

# *Strategies and Practice of Mental Health Education for Primary and Secondary School Students from the Perspective of Positive Psychology*

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**Abstract:** This study is devoted to the in-depth analysis of the application and concrete practice of positive psychology in the field of mental health education in primary and secondary schools. In the introduction, the article expounds the necessity and urgency of the research, points out the increasingly serious mental health problems of primary and secondary school students, and emphasizes the urgent need to find efficient educational strategies to improve the present situation. This paper discusses the challenges that may be encountered in the process of implementing the mental health education strategy for primary and secondary school students, including the shortage of teachers, the lack of educational resources and the cognitive deviation of parents and society. In order to meet these challenges, the article puts forward a series of measures. These include strengthening teacher training to improve teachers' professional quality and educational ability, striving for more educational resources to provide material guarantee for mental health education, and raising parents' and society's awareness and attention to mental health education through publicity and education. The article emphasizes that only by taking effective measures to meet the challenges can we ensure the effective implementation of the strategy and provide a strong guarantee for the healthy psychological growth of primary and secondary school students.

## **1. Introduction**

Positive psychology is a new branch of psychology, which originated at the end of the 20th century [1]. Its core idea is to pay attention to the advantages and potential of human beings and to study how to promote individual happiness, satisfaction and sense of accomplishment [2]. Different from traditional psychology, it mainly focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of psychological problems, but emphasizes improving people's overall mental health level by cultivating positive attitude, exploring personal advantages and enhancing psychological resilience [3]. In the field of mental health education, positive psychology provides a brand-new perspective and method, encourages educators to start from the positive, guides students to know themselves and develop their potential, and then constructs a more positive and healthy psychological environment.

In the current educational environment, mental health education in primary and secondary

schools is facing multiple challenges [4]. The fierce social competition and the change of family structure lead to the rising pressure on students' studies and interpersonal relationships, and their psychological problems are characterized by youthfulness and diversification [5]. At the same time, the traditional mental health education model mainly focuses on the identification and treatment of problems, ignoring the cultivation of students' positive psychological quality [6]. It is difficult to improve students' mental health level by taking temporary solution instead of permanent cure, and it may also make students feel labeled and denied, further aggravating their psychological burden.

In view of this, it is particularly critical to explore the strategies and practices of mental health education in primary and secondary schools from the perspective of positive psychology. The purpose of this study is to find a way to integrate the concepts and methods of positive psychology into mental health education in primary and secondary schools, so as to effectively meet the educational challenges by cultivating students' positive mentality, promoting psychological resilience and promoting all-round development. This study also hopes to provide educators with innovative ideas and methods to promote the innovation of mental health education model.

## **2. Theoretical basis of positive psychology and demand analysis of mental health education in primary and secondary schools**

Positive psychology has a series of rich and profound theories, which provide a solid foundation for mental health education. Happiness theory advocates that the pursuit of happiness is the fundamental goal of life, and education should guide students to understand the essence of happiness and find and create happiness in daily life [7]. The advantage theory emphasizes that everyone has unique talents and advantages, and the mission of education is to help students explore and use these advantages in order to achieve success and satisfaction in their study and life. Stream experience theory explains the extreme pleasure people experience when they are absorbed in activities. This kind of experience is extremely important for cultivating students' interest and concentration [8]. These theories deepen our understanding of human psychological mechanism and provide a new perspective and method for mental health education. For example, teachers can design challenging activities to stimulate students' streaming experience or identify and cultivate their advantages to enhance their sense of self-efficacy.

Primary and secondary school students are at a critical stage of psychological development, and their cognitive, emotional and social skills are undergoing significant changes [9]. On the cognitive level, students' thinking, memory and problem-solving abilities are constantly enhanced, and they are eager to explore the unknown and pursue new knowledge. Emotionally, students' emotional experience has become richer, and they have begun to learn to express their feelings and become more sensitive to other people's emotional changes. In the social field, students gradually expand their social circles and learn to cooperate, share and compete with others. These development characteristics determine that mental health education for primary and secondary school students must meet their diversified needs, not only to help them establish correct cognitive concepts, but also to cultivate their emotional control ability and teach them how to get along with others.

Combined with the theory of positive psychology, we can make clear the specific needs of mental health education for primary and secondary school students (see Figure 1). These needs are in line with the characteristics of psychological development of primary and secondary school students, and are also the necessary conditions for their healthy growth and all-round development.

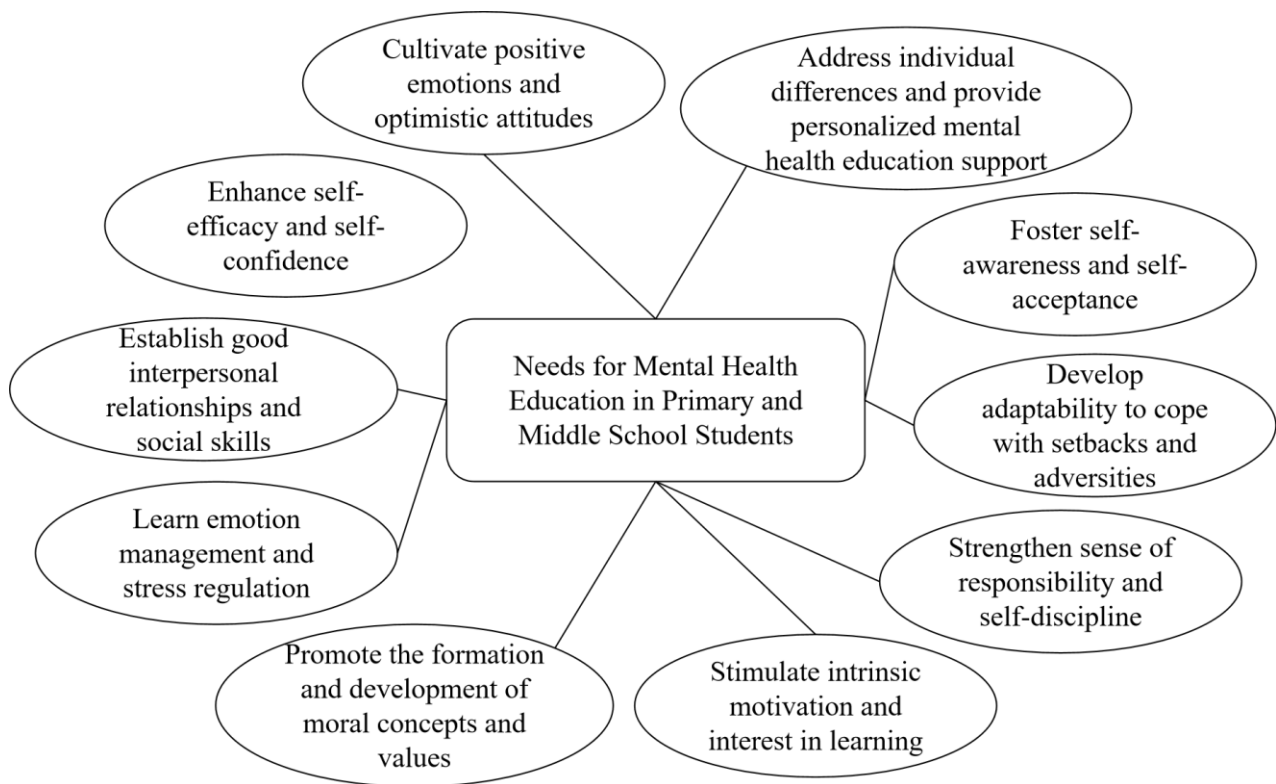


Figure 1 Mental health education needs of primary and secondary school students

At present, the application of positive psychology in mental health education in primary and secondary schools has achieved initial results. Many schools have begun to integrate the concepts and methods of positive psychology into the mental health education curriculum, and stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm by designing interesting and challenging activities [10]. At the same time, some schools have also carried out projects aimed at identifying and cultivating students' strengths to help students discover their own strengths and give full play to their potential. Although some progress has been made, the application of positive psychology in mental health education in primary and secondary schools still faces many challenges and difficulties. Therefore, it is an important task to apply the ideas and methods of positive psychology to mental health education in primary and secondary schools more effectively through continuous exploration and practice.

### 3. Construction of mental health education strategies in primary and secondary schools from the perspective of positive psychology

From the perspective of positive psychology, the overall strategy of mental health education in primary and secondary schools should adhere to the principle of giving priority to prevention, paying attention to individual differences and emphasizing positive experience. Prevention first means that our education should focus not only on solving problems, but also on preventing the occurrence of psychological problems, and help students face challenges more calmly by cultivating their positive mentality and coping skills. Paying attention to individual differences requires us to fully consider the uniqueness of each student in the education process and teach students in accordance with their aptitude, so that each student can grow up in an educational environment suitable for him. Emphasis on positive experience is to make students feel happy and satisfied in the process of education, so as to stimulate their learning enthusiasm and internal motivation.

According to the characteristics of different psychological development stages of primary and

secondary school students, we can design a series of mental health education courses and activities, as shown in Table 1. These courses and activities fully consider the psychological changes and development laws of students at different ages, and closely combine their real life and study scenes. It aims to effectively improve students' mental health level through entertaining. These well-designed courses and activities help students to establish a positive attitude, enhance their ability of self-adjustment and coping with pressure, and promote their all-round development. By participating in these activities, students will be more confident and cheerful, and learn to face the challenges and difficulties in life with a positive attitude. Their interpersonal skills will also be improved, laying a solid foundation for their future study and life.

Table 1 Mental Health Education Courses and Activities Design for Primary and Middle School Students

| Seq. No. | Course/Activity Name                                       | Target Psychological Development Stage | Main Purpose   |
|----------|--|--|--|
| 1        | Emotion Recognition and Expression Workshop                | Lower Primary School                   | Help students recognize and express emotions appropriately                                   |
| 2        | Self-Confidence Boosting Training Camp                     | Middle to Upper Primary School         | Enhance students' self-confidence and self-efficacy  |
| 3        | Social Skills Group Activity                               | Junior High School                     | Improve students' social skills and interpersonal communication techniques                   |
| 4        | Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques Course         | Junior High School                     | Teach students methods for coping with stress and relaxation techniques                      |
| 5        | Self-Awareness and Growth Planning Workshop                | Junior High to High School             | Guide students to explore themselves and develop personal growth plans                       |
| 6        | Interest in Learning and Motivation Inspiration Lecture    | Junior High to High School             | Stimulate students' interest in learning and intrinsic motivation                            |
| 7        | Responsibility and Self-Discipline Cultivation Project     | High School                            | Enhance students' sense of responsibility and self-discipline                                |
| 8        | Setback Education and Adversity Coping Training            | Junior High to High School             | Cultivate students' resilience to setbacks and ability to cope with adversities              |
| 9        | Values and Moral Education Series of Lectures              | Throughout Primary and Middle School   | Guide students to establish correct values and moral concepts                                |
| 10       | Personalized Mental Health Counseling and Support Services | Throughout Primary and Middle School   | Provide targeted mental health counseling and support to meet students' individualized needs |

To integrate the concept of positive psychology into daily teaching and management, we need to start from multiple levels. First of all, it is necessary to build a positive learning environment and create an atmosphere of encouragement, support and respect, so that students can express themselves freely. Secondly, it is necessary to improve teachers' positive psychological literacy, so that they can use relevant concepts and methods for education and management. In addition, schools can also integrate the concept of positive psychology into the school's rules and regulations and evaluation system, making it a part of school culture.

Of course, in the process of implementing these strategies, a series of challenges will inevitably be encountered. For example, the shortage of teachers, the lack of educational resources, and the cognitive deviation of parents and society may all affect the effectiveness and feasibility of the

strategy. Some parents may not know enough about the importance of mental health education, or even misunderstand it, thinking that it is not a necessary link in children's education. The general concept of society may also ignore the value of mental health education, thus affecting the social support and recognition of educational strategies. In order to effectively meet these challenges, we must take active and effective measures. It is urgent to strengthen teacher training. Through regular training and study, teachers' professional quality and educational ability can be improved, so that they can be better qualified for the task of mental health education. At the same time, we should actively strive for more educational resources, including government investment, social donations and other channels to provide the necessary material guarantee for mental health education. Publicity and education are also indispensable. Schools need to raise parents' and society's awareness and attention to mental health education through various forms of publicity activities, so that they can understand the importance of mental health education to children's all-round growth. Only in this way can we form a joint force to ensure the effective implementation of the strategy and provide strong support and guarantee for the healthy psychological growth of primary and secondary school students.

#### 4. Conclusions

After a period of practical exploration, we have accumulated rich experience in mental health education in primary and secondary schools, and at the same time we have learned some profound lessons. Practice shows that the strategy of positive psychology has played a positive role in improving students' mental health level, enhancing their self-awareness and emotional regulation ability, and promoting the harmonious development of the relationship between teachers and students and peers. Nevertheless, this paper also faces some challenges. For example, some teachers don't understand the concept of positive psychology deeply enough, which affects its application in educational practice. In addition, due to the great individual differences among students, it is also a difficult problem to carry out personalized education according to the needs of different students. In view of these experiences and lessons in practice, this paper puts forward some suggestions for improvement: firstly, teachers should be trained to improve their positive psychology literacy and educational practice ability, so as to ensure that they can effectively integrate the concepts and methods of positive psychology into daily teaching. Secondly, we should pay attention to personalized education and design targeted educational activities and courses according to students' different needs and characteristics to meet their diversified development.

For the future research direction, this paper thinks that the research of mental health education in primary and secondary schools should be more diversified and in-depth. On the one hand, we can further explore the applicability and effect differences of positive psychological strategies among students of different ages, genders and family backgrounds, and provide accurate theoretical basis for educational practice. On the other hand, we should pay attention to the cross-integration of positive psychology and other disciplines. For example, combining with pedagogy, psychology, sociology and other fields, we can examine and study the mental health education in primary and secondary schools from a broader perspective. In addition, strengthening international cooperation and exchanges and drawing lessons from international advanced educational concepts and practices will also promote the continuous innovation and development of mental health education in primary and secondary schools.

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