

What is Positive Education?

Positive Education comes from the work of Dr. Martin Seligman and is based on Positive Psychology. Its emphasis is on wellbeing; on encouraging both resilience and optimism. Research shows that 1 in 4 children will experience some degree of depression and that the teaching of resilience and the encouraging of optimism greatly reduces this risk. Positive Education also looks at the character strengths of each individual. It focuses on developing the positive qualities of a person as opposed to just addressing weaknesses.

Positive Education encourages optimism, develops resilience and is a key focus at Altona P-9 College.

What does Positive Education look like at Altona P-9 College?

Altona P-9 College uses the strategies of Positive Education in an effort to foster optimistic, resilient students confident in dealing with day-to-day situations. Each year level devotes one hour a week to learning the skills and strategies necessary to develop students' resilience and optimism as well as strengths and values. Topics include: thinking about thinking, identifying negative thinking patterns, self talk, generating alternatives to first thoughts, identifying aggressive, assertive and passive behaviour, setting goals, finding what went well, working well with others...these are then related to the child's everyday experiences. Our aim is to provide our students with the skills they need to not only reduce their risk of depression but live happy, engaged meaningful lives.

Why teach Positive Education-wellbeing?

Research tells us that two good reasons wellbeing should be taught in schools are the current flood of depression and the nominal increase in happiness over the last two generations. A third good reason is that greater well-being enhances learning. Positive mood produces broader attention, more creative thinking, and more holistic thinking. Wellbeing should be taught in school because it is an antidote to the growing incidence of depression, a way to increase life satisfaction, and an aid to better learning and more creative thinking.