

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

UM Graduate Student Research Conference (GradCon)

Mar 4th, 11:40 AM - 11:55 AM

Happy schools: Examining a psychoeducational curriculum and small group intervention for high school students

Dylan Wright

dw130889@umconnect.umt.edu

Lillian Martz

ll126028@umconnect.umt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/gsrc>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Wright, Dylan and Martz, Lillian, "Happy schools: Examining a psychoeducational curriculum and small group intervention for high school students" (2022). *UM Graduate Student Research Conference (GradCon)*. 2.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/gsrc/2022/332/2>

This Oral Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in UM Graduate Student Research Conference (GradCon) by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

Happy Schools: Examining a psychoeducational curriculum and small group intervention for high school students

Dylan Wright

School Counseling MA Student

Lillian Martz, MA

Counselor Education & Supervision PhD Student

Agenda and Intended Outcomes

1. Discuss *Positive Psychology*
2. Montana Happiness Project
3. Psychoeducation Curriculum
(Tier 1 Intervention)
4. Small Groups (Tier 2
Intervention)
5. Outcomes
6. Next Steps

Positive Psychology

“What’s **WRONG** with you?”

You have 12,000-60,000 thoughts/day. 80% of those are negative and 95% are repetitive

“What’s **RIGHT** with you?”

What is “Positive Psychology”?

P
E
R
M
A



P
E
R
M
A

Montana Happiness Project

The Montana Happiness Project began when we realized that the opposite of an attempted or completed suicide is a meaningful, well-lived life. We teach professionals how to engage in suicide assessment, intervention, and prevention focusing on strengths while also teaching evidence-based happiness strategies everyone can use to live more fulfilling lives.

- University of Montana
 - Art & Science of Happiness course and groups
 - Happiness Workshop (April 8 & 9)
- **K12 Public Schools**
 - **Tier 1 Curriculum**
 - **Tier 2 Small Groups**
- Families First Learning Lab
 - Dads & Dialogue
 - Wellness Consultations
- Professional Presentations
 - Diverse U, AmeriCorps, Early Learning Fellows, Risk & Resiliency, Montana School Counseling Association (MSCA), etc...
- Happy Media Series

The Wright Stuff on Happiness
MHP Podcast



Where did you
find that? I've been
searching for it everywhere.



I created it
myself.



DID YOU INHERIT YOUR LEVEL OF HAPPINESS?



50% Genetic



40% Your control



10% Circumstances

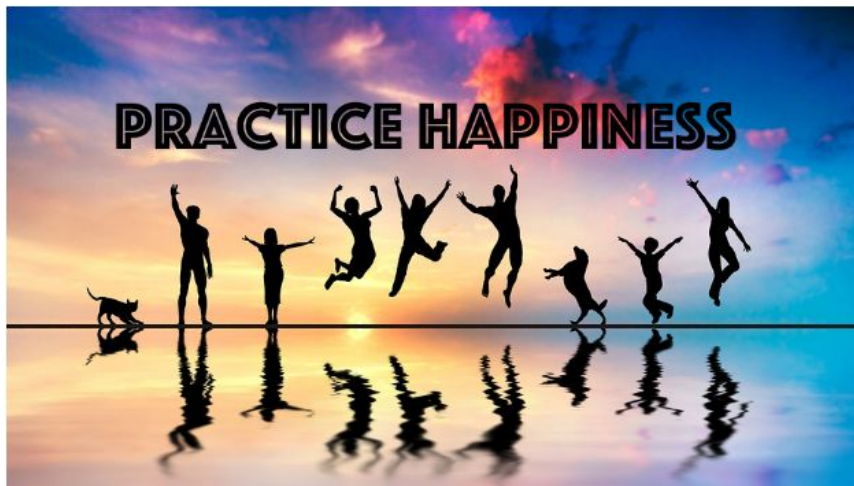
Our basic temperament is inherited.

Despite this, we have some control over how happy we feel.

Source: Positive psychologist Sonja Lyubomirsky

Montana Happiness Projects in the High School

- High School Curriculum
 - Monthly lessons
 - 100% of Freshman and Sophomore students from Health class
 - Wellness and evidence-based happiness strategies
- Elementary Lessons
 - In conjunction with Youth Leadership Committee
 - HS Students will lead 5th grade students through happiness lessons




Big Principles of Happiness Strategies

- Nothing works for everyone
- Pick a tool, try it with an experimental mindset
- Build on your strengths and past successes

Happy Place





GRATITUDE

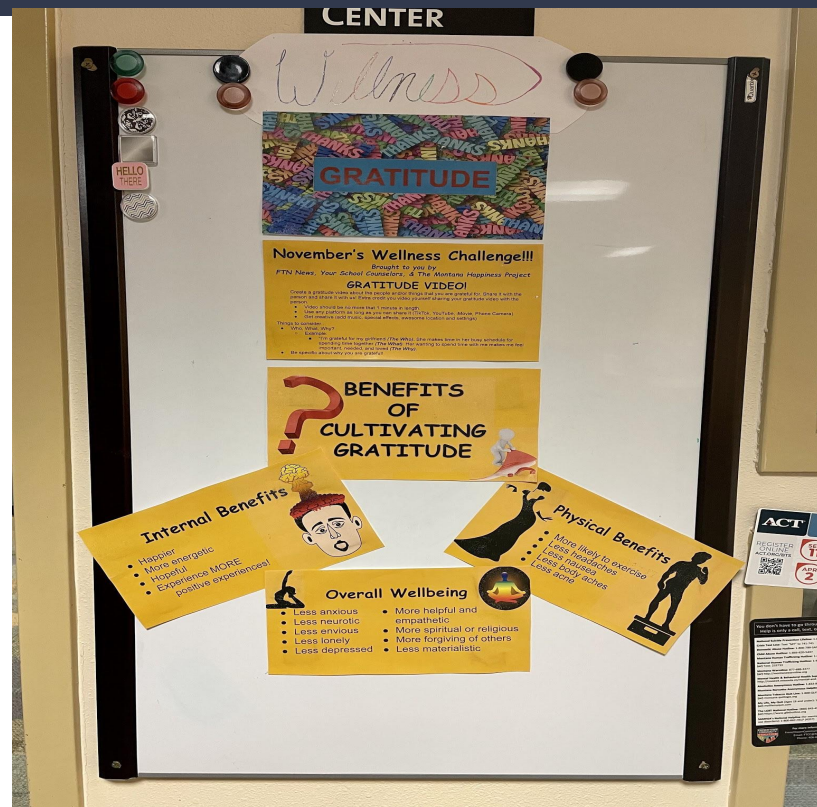


kindness

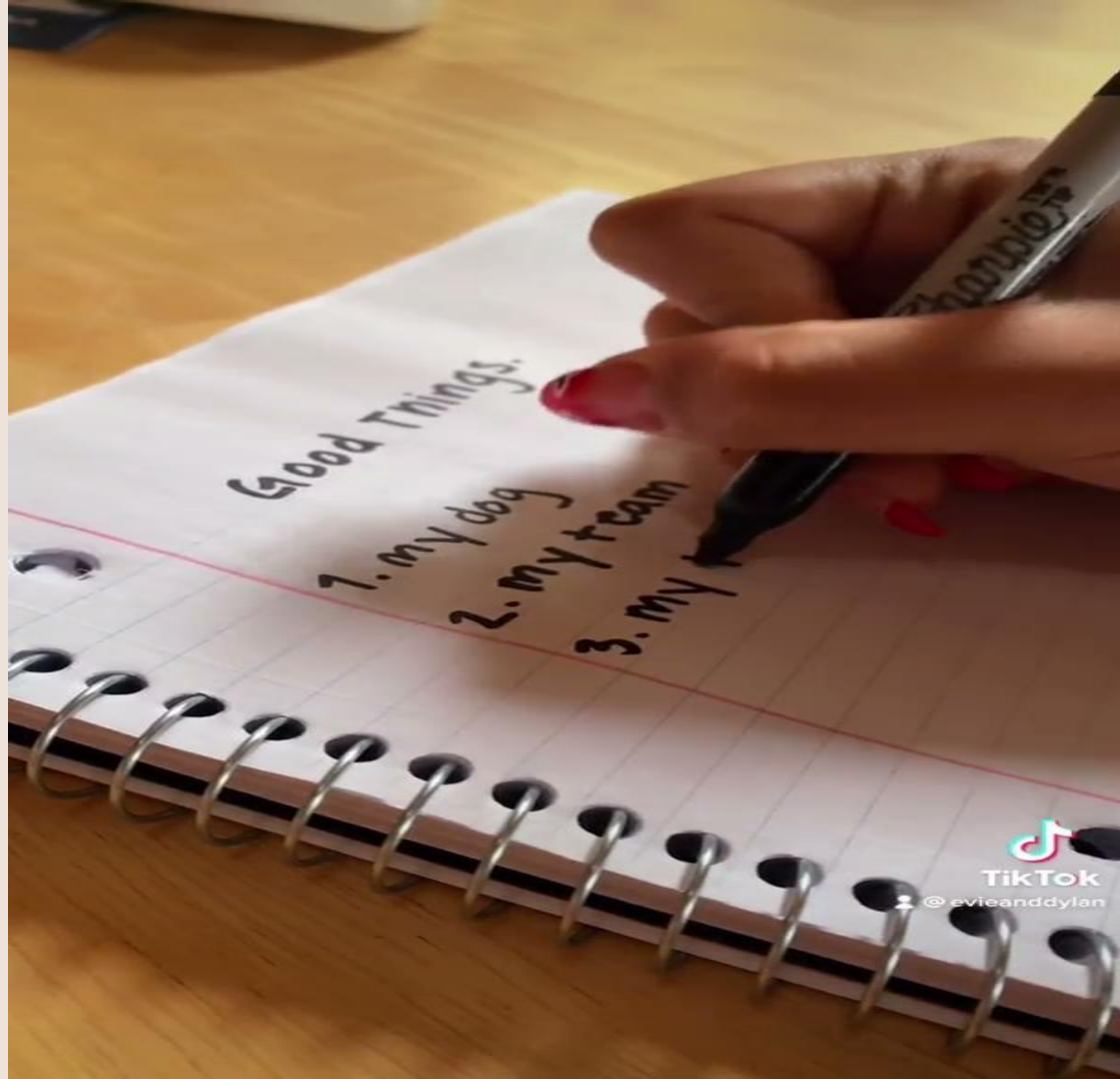
Montana Happiness Projects in the High School

Schoolwide Integration

- In conjunction with the Media Arts class, a contest for logo creation.
 - **Montana Happiness Project logo contest**
 - Challenging students to create the next MHP logo by using their knowledge of the principles of Positive Psychology and the mission of the Montana Happiness Project.
 - **Social Media Contest**
 - Students use social media platforms to create and promote positive well-being.



S
O
C
I
A
L



M
E
D
I
A

GROUPS

- Small Groups @ HS
 - 5 sessions
 - 1.5 hours
 - Incorporate a wellness practice, discuss effects, any other issues related to mental health/well-being
- Group @ Middle School (6th graders)
 - Conjunction with Youth Leadership Committee
 - Facilitated by HS students
 - 5 sessions
 - 40 minutes



General Outcomes

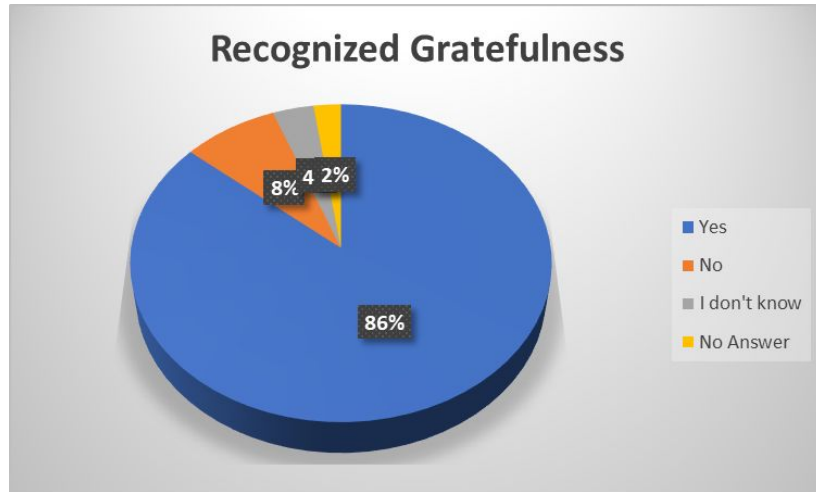
Happiness course at UM

When compared with a control group of similar college students

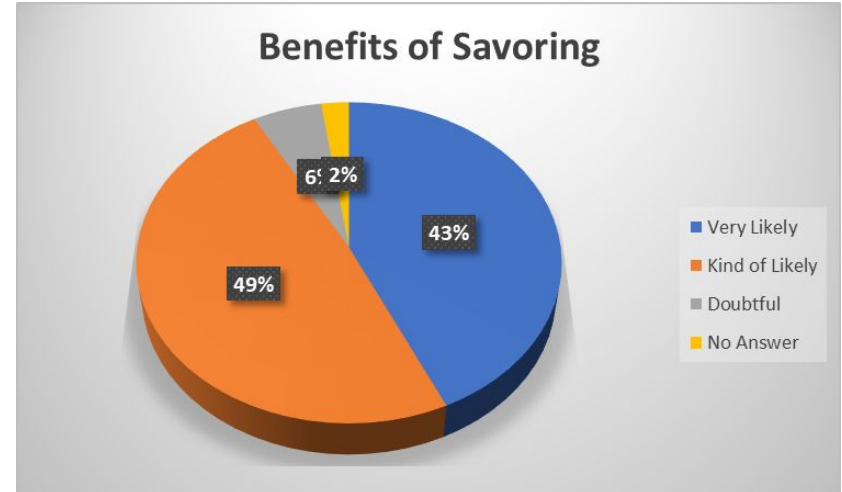
- Increased Perceived social support from friends on the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support: $p = .028$
- Increased Positive affect on the Negative and Positive Affect Scale (NAPAS): $p = .008$
- Better Sleep on the Physical Health Questionnaire: $p = 0.31$
- Less Headaches on the Physical Health Questionnaire: $p = .031$
- Total health on the Physical Health Questionnaire: $p = .006$
- Total hope on the Adult Hope Scale: $p = .004$

Outcomes from HS Lessons

Pretest Question – “In the last lesson we learned about Gratitude. Since that lesson, have you recognized any moments that you were grateful for something?”



Posttest Question – “Is savoring something that you think a person would benefit from?”



Future Plans

- Continued lessons/groups and data collection for publication
- Creation of a Happiness Potential Measure
- Dual Enrolled option for Art & Science of Happiness through UM and Montana Digital Academy
- Adapt/Expand lessons to year-long Elementary Counseling Curriculum
- Expand school-wide integration
 - Language Arts, Art, PE

Resources

- ★ Authentic Happiness (Seligman)
 - Book and website
- ★ The How of Happiness (Lyubomirsky)
- ★ VIA Institute on Character
- ★ PositivePsychology.com
- ★ https://youtu.be/iK6K_N2qe9Y
- ★ University of Pennsylvania Positive Psychology Center
- ★ Greater Good Magazine
- ★ NIH Emotional Wellness
- ★ Positive Psychology: Happiness, Mindset and Living the Full Life | ASU Office of University Initiatives

Contact info:

Dylan Wright – dylan@familiesfirstmt.org

Lillian Martz – lillian.martz@umontana.umt.edu