

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to publish our Spring newsletter for the Maytiv Center, at the School of Psychology in the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya (IDC). In this issue we are proud to present a summary of research results from two multi-year evaluation studies conducted on Maytiv's intervention programs in Israeli schools. We hope you enjoy, and feel free to send us your comments. The Maytiv Center team.

Registration has opened for schools that are interested in Maytiv's Positive Psychology School Intervention Program for 2013- 2014. Interested educators, heads of school, or teachers can [learn more](#) about the program or view our [syllabus](#).

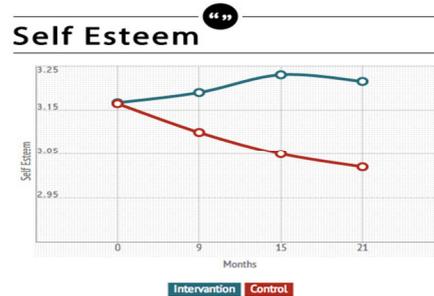
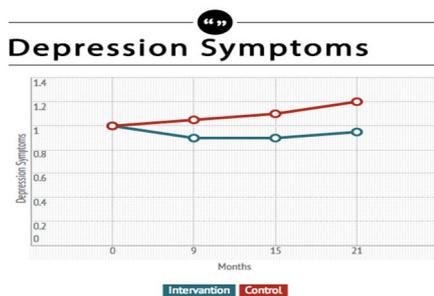
Maytiv's Inspiring Research Results

Dr. Anat Shoshani and Dr. Sarit Guttman-Steinmetz

In the next few weeks a research report will be published. The report summarizes the findings of two wide-ranging research assessments that accompanied the implementation of the Maytiv Center's intervention programs at schools from 2010 to 2012. The studies examined the impact of the intervention program on pupils that participated in the program, and compared these pupils to a control group of pupils who did not participate in the program. The control group was of the same age and from the same background as those who participated in the program.

The research findings demonstrated a clear correlation between participation in the intervention program and **lower levels of emotional distress**, which were expressed in a significant **decrease in symptoms of depression, anxiety and general distress**. By contrast the control group displayed an increase in symptoms of depression and general distress over time. In addition, significant correlation was found between participation in the program and **a rise in positive emotions and optimism, improved self-image, and improved sense of self-efficacy**. Furthermore, pupils that participated in the intervention program demonstrated a significant **rise in the degree they invested in their studies, their emotional connection to the school, and the level of their academic achievements**, as expressed in a clear rise in their grade point averages. Finally, among those who participated in the program, there was a significant **decrease in reports of violent incidents** and an increased sense of feeling protected at school.

In addition, pupils and teachers reported a more **positive educational atmosphere in the school**. The significant impact of the intervention program on the lives of pupils and teachers demonstrates the advantages of integrating elements from the positive psychology approach into the educational system, both formally and informally.



A Festive Evening for School Teams at the IDC

On January Maytiv invited all school staffs who are participating in the intervention program to a festive evening.

The evening, hosted by the Bracha Foundation and the IDC, was convened on the IDC campus.

The purpose of the evening was to empower teachers and educational staff regarding their important, challenging and wearisome roles as educators.

At the beginning of the evening a few toasts were shared by Mario Mikulincer, Dean of the Psychology school at the IDC; Dr. Tali Yariv Mishal CEO of Bracha Foundation and Dr. Anat Shoshani, Academic Director of Maytiv. After, a fascinating lecture by Dr. Tal Ben Shahar, Chairman of Maytiv, about the Positivity Ratio and other scientific indices that can improve our mental and emotional wellbeing. The Maytiv team took the opportunity to thank the schools for choosing the Maytiv's intervention program.



Maytiv's Educational Intervention Program– Impressions From Schools

As described in the last newsletter, Maytiv trainers are conducting intervention programs for teachers in over 10 schools across the country this academic year. The teachers also received tools to transfer the intervention program content to their students. In this manner thousands of students are exposed to Positive Psychology materials each year.

Below are quotes from teachers about their impressions and experiences during the intervention program:

* As a mother of a 12 year old daughter who suffers from Cerebral Palsy, I often asked myself these inevitable questions: why has this happened to me? How do I cope? Is there any point to living in this condition? How can one live like that? Will I ever be happy?...and so on. I *chose* to cope. The program encouraged me to share, talk, feel and perceive these emotions, to accept what happened to my daughter and yet manage a full life – travel, go places, enjoy being with my husband, preserve my marriage, enjoy my two other children and feel - beside the pain, sadness, frustration and disappointment - the moments of happiness, laughter, hanging out, working, teaching and so on.



* A major part of my decision to participate in this program was my need, on a personal level, to make a change. I felt how this program taught me to look at my life in a more positive way. For example, it helped me to make my 15-year-old daughter believe in her strengths, to fulfill them and to understand that bad feelings are also permitted. This is part of being human.

* In the program we felt like a family. There was a listening ear, sharing, friendship and honesty. I enjoyed myself. It paved a way for me to talk about things that were never spoken about before, because I did not feel comfortable discussing them. The program has helped to ease pressure, encourage thoughtfulness, and open hearts.

* The meetings taught me how to help any child in class find his inner strengths, and how to expand the use of these powers. This work fills the children and me with optimism and hope

* I am a special education teacher for fifth and sixth graders. The students look forward to the Positive Psychology lesson; they remember when it is and ask for it. During the week they also often asked me to remind them about something we talked about on positive thinking. One of the achievements I think was that one student, who is very shy and emotionally blocked, one that usually sits quietly and never participates in class, agreed to open up and shared an experience he had.

Positive City- Positive Psychology on a Citywide Level

The Maytiv team is currently working on recruiting new schools for the next academic year. Until now Maytiv's intervention program has been applied in specific schools across the country, thus the impact of the program has been confined to the local school level. This year, Maytiv will launch a new project called **Positive City** in selected cities in Israel. The purpose of the Positive City project is to manage the intervention program on a citywide level that includes all elementary, middle and high schools in a municipality. The first city that chose to participate in the new project is the city of **Bat Yam**. The citywide perspective will enable Maytiv to expand the program's impact from Bat Yam schools to the whole community; and from the micro level that deals with individual change, to the macro level that deals with change in schools, families, communities and the city itself. Besides imparting the positive psychology curriculum to teachers and students in Bat Yam, students will be involved in projects to benefit the community, and there will be cooperation between schools in the city. Students' parents will be invited to lectures on positive psychology and will participate in the school's initiatives in this area. Maytiv will work with the social and education departments in the city municipality to plan



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