

Strength-Based Parenting: Small Shifts Can Make a Positive Difference in Your Kids

Parenting is simultaneously the most joyous and stressful role. It is overwhelming not only due to the pressure we face juggling work and family but also due to the burdens our children face – intense academic pressures, social media, cyberbullying, self-harm trends, alcohol, teen suicide and so on. The temptation is to pull our kids close to protect them...maybe even over-protect them.

But we can't be there for our kids all the time – it's exhausting, it's practically impossible, and it's not effective in the end. Not to mention the fact that our kids don't want us to be there all the time. They need their space just like we do. We can't always protect our kids from the outside world, but we can build them up from the inside and make them psychologically strong.

So, what does that look like? This is a question I've been driving by, both as a mother and as a psychologist, for the past 15 years. What my research shows is that you can build inner resilience in your kids by helping them to see and use their own strengths to navigate life's challenges.

In fact, my published research has shown that Strength-Based Parenting is linked to:

- Higher levels of life satisfaction, self-efficacy, and positive emotions.
- Lower levels of depression and anxiety.
- Better ability to cope with friendship issues and homework challenges *and* better grades.

This keynote weaves together science and stories to provide the audience with an understanding of taking a strength-based approach to parenting. Why it is important. How they can become more strength-based and what benefits they can expect for their kids and themselves.

CORE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- The three elements that make up a true strength.
- How to deal with weakness and problem-behavior in more constructive ways.
- How to more easily and consistently spot strengths in their children.

FORMAT: 60-minute keynote.

IDEAL AUDIENCES: Parents, teachers, family therapists, or anyone working with children, parents and families.

WHAT MAKES THIS PRESENTATION UNIQUE: Lea offers her audience a unique blend of science and practice. As a leading positive psychology researcher and president of the International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA), Lea is deeply active in the science. Her warm, personal style, practical way of thinking and her work with schools and parents mean she is able to translate the science to make it real and actionable for her audience.

"Lea's authenticity, honesty, humor and humility, complemented by her unquestionable leading expertise in this field, enables her to skillfully connect to parents, truly making her a beacon of hope and meaningful change."

— **Laura Allison, Director of Wellbeing, Registered Psychologist, PLC School, Perth, Australia**

ABOUT LEA:

[Lea Waters](#), PhD is a professor, published author, psychologist, internationally-celebrated speaker and one of the world's leading experts on Positive Education, Positive Organizations and Strength-Based Parenting and Teaching.

Professor Waters is the Founding Director and Inaugural Gerry Higgins Chair in Positive Psychology at the Centre for Positive Psychology, [University of Melbourne](#) where she has held an academic position for more than 23 years. Lea holds affiliate positions at Cambridge University and the University of Michigan and serves on the [Scientific Board at Berkeley University's](#) Greater Good Science Center. Lea is the 2017-2019 President of the International Positive Psychology Association, serves on the Council of Happiness and Education for the [World Happiness Council](#), is the Patron of Flourishing Education Japan and Ambassador for the Positive Education Schools Association.

As a researcher, she has published over 100 scientific articles and book chapters.

Her book, [The Strength Switch: How The New Science of Strength-Based Parenting Can Help Your Child and Your Teen to Flourish](#), was the top release on Amazon in the parenting category, was listed as one of the [top reads for 2017](#) by Berkeley University's Greater Good Center and was listed in the Top Five Books on Happiness for Children in the UK's Top Five site. It has been translated into Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, Hungarian, Arabic, Russian, French, and Spanish.

In 2015, Professor Waters was listed as one of Australia's [Top 100 Women of Influence](#) by the Financial Review and Westpac Bank. She has been listed in the Marques 'Who's Who in the World' since 2009 and was included in the 2017 edition of Who's Who of Australian Women.

Lea is committed to spreading the science of positive psychology as widely as possible and has been featured on *Morning Dose* (The CW, Dallas, TX, USA), *Revolution School* (ABC, Australia), *Matter of Fact* (ABC, Australia), *Destination Happiness* (Channel Nine, Australia), *Today Extra* (Channel Nine, Australia), *National Nightly News* (Channel Ten, Australia), *The Project* (TV3, New Zealand), *The Café* (NZTV, New Zealand), *Breakfast* (NZTV, New Zealand). Lea is also frequently featured in print media, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *TIME Magazine*, *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, *The Globe* (Toronto), *The Guardian* (UK), and *The Age* (Australia). Lea's TEDx talk, [Warning: Being positive is not for the faint hearted!](#) explores how small positive steps can make a big impact on the wellbeing of ourselves and others, has been viewed more than 118,000 times.

Lea is the founder of [Visible Wellbeing](#), an initiative that brings the science of wellbeing and learning to schools. Visible Wellbeing is being used in schools across Australia, Asia, Canada, New Zealand and United Arab Emirates. Her newest program, [The Strengths Switch](#), offers parents and educators free resources, online courses, and facilitated courses to better build the strengths of families across the globe.

