

LEA WATERS PhD

PSYCHOLOGIST | RESEARCHER | SPEAKER | AUTHOR

BULLETS

Lea Waters, PhD

- University researcher who turns her science into strength-based strategies to help people thrive.
- One of the world's leading experts on Positive Education, Positive Organizations and Strength-Based Parenting and Teaching.
- Psychologist, researcher and [TEDx speaker](#).
- Board Member and 2017-2019 President of the [International Positive Psychology Association](#) (IPPA).
- Professor and Founding Director of the [Centre for Positive Psychology](#) at the University of Melbourne.
- Serves on the World Happiness Council's Council of Happiness & Education.
- Author of [The Strength Switch](#) which was named one of the [top reads for 2017](#) by *Greater Good Magazine*—one of the [top five best books on happiness for children](#) by *Five Books*, and was the top new release in the parenting category on Amazon. *The Strength Switch* has been translated into Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese, Japanese, Hungarian, Arabic, Russian, Spanish and French.
- Has published more than 100 scientific journal articles.
- Holds affiliate positions at Cambridge University's [Well-being Institute](#) and the University of Michigan's [Center for Positive Organizations](#). Lea also holds a position on the Science Board of the University of California, Berkeley's [Greater Good Science Center](#).
- Founder of [Visible Wellbeing](#), a social enterprise that helps educators foster positive education in their schools, and [The Strength Switch](#), which offers parents and educators free resources to better build the strengths of young people as well as a five-week online course of parents.
- Co-director of [The Strengths Exchange](#), which brings together stories of character strengths from children, teens and parents across the world
- Ambassador for the [Positive Education Schools Association](#) (PESA).
- Patron of [Flourishing Education Japan](#).
- Featured in the ABC TV documentary Revolution School, *The Atlantic*, *The Washington Post*, *TIME*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Guardian* and *Success Magazine*.

50 WORD COUNT

Lea Waters, PhD

Lea Waters, PhD is one of the world's leading experts on Positive Education, Positive Organizations and Strength-Based Parenting and Teaching. Lea is the founding director of the [Centre for Positive Psychology](#) at the University of Melbourne and a Board Member and the 2017-2019 President [International Positive Psychology Association](#). Lea turns her science into strength-based strategies to help people thrive.

100 WORD COUNT

Lea Waters, PhD

Lea Waters, PhD is a psychologist, researcher, speaker and author. She's one of the world's leading experts on Positive Education, Positive Organizations, and Strength-Based Parenting and Teaching. As a University researcher, Lea turns her science into strength-based strategies to help organizations, educators and parents around the world build resilience in their employees and children, helping them to thrive. Lea is the founding director of the [Centre for Positive Psychology](#) at the University of Melbourne and Board Member and the 2017-2019 President of the [International Positive Psychology Association](#). She is the author of [*The Strength Switch*](#). Lea's work has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Guardian*, and more.

BIO - 300 WORD COUNT

Lea Waters, PhD

Lea Waters, PhD is one of the world's leading experts on Positive Education, Positive Organizations and Strength-Based Parenting and Teaching. As a University researcher, Lea turns her science into strength-based strategies to help organizations, educators and parents around the world build resilience in their employees and children, helping them to thrive.

Lea is a Board Member and the 2017-2019 President of the [International Positive Psychology Association \(IPPA\)](#), serves on the World Happiness Council's Council of Happiness & Education, and is the founding Director of the [Centre for Positive Psychology](#) at the University of Melbourne, where she's worked for more than 20 years.

Lea helps parents, educators and organizations make a small switch that makes a big difference in overall wellbeing.

As humans, we're wired to focus on the negative and zoom in on what's "off." Lea proposes a better way for doing things. She says we can short-circuit our negative defaults by making a mental switch that flicks to shift our attention from weaknesses to strengths, and from negative to positive.

In her book, [*The Strength Switch*](#), Lea says that the strength-based approach gives us the power to live the good life by drawing on our most abundant inner resources (our strengths!) *The Strength Switch* was named one of the [top reads for 2017](#) by *Greater Good Magazine*, one of the [top five best books on happiness for children](#) by *Five Books*, the top new release in the parenting category on Amazon, and has been translated into Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese, Japanese, Hungarian, Arabic, Russian, Spanish and French.

Lea is passionate about helping people all over the world make the Strength Switch. Lea's [*Visible Wellbeing*](#) and [*The Strength Switch*](#) programs are being used by schools and parents worldwide.

Lea has been featured in *The Atlantic*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Guardian*, and more. As a researcher, she's published more than 100 scientific journal articles.

Lea's top strengths include: humor, curiosity and kindness.

FULL BIO - FOR PITCHING

Lea Waters, PhD

Lea is one of the world's leading experts on Positive Education, Positive Organizations and Strength-Based Parenting and Teaching. As a University researcher, Lea turns her science into strength-based strategies to help organizations, educators and parents around the world build resilience in their employees and children, helping them to thrive.

Lea is a Board Member and the 2017-2019 President of the [International Positive Psychology Association \(IPPA\)](#), serves on the World Happiness Council's Council of Happiness & Education, and is the founding Director of the [Centre for Positive Psychology](#) at the University of Melbourne, where she's worked for more than 20 years.

Lea helps parents, educators and organizations make a small switch that makes a big difference in overall wellbeing.

As humans, we're wired to focus on the negative and zoom in on what's "off" — which can be hugely helpful when your life's at stake, but for most of us, it's a survival mechanism that's outdated, and doing more harm than good. Lea proposes a better way for doing things. She says we can short-circuit our negative defaults by making a mental switch that flicks to shift our attention from weaknesses to strengths, and from the negative to positive news around us.

In her TEDx talk, [Warning: Being Positive Is Not For The Faint Hearted](#), Lea explores how we can spread positive messages in an effort to override the dominant message of fear and scarcity and make a collective difference in the world by spreading hope and happiness.

In her book, [The Strength Switch](#), Lea says that the strength-based approach gives us the power to live the good life by drawing on our most abundant inner resources (our strengths!) When we use the strength-based approach with children, they internalize the idea that they have strengths, and they learn to use them to take charge of their life.

Three decades of research clearly show the advantages of taking a strength-based approach for children and adults alike, including: great levels of happiness and engagement, better work performance, increased levels of self-esteem, and enhanced ability to cope with stress and adversity.

Lea is passionate about helping people all over the world make the Strength Switch.

Lea has worked with the Chinese International School in Hong Kong, Ridley College in Canada, and Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School in the U.S., as well as hundreds of schools in Australia. She holds affiliate positions at Cambridge University's [Well-being Institute](#) and the University of Michigan's [Center for Positive Organizations](#). Lea also holds a position on the Science Board of The University of California, Berkeley's [Greater Good Science Center](#); and has spoken at the European Positive Psychology Conference, the Mexican Conference on Happiness and the International Positive Education's World Congress, to name few. Lea is also the Patron of [Flourishing Education Japan](#).

Lea's [Visible Wellbeing](#) program is being used by schools in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand, United Arab Emirates and Australia.

Lea's book *The Strength Switch* has been translated into Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese, Japanese, Hungarian, Arabic, Russian, Spanish and French. It was also named one of the [top reads for 2017](#) by *Greater Good Magazine*, one of the [top five best books on happiness for children](#) by *Five Books*, and was the top new release in the parenting category on Amazon.

Lea was featured in the ABC TV documentary Revolution School, and has been featured in *The Atlantic*, *The Washington Post*, *TIME*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Guardian* and *Success Magazine*. As a researcher, she's published more than 100 scientific journal articles.

In 2015, Lea was listed as one of Australia's Top 100 Women of Influence by the *Australian Financial Review* and Westpac.

Lea's top strengths include: humor, curiosity and kindness. She lives with her husband and two children in Melbourne, Australia.

FULL BIO – CREDENTIALS

Lea Waters, PhD

[Lea Waters, PhD](#) is an Australian academic, researcher, psychologist, author and speaker who specializes in positive education, parenting and organizations.

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY EXPERT AND EDUCATOR

Professor Waters is a Professor in Psychology at the [Centre for Positive Psychology](#), Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne. She is the first Australian to be appointed a Professorship in Positive Psychology, the Founding Director of the Centre for Positive Psychology and the Inaugural Gerry Higgin Chair in Positive Psychology. She is a researcher and has held an academic position at the University of Melbourne for more than 20 years. Lea holds affiliate positions at Cambridge University's [Well-being Institute](#) and the University of Michigan's [Center for Positive Organizations](#). She also holds a position on the Science Board of The University of California, Berkeley's [Greater Good Science Center](#).

Lea is a Board Member and the 2017-2019 President of the [International Positive Psychology Association](#) (IPPA) and serves on the Council of Happiness and Education for the [World Happiness Council](#). She is a registered psychologist (AHPRA) and a full member of the Australian Psychological Society. She is on the Advisory Board for the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, Ambassador for the Positive Education Schools Association and Patron for [Flourishing Education Japan](#).

SPEAKER

Lea's TEDx talk, [*Warning: Being positive is not for the faint hearted!*](#), explores how, with small positive steps, we can make a huge impact on our wellbeing. Her keynotes and talks offer her audience a unique blend of science and practice. Past clients have included: Metrorail, Merrill Lynch, Marriage and Relationship Educators Australia, International Positive Education Association, International Positive Psychology Association, Academy of Management, International Conference on the Science of Happiness, Chinese International School of Hong Kong, Canadian Positive Psychology Association, Mexican National Conference on Happiness and New Zealand Association of Positive Psychology.

RESEARCHER AND AUTHOR

Lea has published more than 100 [scientific journal articles and book chapters](#). Her first book, [*The Strength Switch: How The New Science Of Strength-Based Parenting Can Help Your Child and Your Teen To Flourish*](#), was released May 2017 (Avery/The Penguin Group). *The Strength Switch* was named one of the [top reads for 2017](#) by *Greater Good Magazine*, one of the [top five best books on happiness for children](#) by *Five Books*, and was the top new release in the parenting category on Amazon. *The Strength Switch* has been translated into Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese, Japanese, Hungarian, Arabic, Russian, Spanish and French.

AWARDS AND HONORS

In 2015, Professor Waters was listed as one of Australia's Top 100 Women of Influence by the *Australian Financial Review* and Westpac Bank. She has been listed in the *Marquis Who's Who in the World* since 2009 and has been included in the 2017 edition of *Who's Who of Australian Women*. A gifted teacher and facilitator, Lea has been awarded many International and National Teaching Awards including the Management Educator of the Year Award (2004) by the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management and two National Teaching Excellence Awards from the Australian Government (2008, 2011).

MEDIA

Lea was featured in the ABC TV documentary *Revolution School*, *TEN National News* and *Nine Today Extra Morning Show*. She is frequently featured in print including *The Atlantic*, *The Washington Post*, *TIME.com*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Guardian*, Toronto's *The Globe and Mail*, *Educational Review*, *Professional Educator*, *Global Thrive*, *Success Magazine*, *Tec Review*, *Live Happy Magazine*, *The Australian*, *Herald Sun*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *MindFood Magazine*, *KidSpot Magazine*, *Fernwood Magazine*, and the *Australian Education Leader*. A regular on radio, Lea has been on *Trending Today USA - USA Radio Network*, *In the Moment - South Dakota Public Radio* (NPR/PBS affiliate), *MI Morning Show - WGVU-FM* (NPR affiliate), *Troy Public Radio* (NPR affiliate), *Live Matters - ABC National*, *Big Ideas - Radio National*, *The Breakfast Show - 2DayFM*, *Afternoons - ABC Melbourne* and *Statewide Afternoons - ABC Radio Sydney*.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Lea is the Director of three education programs and projects. Her [Visible Wellbeing](#) initiative is being used in schools across Australia, North America, Asia and New Zealand in both the State and Independent Education systems. [The Strengths Exchange](#) (Co-Director with Lara Mossman) brings together stories of character strengths from children, teenagers and parents across different countries to encourage families to start conversations about the strengths within them. Her

newest program, [The Strength Switch](#), offers parents and educators free resources to better build the strengths of young people as well as a five-week online course for parents.

