

# Hope Research

## *(Hope Foundation of Alberta)*

Ongoing work at the Hope Foundation, a research institute located at the University of Alberta, demonstrates that hope is a multidimensional concept that enables individuals to envision and actively move toward a more positive future. Hope is the motivating factor behind resilience. Having a high level of hope correlates positively with a greater sense of self-worth, academic success, social competence and creativity. Students who have a high degree of hope tend to have strong problem-solving abilities and engage in wellness-enhancing activities. On the other hand, hopelessness is the greatest predictor of suicide.

Hope is enhanced, sustained and learned in trusting relationships with significant others. It is about goal setting and attainment; therefore, it is both a process and an outcome. Hope is a crucial therapeutic factor that encourages people to think about possibilities and solve problems creatively. This attitude and way of thinking can help individuals take more positive actions during times of adversity.

Schools can help students develop a stronger understanding and sense of hope by:

- integrating hope-focused strategies into learning activities; e.g., developing personal Hope Kits that represent a student's ongoing hopes
- using hopeful words and phrases such as "What is the smallest thing we can do ...?" or "What would a hopeful person do in this situation?"
- providing opportunities for reflection
- implementing assessment and evaluation strategies that encourage students and promote feelings of hopefulness
- increasing service learning opportunities that incorporate hope-focused activities; e.g., HOPE KIDS™
- incorporating story and writing themes that provide opportunities for students to explore and reflect on hopeful ways of thinking and acting.

### Contact information

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### Related publication

Jevne, R. F. and J. E. Miller, *Finding Hope: Ways to See Life in a Brighter Light*. Fort Wayne, IN: Willowgreen Publishing, 1999.