

Unit Name: Highlights

Parents, carers and families are an integral part of the Positive Living Skills Initiative.

The Positive Living Skills program is a universal and practical program designed specifically for children from Preschool onwards, and the principles and positive effects of the learning experiences can reach teachers, school staff, parents, families and wider communities.

The goal is to prevent problems before they develop, by implementing a positive life skills program from an early age. The Positive Living Skills program assists to create habitual positive, healthy supportive behaviours by guiding children to learn to understand and self-direct their own thinking processes, emotions, actions, responses and outcomes, and build effective self-management and social skills.

Noticing and enjoying **highlights** is an effective way for us to bring our focus to the positive opportunities all around us, and highlights are available to almost every human being on any day.

When students learn to bring their focus to highlights every day, they begin to build an optimistic and appreciative outlook for life, and learn to focus on building on their strengths and seeing the potential in themselves, in School and in life in general.

Definition of Highlights:

*Highlights are happy things you see and do and happy times you share with others.
Highlights help you feel good.*

Why Highlights?

A highlight is any simple pleasure, little treasure, joy, positive feeling, meaningful experience, magic moment or anything that lifts the quality of any day for any person.

Taking just a moment, at any time of the day or evening, to stop, and focus on the moment you are experiencing, can connect you with a sense of love and joy that can become a highlight in your day, and connect you with a positive feeling of happiness and appreciation that can be built on.

Science is showing us that if we allow our brain to fully take in the positive highlight we are experiencing, it can begin to re-wire our neurology so we can build skills to enable us to create a positive experience at any time and thus hard-wire ourselves for happiness and positivity.

According to Dr Terry Orlick, there are 7 Sources of Highlights, which are self-generated, and available in some form to virtually all human beings, almost every day.

1. Positive Human Interaction, e.g., *sharing a smile or laugh, a genuine positive comment, a hug or caring gesture*
2. Positive Interaction with Nature, e.g., *the smell of freshly cut grass, noticing a beautiful tree, a bird song, sunlight on the water,*
3. Positive Connection through Play, Games, Sport, Physical Activity, e.g., *teams or play, any movement*
4. Positive Personal Accomplishments, e.g., *finishing a project, achieving a goal in any pursuit*
5. Positive Personal Discovery or Creativity, e.g., *learning, creating, growing, solving a problem*
6. Positive Physical Sensations, e.g., *feel of a warm bath, cool water on a hot day, a relaxing massage*
7. Pure Relaxation, e.g., *a few deep breaths, a quiet moment*

Highlight experiences allow children, young people and adults to self-direct their neuroplasticity to a more positive, realistically optimistic bias, by embracing simple positive moments that bring joy and an enhanced quality to life.

When children and young people begin to connect more fully with highlights, they also begin to feel the immediate effects of a positive fully connected focus, which can enhance self-esteem and learning.

When children are guided to look for, acknowledge and appreciate the positive aspects in each day, their ability to perceive highlights improves and they begin to experience more highlights, experience more fulfilment, and share more highlights with others.

The Happy Highlight Clicker

A Highlight Clicker is a great way to help people of all ages learn how to click on to a Happy Channel and click off a Negative or Stressed Channel.

One of the fastest and most interactive ways to help children to bring their focus to the positive, so they feel happier, less stressed and more confident within themselves in any context, is to introduce them to clicking Highlights.

- Counting highlights in your day – any time of day – click!
- Counting the highlights you are looking forward to today, tonight, tomorrow, next week – click!
- Changing your channel from negative to positive – click!
- How many things can I appreciate about today/right now? – click!
- What and who do I have to be grateful for right now? – click!
- How many things can I count that are positive about in my life in one minute?
- How many highlights can I find in a 5-minute walk outside? In Nature? Play? Discovery? Human Interaction? Click! Click! Click!



Sharing and counting highlights and reflecting on them brings a positive and lasting focus to children and adults alike.

Here are some ideas for how to apply highlight concepts into your home life:

As well as applying the Highlights lessons within the delivery of the Positive Living Skills program, here are some suggestions for how the concepts within this Unit could be applied at home:

- Asking your children to share the highlights of their school day will embed and expand on positive experiences
- Sharing highlights amongst family members over a meal is a powerful way for families to positively connect and enhance a shared positive outlook
- When children have nothing to do encourage them to create their own Highlight games ie; think of new ways to teach people about highlights, to encourage their friends to share highlights
- Encourage your children to think of people in their lives they could make a positive comment to and thereby giving the other person a highlight moment
- Encourage your family to share one thing you each love, appreciate, value or respect about each other or appreciate about your family, friends, teacher etc
- Encourage your children to share with you something they like or are proud about within themselves

*****For more information about the Positive Living Skills program, and to access free resources from the Positive Living Skills family link, visit www.positivelivingskills.com**