



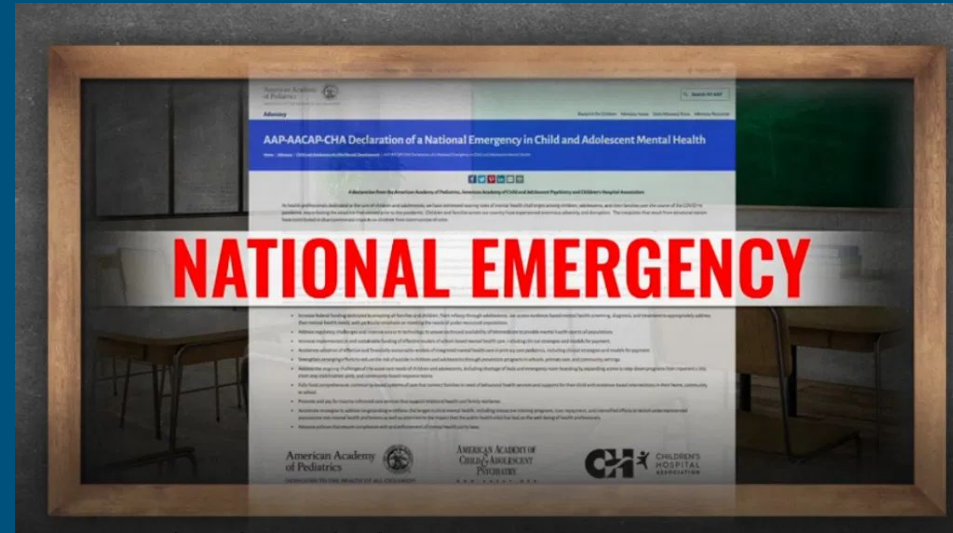
The Science of Hope

And Positive Childhood Experiences



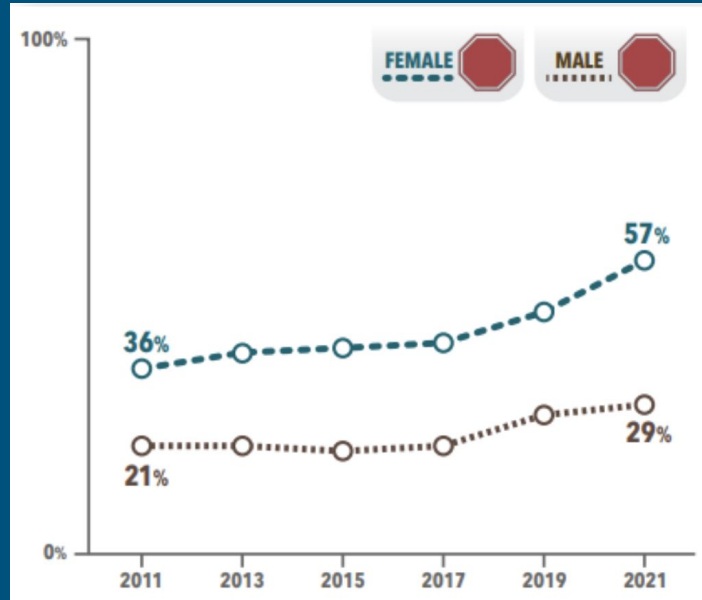
The Problem

In October 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) and the Children's Hospital Association (CHA) joined together to declare a National State of Emergency in Children's Mental Health...*As health professionals dedicated to the care of children and adolescents, we have witnessed soaring rates of mental health challenges among children, adolescents, and their families over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating the situation that existed prior to the pandemic...Rates of childhood mental health concerns and suicide rose steadily between 2010 and 2020 and by 2018 suicide was the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24.*



Feelings of sadness and hopelessness

10-year trend by gender:



Condition of Education - 2023

70%

Public schools reported that % of students seeking mental health services has *increased*.

Are you able to effectively provide mental health services to all students in need?

12%

Strongly Agreed



It's Not Just Students

CDC Report on Teachers' Mental Health*

27%

OF TEACHERS
SELF-REPORTED
SYMPTOMS
CONSISTENT
WITH CLINICAL
DEPRESSION.

37%

OF TEACHERS
SELF-REPORTED
SYMPTOMS
CONSISTENT WITH
GENERALIZED
ANXIETY.

53%

OF TEACHERS ARE
THINKING ABOUT
LEAVING THE
PROFESSION—
THAT'S MORE
THAN BEFORE THE
PANDEMIC.

19%

OF TEACHERS
STARTED OR
INCREASED ALCOHOL
USE TO DEAL WITH
STRESS DURING THE
PANDEMIC.

*REPORT RELEASED IN MAY 2021.

Approaches to Mental Health

Historic

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Trauma Focused
- Deficit Model

New

- Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) and Hope
- Positive Focus
- Strengths Model

What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?

ACEs are potentially traumatic events that occur before the age of 18.

They can stem from various happenings like physical abuse or household dysfunction. ACEs can undermine a person's sense of safety, stability, and capacity to form or maintain relationships.

- Mental Illness
- Substance Addiction
- Imprisonment of Family Member
- Witnessing Abuse
- Losing a Parent to Separation, Divorce, or Death
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Verbal Abuse
- Physical Neglect
- Emotional Neglect

Students with 3 or more ACEs are:

- 3x as likely to use ADHD medication
- 3x more likely to fail classes
- 4x more likely to have poor health
- 5x more likely to have attendance problems
- 6x more likely to have behavior problems

Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)

- Help mitigate the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences on adults
 - Research indicates that the absence of PCEs may be more damaging to long-term health outcomes than the presence of ACEs.

The more PCEs present, the better.

- Having 3 - 5 Positive Childhood Experiences is the sweet spot.
 - Leads to lower substance abuse.
 - Lower rates of depression.
 - Improved physical health.
 - More likely to be employed.
 - Lower rates of Heart Disease.
- ***Schools can positively affect/influence 4 of the 7 PCEs!**

What are they? The PCE Scale Questions.

As a child, how often did you...

1. Feel able to talk to your family about feelings?
2. Feel your family stood by you during difficult times?
3. Feel safe and protected by an adult in your home?
4. Feel a sense of belonging in high school?
5. Enjoy participating in community traditions?
6. Feel supported by friends?
7. Have at least two non-parent adults who took genuine interest in you?

Four building blocks of Hope originate from PCEs.

1. Relationships

- a. Relationships with other children and adults through interpersonal activities.

2. Environment

- a. Safe, equitable, stable environments for living, playing, learning at home and in school.

3. Engagement

- a. Social and civic engagement to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness.

4. Emotional Growth

- a. Emotional growth through playing and interacting with peers for self-awareness and self regulation.

Hope is not a strategy.

What is Hope?

“Hope is the belief that your future can be brighter than your past and that you play a role in making it happen.”

- Casey Gwinn & Chan Hellman in Hope Rising: How the Science of HOPE Can Change Your Life (2018)

Focus on the right things.

1. Proactive versus reactive.
 - a. Are we developing Agency or Dependency in our students?
2. Different from aimless (actionless) Hope. I “hope” you have a good day. I “hope” I pass the test. Aimless hope can lead to “false” hope which is actually detrimental to your health.
3. For the most part, the field of psychology has focused on reducing symptoms—not healing the causes—and preventing relapse once symptoms have been treated. Major meta-analysis studies agree that to do this, we need better treatment interventions that lessen relapse. We require different ways of thinking about the problem to create more effective treatment interventions. Yet we’ve been studying the flashlights that don’t light up rather than those that keep on shining.

Hope matters!

1. The higher the hope of a child...
 - a. ...the higher the daily attendance rate.
 - b. ...the lower the tardiness rate.
 - c. ...the greater resilience will be along with a positive outlook on life.
 - d. ...the less stress, anxiety and depression they will experience.
 - e. ...the better they will perform in school.
 - f. ...the more they will develop stronger relationships and social connections.
 - g. ...the more they will engage in healthier behaviors and coping skills.
2. Several academic studies indicate that hope is a more robust predictor of future success than the ACT, SAT, and a GPA.
3. “In every published study of hope... hope is the single best predictor of well-being compared to any other measures of trauma recovery.”

It's not just for students.

Hopeful Educators...

1. Report higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment to the organization.
2. Are better at critical thinking and problem-solving.
3. Are more energetic in their pursuit of goals.
4. Are more likely to be engaged in their work and approach new task with vigor.

The Hopeful...

“Believe their future will be better than their present...and they have the power to make it so;

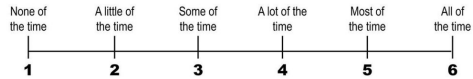
understand there are multiple pathways to success; and they anticipate and plan for obstacles.”

- Shane J. Lopez

Hope is Measurable

THE CHILDREN'S HOPE SCALE

Directions: Read each sentence carefully. For each sentence, please think about how you are in most situations. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes YOU and put that number in the blank provided. There are no right or wrong answers.



- ___ 1. I think I am doing pretty well.
- ___ 2. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me.
- ___ 3. I am doing just as well as other kids my age.
- ___ 4. When I have a problem, I can come up with lots of ways to solve it.
- ___ 5. I think the things that I have done in the past will help me in the future.
- ___ 6. Even when others want to quit, I know that I can find ways to solve the problem.

Notes: The **Agency** subscale score is the sum of items 1, 3 & 5; the **Pathways** subscale score is the sum of items 2, 4 & 6. **Hope** is the sum of the three **Pathways** and three **Agency** items. Scores can range from a low of 6 to a high of 36.

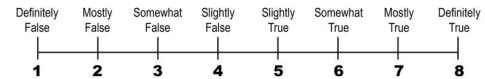
Agency Score ___ (Add items 1,3 and 5)

Pathways Score ___ (Add items 2,4, and 6)

Total Hope Score ___ (Agency Score + Pathways Score)

THE ADULT HOPE SCALE

Directions: Read each sentence carefully. For each sentence, please think about how you are in most situations. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes YOU and put that number in the blank provided. There are no right or wrong answers.



- ___ 1. I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.
- ___ 2. I energetically pursue my goals.
- ___ 3. There are lots of ways around any problem.
- ___ 4. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me.
- ___ 5. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.
- ___ 6. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future.
- ___ 7. I've been pretty successful in life.
- ___ 8. I meet the goals that I set for myself.

Notes: The **Agency** subscale score is the sum of items 2, 6, 7 & 8; the **Pathways** subscale score is the sum of items 1, 3, 4 & 5. **Hope** is the sum of the four **Pathways** and four **Agency** items. Scores can range from a low of 8 to a high of 64.

Agency Score ___ (Add items 2,6, 7, and 8)

Pathways Score ___ (Add items 1,3,4, and 5)

Total Hope Score ___ (Agency Score + Pathways Score)

Hope can be Strengthened



The New G.P.A.

1. Goals (whatpower)
2. Pathways (waypower)
3. Agency (willpower)

Goals (Whatpower)

My future will be better than my present.

Pathways (WayPower)

1. Where am I? What are my needs?
2. Where do I want to go?
3. Who can help me get there? What resources are available to me? What barriers exist?

Pathways are a Productive Struggle (Eustress)

- Motivation
- Persistence
- Scaffolded support through targeted feedback

Agency (Willpower)

- Agency is about the ability to choose and make self-directed, self-determined decisions.
 - Narayan et al. (as quoted by Samman & Santos, 2009) define agency as an individual's or group's ability to make purposeful choices.
- Such choices depend a great deal on a person's assets and capabilities, both social and psychological.
 - The social components include a sense of belonging, identity formation and expression, and the capacity for and demonstration of leadership.
 - The psychological components include self-esteem, self-confidence, and the ability to have a vision for the future.
- By identifying achievable goals and action steps, students grow their “can-do” mind muscle.

Entitlement is a Hope killer.



Things we've done as a society for Generation Z that can negatively impact Hope.

1. Empowerment without Wisdom
2. Stimulation without Ownership
3. Privilege without Responsibility
4. Involvement without Boundaries
5. Individualism without Perspective
6. Accessibility without Accountability
7. Fluidity without Integrity
8. Opportunity without Resilience
9. Consumption without Reflection

Good News: Hope is also Transferable!

Hopeless students can borrow Hope from others.

- Hope is not an emotion or a fixed genetic trait.
- It is both a skill and a mindset.
- That means it is malleable and can be learned and grown!

Students can be assigned social models (peers with higher Hope scores) as a layer of support.

But you can't give what you don't have.

*It costs a
candle nothing
to light
another
candle.*



Resources and References

1. Researchers: C.R. Snyder, Shane J. Lopez, Cathleen Beachboard, and Chan Hellman.
2. Battelle for Kids (National Conference on Education)
3. Tim Elmore - [Generation Z Unfiltered](#)