



SENSEABILITY

Professional Reading & References

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for SenseAbility and Sense of Belonging

The SenseAbility Suite takes a positive skill-building approach which aims to enhance or encourage good mental health, emotional wellbeing, and resilience in young people. The program is grounded in evidence-based cognitive-behavioural principles that regard thoughts as central in influencing our feelings and consequent behaviour. Assisting young people to develop skills in monitoring and challenging unhelpful thoughts is, therefore, a core component of the program. To read more about the research evidence for the importance of cognitive elements in mental health and emotional wellbeing see the references listed below.

SenseAbility is also supported by a range of literature and research that attests to the role of the Six Senses – Self-worth, Control, Belonging, Purpose, Future and Humour – as fundamental to building emotional wellbeing and resilience. Supporting young people to build or enhance these senses may be more important now than ever before. As Eckersley recently wrote, ‘while young people are materially better off . . . social and cultural changes have made it harder for them to develop a strong sense of identity, purpose, belonging and security: in short, to feel life is deeply meaningful and worthwhile’ (Eckersley, 2008, p.2).

Like the other senses, Sense of Belonging plays an important role in good mental health and wellbeing. A strong Sense of Belonging has been associated with school retention (Schlosser, 1992), better health (Ross, 2002), and job satisfaction (Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000). A small sample of research articles supporting the importance of Sense of Belonging is listed below. For those who would like to read more on the evidence supporting the other Senses, please see the individual sense modules.

Literature and research on cognitive-behavioural principles	References
A negative cognitive triad (negative view of the self, the world, and the future) is proposed to explain the development of depression and other mental health problems. Distorted or dysfunctional thinking is common to all psychological disturbance.	Beck, 1964, 1976, 1991
Adolescents with negative cognitions about themselves, their world, or the future were more vulnerable to depression.	Jaycox, Reivich, Gillham, & Seligman, 1994
Literature and research on positive psychology	
A collection of individual papers that cover many broad areas on topics such as identifying strengths and subjective wellbeing.	Snyder & Lopez, 2005
An introduction to the area of positive psychology. An evaluation of interventions in positive psychology.	Seligman et al., 2000, 2005
Literature and research on Sense of Belonging	
Proposed the ‘belongingness hypothesis’ – humans have a pervasive drive to form and maintain significant relationships and a sense of belonging is a buffer against loneliness.	Baumeister & Leary, 1995
Students’ sense of belonging in class was related to expectations of academic success, school grades, intrinsic interest in school work, teacher ratings of student effort, and engagement and persistence with difficult academic work.	Goodenow & Grady, 1993
Sense of belonging among first-year university students was predictive of academic persistence and retention.	Hausmann, Schofield, & Woods, 2007
A strong sense of belonging to one’s church congregation was found to be associated with greater health satisfaction.	Krause & Wulff, 2005
Sense of belonging in school has been found to be a protective factor against drug abuse among adolescents.	Napoli, Marsiglia, & Kulis, 2003
Adolescents who reported a strong sense of belonging to their peer group exhibited significantly less internalising and externalising behaviours than peers who viewed their peer group as important but did not have a positive sense of peer group belonging.	Newman, Lohman, & Newman, 2007
University staff who reported a stronger sense of belonging to their work team exhibited lower work stress, lower perceived stress and better physical health than colleagues with a lower sense of belonging.	Oldfield, McLaren, & McLachlan, 2003
Sense of community belonging was positively associated with self-perceived health even after controlling for SES, health behaviours, stress, presence of chronic disease and other factors.	Ross, 2002
A vast body of research evidence supports the link between interpersonal relatedness and subjective wellbeing.	see Ryan & Deci, 2001, for a review
Students whose teachers placed greater emphasis on sense of belonging to school were more likely to continue in school.	Schlosser, 1992
Suggested reading	
‘Creating a Sense of Belonging to Build Safe Schools’	Edwards & Mullis, 2001
‘The positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing’	Noble & McGrath, 2008



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- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin, 117*, 497-529.
- Beck, A. T. (1964). Thinking and depression: II. Theory and therapy. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 10*, 561-571.
- Beck, A. T. (1976). *Cognitive therapy and the emotional disorders*. New York: International Universities Press.
- Beck, A. T. (1991). Cognitive therapy: A 30-year retrospective. *American Psychologist, 46*, 368-375.
- Eckersley, R. (2008). Never better – or getting worse? *The health and wellbeing of young Australians*. Canberra: Australia 21 Ltd.
- Edwards, D., & Mullis, F. (2001). Creating a sense of belonging to build safe schools. *The Journal of Individual Psychology, 57*(2), 196-203.
- Goodenow, C., & Grady, K. (1993). The relationship of school belonging and friends' values to academic motivation among urban adolescent students. *The Journal of Experimental Education, 62*, 60-71.
- Hausmann, L., Schofield, J., & Woods, R. (2007). Sense of belonging as a predictor of intentions to persist among African American and white first-year college students. *Research in Higher Education, 48*(7), 803-839.
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- Krause, N., & Wulff, K. M. (2005). Church-based social ties: A sense of belonging in a congregation and physical health status. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion, 15*(1), 73-93.
- Napoli, M., Marsiglia, F. F., & Kulis, S. (2003). Sense of belonging in school as a protective factor against drug abuse among Native American urban adolescents. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions, 3*(2), 25-41.
- Newman, B. M., Lohman, B. J., & Newman, P. R. (2007). Peer group membership and sense of belonging: Their relationship to adolescent behavior problems. *Adolescence, 42*(166), 241-263.
- Noble, T., & McGrath, H. (2008). The positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing. *Educational & Child Psychology, 25*(2), 119-134.
- Oldfield, S., McLaren, S., & McLachlan, A. J. (2003). Sense of belonging as a predictor of mental and physical health in regional university staff [Abstract]. *Australian Journal of Psychology, 55*(Suppl.), 201.
- Ross, N. (2002). Community belonging and health. *Health Reports/Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Health Information, 13*(3), 33-39.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology, 52*, 141-166.
- Schlosser, L. K. (1992). Teacher distance and student disengagement: School lives on the margin. *Journal of Teacher Education, 43*, 128-140.
- Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology. *American Psychologist, 55*(1) 5-14.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress. *American Psychologist, 60*(5) 410-421.
- Snyder, C. R. & Lopez, S. J. (2005). *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



for SenseAbility and Sense of Control

The SenseAbility Suite takes a positive skill-building approach which aims to enhance or encourage good mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience in young people. The program is grounded in evidence-based cognitive-behavioural principles that regard thoughts as central in influencing our feelings and consequent behaviour. Assisting young people to develop skills in monitoring and challenging unhelpful thoughts is, therefore, a core component of the program. In addition, the suite draws on the positive psychology literature and takes a strength-based approach that removes the focus from 'defects' and 'deficits' to the inherent qualities and skills that can be capitalised on. To read more about the research evidence for the importance of cognitive elements and positive psychology in mental health and emotional wellbeing see the references listed below.

SenseAbility is also supported by a range of literature and research that attests to the role of the six Senses – Self-worth, Control, Belonging, Purpose, Future and Humour – as fundamental to building emotional wellbeing and resilience. Supporting young people to build or enhance these senses may be more important now than ever before. As Eckersley recently wrote, 'while young people are materially better off . . . social and cultural changes have made it harder for them to develop a strong sense of identity, purpose, belonging and security: in short, to feel life is deeply meaningful and worthwhile' (Eckersley, 2008, p.5).

Like the other Senses, Sense of Control plays an important role in good mental health and wellbeing. A healthy Sense of Control has been associated with better health (Lachman & Weaver, 1998; Marmot, et al. 1997) and school retention (Lewis, Ross & Mirowsky, 1999), and is protective against the effects of stress (Ollfors & Andersson, 2007) and depression (Chou & Chi, 2001). A small sample of research articles supporting the importance of Sense of Control is listed below. For those who would like to read more on the evidence supporting the other Senses, please see the individual Sense modules.

Literature and research on cognitive-behavioural principles	References
A negative cognitive triad (negative view of the self, the world, and the future) is proposed to explain the development of depression and other mental health problems. Distorted or dysfunctional thinking is common to all psychological disturbance.	Beck, 1964, 1976, 1991
Adolescents with negative cognitions about themselves, their world, or the future were more vulnerable to depression.	Jaycox, Reivich, Gillham, & Seligman, 1994
Literature and research on positive psychology	
A collection of individual papers that cover many broad areas on topics such as identifying strengths and subjective wellbeing.	Snyder & Lopez, 2005
An introduction to the area of positive psychology. An evaluation of interventions in positive psychology.	Seligman et al., 2000, 2005
Literature and research on Sense of Control	
In a study of people 60 years and older, a strong Sense of Control was found to be a protective factor against depression following stressful life events, even after controlling for socio-demographics and health status.	Chou & Chi, 2001
Higher Sense of Control was associated with higher life satisfaction, better perceived health and lower depression in three large samples of American adults. Sense of Control also moderated the effects of low income on health and wellbeing.	Lachman & Weaver, 1998
Increasing the level of control over day-to-day activities for residents in a nursing home led to improvement in alertness, active participation and a general sense of wellbeing.	Langer & Rodin, 1976
In a large longitudinal study following young Americans from age 14 to 22, low Sense of Control was associated with increased risk of dropping out of school and early non-marital pregnancy.	Lewis et al., 1999
In a study of 7,372 British workers, a low Sense of Control at work was associated with significantly higher risk of developing coronary heart disease.	Marmot et al., 1997
In a study of coping with academic stress in high school students, of the female students who reported high academic stress levels, those with lower Senses of Control experienced more somatic symptoms such as headache, stomach-ache and feelings of nervousness.	Ollfors & Andersson, 2007
A sense of personal control is associated with positive emotions, activation of problem-solving and attention to solutions in challenging situations, reduction in anxiety in the face of stress, and acts as a buffer against the physiological effects of stress.	Thompson, 2005
Suggested reading	
'The positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing.'	Noble & McGrath, 2008

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- Beck, A. T. (1964). Thinking and depression: II. Theory and therapy. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 10, 561–571.
- Beck, A. T. (1976). *Cognitive therapy and the emotional disorders*. New York: International Universities Press.
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- Chou, K., & Chi, I. (2001). Stressful life events and depressive symptoms: Social support and sense of control as mediators or moderators? *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 52(2), 155–171.
- Eckersley, R. (2008). *Never better – or getting worse? The health and wellbeing of young Australians*. Canberra: Australia 21 Ltd.
- Jaycox, L. H., Reivich, K. J., Gillham, J., & Seligman, M. E. P. (1994). Prevention of depressive symptoms in school children. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 32, 801–816.
- Lachman, M. E., & Weaver, S. L. (1998). The sense of control as a moderator of social class differences in health and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(3), 763–773.
- Langer, E. J., & Rodin, J. (1976). The effects of choice and enhanced personal responsibility for the aged: A field experiment in an institutional setting. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 34(2), 191–198.
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- Noble, T., & McGrath, H. (2008). The positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing. *Educational & Child Psychology*, 25(2), 119–134.
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- Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress. *American Psychologist*, 60(5) 410–421.
- Snyder, C. R. & Lopez, S. J. (2005). *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Thompson, S. C. (2005). The role of personal control in adaptive functioning. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 202–213). New York: Oxford University Press (US).

for SenseAbility and Sense of Future

The SenseAbility Suite takes a positive skill-building approach which aims to enhance or encourage good mental health, emotional wellbeing, and resilience in young people. The program is grounded in evidence-based cognitive-behavioural principles that regard thoughts as central in influencing our feelings and consequent behaviour. Assisting young people to develop skills in monitoring and challenging unhelpful thoughts is, therefore, a core component of the program. In addition, the series draws on the positive psychology literature and takes a strength-based approach that removes the focus from 'defects' and 'deficits' and focuses instead on the inherent qualities and skills that can be capitalised on. To read more about the research evidence for the importance of cognitive elements and positive psychology in mental health and emotional wellbeing, see the references listed below.

SenseAbility is also supported by a range of literature and research that attests to the role of the six senses – Self-worth, Control, Belonging, Purpose, Future and Humour – as fundamental to building emotional wellbeing and resilience. Supporting young people to build or enhance these senses may be more important now than ever before. As Eckersley recently wrote, 'while young people are materially better off . . . social and cultural changes have made it harder for them to develop a strong sense of identity, purpose, belonging and security: in short, to feel life is deeply meaningful and worthwhile' (Eckersley, 2008, p.5).

Like the other Senses, Sense of Future plays an important role in good mental health and wellbeing. A strong Sense of Future has been associated with more positive wellbeing (Sohl & Moyer, 2009), educational outcomes (Hass & Graydon, 2009; Snyder et al., 1991), and psychological adjustment (Seginer, 2009; Snyder et al., 1991). A small sample of research articles supporting the importance of Sense of Future is listed below. For those who would like to read more on the evidence supporting the other Senses, please see the individual Sense Modules.

Literature and research on cognitive-behavioural principles	References
A negative cognitive triad (negative view of the self, the world, and the future) is proposed to explain the development of depression and other mental health problems. Distorted or dysfunctional thinking is common to all psychological disturbance.	Beck, 1964, 1976, 1991
Adolescents with negative cognitions about themselves, their world, or the future were more vulnerable to depression.	Jaycox, Reivich, Gillham, & Seligman, 1994
Literature and research on positive psychology	
A collection of individual papers that cover many broad areas on topics such as identifying strengths and subjective wellbeing.	Snyder & Lopez, 2005
An introduction to the area of positive psychology. An evaluation of interventions in positive psychology.	Seligman et al., 2000, 2005
Literature and research on Sense of Future	
An unrealistic, negative attitude toward the future has been found to be associated with depression. Hopelessness is also more predictive of suicidal intent than depression.	Beck, Weissman, Lester, & Trexler, 1974
Optimism (an overall expectancy that the future will work out favourably) is associated with effective motivational strategies and contributes to happiness and success in life.	Burnette, 2007
Optimism is related to indicators of better physical health, more persistence in educational efforts, and better subjective wellbeing in times of adversity.	Carver, Scheier, & Segerstrom, 2010
Optimism in middle-aged adults was found to be associated with life satisfaction and was protective against depression.	Chang & Sanna, 2001
Having a strong Sense of Future and goals were linked to completion of post-secondary education in foster youth.	Hass & Graydon, 2009
Adolescents' future orientation influences capacity for intimacy, outcomes at school, and adjustment into adult life.	Seginer, 2009
Hope (comprising the willpower to reach goals as well as the ability to develop multiple ways to obtain them) has been associated with academic success, athletic performance, psychological adjustment, and physical health in students.	Snyder et al., 1991
In a study of 281 university undergraduates, a strong sense of optimism and positively-focused striving for goals were strongly predictive of wellbeing, whereas preventive coping (focusing on preventing negative events) was not linked with wellbeing.	Sohl & Moyer, 2009
Positive expectations for the future are a protective factor for sex risk behaviour and are associated with fewer sex partners among homeless youth.	Tevendale, Lightfoot, & Slocum, 2009
Suggested reading	
'Promoting hope: Suggestions for school counsellors'	Pedrotti, Edwards, & Lopez, 2008

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- Beck, A. T. (1964). Thinking and depression: II. Theory and therapy. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, *10*, 561–571.
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- Beck, A. T., Weissman, A., Lester, D., & Trexler, L. (1974). The measurement of pessimism: The hopelessness scale. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *42*(6), 861–865.
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- Hass, M., & Graydon, K. (2009). Sources of resiliency among successful foster youth. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *31*(4), 457–463.
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- Pedrotti, J. T., Edwards, L. M., & Lopez, S. J. (2008). Promoting hope: Suggestions for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, *12*(2), 100–107.
- Seginer, R. (2009). *Future orientation: Developmental and ecological perspectives*. New York, NY, US: Springer Science + Business Media.
- Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology. *American Psychologist*, *55*(1) 5–14.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress. *American Psychologist*, *60*(5) 410–421.
- Snyder, C. R. & Lopez, S. J. (2005). *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Snyder, C. R., Harris, C., Anderson, J. R., Holleran, S. A., Irving, L. M., Sigmon, S. T., Yoshinobu, L. et al. (1991). The will and the ways: Development and validation of an individual-differences measure of hope. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *60*(4), 570–585.
- Sohl, S. J., & Moyer, A. (2009). Refining the conceptualization of a future-oriented self-regulatory behavior: Proactive coping. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *47*(2), 139–144.
- Tevendale, H. D., Lightfoot, M., & Slocum, S. L. (2009). Individual and environmental protective factors for risky sexual behavior among homeless youth: An exploration of gender differences. *AIDS and Behaviour*, *13*(1), 154–164.



for SenseAbility and Sense of Humour

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Like the other Senses, Sense of Humour plays an important role in good mental health and wellbeing. A strong Sense of Humour has been associated with lower levels of anxiety (Henderson & Rasario, 2008, Houston, McKee, Carroll, & Marsh, 1998) and depression (Götestam, Svebak, & Jensen, 2008; Houston et al., 1998), social cohesion and group resilience (Lefcourt, 2001), and is a protective factor against the effects of workplace stress (Moran & Hughes, 2006). A small sample of research articles supporting the importance of Sense of Humour is listed below. For those who would like to read more on the evidence supporting the other Senses, please see the individual Sense modules.

Research References

Literature and research on cognitive-behavioural principles	References
A negative cognitive triad (negative view of the self, the world, and the future) is proposed to explain the development of depression and other mental health problems. Distorted or dysfunctional thinking is common to all psychological disturbance.	Beck, 1964, 1976, 1991
Adolescents with negative cognitions about themselves, their world, or the future were more vulnerable to depression.	Jaycox, Reivich, Gillham, & Seligman, 1994
Literature and research on positive psychology	
A collection of individual papers that cover many broad areas on topics such as identifying strengths and subjective wellbeing.	Snyder & Lopez, 2005
An introduction to the area of positive psychology. An evaluation of interventions in positive psychology.	Seligman et al., 2000, 2005
Literature and research findings on the value of a good sense of humour	
Capps provides a review of the empirical studies of the psychological benefits of humour.	Capps, 2006
In a study of 1,069 high school students, both sense of humour and meaning in life had a strong negative relationship with depression even after controlling for bodily complaints and exposure to stressors.	Götestam, Svebak, & Jensen, 2008
Studies of the benefits of laughter in medical settings have found that having clowns in hospitals reduced anxiety in children undergoing surgery and had positive psychological effects on acutely ill geriatric patients.	Henderson & Rosario, 2008
Residents of an aged-care facility who took part in a humorous social diversion activity once a week for four weeks were found to have significantly lower levels of anxiety and depression compared with those residents who did not take part in the program.	Houston et al., 1998
Use of sense of humour by teachers has been associated with more supportive learning environments, enhanced attention and pleasure in learning in students, an increase in divergent thinking skills, and better exam scores.	James, 2004
Undergraduate university students who scored high on sense of humour reported less worry than those with lower sense of humour.	Kelly, 2002
In a comprehensive examination of humour, Lefcourt reports that: humour lessens the effects of stressful life events reducing the likelihood of depressive mood states; humour was found to increase social cohesion and build resilience in groups facing life-threatening situations (e.g. hostage situations and military occupation); and humour is linked to the reduction of the physiological effects of stress (e.g. autonomic nervous system activation and immunosuppression).	Lefcourt, 2001
Children who scored higher on measures of humour were rated by their teachers as more productive, cooperative, responsive, attentive, and generally more effective in the classroom.	Masten, 1986
In a study of social work students, humour was found to be a protective factor against workplace stress.	Moran & Hughes, 2006

SenseAbility and Sense of Humour

- Beck, A. T. (1964). Thinking and depression: II. Theory and therapy. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 10, 561–571.
- Beck, A. T. (1976). *Cognitive therapy and the emotional disorders*. New York: International Universities Press.
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- Eckersley, R. (2008). *Never better – or getting worse? The health and wellbeing of young Australians*. Canberra: Australia 21 Ltd.
- Götestam, K. G., Svebak, S., & Jensen, E. N. (2008). The role of personality, mood, subjective health, and stress in depressive symptoms among high school students. *European Journal of Psychiatry*, 22(3), 121–129.
- Henderson, S. W., & Rosario, K. (2008). But seriously: Clowning in children’s mental health. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 47(9), 983–986.
- Houston, D. M., McKee, K. J., Carroll, L., & Marsh, H. (1998). Using humor to promote psychological wellbeing in residential homes for older people. *Aging & Mental Health*, 2(4), 328–332.
- James, D. (2004). A need for humor in online courses. *College Teaching*, 52(3), 93-94.
- Jaycox, L. H., Reivich, K. J., Gillham, J., & Seligman, M. E. P. (1994). Prevention of depressive symptoms in school children. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 32, 801–816.
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- Lefcourt, H. M. (2001). *Humor: The psychology of living buoyantly*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Masten, A. S. (1986). Humor and competence in school-aged children. *Child Development*, 57, 461–473.
- Moran, C. C., & Hughes, L. P. (2006). Coping with stress: Social work students and humour. *Social Work Education*, 25(5), 501–517.
- Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology. *American Psychologist*, 55(1) 5–14.
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for SenseAbility and Sense of Purpose

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Like the other Senses, Sense of Purpose (or meaning) plays an important role in good mental health and wellbeing. A strong Sense of Purpose has been associated with greater life satisfaction (Pan, Wong, Joubert, & Chan, 2008), better health behaviour (Park, Edmonson, Fenster, & Blank, 2008), and wellness (Ryff & Singer, 1998). A small sample of research articles supporting the importance of Sense of Purpose is listed below. For those who would like to read more on the evidence supporting the other senses, please see the individual Sense modules.

Literature and research on cognitive-behavioural principles	References
A negative cognitive triad (negative view of the self, the world, and the future) is proposed to explain the development of depression and other mental health problems. Distorted or dysfunctional thinking is common to all psychological disturbance.	Beck, 1964, 1976, 1991
Adolescents with negative cognitions about themselves, their world, or the future were more vulnerable to depression.	Jaycox, Reivich, Gillham, & Seligman, 1994
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A collection of individual papers that cover many broad areas on topics such as identifying strengths and subjective wellbeing.	Snyder & Lopez, 2005
An introduction to the area of positive psychology. An evaluation of interventions in positive psychology.	Seligman et al., 2000, 2005
Literature and research on Sense of Purpose (or meaning)	
An examination of how meaning in life, described as having personally significant goals, contributes to positive experiences and a positive life.	Emmons, 2003
Purpose in life and the capacity to make sense of experiences may serve to sustain hope for the future.	Frankl, 1974
Fry examines the development of personal meaning and wisdom in adolescence, suggesting the role of mentors, tutors and nurturant adults is core to such development.	Fry, 1998
A strong sense of meaning in life was associated with more positive life satisfaction for university students studying abroad. Meaning in life was also found to mediate the role between acculturative stressors and life satisfaction.	Pan et al., 2008
Poor sense of meaning in life was associated with negative health behaviour in middle-aged survivors of cancer.	Park et al., 2008
In a study of patients dealing with congestive heart failure, it was found that meaning in life was related to more positive mental and physical health-related quality of life.	Park, Malone, Suresh, Bliss, & Rosen, 2008
Ryff and Singer examine the literature and research on the importance of life purpose in health proposing that ‘seeing life as purposeful and meaningful [is] a critical feature of human wellness’ (p.7).	Ryff & Singer, 1998
Strong relationships have been found between a sense of meaning in life and a number of different measures of psychological wellbeing.	Zika & Chamberlain, 1987, 1992
Suggested reading	
‘The positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing.’	Noble & McGrath, 2008

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for SenseAbility and Sense of Self-worth

The SenseAbility Suite takes a positive skill-building approach which aims to enhance or encourage good mental health, emotional wellbeing, and resilience in young people. The program is grounded in evidence-based cognitive-behavioural principles that regard thoughts as central in influencing our feelings and consequent behaviour. Assisting young people to develop skills in monitoring and challenging unhelpful thoughts is, therefore, a core component of the program. In addition, the series draws on the positive psychology literature and takes a strength-based approach that removes the focus from 'defects' and 'deficits' and focuses instead on the inherent qualities and skills that can be capitalised on. To read more about the research evidence for the importance of cognitive elements and positive psychology in mental health and emotional wellbeing, see the references listed below.

SenseAbility is also supported by a range of literature and research that attests to the role of the six Senses – Self-worth, Control, Belonging, Purpose, Future and Humour – as fundamental to building emotional wellbeing and resilience. Supporting young people to build or enhance these senses may be more important now than ever before. As Eckersley recently wrote, 'while young people are materially better off . . . social and cultural changes have made it harder for them to develop a strong sense of identity, purpose, belonging and security: in short, to feel life is deeply meaningful and worthwhile' (Eckersley, 2008, p.5).

Like the other senses, Sense of Self-worth plays an important role in good mental health and wellbeing. A strong Sense of Self-worth has been associated with better academic performance (Humphrey, Charlton, & Newton, 2004), reduced anxiety (Grills & Ollendick, 2002), and the use of more positive coping strategies (Mantzicopoulos, 1990). A small sample of research articles supporting the importance of Sense of Self-worth is listed below. For those who would like to read more on the evidence supporting the other senses, please see the individual Sense modules.

Literature and research on cognitive-behavioural principles	References
A negative cognitive triad (negative view of the self, the world, and the future) is proposed to explain the development of depression and other mental health problems. Distorted or dysfunctional thinking is common to all psychological disturbance.	Beck, 1964, 1976, 1991
Adolescents with negative cognitions about themselves, their world, or the future were more vulnerable to depression.	Jaycox, Reivich, Gillham, & Seligman, 1994
Literature and research on positive psychology	
A collection of individual papers that cover many broad areas on topics such as identifying strengths and subjective wellbeing.	Snyder & Lopez, 2005
An introduction to the area of positive psychology. An evaluation of interventions in positive psychology.	Seligman et al., 2000, 2005
Literature and research on Sense of Self-worth	
A strong sense of self-worth was found to act as a protective factor against bullying in young adolescents who were overweight.	Fox & Farrow, 2009
For middle school boys who were victims of bullying, self-worth acted as a protective factor with higher self-worth associated with fewer anxiety symptoms.	Grills & Ollendick, 2002
Positive self-worth was found to be a protective factor against higher levels of stress (as measured by levels of epinephrine) in children while undergoing cancer treatment.	Hockenberry-Eaton, Kemp, & Diolorio, 1994
In a study of Year 7 students, self-worth was positively associated with academic achievement. Higher self-worth was related to reports of greater teacher and parent support.	Humphrey et al., 2004
High self-worth has been associated with a successful transition to high school.	Lord, Eccles, & McCarthy, 1994
A high sense of self-worth in elementary school students was associated with the use of positive/action-oriented coping strategies in the face of a stressful school experience.	Mantzicopoulos, 1990
In a longitudinal study of students from Grade 6 to 7, low self-worth created vulnerability to depressive symptoms and conduct problems.	McCarty, Vander Stoep, & McCauley, 2007
A high sense of self-worth was associated with decreased vulnerability to life stress in urban youth.	Weist, Freedman, Paskewitz, Proescher, & Flaherty, 1995
Adolescent girls with higher self-worth were less likely to be involved in risk behaviours related to substance use, bullying, suicidality, and sexuality.	Wild, Flisher, Bhana, & Lombard, 2004
High self-worth in African American adolescents was associated with stronger feelings of bonding to school. Bonding to school was associated with higher academic performance.	Zand & Thompson, 2005
Suggested reading	
'The positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing.'	Noble & McGrath, 2008

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