

Optimism in the Classroom

Optimism is the tendency to believe that good things are to come and to have a positive outlook

In response to the statement, “I usually expect to have a good day,” students indicated:

Not at all true: 10% A little true: 29% Pretty much true: 38% Very much true: 21%

Happiness Scavenger Hunt

Ask students to create a list of things in their immediate surroundings and day-to-day experiences that bring happiness to them. Share these experiences as a class.

Imagine: Best Possible Self

Give students the opportunity to write about their best possible self for 15 minutes. Then, ask them to close their eyes and imagine what they wrote as vividly as they can.

Self-Administered Optimism

Familiarize the student with the concept of explanatory style. Have them keep track of their best and worst daily events in a journal. Ask them to provide causes for each event. After some time, ask them to rethink the causes and notice what they attribute these events to.

For more information about the Social Emotional Health Survey, see: www.project-covitality.info



Importance of Optimism

Studies have shown that optimistic thinking is associated with many positive outcomes:

- Increased school achievement.
- Improved subjective well-being.
- Higher self-esteem.
- Increased problem solving.
- Better health.
- Lower rates of depression.
- Better school adjustment.
- Lower dropout rates.

Resources

For more information on “optimism” and fostering methods, visit the following sites:

- Fostering Optimism in Young Children
- Happiness Matters Podcast
- 8 Ways to Become an Optimist