

UpPotential's Youth Caring Program Report of Findings 2017-2020



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About UpPotential



UpPotential, founded in 2007, is an online research-based, self-help wellness platform dedicated to empowering people to reach their potential and to enrich the physical and mental wellness of the individual.

Through the wellness platform, UpPotential provides culturally adapted information, resources, and life skills training to enable people - regardless of their age, gender, or ethnicity - to live a positive and constructive life.

The mission of UpPotential is to increase awareness by advocating self-help skills through education. The online stress management program helps people to deal with stress and to think positively when facing their challenges

in life. It is not just about helping themselves, and they will also learn to care about their family, friends, and the others. The core values of the organization involve helping the users how to manage their stress and increase resilience in his or her life to become a positive well-being.

The organization has been awarded as a Caring Company by the Hong Kong Council of Social Services for the since 2012.

To address these needs and provide a caring support to the community through education, UpPotential Caring Heart Company Limited (NGO – granted with Section 88 in the year 2020), the charitable arm of UpPotential Company Limited, has presented the Youth Caring Program (YCP).



Scope of the Report

This report was designed to provide an overview of the UpPotential Youth Caring Program (YCP) and program highlights from Fall 2017 to Summer 2020. These highlights include program engagement and key findings of participation and presents recommendations for strengthening the program. This report was prepared by the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools (CHHCS) at the Milken Institute of Public Health at the George Washington University with input from the UpPotential Team.

Overview of Need

Child mental health is a public health concern globally. According to the World Health Organization, 10-20% of children experience mental disorders.¹ In Hong Kong, over 50% of secondary students exhibit symptoms of depression and 25% show high levels of anxiety.² This has led to a rapidly increasing number of child and adolescent psychiatric patients, with a 50% increase from 2011-2012 to 2015-2016.³ Youth suicide rates more than doubled from 2014-2017, with 1 in 3 primary school students and 2 in 5 students at risk of suicide.⁴ In the 20 year review of the health situation of children and adolescents conducted by the Hong Kong Pediatric Foundation (HKPF) in 2017, three health issues contributing to the mental health challenges in Hong Kong were identified: (1) increasing mental health problems for children and adolescents; (2) periodic surge of youth suicide; and (3) enormous stress for parents, children, and youth.⁵ Over the past year, the Covid-19 pandemic, has also brought about unprecedented challenges including prolonged closures of schools and public facilities for children. This has

compounded the existing mental health problems that children and young people are faced with, further deteriorating their health and well-being.

Given that 50% of mental health disorders begin by the age of 14 and 75% by the age of 24, it is important to prioritize mental health and provide prevention efforts to decrease this number.⁶ These efforts include teaching and training, assessment, research, implementation guidelines on psychotherapeutic or psychological intervention. According to the recommendation of the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides in their final report on November 2016 “universal prevention strategies, which are designed to reach all students, aim to maximize health, strengthen resilience and minimize suicide risk by removing barriers to care, increasing access to help and strengthening protective factors, e.g., stigma reduction associated with help-seeking behavior, enhancing mental health literacy in schools, life education, parent education and home-school collaboration.”

Research shows that schools, including teachers, student support staff, and other school personnel who interact with students, play a critical and unique role in a child's development and are well-suited to deliver student wellness and mental health interventions.⁷ Mental health programs provided in school settings can increase accessibility to students and reduce barriers to participation.⁸ Additionally, peer-to-peer interventions can also reduce implementation barriers as schools can recruit from the student body to help implement activities.⁹ Classroom-based curriculum for mental health interventions have positive impacts on youth mental health, improve positive teacher-student relationships, and promote a positive school climate.¹⁰ Therefore, addressing the mental health needs of students, parents, teachers, and school personnel has become more important and necessary than ever before.

Schools can implement services and supports to students in varying scales and intensities, also known as a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). This approach ensures that all students will have exposure to universal mental health supports. School-wide Tier 1 mental health supports are provided to ALL students and increases students' awareness, provides a space for students to learn problem-solving and coping skills, enhances social/emotional or behavioral adjustment and well-being and allows for school personnel to identify early signs of mental health difficulties and refer cases to the second tier when needed. Tier 2 supports are for students experiencing more intensive needs, and Tier 3 supports address mental health concerns for students who are already experiencing significant distress and impaired functioning.

UpPotential believes that the educational system and the high demand and competition of the modern world creates the massive loads of stress on teachers, students, and parents. This stress can be mitigated by providing Tier 1 stress management skills to strengthen resilience and the ability to manage stress caused by school, as well as build the strength and positive energy to face other challenges. In addition, UpPotential believes the school has a controlled and a safe environment to promote self-help skills through online and offline training education; to grow and plant positive seeds in the school community.

To address these needs and provide caring support to the community through education, UpPotential Caring Heart Company Limited (NGO – granted with Section 88 in the year 2020), the charitable arm of UpPotential Company Limited, has presented the Youth Caring Program (YCP) to the school. Hong Kong Academy of Nursing (HKAN) was invited to be a partner organization.

YCP helps students learn to manage stress and increase resilience to enhance mental wellness awareness, and we believe self-help skills can become a caring act for oneself and others. We educate and promote self-help skills as life-long skills for the youth to generate positive energy to lead a healthy, positive life.





Overview of the Youth Caring Program

YCP is built on the Chinese culture and Confucius' concept of (修身齊家治國平天下). The program aims to cultivate wellness of the participants and to build a caring network in the school community.

The core values of YCP are to promote self-help skills, increase mental wellness awareness, achieve social and emotional competencies, and strengthen resilience to turn challenges into opportunities. We believe self-help skills are a care act for oneself and others.

“

Prepare a child for the road, not the road for the child.”

Through evidence-based in-school and online training free of charge to schools, YCP helps to build students' ability to learn independently and encourage them to use information technology for learning while increasing the capacity of parents and teachers to support their students' needs. Ultimately, YCP educates students with self-help skills' training as tools to strengthen their resilience and to create a caring network.

The Youth Caring Program Reaches:

Students

through the direct program and supports to enhance wellness and support each other

Teachers

through online/offline workshop trainings to build their capacity to support their students

Parents

through online/offline workshop trainings to support and build their interpersonal relationship with their children

Program Goals

The primary goal of the Youth Caring Program is to enhance the mental and physical wellness of youth from the age of 7 to 18 by incorporating the cultural and research-based programs through the online and online training in the school environment.

Specifically, the program helps children understand the importance of learning self-help skills, how to help others use skills, and ultimately have enhanced self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, generate positive energy in the community, confidence, and leadership skills to support their own physical and mental wellness. Although the program is directly impacting students, education and training is provided to teachers and parents to increase their ability to support youth well-being.

In-School Components (Offline Training)

The YCP In-school components includes a School Talk (an interactive presentation with the whole school at the beginning of the school year to introduce self-help skills as life skills); training workshops (to train Little Coaches, teachers, and parent volunteers to support In-class lessons at school, and to navigate the online platform) and Student Ambassadors Training to prepare the student ambassadors to serve as youth leaders and to encourage the use of coping skills among their peers). This is an essential component of the program as peer-to-peer interventions benefit both the student giving the information and the student who receives the information and have been shown to reduce negative mental health issues among youth.

Implementation of In-School Component

Before the commencement of the school year, UpPotential conducts planning meetings with schools for implementation preparation. After schools enter a formal partnership, UpPotential provides a School Talk for the whole school at the beginning of the school year. The School Talk aims to motivate the students to have a better understanding of the importance of self-help skills; to enhance their awareness of online and offline training support for the benefit of their growth. The talk is designed to interact with the students and speaker through on-stage activities and exercises. There are two school wellness talks in the second term by the Hong Kong Academy of Nursing.

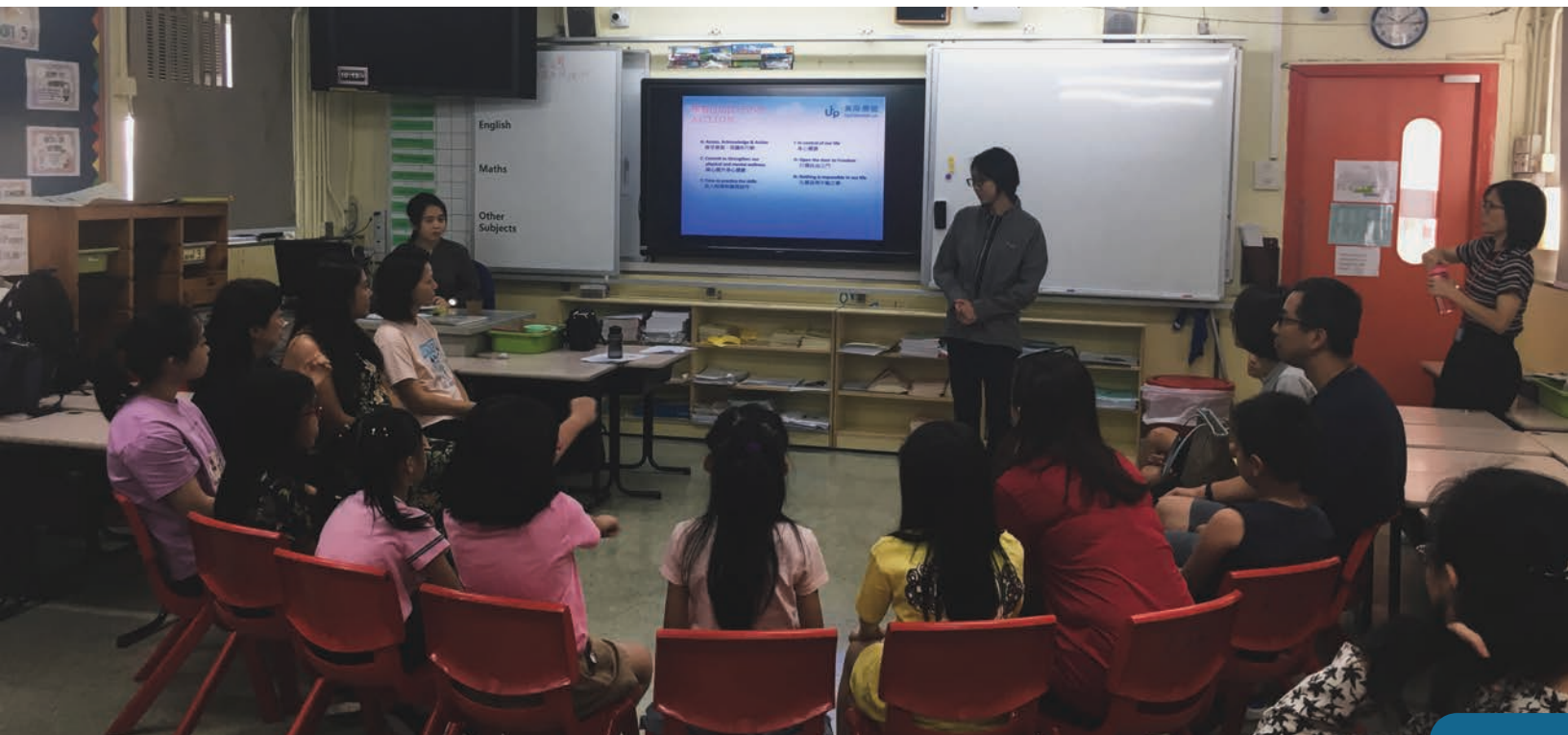


The in-classroom curriculum consists of ten lessons provided by UpPotential, based on the Online Stress Management Core Program. Teachers are provided an online login with instructions on how to implement and facilitate the lessons in the classroom. All ten lessons are provided and can be adapted to each class's schedule. At the beginning of the second term, a Student Ambassador Training is provided to Little Coaches who are transitioning to become a Student Ambassador. All Little Coaches for the class are promoted to become Student Ambassadors and assist in developing positive energy among their peer group. This one-hour training is to motivate the student ambassadors to continue promoting self-help skills among their peer groups. It can enhance students' self-esteem, confidence, and leadership skills.

To assess the impact of the program, at the end of the school year, all students, parents, and teachers are invited to the program feedback form. Students are also invited to complete a pre-assessment after School Talk and a post-assessment at the end of the school year. Parents, teachers, and students are also invited to share testimonials regarding their experience in the program.

In-School (Offline) Components

- **The School Talk** is an interactive presentation for the whole school at the beginning of the school year to give students a better understanding of the importance of self-help skills and to enhance their awareness of training support.
- **Training Workshops** train students, teachers, and parents to facilitate in-class lessons, navigate the online platform, and act as Student Ambassadors.
- **In-Class Lessons at School** consist of either six or ten lessons that are one hour each, or twelve lessons that are one-half hour each. Content, which is all provided by UpPotential, is based on the online stress management core program. Little Coaches for the class will help in small group activities and develop positive energy among their peers.
- **Student Ambassador Training** involves one hour of training at the beginning of the second term to motivate ambassadors to continue promoting self-help skills among their peers. It will enhance students' self-esteem, confidence and leadership skills. The training includes unique online activities.



Online Component

YCP's online components provide a customized platform to each school at the beginning of the school year that includes an Animated Core Stress Management Program, which is research-based on Positive Psychology and Cognitive Behavior Therapy, helping students to cope with anxiety, stress and other life pressures by using self-help skills; the Wellness Programs - the UpPotential Islands - each island encompasses a theme to broaden student knowledge, a selection of six of the themes by the school for their tailored wellness platform.

Research shows that online mental health interventions have significant positive effects on youth experiencing depression and anxiety. The adoption of computer simulations and training for student wellness and mental health interventions has increased due to the rising use of technology among youth.¹¹

UpPotential provides each a school a tailored online wellness platform available throughout the school year. Each student receives three login codes, one for themselves and two additional codes for their family members. The wellness platform consists of the Animated Version of Core Stress Management course and UpPotential Islands.

“*Students are very excited to participate in this course because there are many opportunities to do exercises. They are interested in this learning skill and their learning motivation is stronger. Also, after listening to some stories or life examples, they were very willing to share and demonstrate their own life experiences to their classmates. I think it is very good.*”

—Teacher Participant

Online Training

- *The Core Program* is a stress management course based on Positive Psychology and Cognitive Behavior Therapy. Helping people at any stage of their lives cope with anxiety, stress and other life pressures by using self-help skills, the course includes lessons on the following topics:

Lesson 1: What, Why & How?

Lesson 2: Relaxation Exercises

Lesson 3: Breathing Exercises

Lesson 4: Nutrition

Lesson 5: Positive Self Talk & Cognitive Behavior Treatment

Lesson 6: Desensitization & Other Behavioral Therapy

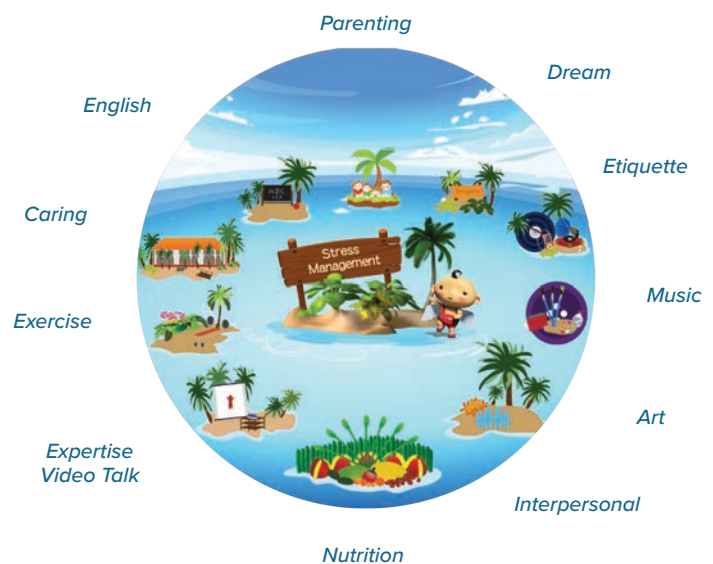
Lesson 7: Gratitude & Savoring

Lesson 8: Building Openness & Social Support

Lesson 9: Meaning, Flow, & Spirituality

Lesson 10: Good Sleep

- *Wellness Programs* - The Wellness Programs include each UpPotential Island, which encompasses a theme to broaden student knowledge. Schools select six out of 11 themes for their tailored wellness platform.



Animated Version of Core Stress Management Course

The animated version of the Core Stress Management course includes ten lessons designed that based on Positive Psychology and Cognitive Behavior Therapy. The purpose of this course is to help people at any stage of their lives to cope with anxiety, stress, and other life pressures by using self-help skills. As the school, family and school peers can play a supportive role to those who are under stress, this course also helps them assist others in dealing with their problems and is essential to educate individuals in the early stage of their lives. Students who take the course are required to complete the wellness pre-assessment before entering the first lesson and a short, 10 question quiz in between each lesson to advance to the next lesson. After the completion of the ten lessons, the student can download a Certificate of Completion immediately from the online platform.

The Core Stress Management Program Lessons

1	What, Why, and How? Explores the cause of stress and anxiety.
2	Relaxation Exercises Introduces and describes various relaxation exercises, options, and relaxation techniques.
3	Breathing Exercises Teaches breathing exercises to lessen the stress arising from panic and anxiety with contents including a breathing exercise demonstration.
4	Nutrition Discusses the importance of nutrition, including how to make the right food choices and which vitamin supplements to use.
5	Positive Self Talk and Cognitive Behavior Treatment Focuses on ways individuals' respond to emotions and feelings that have an impact on him/her, and the importance of using affirmative and positive self-talk.
6	Desensitization and Other Behavioral Therapy Provides ways to overcome fear and phobia that affect daily lives and teaches the use of 'virtual imagination' and 'real-life desensitization therapies', which will help transform overly sensitive feelings and negative thoughts into more positive thoughts and feelings.
7	Gratitude and Savoring Provides everyday tools for the individual to develop a thankful, positive, and constructive attitude towards life.
8	Building Openness and Social Support Teaches ways to become more confident, become more open to facing challenges and ways to create healthy self-esteem while multiplying this effect through various social support.
9	Meaning, Flow, and Spirituality Discusses the importance of Flow and Spirituality in one's life and helps individuals build positive life goals and create meaning in life.
10	Good Sleep Provides guidelines and methods to improve sleep quality and quantity and explains the importance of adequate sleep to physical and mental health.

Up Potential Islands

UpPotential Islands (潛夢島) represent different themes (each island) focusing on and helping to broaden the knowledge of the students. Schools select six out of 11 UpPotential Islands to be included in their school online wellness platform. Each island has a particular theme focusing on and helping to broaden the knowledge of the students.

The 11 UpPotential Islands Include:

1. **Expertise Video Talk Island (專家資訊平台):** Provides expert knowledge on subjects and help to broaden the exposure of the users.
2. **Dream Island (潛夢坊):** Provides inspiration of self-confidence, hope, and passion for future.
3. **Music Island (寧神島):** Teaches how to use music for relaxation and manage stress.
4. **English Island (英語學習島):** To increase confidence and social development through the enhancement in English skills.
5. **Nutrition Island (營養美食島):** Provides varieties of nutritional information and menus to enrich mental and physical health.
6. **Exercise Island (健身島):** Introduces different ways of exercising for health care.
7. **Interpersonal Island (人際關係島):** To understand the importance of the interpersonal relationship will help in many aspects of development.
8. **Etiquette Island (禮儀島):** Promotes social skills to improve the wellness of oneself.
9. **Parenting Island (親子潛夢樂園):** Enhances the parent/child's relationships through learning culturally adapted materials.
10. **Art Island (潛夢藝術島):** Enriches creativity and focus on art.
11. **Caring Island (護理島):** Enhances the knowledge of prevention and wellness through health care's information.





Program Findings¹²

Data Collection Measures

To assess the reach and impact of YCP, the following measures were collected:

Student Characteristics and Program Utilization

Student demographic characteristics including gender and age are collected. Online student learning progress in the core program is collected through the program website.

Student Pre- and Post-Assessment

Students complete the same pre-assessment and post-assessment at the beginning and end of the school year. The assessments are available online, and some paper surveys are administered. The assessment is adapted from two existing measures of student wellness,^{13,14} and includes 13 wellness-related items, including diet, water intake, physical activity, sleep, self-help skills, pro-social and interpersonal skills, and mindset. Students self-report their level of wellness behaviors using a four-point Likert scale (0=Never, 1=A little bit, 2=Partially, and 3=Always). A total score is obtained by summing all 13 items. Cutoff scores are used to determine students' physical and mental health status (0-12=Low Wellness, 13-24=Medium Wellness, 25-39=High Wellness).

Student Program Feedback Questionnaire

A student program feedback questionnaire is administered at the end of the school year. The questionnaires are available online, and some paper surveys are administered. The questionnaire includes 10 measures of program satisfaction and overall self-help seeking behavior. Students self-report their perception of the program using a four-point Likert scale (0=Strongly disagree, 1=Partially disagree, 2=Partially agree, and 3=Strongly agree). No open-ended questions are included on the student program assessment.

Data Collection Measures

to assess the reach and impact of YCP, the following measures were collected:

● Student Characteristics and Program Utilization Platform

Measures program usage and reach

● Student Pre- and Post-Assessment

13 questions designed to measure students' perception of their physical, social, and mental well-being

● Student Program Feedback Questionnaire

10 questions measuring program satisfaction and overall self-help seeking behavior

● Parent & Teacher Program Feedback Questionnaire

9 questions measuring program satisfaction and overall self-help seeking behavior

● Testimonials with Parents, Teachers, and Students

Interview parents, teachers, and students to gain further information on satisfaction, experience, and participant behavior changes

Parent and Teacher Program Feedback Questionnaire

A program feedback questionnaire is also administered to parents and teachers at the end of the school year. Most questionnaires are completed online, and some paper surveys are administered. The questionnaire includes nine measures of program satisfaction. Parents and teachers self-report their perception of the program using a four-point Likert scale (0=Strongly disagree, 1=Partially disagree, 2=Partially agree, and 3=Strongly agree). An open-ended question is included for other feedback.

Testimonials with Parents, Teachers, and Students

YCP team member interviews parents, teachers, and students to gain further information on their satisfaction, experience, and changes they have made after participating in the program. These interviews include 6 questions for students and 6 questions for parents.

Data Analysis Methods

Frequency distribution tables were generated to present student characteristic, utilization, and feedback data. Analyses were conducted to examine differences in mean (average) pre- and post-assessment scores among students who completed the assessments. Independent samples t-tests were used to compare the means from the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. Analyses were conducted in SAS 9.4, a statistical data analysis software.

Participant Reach

Since its start in the school year of 2017-2018 to the present (2020-2021), YCP has reached around 7,000 students in Hong Kong. They have increased the number of schools from six schools to 25 schools during these years. In Fall 2019 to Summer 2020, YCP served over 5,000 students, and the evaluation report is based on the past three years (Fall 2017 to Summer 2020) of collected data. Students attend primary schools and the average participant age of 8 years old. About an equal number of male and female students have participated in the program.

Total Students Served from 2018-2020 (25 schools) n (%)	
Total # of Students	3,969
Sex	
Female	1,554 (39%)
Male	1,785 (45%)
Unspecified	630 (16%)
Age	
7 years	387 (10%)
8 years	2,588 (65%)
9 years	841 (21%)
10 years	111 (3%)
11 years	35 (1%)
12 years	7 (0%)

Note: No student characteristic data were collected in the first year, 2017-2018.

Program Utilization and Completion

Since 2017-2018, a total of 1,699 students participated in the animated stress management core program, representing more than one-third (34%) of the 5,009 students who participated in YCP in that period. Overall, 81% of students who enrolled in the animated stress management core program completed at least one of the 10 lessons. In total, 586 students – or 34% of animated stress management core program users – completed all 10 lessons. The number and percentage of users completing all lessons increased each year, with the greatest average lesson completion in 2019-2020.

Since 2017, YCP has educated and promoted mental, social and physical health skills to:



5,009
students



25
schools



1,481
student ambassadors



437
parent volunteers



222
teachers



341.5
workshop & in-class
training hours

Highest Program Completion Achieved

	Total <i>n</i> (%)
Total # of Students	1,699
Started but did not complete Lesson 1	329 (19%)
Lesson 1	355 (21%)
Lesson 2	128 (8%)
Lesson 3	78 (5%)
Lesson 4	61 (4%)
Lesson 5	49 (3%)
Lesson 6	37 (2%)
Lesson 7	24 (2%)
Lesson 8	24 (2%)
Lesson 9	28 (2%)
Lesson 10	586 (34%)

Students' Perception of Physical, Social, and Emotional Well-Being

The student pre- and post-assessments asked 13 wellness-related questions, including diet, water intake, physical activity, sleep, self-help skills, pro-social and interpersonal skills, and mindset. Each school year, students reported an increase of their wellness in these areas.

On average, students reported high levels of wellness at both pre- and post-assessment. Overall, mean (average) wellness scores improved from pre-assessment (30.22) to post-assessment (31.23) by one point. The mean pre-assessment and post-assessment scores increased in 2017-18 and 2018-19, but not in 2019-20. The largest increase in score was in 2017-18, with a mean increase of 3.23 points from pre- to post-assessment.

Since the 2017-2018 school year, there has been an 845% increase in engagement with all 10 lessons of the online core program with 65% of students completing up to nine lessons and 35% completing all 10 lessons.

Test Scores from 2017-2020 at Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment

	Pre-Assessment			Post-Assessment			Results	
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
All years	3,940	30.22	6.27	2,259	31.23	6.59	-5.92	< 0.0001***

* $p \leq 0.05$. ** $p \leq 0.01$. *** $p \leq 0.001$.

Notes: *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation, *t* = t-value, *p* = p-value.

At the item-level, the mean pre-test scores ranged from a low of 2.08 (Exercises three times per week for 20+ minutes) to a high of 2.70 (Has at least good friends). Item-level post-test scores for students ranged from 0 to 3. Mean post-test scores ranged from a low of 2.18 (Exercises three times per week for 20+ minutes) to a high of 2.70 (Has at least good friends).

The pre-assessment and post-assessment items were grouped into three categories:

Physical Health (Five items, including: Has a balanced nutritious diet; Eats 2 fruits and 3 vegetables daily; Drinks 6 glasses of water daily; Exercises 3x/week for 20+ minutes; and Sleeps 7-8 hours/night)

Prosocial Skills (Four items, including: Can share feelings with others; Listens to and accepts criticism from others; Has at least 3 good friends; and Likes to build and maintain good friendships)

Mental Wellness (Four items, including: Knows how to seek help when needed; Can focus on things quickly; Knows how to cherish and care about oneself; Can think positively)

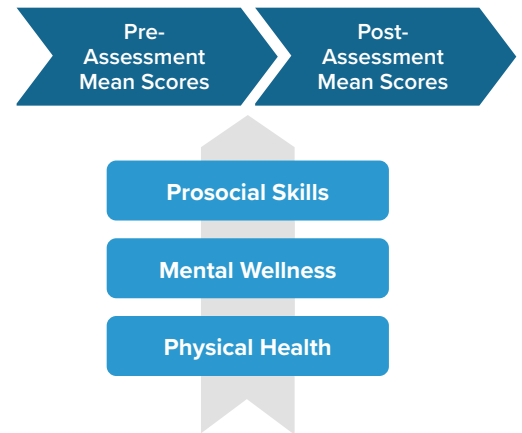
Student physical health, prosocial skills and mental wellness improved because of participating in YCP. Overall, students reported improved physical health from a mean score of 11.17 to 11.63. Increased physical health was reported in school years 2017-2018 (from 11.66 to 12.76) and 2018-2019 (from 11.31 to 11.98), but not in 2019-2020. Prosocial skills also improved from pre-assessment (9.36) to post-assessment (9.64) among all YCP participants; increased prosocial skills were reported in 2017-2018 (from 9.63 to 10.57) and 2018-2019 (from 9.43 to 9.74), but not in 2019-2020. Across all years, students reported improvements in mental wellness, from a mean score of 9.41 to 9.58. Students reported improvements in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 (from 9.57 to 10.76, and from 9.48 to 9.68, respectively), but not in 2019-2020.

Physical Health, Prosocial Skills, and Mental Wellness at Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment from 2017-2020

	Pre-Assessment			Post-Assessment			Results	
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Physical Health	3,940	11.17	3.01	2,259	11.63	3.05	-5.88	< 0.0001***
Prosocial Skills	3,940	9.36	2.38	2,259	9.64	2.56	-4.42	< 0.0001***
Mental Wellness	3,940	9.41	2.41	2,259	9.58	2.53	-2.68	0.0074**

* $p \leq 0.05$. ** $p \leq 0.01$. *** $p \leq 0.001$.

Notes: *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation, *t* = t-value, *p* = p-value.



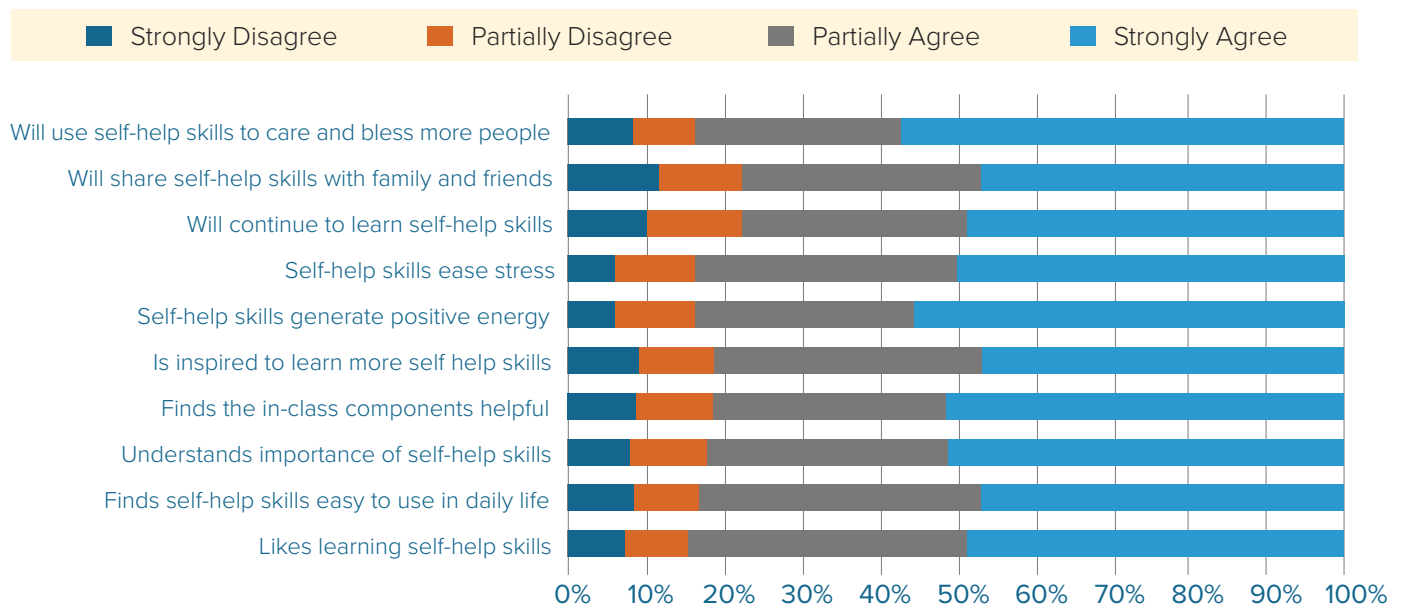
Student Feedback

Among student participants from 2017-2020, the mean (average) scores on the Student Program Feedback Questionnaire ranged from a low of 2.13 (“Will share self-help skills with family and friends”) to a high of 2.35 (“Will use self-help skills to care and bless more people”). The mean score for all items was greater than 2, indicating a mean response between “Partially Agree” and “Strongly Agree”.

Most students agreed with questionnaire items, ranging from a low of 79% (“Will continue to learn self-help skills”) to a high of 85% (“Likes learning self-help skills”).

Student Evaluation Responses, 3 Year (*n*=4,369)

Overall, **over 80% of students found the course satisfying** (strongly or partially agree). In addition, **over 90% of students reported understanding the importance of self-help skills**, were inspired to learn more, utilize them to ease stress and care for more people, and found them easy to use in daily life.

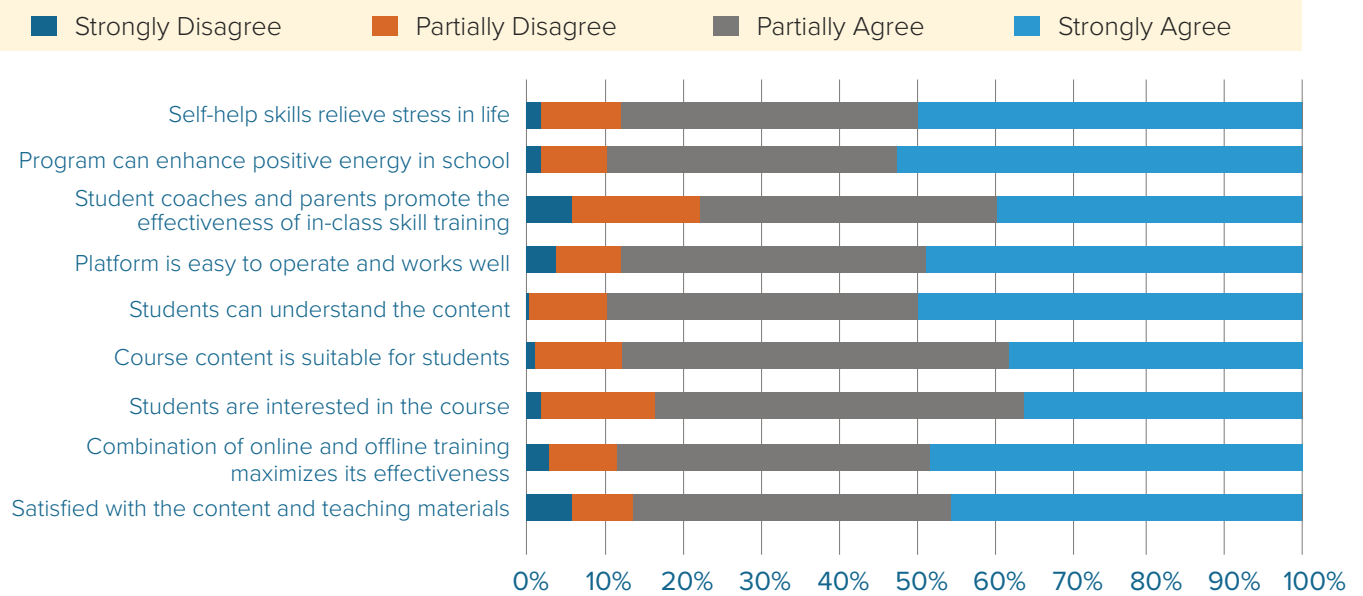


Teacher Feedback

Among teachers who participated in YCP from 2017-2020, the mean scores on the Teacher Program Feedback Questionnaire ranged from a low of 2.10 (“Student coaches and parents promote the effectiveness of in-class skill training”) to a high of 2.42 (“Program can enhance positive energy in school”). The mean score for all items was greater than 2, indicating a mean

response between “Partially Agree” and “Strongly Agree.” Most teachers reported partially agreeing or strongly agreeing with all questionnaire items, ranging from a low of 76% (“Student coaches and parents promote the effectiveness of in-class skill training”) to a high of 90% (“Students can understand the content”).

Teacher Evaluation Responses, 3 Year (n=295)



“ Students are very excited to participate in this course because there are many opportunities to do exercises. They are interested in this learning skill and their learning motivation is stronger. Also, after listening to some stories or life examples, they were very willing to share and demonstrate their own life experiences to their classmates. I think it is very good.”

—Teacher Participant



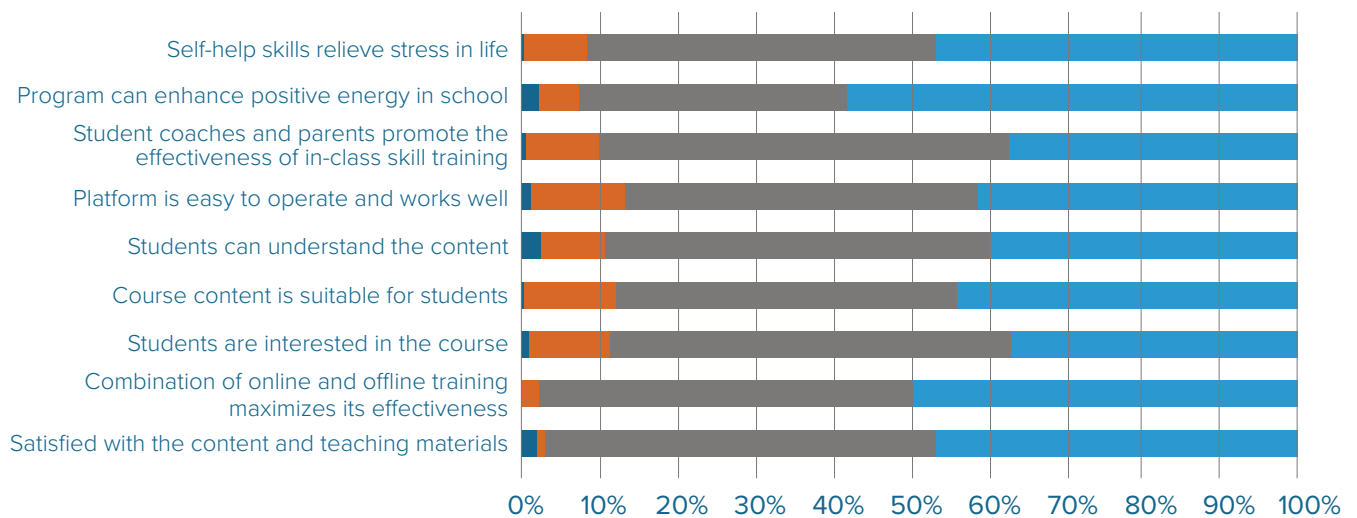
Parent Feedback

Among parents of students who participated in the YCP from 2017-2020, the mean scores on the Parent Program Assessment Questionnaire ranged from a low of 2.23 (“Students are interested in the course”) to a high of 2.48 (“Program can enhance positive energy in school”). The mean score for all items was greater than 2, indicating a mean response between

“Partially Agree” and “Strongly Agree.” Most parents reported partially agreeing or strongly agreeing with all questionnaire items, ranging from a low of 87% (“Students can understand the content”) to a high of 96% (“Combination of online and offline training maximizes its effectiveness”).

Parent Evaluation Responses, 3 Year (n=523)

Strongly Disagree Partially Disagree Partially Agree Strongly Agree



Over 90% of parents and teachers indicated being satisfied with the course content.

In addition, over 90% of parents and teachers felt that self-help skills relieve stress in life and the program generates positive energy in school.

Evaluation Limitations

Approximately 1,500 pre- and post-assessments were administered using paper surveys, which may have resulted in data entry errors. These surveys did not contain a User ID and could not be used for matched-pair analyses.

During the 2019-2020 school year, Covid-19 may have resulted in program modifications and/or decreases in

program fidelity, for the offline (classroom-based) training components. In addition, students may have reported lower levels of well-being because of the social, mental health, financial, and other impacts of Covid-19. As a result, the findings from the 2019-2020 school year should be interpreted with some caution.



Recommendations

Overall, the program has shown to be effective in providing an understanding and motivation to physical and mental well-being. Even with the seen effectiveness, there is always room for improvement. The following are recommendations that emerged from reviewing the data and will be considered to strengthen YCP.

Planning, Implementation, and Collaboration

- + Embed YCP in the school curriculum to improve sustainable efforts in the schools.
- + Engage more schools in the refinement of program materials to get buy-in and more accurately align resources to student and teachers' needs.
- + Collaborate with local funders and education system to encourage their meaningful support of the initiative in the form of funding and sponsorships.
- + Examine the pre-test and post-test items that were not statistically significant and assess whether the YCP lessons and offline training include sufficient instruction in these areas.

Data/Evaluation

- + Examine the effects of COVID-19 in the interpretation of the 2019-2020 school year results.
- + Streamline all data collection efforts to online instead of paper surveys. This eliminates the administrative task of data entry, reduces the likelihood of data entry errors, and allows survey results to be linked to the User ID field (allows for matched records).
- + Consider additional quantitative data collection activities to assess training workshops (i.e., changes in teachers' awareness, knowledge, and understanding of student wellness topics, and teachers' readiness to adopt a self-help curriculum and collecting information on the Little Ambassador and Little Coach program (i.e.,

number of students who “graduate” to each level and interpersonal and outreach skills gained).

- + Implementing further qualitative components of the evaluation, including conducting interviews with school principals/leaders around the school-wide impact and including open-ended feedback in assessments.

Funding

- + Receiving funds to provide schools the ability to implement the program.
- + Allocating funding to further assess the impact of the program.
- + Continue to provide the program free of cost to schools.

Communication/Marketing

- + Improve the visibility of YCP via traditional and social media so that the schools can better access programming and resources.
- + Improve information sharing including findings of impact of program on students with school partners.

Conclusion

Students engaged in YCP had positive outcomes in physical and mental health and prosocial skills. More than 5,000 students from 25 schools participated in the program. In addition, there has been an increase from four schools to 25 schools since the start of the program, with parents and teachers feeling satisfied and acknowledging the benefits of the program. This program brings a valuable resource to assist schools in supports students’ mental wellness. UpPotential is looking forward to growing the success of YCP and scaling to more schools. This report of initial findings will be used as part of the planning and scaling as it identifies both the successes and challenges for YCP.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO EXPANDING YCP AND CONTINUING TO INCREASE OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH IN HONG KONG.



The Center for
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About CHHCS

The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools (CHHCS) is a nonpartisan policy, resource, and technical assistance center with a history of developing school-connected strategies to break down barriers and improve health and education outcomes for children. Our mission is to advance policies, systems, and environments to build and sustain strategies that bridge health and learning for all students through multi-sector and school-connected approaches. www.healthinschools.org



Endnotes

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- 12 Note: During the 2019-2020 school year, COVID-19 (coronavirus) may have resulted in program modifications and/or decreases in program fidelity, in particular for the in-school, classroom-based training components. In addition, students may have reported lower levels of well-being because of the social, mental health, financial, and other impacts of COVID-19. As a result, the findings from the 2019-2020 school year should be interpreted cautiously.
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