

# THE KNOX MENTORING PROGRAM

*Great boys growing into great men of integrity, faith, wisdom and compassion*



## Developing a positive future

*'While all schools will have "pastoral care" systems, the question for all of us is to determine if they are appropriate for the needs of our students in the 21st Century. For me, the wellbeing of our young people is essential for an active and optimistic future. Schools must decide how to do this but at the heart of any effective pastoral care program are the teachers who deliver it. There needs to be focus on training and up-skilling teachers as mentor*

*coaches of this nation's most precious asset... its youth'.*

**John Weeks**  
Headmaster

Knox Grammar School

**Positive Education**, with its long term, sustainable strategy, structure and processes, provides a platform from which Knox can constructively influence not just its own community but the community at large.



## Equipping the next generation...

# What is Positive Psychology?

Positive Psychology is the scientific study of the conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups and institutions; the study of what enables individuals and communities to thrive.

It is the knowledge of what makes life worth living - character strengths, virtues, and the conditions that lead to higher levels of wellbeing and engagement.

**Positive Education is education for both traditional skills and for wellbeing.**

Positive Education focuses on our strengths, those particular ways of behaving, thinking, or feeling that are real to us, and which energise or motivate us.

Positive Education encourages and develops a link between our strengths and the universally valued virtues of wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance and transcendence.

Positive Education assists individuals to realise their strengths, and develop their usage in their daily lives, their relationships and their work, and in so doing demonstrate the above virtues, producing meaningful, engaged and pleasurable lives.

Positive Education assists individuals to change and develop their attitudes and behaviours, to more fully utilise their strengths, and function most effectively as individuals, in relationships, as members of teams or social groups, and indeed, society as whole.

The design and delivery of the Knox Positive Education Program is the most comprehensive of its kind, providing a proactive, multi-level approach to creating a positive school climate to support academic performance, mental fitness and the wellbeing of students and staff.

The three year program includes the development of explicit and implicit integrated components, including a specially designed curriculum, aimed at providing staff, students and the community specific strengths-based, solution-focused knowledge and skills to apply in their school work and life.



**Academic, support and administration staff of Knox have all been trained in the principles of positive psychology and its practical application through positive education and coaching.**

**The Knox Positive Education Program will be delivered by the Knox Mentoring Teams.**

Members of the Mentor Teams work closely with all boys to help them to develop and flourish, attain their academic and personal goals and to assist them on the journey towards a purposeful and meaningful life.

Each of the stages, Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8), Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10) and Stage 6 (Years 11 and 12) has a Mentoring team comprising: Senior Academic Master, Student Psychologist, Chaplaincy Support, Mentor Team Leaders for each Year Group, Mentor Team Assistant Leaders for each Year Group and 12 Mentors for each Year Group.

Together this team oversees the development and implementation of the School's Positive Education Program, creating a positive climate of excellence for the team and their boys.

Importantly, Mentors lead their own Mentor Group for up to 6 years, building not merely a strong relationship between teacher and student, but also connectedness between students and parents.

Student Administration Officers support all members of the team with communication and administrative matters related to that group, and provide a personal point of contact for the boys and parents.

The key to building strong relationships with students is contact time, which allows for a wide range of activities to happen outside the pressure of our modern classroom environments. Substantial contact time has been built into the daily timetable, so Mentors have lots of time with all their boys. This means that the boys see reflection, discussion, and coaching as a natural part of school and daily life.

During this 'Talk Time', an aged-based program built on the principles of Positive Psychology is also delivered. These programs are developed and delivered by the Year Teams.

Knox Coaching and Mentoring is collaborative, solution-focused, results-orientated, aimed at enhancing life experience, goal-attainment and wellbeing.

It fosters self-directed learning and personal growth. It increases goal attainment and life satisfaction, increased perceived control over environmental factors and results in greater openness towards new life experiences.

## The purposeful life...

Whilst Positive Education might be an innovative approach, it is certainly innovation wrapped in tradition, for it represents a continuous journey from Knox's founding in 1924 to today's 21st Century Knox. Positive education as an idea and a practice underpinned in the establishment and early life of Knox, as articulated by founding Headmaster Neil MacNeil's espousal of 'creating and living the purposeful life'.

Positive Education is important at Knox because we believe in the next generation, and believe in equipping them with the means to live a whole and meaningful life within a rapidly changing but ever needful world.

Positive Education reflects and establishes a strong, clear link to Knox Values – integrity, wisdom, compassion, faith.

Positive Education, with its positive, strengths-based approach to developing skills for life, gives boys, 'A chance to be the best they can be', and enhances their journey from Great Boys to Great Men.

Positive Education offers a long term, sustainable strategy and structure which can be implemented in very practical ways in every area of school and community life.



Knox Grammar School is working closely with The Positive Psychology Institute and the University of Wollongong, in this world-first, scientifically evaluated, Positive Education Program.

**For more information on the Positive Psychology Institute, visit:**  
[www.positivepsychologyinstitute.com](http://www.positivepsychologyinstitute.com)

## Assisting great boys to become great men

Knox Grammar School is a Uniting Church school for day boys K-12 with boarding for up to 160 boys from Years 7-12