
- For instance, in addition to practicing grateful thinking at all times, they may want to enact a gratitude visit or complete a gratitude journal at times they are feeling regret or disappointment with their life circumstances. They may want to do acts of kindness or use strengths in new ways when they catch themselves feeling “blah” about their day. When they catch themselves feeling hopeless about their future, they should prompt themselves to practice hopeful thinking.
 - After students identify perceived emotions that cue them to increase positive thoughts about a specific time period (past, present, and future), ask students to read aloud the definition of activities that correspond to this period (use round robin format).
- Note: Students should record their character strengths in their summary sheet during the discussion of planning to improve daily experiences.
Which of these activities did you feel gave you the biggest happiness boost?
Which do you plan to continue in the future?
Why that particular activity?
 - To capitalize on intrinsic motivation, students should plan to keep up those activities that felt natural and enjoyable and are consistent with their values. They should feel free to set aside any activities they completed mostly to gain access to rewards or out of guilt/obligation.
-

C. Personal Reflection: Progress During Program

It is important to have the students think through and reflect on their personal growth during the intervention. Provide them with the following instructions.

Personal Reflection

Take a few minutes to think of the ways you have changed over the past ten weeks.

Allow a couple of minutes for students to reflect.

In general, how have your feelings about your life changed?

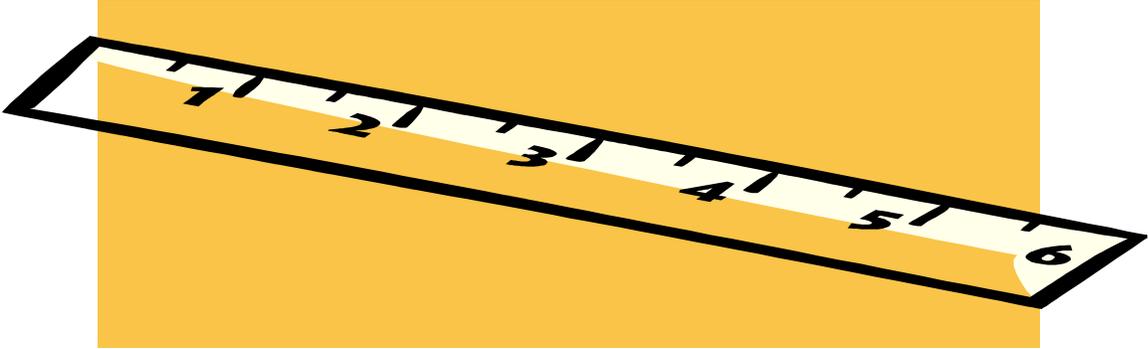
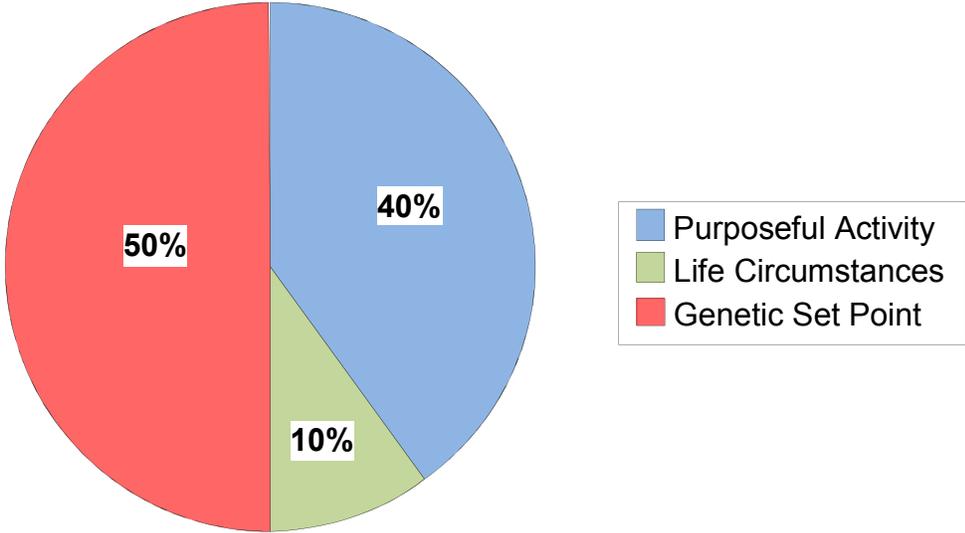
- Follow-up prompts for topics if not included in students’ responses:
 - *Any changes in happiness?*
 - *What about your feelings about yourself?*
 - *People in your life?*
 - *Your past?*
 - *Your current life?*
 - *Your future?*
-

D. Wrap-Up and Solicit Student Feedback

- Provide students with the “Certificate of Completion” and express appreciation for their continued efforts over the weeks.
 - Distribute the *Program Feedback Request*; Ask students to write down their thoughts about their satisfaction with the program/group before leaving.
 - Collect post-intervention outcome data using the same indicators of subjective well-being administered pre-intervention (baseline). Data collapsed across participants (i.e., mean scores at each time point) should be compared to assess typical progress.
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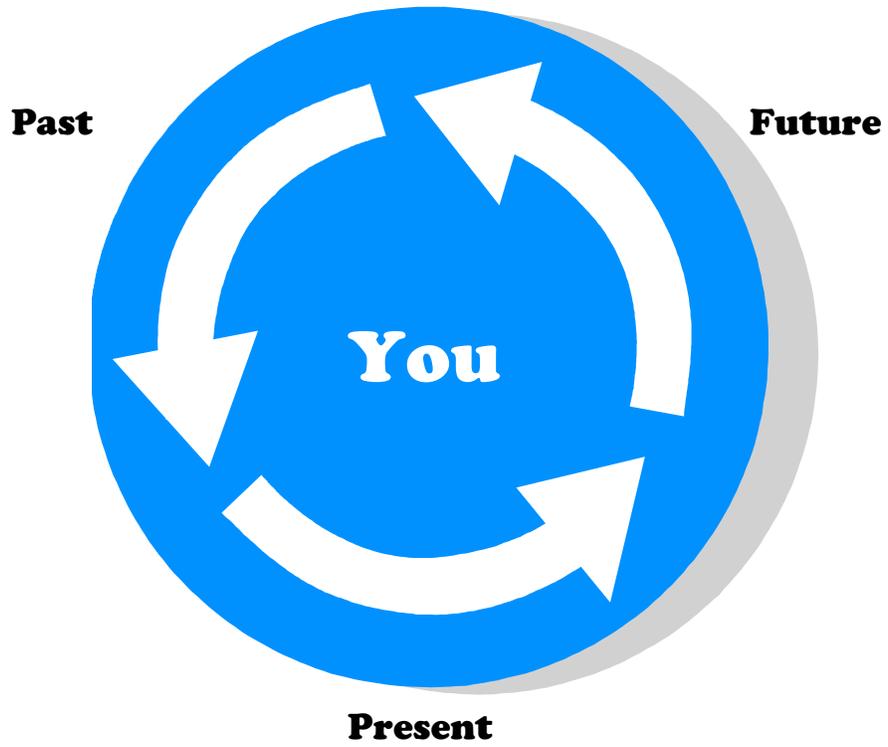
STUDENT HANDOUTS

What Determines Happiness?



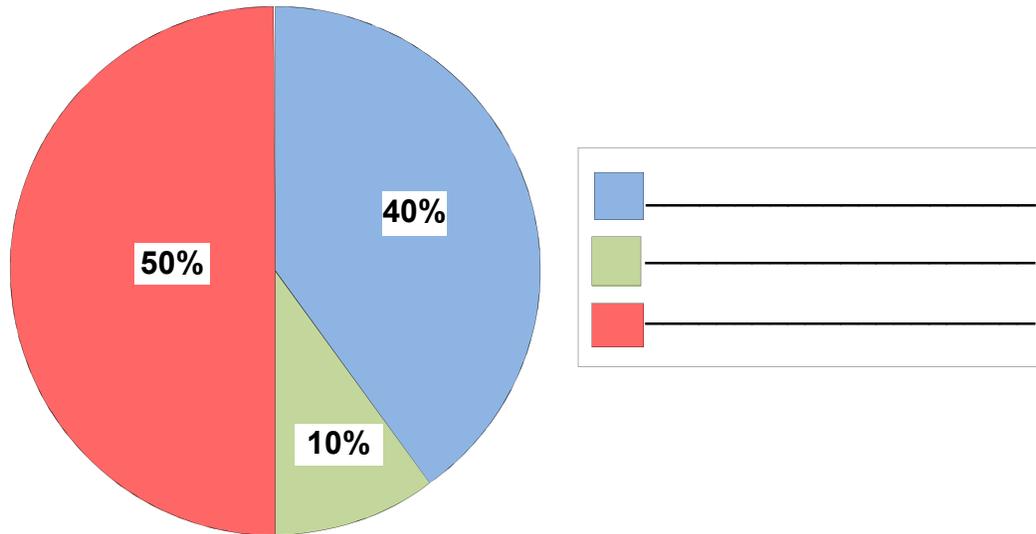
Well-Being Promotion Program

Happiness Flow Chart



Well-Being Promotion Program
Student Handout: Overview of Program Activities

What Determines Happiness?



What is the Purpose of this Well-Being Promotion Program?

1. During our weekly program meetings, which of the three areas that determine happiness are we going to focus on in order to improve our happiness? _____
2. How many times each week are we going to meet? _____
3. How many weeks will we meet? _____
4. What do I need to bring with me to the meetings? _____

What is Confidentiality?

How Will I Keep what Students Say during Meetings Confidential?

Well-Being Promotion Program
Student Handout: Gratitude Visit Planning Form

Gratitude Visit Planning Form

People who have been especially kind or helpful to me:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Person I will make a gratitude visit to: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

****Reminder:** Tell the person that you want to make plans to spend time with them. Don't tell them about your gratitude letter before the visit. To have the gratitude visit work really well, remember to read your letter out loud to the person. Read slowly with expression and make eye contact.

Well-Being Promotion Program
Student Handout: Performing Acts of Kindness Record Form

| | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| | Day of the Week: _____ | Date: _____ |
| Acts of Kindness | | |
| | | |
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Well-Being Promotion Program

Student Handout: Classification of 24 Character Strengths

VIA Classification of 24 Signature Character Strengths

| | Strength | Definition |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Wisdom & Knowledge | Creativity | Thinks of new ways to do things; has unique ideas |
| | Curiosity | Interested in exploring and discovering things |
| | Love of Learning | Likes to become an expert in things; enjoys learning in school |
| | Open-mindedness/Judgment | Doesn't jump to conclusions; thinks things through |
| | Perspective | Understands both sides of a story; offers good advice to others |
| Courage | Authenticity/Honesty | Tells the truth; is "real" and not pretending to be something he/she is not |
| | Bravery | Speaks up for what is right; stands up to threats |
| | Persistence/Perseverance | Hard-working; likes completing tasks |
| | Zest | Energetic and full of excitement |
| Humanity | Kindness | Does good deeds or favors for other people; helps others and takes care of them |
| | Love | Values close relationships with other people |
| | Social Intelligence | Knows how other people think and feel |
| Justice | Fairness | Treats all people the same; doesn't judge people |
| | Leadership | Organizes group activities and makes sure things get done |
| | Teamwork | Works well with others and does their share of the work |
| Temperance | Forgiveness | Gives people a second chance when they do something wrong |
| | Modesty/Humility | Doesn't brag about accomplishments; doesn't think he/she is better than everyone else |
| | Prudence | Careful about making choices; doesn't do things he/she will regret |
| | Self-Regulation | In control of one's emotions |
| Transcendence | Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence | Notices beautiful things in the world (nature, art, science) |
| | Gratitude | Aware and thankful for good things that happen; gives thanks |
| | Hope | Believes that good things will happen in the future |
| | Humor | Likes to laugh and bring smiles to other people |
| | Religiousness/Spirituality | Has beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe |

| | | |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| Signature Strength: | | |
| <i>New Ways I Can Use this Strength:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. | | |
| Day of the Week | New Use | Feelings |
| | | |
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|---|----------------|-----------------|
| Signature Strength: | | |
| <i>New Ways I Can Use this Strength:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. | | |
| Day of the Week | New Use | Feelings |
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|---|----------------|-----------------|
| Signature Strength: | | |
| <i>New Ways I Can Use this Strength:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. | | |
| Day of the Week | New Use | Feelings |
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Best Possible Self in the Future

Directions: Think about your life in the future. Take a few minutes to imagine that everything has gone as well as it possibly could. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing all of your goals. Draw a picture or write about what you've imagined in the space below.



Steps I will take to achieve my goals to become my best possible self in the future:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

****Homework assignment:** Continue to write or draw about your best possible self in the future. Review your picture or story each night and add new thoughts or ideas. You can also make changes to what you have already drawn or written. Continue to think and write about ways you can achieve the goals you imagine for your future; use the back of this page as needed.

Well-Being Promotion Program
Student Handout: Program Summary Sheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

When I want to feel closer to people in my school:

- Get to know your classmates
 - Recognize things you have in common
 - Help classmates when challenges occur; let them know when you need help; work on problems together
- Turn to your teachers
 - Think about the ways your teachers supports and helps you
 - How can you let your teacher know you care?

When I want to feel more positive about my past:

- Gratitude journal
 - 5 things I'm grateful for, write down 1 time each week
- Gratitude visit
 - Write a letter of thanks to someone who has been kind to me; read the letter to the person

When I want to feel more positive about my daily life:

- Do acts of kindness
 - 5 kind acts for other people in one day
- Use my signature character strengths
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

When I want to feel more positive about my future:

- Hopeful thinking
 - Focus on goals and ways to achieve those goals

Well-Being Promotion Program
Student Handout: Program Feedback Request

Your Thoughts on the Well-Being Promotion Program

1. What do you feel are some of the most important things you learned in the program?

2. What did you like best about the program?

3. What did you like least about the program?

4. Which activities that you learned in the meetings are you likely to continue to do on your own?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> “Me at my best” writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude journal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude visit | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts of kindness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Using my signature strengths in new ways | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloring as a team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> “Best possible self in the future” writing | <input type="checkbox"/> None |

5. What suggestions do you have to improve the program?

6. Any additional comments?

Certificate of Completion

congratulations to

for successfully completing the
Well-Being Promotion Program.

It has been a pleasure having your class participate!

TEACHER HANDOUTS

Well-Being Promotion Program

Notes for Teachers: Overview of Program Activities

Frequently Asked Questions

What is positive psychology?

- The study of factors and traits that make people thrive. Positive psychology emphasizes the presence of positive indicators of mental health, such as personal happiness

Why are we trying to make your students happier?

- Happier kids earn better grades, perform better on standardized tests, have more positive attitudes towards school and learning, have better social relationships, are physically healthier, and have fewer symptoms of mental health problems like depression and anxiety.

Why are we working with your students?

- We have partnered with your school administrators and student support services team to implement this universal wellness promotion curriculum with all fourth and fifth grade students. We would like students in your class to participate because we expect they will experience an increase in happiness due to taking part in the well-being promotion program.

What does the Well-Being Promotion Program include?

- The program consists of meetings between school mental health providers and students. A schedule of what your students will be focusing on with their counselor:
 - Meeting 1a-1b: Program Overview for Teachers and Parents
 - Meeting 1c: Getting to Know Students in My Class (Team-Building)
 - Meeting 2: You at Your Best (Happiness Introduction)
 - Meeting 3: Gratitude Journaling
 - Meeting 4: Gratitude Visits
 - Meeting 5: Acts of Kindness
 - Meeting 6: Introduction to Character Strengths
 - Meeting 7a-7b: Assessment of Character Strengths and Using First Signature Strength in New Ways
 - Meeting 8: Using Second Signature Strength in New Ways
 - Meeting 9: Hope and Goal-directed Thinking
 - Meeting 10: Program Review

Your classroom's program leader is: _____.

Contact details: _____.

Your class will typically meet with the program leader on: _____.

Well-Being Promotion Program

Notes for Teachers: Building Strong Student-Teacher Relationships

Students' perceptions of social support from teachers reflect how much students feel respected, cared for, and valued by their teachers. Happier students report greater social support. *Emotional support* and *instrumental support* are the aspects of teacher support most highly related to students' happiness. **Emotional support** = students' perceptions of how often teachers care about them, treat them fairly, and make it okay to ask questions. **Instrumental support** = how much students perceive teachers make sure students have what they need for school, take time to help them learn to do something well, and spend time with them when they need help.

Sometimes, students and adults have different ideas about what types of adult actions are supportive. For example, children may focus on tangible goods as 'proof' of care, whereas adults go out of their way to keep children safe (actions that may go unnoticed to children). When researchers* interview children about what support from teachers "looks like," many children report the same ideas, suggesting some strategies teachers may want to consider in an effort to promote positive student-teacher relationships:

- *Communicate care for well-being* through:
 - Asking personal questions (e.g., asking a withdrawn student if everything is okay)
 - Being pleasant and/or respectful
 - Allowing free-time during the day
 - Giving candy
- *Utilize best teaching practices* through:
 - Showing concern for both the individual student's and the entire class's understanding of academic material, then providing additional learning experiences as needed
 - Using diverse teaching strategies, especially those consistent with a child's preferred method of learning
- *Show explicit interest in students' academic achievement* through:
 - Recognizing student accomplishments
 - Helping students to improve grades
 - Providing rewards for good academic performance
 - Explaining errors made on assignments
 - Ensuring academic workload can be completed in a reasonable amount of time
- *Show equity of support* through:
 - Appearing objective in your approach to (a) selecting students to participate in class, and (b) providing rewards to students
 - Explicitly stating intent to treat all students the same
 - Disciplining students by taking time to correctly identify the wrongdoer, rather than punishing the entire class
- *Make students feel comfortable asking questions* through:
 - Creating a physical and emotional classroom environment in which questions appear to be encouraged; for example, through use of posters, "question boxes" where students can privately place questions for later answer, etc.
 - Creating a supportive emotional environment by responding positively to questions and appreciating the students' interest in learning answers

- Creating a logistical arrangement by providing permission, time, and diverse mechanisms for students to pose questions

Research suggests that boys differ from girls in their views of which teacher behaviors communicate care.

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| For GIRLS, teacher actions noted most as showing care: | For BOYS, teacher acts noted most as showing care: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taking actions to help students improve their moods ▪ Expressing an interest in students' well-being ▪ Sharing their personal experiences with students ▪ Having contact with students outside of class ▪ Taking an interest in students' academic progress ▪ Use of varied teaching strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Giving students rewards (e.g., candy, free time, treats) ▪ Helping students improve their grades ▪ Explicitly stating permission to ask questions ▪ Responding to questions in a positive manner |
| What NOT to do for girls? GIRLS appear especially sensitive to feeling low support when they perceive: | What NOT to do for boys? BOYS appear particularly sensitive to: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A negative emotional environment • Negative responses to students' questions • Strict grading policies • Setting firm rules and expectations • Insufficient assistance for learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers assigning an overwhelming workload |

*The findings reported in this handout are based on research conducted by school psychologists at the University of South Florida, as reported in: Suldo, S. M., Friedrich, A. A., White, T., Farmer, J., Minch, D., & Michalowski, J. (2009). Teacher support and adolescents' subjective well-being: A mixed-methods investigation. *School Psychology Review*, 38, 67 – 85.

Well-Being Promotion Program
Notes for Teachers: Team-Building

What Did the Students Learn?

During this meeting, we strengthened students' relationships with their peers through activities that promote teamwork as well as respect for similarities and differences. First, we introduced the program leaders and engaged in ice-breaker team-building activities to establish a positive class environment. Students participated in an activity through which they learned about commonalities among classmates, and reflected on their similarities. We also engaged in "Creative Coloring," in which teams of students completed a coloring project, however each student could only use the one color he or she was provided. Students then discussed the challenges and benefits of working together as a group, noting the importance of being able to work with and support other team members. Finally, we provided a brief introduction to the Well-Being Promotion Program, stressing how important it is that we are kind to and communicate care for one another.

Homework Activities

- Students do not have any homework activities this week.

What Can I Do?

Encourage students to work as teams during in-class activities. Then, prompt students to consider the benefits associated with working with their classmates. During whole-group discussions, prompt students to recognize and give praise to others (classmates or teachers) who have done something nice for them.

Well-Being Promotion Program
Notes for Teachers: You at Your Best

What Did the Students Learn?

At this meeting, we introduced the well-being promotion intervention to the students by explaining the purpose of the program activities and confidentiality. We discussed what it means to be happy and why it is important. During this meeting, we also completed an activity, “You at Your Best,” which asked the students to write about a time when they were at their best (e.g., did something very well, displayed a talent, created something), reflect on their story (e.g., remember feelings that day, identify the strengths they displayed in their story), and share their story and reflections with the class.

Homework Activities

- The students were asked to further expand on their “You at Your Best Story” by re-reading their story and reflecting on their identified strengths each night, then adding more details and length to the story.

What Can I Do?

Write your own “You at Your Best” story and share it with the students, then take the time to review the students’ own stories. Compare and contrast how each story displayed times when the students and teacher were at their best.

Well-Being Promotion Program
Notes for Teachers: Gratitude Journaling

What Did the Students Learn?

During this meeting, we introduced the concept of gratitude to the students. We discussed what gratitude is and why it is important for happiness.

What is gratitude? You feel gratitude (thanks, appreciation, grateful) when you recognize that you received an intentional act of kindness from another person.

More specifically, you feel gratitude after gaining a benefit that you view as valuable, that was provided intentionally and altruistically (not for different motives), and occurred at some cost to the person who provided the benefit.

Example: A child earned an “A” on a homework assignment that his sister helped him complete the night prior. The child may feel gratitude towards his sister because she helped him on purpose (intent), gave up her time to help him (cost), and he got a good grade (benefit) due to her help.

Why is gratitude important? It helps us focus our thoughts and emotions on the positive parts of our pasts related to school, friendships, and family life. Grateful thinking leads to more happiness with life.

The students rated their current levels of gratitude, and created a gratitude journal to record things in their life for which they are grateful.

Homework Activities

- Each night before bed, the students were asked to spend five minutes writing down at least five things in life that they are grateful for. The students will be asked to share 2-3 of the responses they recorded in their journals during our next meeting.

What Can I Do?

Review the definition of gratitude in class. Share one thing you are grateful for with the students, and ask the students to share one of the things they wrote down the previous night. Spend time discussing why the students are grateful for those things and have them write down their reasoning. Encourage the students to add more events and benefits to their gratitude journals.

What Did the Students Learn?

During this meeting, we continued our work with gratitude. We introduced gratitude visits to the students.

What is a gratitude visit? In a gratitude visit, a student first writes a letter of gratitude to a person who has been particularly kind to them in the past, but whom was never properly thanked. Then, the student personally delivers the letter to that person.

We also discussed the connections between feeling grateful, doing things that recognize benefits and communicate thanks (activities like keeping a gratitude journal, sharing feelings of gratitude with people who have been kind to us), and personal feelings of happiness.

Homework Activities

- The students were asked to (1) enact their gratitude visit and (2) write in their gratitude journals at least one night. If carrying out the gratitude visit was not possible (e.g., the person identified was not able to meet in person), the students were asked to just continue journaling.

What Can I Do?

Continue reviewing what gratitude means, either in conversations with the whole class or with individual students. If the students wrote a gratitude letter, ask about the meeting with the person to whom the student wrote the letter (What happened when you met with the person to share the letter of thanks? How do you feel after writing and sharing the letter?). Ask the students to write a short reflection about the meeting. Continue sharing one thing you are grateful for, and ask the students to share one thing from the gratitude journal.

What Did the Students Learn?

During this meeting, we introduced the character strength of *kindness* to the students.

What is an act of kindness? An action that benefits another person or makes other people happy, typically at the cost of your time and effort. When a person often performs these behaviors, we say that they are kind, or they possess the strength of kindness.

Why is kindness important? Performing acts of kindness helps us to focus our emotions on the positive parts of our present lives. For examples, doing kind acts help to: increase cooperation, increase awareness of our own good fortune, let you see yourself as helpful, increase your confidence about being able to help others, get others to know and like you, and make it more likely that others will reciprocate kindness and friendship.

Homework Activities

- The students were asked to perform five acts of kindness during one day prior to the next session, and record these behaviors on their “Acts of Kindness Record Form.” The students will be asked to share 2-3 of the kind acts they performed and related feelings with the class at the beginning of the next session.

What Can I Do?

When you see the students engaging in acts of kindness, acknowledge those kind acts. Try to find ways to incorporate kindness as a theme in the classroom throughout the week. Have the students write down each morning how he or she plans to be kind throughout the day, and then review at the end of the day whether the students followed through with the acts of kindness.

Well-Being Promotion Program

Notes for Teachers: Introduction to Character Strengths

What Did the Students Learn?

During this meeting, we introduced the students to character strengths. We began with a discussion about what character strengths and virtues are, and in particular reviewed a classification system of 24 character strengths. A sample of 12 of these strengths, including definitions of the strengths, is listed below. Next, the students generated a list of what they perceived their top 5 character strengths to be. This was followed by a discussion of how using character strengths relates to happiness.

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Wisdom and Knowledge | Creativity | Thinks of new ways to do things; has unique ideas |
| | Curiosity | Interested in exploring and discovering things |
| | Love of Learning | Likes to become an expert in things; enjoys learning in school |
| | Open-mindedness/Judgment | Doesn't jump to conclusions; thinks things through |
| | Perspective | Understands both sides of the story; offers good advice to others |
| Courage | Authenticity/Honesty | Tells the truth; is "real" and not pretending to be something he/she is not |
| | Bravery | Speaks up for what is right; stands up to threats |
| | Persistence/Perseverance | Hard-working; likes completing tasks |
| | Zest | Energetic and full of excitement |
| Humanity | Kindness | Does good deeds or favors for other people; helps others and takes care of them |
| | Love | Values close relationships with other people |
| | Social Intelligence | Knows how other people think and feel |

Homework Activities

- The students were asked to continue performing acts of kindness. Again, the students were asked to perform five acts of kindness during one day prior to the next session, and record these on their "Acts of Kindness Record Form."

What Can I Do?

Ask the students to share with you the traits they wrote down. Ask the students to share with you how they think they exemplify the traits picked. Continue with the acts of kindness activities (planning and enacting) from the previous meeting.

Well-Being Promotion Program

Notes for Teachers: Assessment of Character Strengths

What Did the Students Learn?

During this meeting, we objectively identified the student's signature strengths by helping the student to complete a lengthy online survey, called the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths for Youth (VIA-Youth). The survey examines a student's status on all 24 character strengths (i.e., how much the student exemplifies each of the strengths relative to other children), then rank orders for the student his or her top 5 strengths. These top 5 strengths are displayed on the computer screen. We reviewed the student's top 5 strengths, and discussed how these are the student's *signature* character strengths.

Homework Activities

- The students do not have any newly assigned homework activities for this session, they should perform five acts of kindness during one day prior to the next session, and record these on their "Acts of Kindness Record Form" if they have not done so already.

What Can I Do?

Ask the students about their experiences completing the survey... what did they discover were their signature strengths? You can identify your own signature strengths by completing the adult version of the Values in Action Inventory Survey, available at www.viacharacter.org. You and your student may have some signature strengths in common! Finding common ground and expressing interest in students are two of many ways to communicate your support to children.

Continue with the acts of kindness activities (planning and enacting) from the previous meeting.

Well-Being Promotion Program

Notes for Teachers: Using My Signature Strengths in New Ways

What Did the Students Learn?

During this meeting, we compared the students' strengths as identified in the online survey (completed in the last meeting) to what the student perceived to be his or her strengths a few meetings back. We then chose one strength to focus on first, and brainstormed *new* ways to use that signature strength. Next, we developed a plan for how the students would use their signature strength in the coming week by selecting and enacting at least two of the brainstormed activities. The students wrote down this plan in the "New Uses of My First Signature Strength" record form (sample below).

New Uses of My First Signature Strength

| | | |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Strength: | | |
| New Ways I | 1. | |
| Can Use this | 2. | |
| Strength: | 3. | |
| Day of the Week | New Use | Feelings |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Homework Activities

- The students were asked to use their signature strength in new ways each day of the upcoming week, by carrying out the plan developed in the meeting; if the students think of different ways to use the strength during the week, that is fine- they can use the strength in any new way. The students should write down how the strength was ultimately used each day, and write down the feelings they experienced after they used the strength that day.

What Can I Do?

Ask the students how they are using, and plan to use, their signature strength. Contribute new ideas, and comment on times you see the students' strengths in action. Ask about the feelings the students had after they used the signature strength. Ask the students to write down why they think they felt that way and how this relates to their personal happiness.

Well-Being Promotion Program

Notes for Teachers: Using Another Signature Strength in New Ways

What Did the Students Learn?

During this meeting, we continued our work with character strengths. We explored and planned for ways to use another one of the students' signature strengths in new ways across life domains (e.g., school, friendships, family). The students wrote down ideas on the "New Uses of My Second Signature Strength" record form (sample below), as well as days of the week he or she can use the strength in the identified ways.

New Uses of My Second Signature Strength

| Strength: | | | |
|--|--------------|---------|----------|
| New Ways I Can Use this Strength: | | | |
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| Day of the Week | Area of Life | New Use | Feelings |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Homework Activities

- The students were asked to use the second signature strength in new ways each day of the upcoming week across life domains, as planned in the "New Uses of My Second Signature Strength" record form. The students were asked to write down how the strength was ultimately used each day, and to classify the domain of life to which this use applied. The students were also asked to write down feelings experienced after using the strength each day. The students were encouraged to continue performing acts of kindness, OR to continue gratitude journaling.

What Can I Do?

Find out the students' second signature strengths. Ask the students how they are using, and plan to use, the signature strength. Contribute new ideas, and comment on times you see the students' strengths in action. Ask about the feelings the students had after they used their second signature strength. Ask the students to write down why they think they felt that way and how this relates to their personal happiness. Continue either sharing things you are each grateful for, or continue with reviewing the students' acts of kindness as done in previous weeks.

What Did the Students Learn?

During this meeting, we discussed the character strength of *hope* with the students.

What is hope? Believing that you can find ways to meet your goals, and have the ability and motivation to enact those plans. When an obstacle gets in the way, having hope means believing you can find another way to meet your needs and come up with ideas on what those other ways might be. When you are hopeful, you believe that you can reach your goals because you have the ability and can get the resources – you are motivated.

Why is hope important? Hopeful thinking helps us to focus our emotions on the positive parts of our future lives. In turn, we feel happier, more confident, and resilient to stress. Hope also leads to benefits at school—helps you work harder and smarter (find different ways to meet goals), in sports (greater confidence, effort, and performance), in physical health (motivation to maintain healthy habits and cope with illness), and in social relationships (energy and pathways to making and keeping friends).

We discussed what hope is and how hopeful thinking relates to happiness, and estimated your students' current levels of hope. Your students participated in an activity called “Best Possible Self in the Future,” which involved them taking a few minutes to imagine their future life once they have worked hard to achieve their goals, and then writing about this image of their future self. They were also encouraged to begin writing about ways they will reach those goals.

Homework Activities

- The students were asked to further elaborate on their “Best Possible Self in the Future” writing by reviewing their story each night and adding new thoughts and ideas (for instance, identify multiple ways to reach goals), and/or making revisions to what they had already written.
- Additionally, the students were asked to continue practicing one of the following: gratitude journaling, acts of kindness, OR using signature strengths in new ways.

What Can I Do?

Consider completing your own “Best Possible Self in the Future” activity and share this with your students. Together, you can identify new goals and paths to reaching these goals. Describe a time that you set a goal for yourself, made a plan to achieve your goal, and carried out the plan. Share how reaching your goal made you feel.

Well-Being Promotion Program
Notes for Teachers: Program Review

What Did the Students Learn?

During this final meeting, we reviewed and reflected on the content covered throughout the course of the well-being promotion program. Your students received the summary below:

When I want to feel closer to people in my school:

- Get to know your classmates
 - Recognize things you have in common
 - Help classmates when challenges occur; let them know when you need help; work on problems together
- Turn to your teachers
 - Think about the ways your teachers supports and helps you
 - How can you let your teacher know you care?

When I want to feel more positive about my past:

- Gratitude journal
 - 5 things I'm grateful for, write down 1 time each week
- Gratitude visit
 - Write a letter of thanks to someone who has been kind to me; deliver the letter

When I want to feel more positive about my daily life:

- Do acts of kindness
 - 5 kind acts for other people in one day
- Use my signature character strengths
 - _____
 - _____

When I want to feel more positive about my future:

- Hopeful thinking
 - Focus on goals and ways to achieve those goals

We asked the students to think about the activities they plan on continuing in the future. We also discussed the progress they have made since the beginning of the program, in terms of positive changes in their emotions, behavior, and relationships.

What Can I Do?

- Discuss with the students how you have seen them change throughout the well-being promotion program.
- Help the students schedule (and write down these ideas in a planner, as a reminder to follow-through) how they will continue doing at least one of the activities learned throughout the intervention, such as gratitude journaling, performing acts of kindness, using signature strengths in daily life, and practicing hopeful thinking.
- Once a week or so, ask the students about their progress with the planned activities. Comment on any positive changes in mood or behavior you notice.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENTS' HAPPINESS!!!

Well-Being Promotion Program

Teacher Check-In: Classroom Support and Climate

Over the course of this past week...

(Date: _____)

| |
|--|
| 1. What did you do or say to show support/care to your students? |
| |
| 2. How did the student(s) respond to those intentional displays of teacher support and care? |
| |
| 3. Which actions/strategies appeared particularly effective in conveying support? |
| |
| 4. What, if any, differences in classroom climate or relationships with specific students did you notice after those purposeful displays of support or care? |
| |

Well-Being Promotion Program

Teacher Check-In: Classroom Support and Climate

Over the course of this past week...

(Date: _____)

| |
|--|
| 1. What did you do or say to show support/care to your students? |
| |
| 2. How did the student(s) respond to those intentional displays of teacher support and care? |
| |
| 3. Which actions/strategies appeared particularly effective in conveying support? |
| |
| 4. What, if any, differences in classroom climate or relationships with specific students did you notice after those purposeful displays of support or care? |
| |

Well-Being Promotion Program
Teacher Handout: Mid-Program Feedback Request

Teacher Feedback on the Well-Being Promotion Program

1. Which weekly handouts from the interventionists did you read over after the in-person meeting with the interventionist? (*check next to each week you reviewed the handout*)
 Week 1a: Building Strong Student-Teacher Relationships
 Week 1c: Classmate Team-Building
 Week 2: You at Your Best
 Week 3: Gratitude Journaling
 Week 4: Gratitude Visit
 Week 5: Acts of Kindness
2. On average, how many minutes per week did you spend time **performing activities on your own** related to the well-being promotion program content (i.e., topics and activities you learned through participation as an intervention co-facilitator or through weekly handouts you received)? (*please write down an estimate of the number of minutes you spent independently engaged in activities relevant to the topic the week the information was provided, including reading and researching intervention-related materials to prepare for the classwide meeting co-facilitated by the USF group, and reflecting on and applying the activities outside of school*)
 minutes during Week 1 (Building Strong Student-Teacher Relationships and Classmate Team-Building)
 minutes during Week 2 (You at Your Best)
 minutes during Week 3 (Gratitude Journaling)
 minutes during Week 4 (Gratitude Visit)
 minutes during Week 5 (Acts of Kindness)
3. On average, how many minutes per week did you spend time **performing activities with your students** related to the well-being promotion program content **outside of the intervention sessions co-facilitated by the USF research team?** (*please write down an estimate of the number of minutes you spent engaged with your class in activities relevant to the topic the week the information was sent home*)
 minutes during Week 1 (Building Strong Student-Teacher Relationships and Classmate Team-Building)
 minutes during Week 2 (You at Your Best)
 minutes during Week 3 (Gratitude Journaling)
 minutes during Week 4 (Gratitude Visit)
 minutes during Week 5 (Acts of Kindness)

4. Which activities that you've learned through participation as an intervention co-facilitator or through weekly handouts you've received are you likely to continue to do **on your own**? (please check next to each that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Me at my best" writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude journal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude visit | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts of kindness |

5. Which activities that you've learned through participation as an intervention co-facilitator or through weekly handouts you've received are you likely to continue to do **with your students**? (please check next to each that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Me at my best" writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude journal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude visit | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts of kindness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building student-teacher relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Building student-student relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | |

6. What have you liked the **best** about the program?

7. What have you liked the **least** about the program?

8. What suggestions do you have to improve the program?

9. Any additional comments?

Well-Being Promotion Program
Teacher Handout: Post-Program Feedback Request

Teacher Feedback on the Well-Being Promotion Program

1. Which weekly handouts from the interventionists did you read over after the in-person meeting with the interventionist? (*check next to each week you reviewed the handout*)

Week 6a: Introduction to Character Strengths
 Week 6b: Identifying Signature Strengths
 Week 7: Using My Signature Strengths in New Ways
 Week 8: Using Another Signature Strength in New Ways
 Week 9: Hope (Best Possible Self in the Future)
 Week 10: Program Review, Reflection, and Planning

2. On average, how many minutes per week did you spend time **performing activities on your own** related to the well-being promotion program content (i.e., topics and activities you learned through participation as an intervention co-facilitator or through weekly handouts you received)? (*please write down an estimate of the number of minutes you spent independently engaged in activities relevant to the topic the week the information was provided, including reading and researching intervention-related materials to prepare for the classwide meeting co-facilitated by the USF group, and reflecting on and applying the activities outside of school*)

minutes during Week 6 (Introduction to Character Strengths and Identifying Signature Strengths)
 minutes during Week 7 (Using My Signature Strengths in New Ways)
 minutes during Week 8 (Using Another Signature Strength in New Ways)
 minutes during Week 9 (Hope)
 minutes during Week 10 (Review, Reflection, and Planning)

3. On average, how many minutes per week did you spend time **performing activities with your students** related to the well-being promotion program content **outside of the intervention sessions co-facilitated by the USF research team?** (*please write down an estimate of the number of minutes you spent engaged with your class in activities relevant to the topic the week the information was sent home*)

minutes during Week 6 (Intro to Character Strengths, Identifying Signature Strengths)
 minutes during Week 7 (Using My Signature Strengths in New Ways)
 minutes during Week 8 (Using Another Signature Strength in New Ways)
 minutes during Week 9 (Hope)
 minutes during Week 10 (Review, Reflection, and Planning)

4. Which activities that you learned through participation as an intervention co-facilitator or through weekly handouts you received are you likely to continue to do **on your own**?
(please check next to each that apply)

Using my signature strengths “Best possible self in the future” writing
 None

5. Which activities that you learned through participation as an intervention co-facilitator or through weekly handouts you received are you likely to continue to do **with your students**? (please check next to each that apply)

Using my signature strengths “Best possible self in the future” writing
 Building student-teacher relations Building student-student relations
 None

6. What did you like the **best** about the program?

7. What did you like the **least** about the program?

8. What suggestions do you have to improve the program?

9. Any additional comments?

PARENT HANDOUTS

Well-Being Promotion Program

Parent Information Session: Overview of Positive Psychology and Program Activities

Consider and Discuss

- *What do you hope your child will gain from the well-being promotion program?*

Why Parents' Happiness is Crucial to Children's Happiness

- Research has demonstrated that youth's happiness ratings are correlated, or have a positive relationship with, parents' happiness ratings
 - As parents' life satisfaction increases, so does their child's
 - Reciprocal relationship: your child's level of life satisfaction may influence yours too
- Research has found numerous benefits of happiness, including better physical health, academic and occupational success, and rewarding social relationships

Consider and Discuss

- *What is your understanding of "positive psychology"? What have you heard before?*

Key Features of Positive Psychology

- The study of factors and traits that make people thrive.
- Positive psychology gained in popularity in the last 15 years, and grew out of discontent with a focus on mental health problems
- Emphasizes both the absence of mental health problems and the presence of well-being

Key Terms in Positive Psychology

- **Subjective well-being:** A scientific term for happiness, and common indicator of wellness. Often the primary outcome of interventions designed to improve happiness. High subjective well-being reflects high life satisfaction (judging your life to be going well on the whole), and experiencing more positive emotions than negative emotions.
- **Gratitude:** A tendency to appreciate positive aspects of life, feel grateful for positive things in life, and convey thankfulness and appreciate to others. Crucial to making and maintaining positive relationships with others.
- **Kindness:** A character strength involving motivation to act kindly toward others, to follow through on plans to be kind, and to recognize kindness in others. Acts of kindness, or behaving in ways that benefit others or make them happy at personal expense, have been shown to cause increases in happy moods and life satisfaction.
- **Character strengths:** Set of 24 individual positive traits within six broader classes of virtues. Each person has a unique profile of strengths and signature strengths, which are traits most frequently used and appreciated in one's life. Research has shown that using signature strengths in everyday life can improve overall subjective well-being.
- **Hope:** A positive motivational state involving goal-directed thoughts and strategies, and paths to achieving goals. Linked to positive mental health and well-being.

What are "Positive Psychology Interventions"?

- Brief, easy, often self-administered exercises designed to mimic the actions and thoughts of naturally very happy people.

- These exercises have emerged within the last decade, and are growing in popularity in line with increasing evidence that they work to increase subjective well-being as intended
- Positive psychology interventions for children and teens have targeted gratitude, character strengths, kindness, and hope.
- Overall, research on these interventions has found positive results, including increases in life satisfaction and improved mood.

Activity: *Sweet Savoring*

- *Instructions:* For the next 2 to 3 minutes, think about an enjoyable experience you have had, either recently or in the past
- *Do:* Take a minute to close your eyes; think about your experience during that situation and the good feelings you had then
 - Use your senses— consider sight, smell, hearing, touch, and taste
 - Remember and relive the experience...
- *Share:* Pair up and spend a few minutes talking with your partner about your experience
- *Reflect:* What feelings did you have with completing this activity? Feelings when reliving the experience in your thoughts? Feeling when sharing (reminiscing) with another adult?

Additional Thoughts

- When your children share with you the strategies they are learning through the program, and you practice them too (either independently or with your child), you may cause even greater improvements in well-being for both of you
- Visit www.viacharacter.org to learn more about ways to maximize your well-being

What Does the Well-Being Promotion Program Include?

- The program consists of meetings between school mental health providers and students
- A schedule of what your child will be focusing on in each meeting:
 - Meeting 1a-1b: Program Overview for Teachers and Parents
 - Meeting 1c: Getting to Know You Through Team-Building
 - Meeting 2: You at Your Best
 - Meeting 3: Gratitude Journaling
 - Meeting 4: Gratitude Visits
 - Meeting 5: Acts of Kindness
 - Meeting 6: Introduction to Character Strengths
 - Meeting 7a-7b: Assessment of Signature Character Strengths and Use of First Signature Strength in New Ways
 - Meeting 8: Use of Second Signature Strength in New Ways
 - Meeting 9: Hope and Goal-directed Thinking
 - Meeting 10: Program Review

Well-Being Promotion Program
Notes for Parents: Team-Building

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we strengthened your child's relationships with his/her peers through activities that promote teamwork as well as respect for similarities and differences. First, we introduced the program leaders and engaged in ice-breaker team-building activities to establish a positive class environment. Your child participated in an activity through which he/she learned about commonalities among classmates, and reflected on their similarities. We also engaged in "Creative Coloring," in which teams of students completed a coloring project, however each student could only use the one color he or she was provided. Your child then discussed the challenges and benefits of working together as a group, noting the importance of being able to work with and support other team members. Finally, we provided a brief introduction to the Well-Being Promotion Program, stressing how important it is that we are kind to and communicate care for one another.

Homework Activities

- Your child does not have any homework activities this week.

What Can I Do?

Encourage your child to work with you or other members of the family to complete a task (e.g., prepare dinner together, take turns reading pages of a book together). Then, prompt your child to consider the benefits associated with working with family members.

Well-Being Promotion Program
Notes for Parents: You at Your Best

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we introduced the well-being promotion program to your child by explaining the purpose of the program and confidentiality, and discussing what it means to be happy and why it is important. During We also completed an activity, “You at Your Best,” which asked your child to write about a time when they were at their best (e.g., did something very well, displayed a talent, created something), reflect on their story (e.g., remember feelings that day, identify the strengths they displayed in their story), and share their story and reflections with the class.

Homework Activities

- Your child was asked to further expand on their “You at Your Best Story” by re-reading their story and reflecting on their identified strengths each night, then adding more details and length to the story.

What Can I Do?

Encourage your child to share their “You at Your Best” story with you and reflect with them on their story. If you would like, take the time to write your own “You at Your Best” story and share it with your child as well.

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we introduced the concept of gratitude to your child. We discussed what gratitude is and why it is important for happiness.

What is gratitude? You feel gratitude (thanks, appreciation, grateful) when you recognize that you received an intentional act of kindness from another person.

More specifically, you feel gratitude after gaining a benefit that you view as valuable, that was provided intentionally and altruistically (not for different motives), and occurred at some cost to the person who provided the benefit.

Example: A child earned an “A” on a homework assignment that his sister helped him complete the night prior. The child may feel gratitude towards his sister because she helped him on purpose (intent), gave up her time to help him (cost), and he got a good grade (benefit) due to her help.

Why is gratitude important? It helps us focus our thoughts and emotions on the positive parts of our pasts related to school, friendships, and family life. Grateful thinking leads to more happiness with life.

The students rated their current levels of gratitude, and created a gratitude journal to record things in their life for which they are grateful.

Homework Activities

- Each night before bed, your child was asked to spend five minutes writing down at least five things in life that they are grateful for. Your child will be asked to share 2-3 of the responses they recorded in their journals during our next meeting.

What Can I Do?

You can make gratitude journaling a part of your entire family’s routine. You might choose to sit with your child and their siblings (if you have more than one child) each night before bedtime and journal together. You can also share the things you are grateful for with each other. Discuss what similarities and differences you notice!

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we continued our work with gratitude. We introduced gratitude visits to your child.

What is a gratitude visit? In a gratitude visit, a student first writes a letter of gratitude to a person who has been particularly kind to them in the past, but whom was never properly thanked. Then, the student personally delivers the letter to that person.

We also discussed the connections between feeling grateful, doing things that recognize benefits and communicate thanks (activities like keeping a gratitude journal, sharing feelings of gratitude with people who have been kind to us), and personal feelings of happiness.

Homework Activities

- Your child was asked to (1) enact their gratitude visit and (2) write in their gratitude journals at least one night. If carrying out the gratitude visit was not possible (for example, the person identified was not able to meet in person), your child was asked to just continue journaling.

What Can I Do?

Discuss details of the gratitude visit with your child, and if possible help facilitate the visit. If you would like, plan a gratitude visit of your own. You and your child can discuss how completion of this activity makes you feel. If you have incorporated gratitude journaling into your family routine, continue engaging in this activity!

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we introduced the character strength of *kindness* to your child.

What is an act of kindness? An action that benefits another person or makes other people happy, typically at the cost of your time and effort. When a person often performs these behaviors, we say that they are kind, or they possess the strength of kindness.

Why is kindness important? Performing acts of kindness helps us to focus our emotions on the positive parts of our present lives. For examples, doing kind acts help to: increase cooperation, increase awareness of our own good fortune, let you see yourself as helpful, increase your confidence about being able to help others, get others to know and like you, and make it more likely that others will reciprocate kindness and friendship.

We discussed kindness as a virtue and how kindness relates to happiness, and estimated the frequency that your child currently engages in acts of kindness.

Homework Activities

- Your child was asked to perform five acts of kindness during one day prior to the next meeting, and record these behaviors on their “Acts of Kindness Record Form.” Your child will be asked to share 2-3 of the kind acts they performed and related feelings with the class at the beginning of the next meeting.

What Can I Do?

Discuss the importance of acting kindly toward others with your child and how being kind influences how you feel. Engage in acts of kindness alongside your child and reflect on the experiences together. How does engaging in acts of kindness make you feel? What other ways can you incorporate kindness into your daily lives?

Well-Being Promotion Program

Notes for Parents: Introduction to Character Strengths

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we introduced your child to character strengths. We began with a discussion about what character strengths and virtues are, and in particular reviewed a classification system of 24 character strengths. A sample of 12 of these strengths, including definitions of the strengths, is listed below. Your child created a list of what they think their top 5 character strengths are. We also discussed how using character strengths relates to happiness.

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Wisdom and Knowledge | Creativity | Thinks of new ways to do things; has unique ideas |
| | Curiosity | Interested in exploring and discovering things |
| | Love of Learning | Likes to become an expert in things; enjoys learning in school |
| | Open-mindedness/Judgment | Doesn't jump to conclusions; thinks things through |
| | Perspective | Understands both sides of the story; offers good advice to others |
| Courage | Authenticity/Honesty | Tells the truth; is "real" and not pretending to be something he/she is not |
| | Bravery | Speaks up for what is right; stands up to threats |
| | Persistence/Perseverance | Hard-working; likes completing tasks |
| | Zest | Energetic and full of excitement |
| Humanity | Kindness | Does good deeds or favors for other people; helps others and takes care of them |
| | Love | Values close relationships with other people |
| | Social Intelligence | Knows how other people think and feel |

Homework Activities

- Your child was asked to continue performing acts of kindness. Again, your child was asked to perform five acts of kindness during one day prior to the next meeting, and record these on their "Acts of Kindness Record Form."

What Can I Do?

Continue to designate one day of the week to perform acts of kindness alongside your child. Discuss how this has impacted you and your child's feelings and happiness. Additionally, you can think about your own strengths, generate your own list of your perceived top 5 strengths, and share this with your child. Compare and contrast what your perceived strengths are with your child's.

Well-Being Promotion Program
Notes for Parents: Identifying Signature Strengths

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we objectively identified your child's signature strengths by helping your child to complete a lengthy online survey, called the VIA Inventory of Strengths for Youth (VIA-Youth). The survey examines a child's status on all 24 character strengths (i.e., how much the student exemplifies each of the strengths relative to other children), then rank orders for the child his or her top 5 strengths. These top 5 strengths are displayed on the computer screen. We reviewed the child's top 5 strengths, and discussed how these are your child's *signature* character strengths.

Homework Activities

- Your child does not have any newly assigned homework activities for this session, he/she should perform five acts of kindness during one day prior to the next session, and record these on the "Acts of Kindness Record Form" if he/she has not done so already.

What Can I Do?

You can take the adult version of the survey that your child completed to identify your top signature strengths. Visit www.viacharacter.org, register to make a free online account, then complete the "VIA Survey (Adult)," which can be located under the Take Survey tab. If you have other children, encourage them to complete the "VIA Survey for Youth" survey as well. Compare and contrast your strengths with your children's. Plan out ways to use one of your signature strengths in new ways throughout the course of the week and reflect on these experiences with your child/children. How does using your personal strengths make you feel? What about your child?

Well-Being Promotion Program

Notes for Parents: Using My Signature Strengths in New Ways

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we compared your child’s strengths as identified in the online survey (completed in the last meeting) to what the student perceived to be his or her strengths a few meetings back. We then chose one strength to focus on first, and brainstormed *new* ways to use that signature strength. Next, we developed a plan for how your child would use the signature strength in the coming week by selecting and enacting at least two of the brainstormed activities. The student wrote down this plan in the “New Uses of My First Signature Strength” record form (sample below).

New Uses of My First Signature Strength

| Strength: | | |
|--|----------------|----------|
| New Ways I Can Use this Strength: | 1. 2. 3. | |
| Day of the Week | New Use | Feelings |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Homework Activities

- Your child was asked to carry out the use of their chosen signature strength in new ways each day of the upcoming week across life domains as they prepared in their “New Uses of My First Signature Strength” record form. He/she was also asked to write down their feelings after using their strength each day.
- Additionally, your child was asked to continue performing acts of kindness OR to continue gratitude journaling.

What Can I Do?

Plan new ways to use one of your signature strengths in new ways across life domains alongside your child. Both you and your child can share the feelings associated with using your strength in novel ways and the impact of the experiences on your lives. Brainstorm with your child about new ways that both of you can use your signature strengths across life domains. Take a small amount of time to savor your strengths by talking with your child about how much you enjoy your respective strengths. Also, take a few moments to think about how you have used your strengths and actively make a memory of this experience to reflect on at a later time.

Well-Being Promotion Program

Notes for Parents: Using Another Signature Strength in New Ways

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we continued our work with character strengths. We explored and planned for ways to use another one of your child’s signature strengths in new ways across life domains (e.g., school, friendships, family). The student wrote down ideas on the “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form (sample below), as well as days of the week he or she can use the strength in the identified ways.

New Uses of My Second Signature Strength

| Strength: | | | |
|--|--------------|---------|----------|
| New Ways I Can Use this Strength: | | | |
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| Day of the Week | Area of Life | New Use | Feelings |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Homework Activities

- Your child was asked to use the second signature strength in new ways each day of the upcoming week across life domains, as planned in the “New Uses of My Second Signature Strength” record form. Your child was asked to write down how the strength was ultimately used each day, and to classify the domain of life to which this use applied. Your child was also asked to write down feelings experienced after using the strength each day. Also, the student was encouraged to continue performing acts of kindness, OR to continue gratitude journaling.

What Can I Do?

Find out the your child’s second signature strength. Ask your child how he or she is using, and plans to use, the signature strength. Contribute new ideas, and comment on times you see the your child’s strength in action. Ask about the feelings your child had after he or she used the second signature strength. Ask your child to write down why they think they felt that way and how it relates to his or her personal happiness. Continue either sharing things you are each grateful for, or continue with reviewing your child’s acts of kindness as done in previous weeks.

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we introduced the concept of hope to your child.

What is hope? Believing that you can find ways to meet your goals, and have the ability and motivation to enact those plans. When an obstacle gets in the way, having hope means believing you can find another way to meet your needs and come up with ideas on what those other ways might be. When you are hopeful, you believe that you can reach your goals because you have the ability and can get the resources – you are motivated.

Why is hope important? Hopeful thinking helps us to focus our emotions on the positive parts of our future lives. In turn, we feel happier, more confident, and resilient to stress. Hope also leads to benefits at school—helps you work harder and smarter (find different ways to meet goals), in sports (greater confidence, effort, and performance), in physical health (motivation to maintain healthy habits and cope with illness), and in social relationships (energy and pathways to making and keeping friends).

We discussed what hope is and how hopeful thinking relates to happiness, and estimated your child's current level of hope. Your child participated in an activity called "Best Possible Self in the Future," which involved them taking a few minutes to imagine their future life once they have worked hard to achieve their goals, and then writing about this image of their future self. They were also encouraged to begin writing about ways they will reach those goals.

Homework Activities

- Your child was asked to further elaborate on their "Best Possible Self in the Future" writing by reviewing their story each night and adding new thoughts and ideas (for instance, identify multiple ways to reach goals), and/or making revisions to what they had already written.
- Additionally, your child was asked to continue practicing one of the following: gratitude journaling, acts of kindness, OR using signature strengths in new ways.

What Can I Do?

Consider completing your own "Best Possible Self in the Future" activity and share this with your child. Together, you can identify new goals and paths to reaching these goals. Describe a time that you set a goal for yourself, made a plan to achieve your goal, and carried out the plan. Share how reaching your goal made you feel.

Well-Being Promotion Program
Notes for Parents: Program Review

What Did My Child Learn This Week?

During this meeting, we reviewed and reflected on the content covered throughout the course of the well-being promotion program. Your child received the summary below:

When I want to feel closer to people in my school:

- Get to know your classmates
 - Recognize things you have in common
 - Help classmates when challenges occur; let them know when you need help; work on problems together
- Turn to your teachers
 - Think about the ways your teachers supports and helps you
 - How can you let your teacher know you care?

When I want to feel more positive about my past:

- Gratitude journal
 - 5 things I'm grateful for, write down 1 time each week
- Gratitude visit
 - Write a letter of thanks to someone who has been kind to me; deliver the letter

When I want to feel more positive about my daily life:

- Do acts of kindness
 - 5 kind acts for other people in one day
- Use my signature character strengths
 - _____
 - _____

When I want to feel more positive about my future:

- Hopeful thinking
 - Focus on goals and ways to achieve those goals

We asked your child to reflect on the activities they plan on continuing in the future and to reflect on the progress they have made since the beginning of the program.

What Can I Do?

- Ask your child to share his or her reflection of growth with you. Let your child know the positive changes you have seen in him or her throughout the well-being promotion program.
- Help your child schedule (and write down these ideas in a planner, as a reminder to follow-through) how he or she will continue doing at least one of the activities learned throughout the well-being promotion program, such as gratitude journaling, performing acts of kindness, and using signature strengths in daily life.
- Plan and share which of the positive activities you also intend to continue.

Once a week or so, ask your child about his or her progress with the planned activities.

Comment on any positive changes in mood or behavior you notice. Hold each other accountable for following through with these plans!

INTERVENTION INTEGRITY CHECKLISTS

Date: _____
 Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 1a: Psychoeducation for Teachers

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|--|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Introduction to leader and co-leader(s) | Yes | No |
| 2. | Define positive psychology and key constructs | Yes | No |
| 3. | Discuss importance of teacher-student relationships | Yes | No |
| 4. | Discuss strategies for teachers to communicate support to students | Yes | No |
| 5. | Share students' baseline levels of subjective well-being | Yes | No |
| 6. | Review purpose of Well-Being Promotion program (to increase students' happiness) | Yes | No |
| 7. | Provide overview of intervention meetings (frequency, total number, and targets of meetings; distribute "Overview of Program Activities" handout) | Yes | No |
| 8. | Solicit teacher recommendations for behavioral management, including student preferences for incentives (for homework) | Yes | No |
| 9. | Discuss teacher's anticipated role in program implementation | Yes | No |
| 10. | Provide opportunity for questions about program (implementation plan, purpose, logistics, etc.) | Yes | No |
| 11. | Plan teacher activities and teacher-practitioner communication method(s) to help teacher prepare for meetings in advance (review intervention manual; visit viacharacter.org) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled "yes"): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 11 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____

Session Start Time: _____

Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 1b: Psychoeducation for Parents

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Distribute handout (“Overview of Positive Psychology and Program Activities”) to parents as they arrive | Yes | No |
| 2. | Introduce leader and any co-leader(s) to parents | Yes | No |
| 3. | Deliver prepared presentation to parents, which includes a definition of positive psychology and key constructs | Yes | No |
| 4. | Discuss importance of parents and children’s happiness | Yes | No |
| 5. | Lead parents through a positive activity (e.g., savoring, gratitude journal) | Yes | No |
| 6. | Encourage parents to complete the weekly positive activities their children learn in the meetings with the practitioner | Yes | No |
| 7. | Review purpose of Well-Being Promotion program (to increase the child’s happiness) | Yes | No |
| 8. | Provide overview of student-focused meetings (frequency, total number, and targets of meetings; refer to the handout) | Yes | No |
| 9. | Provide opportunity for questions about program (content, purpose, meeting logistics, etc.) | Yes | No |
| 10. | Discuss parent’s potential role (practice at home activities taught at school, as summarized in the weekly handout for parents) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled “yes”): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 10 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____
 Leader: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 2: You At Your Best

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Discuss recent examples of positive social behaviors in the classroom (among students or student-teacher) | Yes | No |
| 2. | You at Your Best activity: students write their personal stories | Yes | No |
| 3. | Students share their You at Your Best stories | Yes | No |
| 4. | Discuss strengths students' displayed in their stories | Yes | No |
| 5. | Discuss perceived importance of happiness | Yes | No |
| 6. | Discuss purpose of program (to increase students' happiness) | Yes | No |
| 7. | Discuss what determines happiness | Yes | No |
| 8. | Comprehension Check: What Determines Happiness worksheet | Yes | No |
| 9. | Discuss confidentiality | Yes | No |
| 10. | Comprehension Check: Definition of confidentiality | Yes | No |
| 11. | Develop rules for appropriate behavior | Yes | No |
| 12. | Discuss incentives available for completing program homework | Yes | No |
| 13. | Assign homework (read and reflect on You at Your Best Stories) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled "yes"): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 13 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____
 Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 3: Gratitude Journals

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Discuss recent examples of positive social behaviors in the classroom (among students or student-teacher) | Yes | No |
| 2. | Homework Review: You at Your Best | Yes | No |
| 3. | Provide incentives for students who completed homework | Yes | No |
| 4. | Discuss definition of gratitude | Yes | No |
| 5. | Students rate personal level of gratitude | Yes | No |
| 6. | Share gratitude level with class | Yes | No |
| 7. | Discuss benefits of gratitude | Yes | No |
| 8. | Decorate gratitude journals | Yes | No |
| 9. | Complete initial entry in gratitude journal | Yes | No |
| 10. | Share notebook entries | Yes | No |
| 11. | Point out positive situations pertinent to school/teachers/peers | Yes | No |
| 12. | Assign homework (gratitude journaling) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled "yes"): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 12 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____
 Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 4: Gratitude Visits

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Discuss recent examples of positive social behaviors in the classroom (among students or student-teacher) | Yes | No |
| 2. | Homework Review: gratitude journals | Yes | No |
| 3. | Provide incentives for students who completed homework | Yes | No |
| 4. | Students create a list of people who have been kind/helpful to them | Yes | No |
| 5. | Students share story about how someone has helped them | Yes | No |
| 6. | Students write a letter to a person to whom they are grateful | Yes | No |
| 7. | Complete gratitude visit planning form | Yes | No |
| 8. | Discuss link between grateful thinking and current feelings of happiness | Yes | No |
| 9. | Discuss how grateful thinking is a purposeful activity | Yes | No |
| 10. | Discuss link between grateful thinking and current feelings of happiness | Yes | No |
| 11. | Assign homework (gratitude visit) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled "yes"): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 11 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____

Session Start Time: _____

Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 5: Acts of Kindness

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Discuss recent examples of positive social behaviors in the classroom (among students or student-teacher) | Yes | No |
| 2. | Homework Review: gratitude visit | Yes | No |
| 3. | Provide incentives for students who completed homework | Yes | No |
| 4. | Students create a list of kind behaviors | Yes | No |
| 5. | Discuss link between kindness and current feelings of happiness | Yes | No |
| 6. | Program leader discusses and estimates the frequency of her acts of kindness | Yes | No |
| 7. | Students discuss and estimate the frequency of their friends' and/or family members' acts of kindness | Yes | No |
| 8. | Students discuss recent acts of kindness they have performed | Yes | No |
| 9. | Students estimate the frequency of their acts kindness | Yes | No |
| 10. | Students complete the Acts of Kindness record form (pick a date) | Yes | No |
| 11. | Assign homework (acts of kindness) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled "yes"): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 11 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____
 Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 6: Introduction to Character Strengths

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Homework Review: acts of kindness | Yes | No |
| 2. | Discuss impact of acts of kindness on social relationships | Yes | No |
| 3. | Provide incentives for students who completed homework | Yes | No |
| 4. | Discuss definition of character strengths | Yes | No |
| 5. | Distribute written list of strengths, such as the “Classification of 24 Character Strengths” | Yes | No |
| 6. | Discuss definitions of the 24 individual character strengths | Yes | No |
| 7. | Program leader discusses own strengths exemplified in You at Your Best story | Yes | No |
| 8. | Students discuss strengths exemplified in their and/or their peers’ You at Your Best story | Yes | No |
| 9. | Students write list of their self-identified strengths on a piece of lined paper | Yes | No |
| 10. | Discuss link between using character strengths and current feelings of happiness | Yes | No |
| 11. | Discuss positive feelings related to choice and effort involved in use of character strengths | Yes | No |
| 12. | Inform class of use of a computerized survey to determine character strengths in the next meeting | Yes | No |
| 13. | Assign homework (acts of kindness) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled “yes”): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 13 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____
 Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check

Session # 7a: Assessment of Signature Character Strengths

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|----|--|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Homework Check: acts of kindness | Yes | No |
| 2. | Encourage children to continue performing acts of kindness if they have not completed their homework | Yes | No |
| 3. | Students individually complete the entire VIA Inventory of Strengths for Youth using online survey (ex: www.viacharacter.org) | Yes | No |
| 4. | Make a hard copy record of students Top 5 strengths, through printing results from website or jotting them down | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled "yes"): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 4 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____
 Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 7b: Use of First Signature Strength in New Ways

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Homework Review: acts of kindness | Yes | No |
| 2. | Discuss impact of acts of kindness on social relationships | Yes | No |
| 3. | Provide incentives for students who completed homework | Yes | No |
| 4. | Discuss recent examples of positive social behaviors in the classroom (among students or student-teacher) | Yes | No |
| 5. | Discuss expected vs. survey-identified signature strengths on an individual and/or small group basis | Yes | No |
| 6. | Discuss fit of signature strengths | Yes | No |
| 7. | Students identify one signature strength to work on this week and talk about a way they have used it previously | Yes | No |
| 8. | Students brainstorm (list) new ways to use chosen character strength during the week | Yes | No |
| 9. | Students complete the “New Uses of My First Signature Strength” record/planning form, by listing methods from the brainstormed list | Yes | No |
| 10. | Assign homework (using first signature strength in new ways) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled “yes”): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 10 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____
 Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 8: Use of Second Signature Strength in New Ways

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Discuss recent examples of positive social behaviors in the classroom (among students or student-teacher) | Yes | No |
| 2. | Homework Review: using first signature strength in new ways | Yes | No |
| 3. | Provide incentives for students who completed homework | Yes | No |
| 4. | Discuss the three domains of life for students in elementary school | Yes | No |
| 5. | Plan which strength they will use in new ways this week | Yes | No |
| 6. | Students independently make lists of new ways to use strength | Yes | No |
| 7. | Categorize volunteers' ways to use their signature strength into life domains on the whiteboard | Yes | No |
| 8. | Problem-solve potential obstacles for student volunteers | Yes | No |
| 9. | Divide into small groups and prepare "New Uses of My Second Signature Strength" forms for each student | Yes | No |
| 10. | Assign homework (using second signature strength in new ways) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled "yes"): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 10 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____
 Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 9: Hope and Goal-directed Thinking

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Discuss recent examples of positive social behaviors in the classroom (among students or student-teacher) | Yes | No |
| 2. | Homework Review: using second signature strength in new ways | Yes | No |
| 3. | Provide incentives for students who completed homework | Yes | No |
| 4. | Discuss students' definition of hope | Yes | No |
| 5. | Students rate personal levels of hope | Yes | No |
| 6. | Share hope level with class | Yes | No |
| 7. | Discuss scientific definition of hope as goals, pathways, and motivation | Yes | No |
| 8. | Discuss the importance/value of hope, including link between hope and happiness | Yes | No |
| 9. | Complete writing activity: Best Possible Self in Future | Yes | No |
| 10. | Assign homework (continue to write about best possible self in the future) | Yes | No |
| 11. | Assign homework (gratitude journals, acts of kindness, or using signature strengths) | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled "yes"): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 11 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Date: _____
 Leader: _____
 Co-Leader: _____
 Teacher: _____

Session Start Time: _____
 Session End Time: _____

Well-Being Promotion Program

Intervention Integrity Check Session # 10: Program Termination

| | Session Activity | Completed? | |
|-----|---|------------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | Homework Review: Best possible self in the future | Yes | No |
| 2. | Homework Review: Choice of acts of kindness, gratitude journal, or using strengths in new ways | Yes | No |
| 3. | Provide incentives for students who completed homework | Yes | No |
| 4. | Review “What Determines Happiness” figure, with emphasis on the purposeful, positive activities which were the intervention focus | Yes | No |
| 5. | Review the “Happiness Flow Chart” figure | Yes | No |
| 6. | Categorize each positive activity as a way to promote positive feelings about past, present, or future | Yes | No |
| 7. | Discuss links between these positive activities and personal happiness about one’s past, present, and future | Yes | No |
| 8. | Distribute “Program Summary Sheet” and help students fill in their signature character strengths | Yes | No |
| 9. | Plan for ways that students will continue to practice their preferred positive activities | Yes | No |
| 10. | Allow time for personal quiet reflection on personal growth | Yes | No |
| 11. | Students share personal changes during past 10 weeks | Yes | No |
| 12. | Provide “Certificate of Completion” | Yes | No |
| 13. | Administer intervention acceptability and utility measure (“Program Feedback Request” form) to gather student perceptions | Yes | No |

Session Integrity Level:

| | |
|--|----------|
| A. # of session activities completed (circled “yes”): | A. _____ |
| B. # of session activities expected: | B. 13 |
| % activities implemented this session (box A / box B): | _____ % |

Appendix H: Student Demographics Form

Version _____ Teacher _____ ID # _____ Fall 2015

- 1. My gender is: Boy Girl
- 2. My age is: 8 9 10 11 12
- 3. My biological parents are:
 - a. Married
 - b. Divorced
 - c. Separated
 - d. Never married
 - e. Never married but living together
 - f. Widowed
- 4. I live with my:
 - a. Mother and Father
 - b. Mother only
 - c. Father only
 - d. Mother and Stepfather
 - e. Father and Stepmother
 - f. Grandparent(s)
 - g. Other relative: _____
 - h. Other:

Appendix I: Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS)

We would like to know what thoughts about life you've had during the past several weeks. Think about how you spend each day and night and then think about how your life has been during most of this time. Here are some questions that ask you to indicate your satisfaction with life. In answering each statement, circle a number from (1) to (6) where (1) indicates you **strongly disagree** with the statement and (6) indicates you **strongly agree** with the statement.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| 1. My life is going well | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. My life is just right | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. I would like to change many things in my life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. I wish I had a different kind of life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. I have a good life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. I have what I want in life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. My life is better than most kids' | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Appendix J: Ten-Item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule for Children

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then circle the appropriate answer next to that word. Indicate to what extent you have felt this way during the past few weeks.

| <i>Feeling or emotion:</i> | | Very slightly or not at all | A little | Moderately | Quite a bit | Extremely |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|----------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1. | Sad | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | Happy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | Scared | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | Miserable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | Cheerful | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | Proud | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | Afraid | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | Joyful | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | Mad | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | Lively | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix K: Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (CASSS)

On this page, please respond to sentences about some form of support or help that you might get from either a parent, a teacher, or classmates. Read each sentence carefully and respond to them honestly. **Rate how often you receive the support described.** Do not skip any sentences. Thank you!

| <h1>My Classmates</h1> | | Never | Almost Never | Some of the | Most of the | Almost Always | Always |
|------------------------|---|-------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------|
| 1 | ... treat me nicely. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2 | ... like most of my ideas and opinions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | ... pay attention to me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | ... give me ideas when I don't know what to do. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | ... give me information so I can learn new things. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | ... give me good advice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | ... tell me I did a good job when I've done something well. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8 | ... nicely tell me when I make mistakes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 | ... notice when I have worked hard. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10 | ... ask me to join activities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11 | ... spend time doing things with me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12 | ... help me with projects in class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| My Teacher(s) | | Never | Almost Never | Some of the | Most of the | Almost Always | Always |
|---------------|--|-------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------|
| 13 | ... cares about me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14 | ... treats me fairly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15 | ... makes it okay to ask questions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16 | ... explains things that I don't understand. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 17 | ... shows me how to do things. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 18 | ... helps me solve problems by giving me information. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 19 | ... tells me I did a good job when I've done something well. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 20 | ... nicely tells me when I make mistakes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 21 | ... tells me how well I do on tasks. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 22 | ... makes sure I have what I need for school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 23 | ... takes time to help me learn to do something well. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 24 | ... spends time with me when I need help. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Appendix L: Engagement versus Disaffection with Learning- Student Report (EvsD-S)

We would like to know about your thoughts, feelings, and behavior in school. Please circle a number from (1) to (4) where (1) indicates you feel the statement is **not at all true** about you and (4) indicates you feel the statement is **very true** about you.

| | Not at all true | Not very true | Sort of true | Very true |
|---|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| 1. I try hard to do well in school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. In class, I work as hard as I can. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. When I'm in class, I participate in class discussions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I pay attention in class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. When I'm in class, I listen very carefully. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. When I'm in class, I just act like I'm working. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. I don't try very hard at school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. In class, I do just enough to get by. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. When I'm in class, I think about other things. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. When I'm in class, my mind wanders. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. When I'm in class, I feel good. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. When we work on something in class, I feel interested. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. Class is fun. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. I enjoy learning new things in class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. When we work on something in class, I get involved. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. When we work on something in class, I feel bored. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. When I'm in class, I feel worried. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. When we work on something in class, I feel discouraged. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. Class is not all that fun for me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. When I'm in class, I feel bad. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Appendix M: Student Internalizing Behavior Screener and Student Externalizing Behavior Screener (SIBS+SEBS)

Directions: Please rate each student named below on each behavior using the following scale, ranging from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*frequently*):

1 = Never, 2 = Rarely/Seldom, 3 = Occasionally/Moderately, 4 = Frequently/Almost Always

For each student, write the number that corresponds to the frequency rating in each cell.

| | Student: Example: John Doe | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. | 8. | 9. | 10. | 11. | 12. | 13. | 14. | 15. | 16. | 17. | 18. | 19. | 20. | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Defiant or oppositional to adults | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lies to get out of trouble | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disrupts class activities | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullies others | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gets angry or upset easily | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fights or argues with peers | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Has difficulty sitting still | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Appears nervous, worried, or fearful | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullied by peers | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spends free time alone | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Clings to adults | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Withdrawn | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Seems sad or unhappy | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Complains about being sick or hurt | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix N: Engagement versus Disaffection with Learning- Teacher Report (EvsD-T)

These next questions ask about the classroom engagement of your student, _____ . Please circle a number from (1) to (4), in which (1) indicates you feel the statement is **not at all true** and (5) indicates you feel the statement is **very true**. It is important to know what you REALLY think, so please answer the question the way you really feel, not how you think you should. All answers are confidential.

| | Not at all true | Not very true | Sort of true | Very true |
|---|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. In my class, this student works as hard as he/she can. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. When working on classwork in my class, this student appears involved. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. When I explain new material, this student listens carefully. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. In my class, this student does more than required. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. When this student doesn't do well, he/she works harder. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. In my class, this student is enthusiastic. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. In class, this student appears happy. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. When we start something new in class, this student is interested. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. When working on classwork, this student seems to enjoy it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. For this student, learning seems to be fun. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. When we start something new in class, this student thinks about other things. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. In my class, this student comes unprepared. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. When faced with a difficult assignment, this student doesn't even try. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. In my class, this student does just enough to get by. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. When we start something new in class, this student doesn't pay attention. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. When we work on something in class, this student appears to be bored. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. When working on classwork, this student seems worried. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. In class, this student seems unhappy. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. In my class, this student is angry. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. When I explain new material, this student doesn't seem to care. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Appendix O: Teacher-Student Relationships Inventory (TSRI)

These next questions ask about your relationship with _____ . Please circle a number from (1) to (5), in which (1) indicates you feel the statement is **almost never true** and (5) indicates you feel the statement is **almost always true**. It is important to know what you REALLY think, so please answer the question the way you really feel, not how you think you should. All answers are confidential.

| | Almost Never True | Seldom True | Sometimes True | Often True | Almost Always True |
|---|-------------------|-------------|----------------|------------|--------------------|
| 1. I enjoy having this student in my class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. If the student has a problem at home, he/she is likely to ask for my help. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I would describe my relationship with this student as positive. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. If this student is absent, I will miss him/her. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The student shares with me things about his/her personal life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. If this student needs help, he/she is likely to ask me for help. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. The student turns to me for a listening ear or for sympathy. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. The student depends on me for advice or help. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. I am happy with my relationship with this student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. I like this student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Note. Conflict subscale (items 4, 7, 8, and 11) removed due to teacher reported discomfort responding to items.*

Appendix P: Institutional Review Board Letter of Approval



RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE
Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669
12901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC035 • Tampa, FL 33612-4799
(813) 974-5638 • FAX (813) 974-7091

9/2/2015

Shannon Suldo, Ph.D.
Educational and Psychological Studies
4202 East Fowler Ave., EDU 105
Tampa, FL 33620

RE: Full Board Approval for Initial Review

IRB#: Pro00023292

**Title: Improving the Subjective Well-being of Elementary School Students and Teachers:
Efficacy of Classwide and Teacher-Focused Positive Psychology Interventions**

Study Approval Period: 8/21/2015 to 8/21/2016

Dear Dr. Suldo:

On 8/21/2015, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and **APPROVED** the above application and all documents contained within, including those outlined below.

Approved Item(s):

Protocol Document(s):

[Study Protocol Research Design](#)

Consent/Assent Document(s)*:

[Parent Consent Positive Psychology Program Evaluation V1 USF Updated 8-27-15.pdf.pdf](#)

[Student Assent Positive Psychology Program Evaluation V1 Updated 8-27-15 USF.pdf.pdf](#)

[Teacher Consent Form \(Strengths-Based Intervention\) Positive Psychology Program Evaluation V1 Updated 8-27-15.pdf.pdf](#)

[Teacher Consent Positive Psychology Program Evaluation V1 8-27-15.pdf.pdf](#)

*Please use only the official IRB stamped informed consent/assent document(s) found under the "Attachments" tab. Please note, these consent/assent document(s) are only valid during the approval period indicated at the top of the form(s).

This research involving children was approved under the minimal risk category 45 CFR 46.404: Research not involving greater than minimal risk.

As the principal investigator of this study, it is your responsibility to conduct this study in accordance with IRB policies and procedures and as approved by the IRB. Any changes to the approved research must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval via an amendment. Additionally, all unanticipated problems must be reported to the USF IRB within five (5) calendar days.

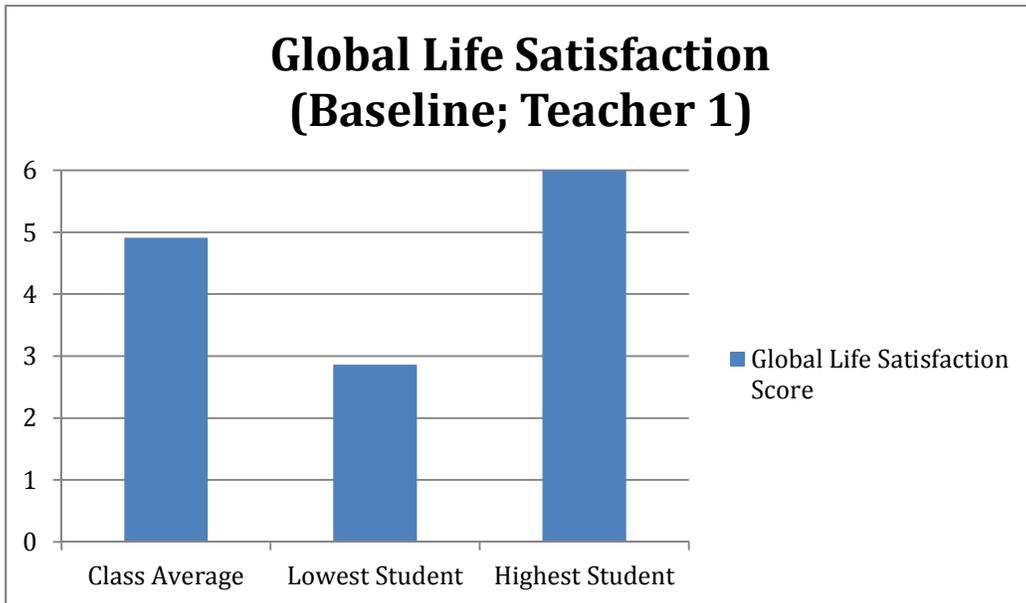
We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

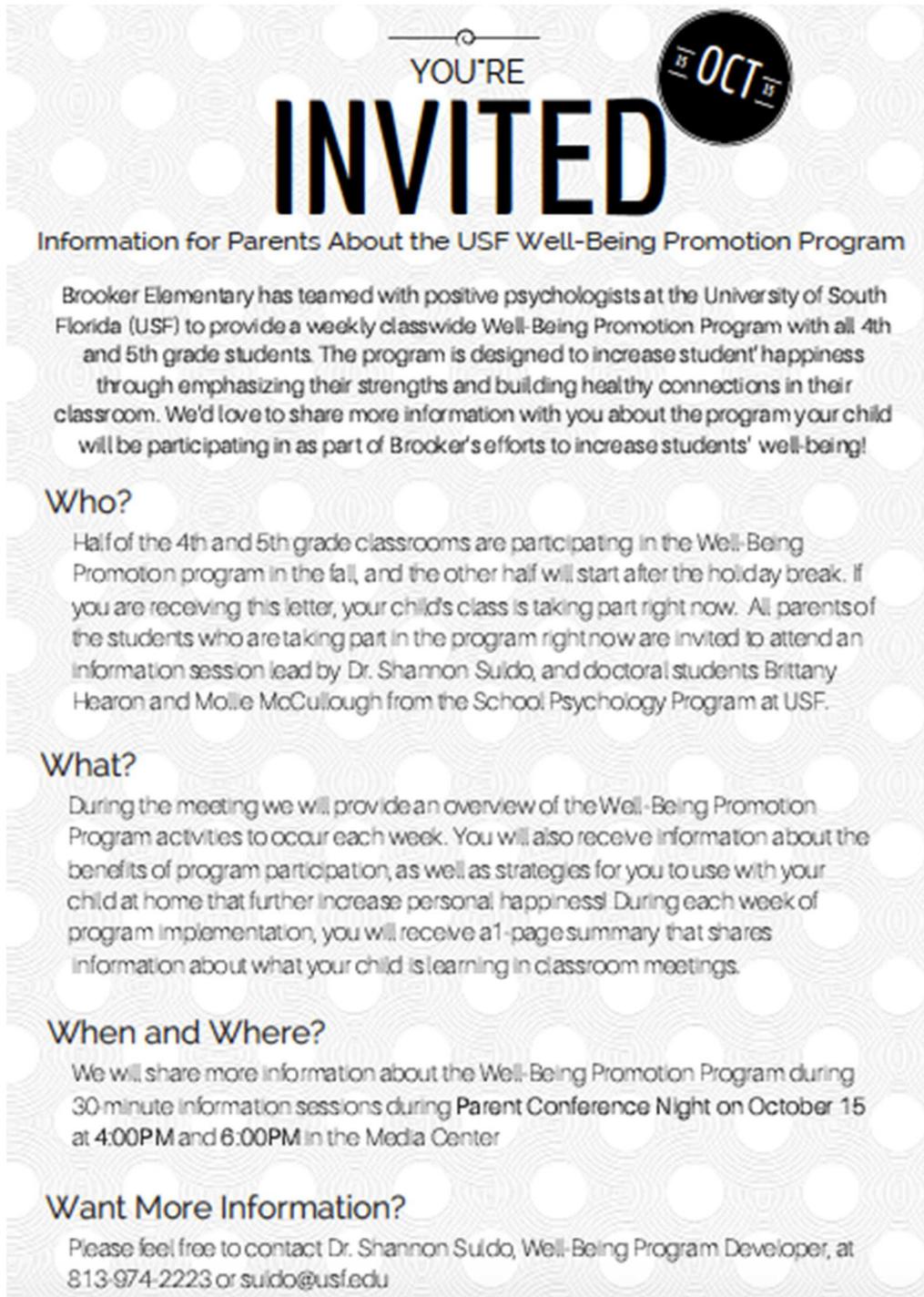
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John A. Schinka, Ph.D.".

John Schinka, Ph.D., Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board

Appendix Q: Sample Teacher Graph of Class Baseline Life Satisfaction



Appendix R: Invitation to Parent Session



**YOU'RE
INVITED**

15 OCT 15

Information for Parents About the USF Well-Being Promotion Program

Brooker Elementary has teamed with positive psychologists at the University of South Florida (USF) to provide a weekly classwide Well-Being Promotion Program with all 4th and 5th grade students. The program is designed to increase student happiness through emphasizing their strengths and building healthy connections in their classroom. We'd love to share more information with you about the program your child will be participating in as part of Brooker's efforts to increase students' well-being!

Who?

Half of the 4th and 5th grade classrooms are participating in the Well-Being Promotion program in the fall, and the other half will start after the holiday break. If you are receiving this letter, your child's class is taking part right now. All parents of the students who are taking part in the program right now are invited to attend an information session lead by Dr. Shannon Suldo, and doctoral students Brittany Hearon and Mollie McCullough from the School Psychology Program at USF.

What?

During the meeting we will provide an overview of the Well-Being Promotion Program activities to occur each week. You will also receive information about the benefits of program participation, as well as strategies for you to use with your child at home that further increase personal happiness! During each week of program implementation, you will receive a 1-page summary that shares information about what your child is learning in classroom meetings.

When and Where?

We will share more information about the Well-Being Promotion Program during 30 minute information sessions during Parent Conference Night on October 15 at 4:00PM and 6:00PM in the Media Center

Want More Information?

Please feel free to contact Dr. Shannon Suldo, Well-Being Program Developer, at 813-974-2223 or suldo@usf.edu