



Project Happiness

Learn how to use Project Happiness science based resources to engage club members in service projects that spread happiness, build community and combat bullying.

www.keyclub.org/projecthappiness

This is why happiness matters!

Happier students

- Learn tools to handle stress better
- Discover smart ways to help themselves and their friends
- Have healthier, more positive relationships
- Bully less and are nicer to be around
- Sleep better at night
- Have an easier time learning new things
- Accomplish more
- Develop skills employers are looking for
- Become change-makers in their schools and communities

Happier teachers

- Cope with stress better
- Provide more inspiration
- Accomplish more
- Smile more often
- Sleep better and worry less
- Find more joy in their jobs and lives
- Become healthier
- Learn tools to empower other students and faculty members
- Become change-makers in their schools and communities

Happier schools and communities

- Grow
- Suffer less crime and violence
- Produce more leaders and successful citizens
- Become more solution oriented
- Have healthier populations
- Actively seek out ways to improve

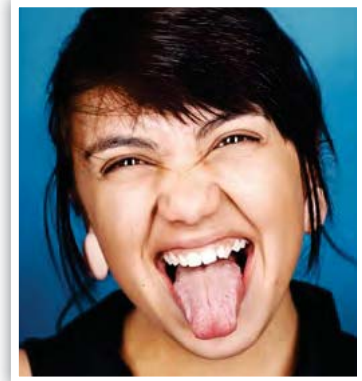
Some pursue happiness, OTHERS CREATE IT.

As a Key Club member, you've probably noticed that helping others makes you feel good about yourself. It turns out that science agrees. Science actually tells us that we have the power to increase our own happiness through the activities and behaviors we choose. So we've decided it's time for Key Clubs to share this idea with others.

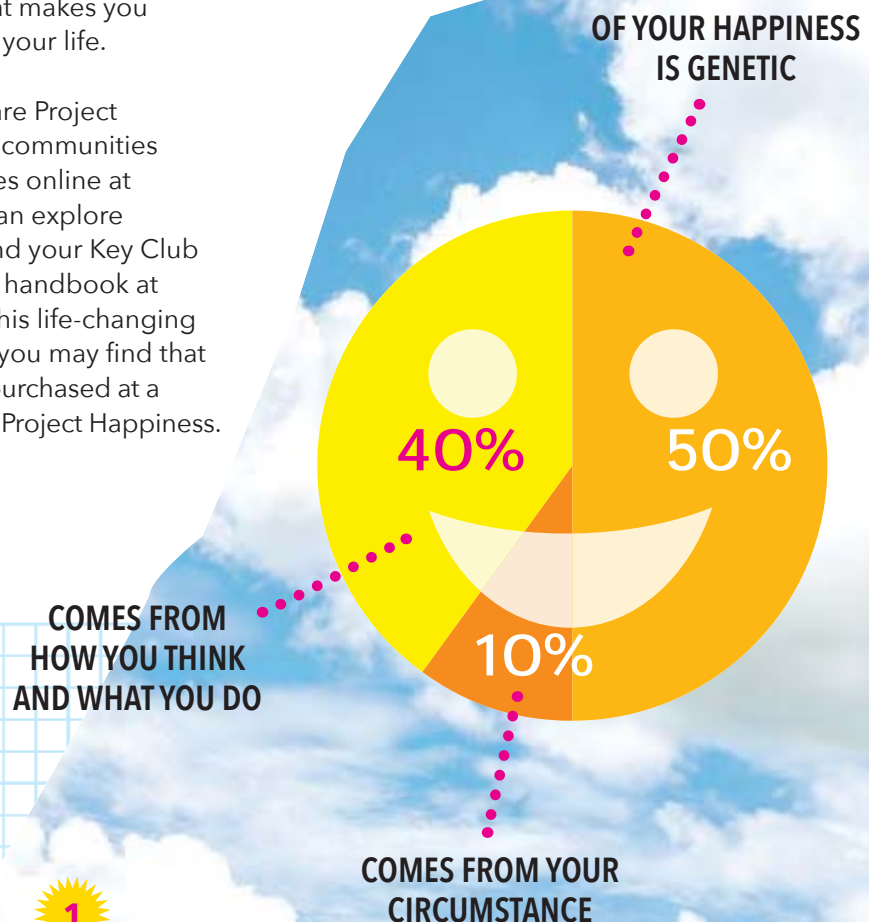
WHY DOES HAPPINESS MATTER? Turn on the news or just listen to people talk. Stress and negativity are everywhere. War, bullying, disease, loneliness, hate and fear are all by-products of those negative feelings. But they don't have to be. Science shows us that the more people expand their own happiness, the kinder they are to themselves and each other.

That's why we've teamed up with Project Happiness, a nonprofit organization with the mission to inspire and empower people to create greater happiness within themselves and their communities. The resources Project Happiness provides are based on science, psychology, observations, interviews, stories and reflections. There are seven sections to the handbook. Through games, club exercises, service projects and discussions you'll discover what makes you happy and learn how to create lasting happiness in your life.

This guide will help you set up your Key Club to share Project Happiness and explain how members, schools and communities will benefit from it. You can also find lots of resources online at www.keyclub.org/projecthappiness. Though you can explore happiness with just this guide, we highly recommend your Key Club purchase a copy of the Project Happiness DVD and handbook at www.projecthappiness.org to get the most out of this life-changing resource. You don't need more than one book, but you may find that you want more than one. Additional books may be purchased at a discount, or you can apply for a scholarship through Project Happiness.



Where happiness comes from



Where do we begin?

There are three ways to get started.

- Use this guide and the free resources you'll find at www.keyclub.org/projecthappiness.
- Screen the Project Happiness DVD. It runs 62 minutes but does not need to be viewed all in one sitting. You can watch it over multiple meetings.
- Use the Project Happiness Handbook and the exercises on its pages.



Elect a Project Happiness committee to teach happiness to your club and spread it throughout your school. Roles to consider:

- **Happiness secretary:** He or she makes sure copies are made for meetings when needed and records notes from brainstorm sessions.
- **Happiness facilitators:** A facilitator listens actively and respectfully and moves the discussion along when needed. Happiness facilitators switch things up so meetings are fun and fresh.
- **Happiness agenda setters:** These students decide which exercises and ideas from the Project Happiness Handbook to include in the meetings and how long to stay on each section. They might map out a plan for the year.
- **Happiness activators:** They help your Key Club activate happiness in your school and community by assigning teams, tasks and due dates for specific projects.

FUN WAYS TO FACILITATE.

We all learn and share differently, so it's good to try all sorts of methods to help people express their feelings and explore happiness. Here are a few techniques you can try.

- **Individual reflection.** Some people need individual, quiet time in order to really understand a concept and relate it to their lives.
- **Work in pairs.** This allows time for everyone to share their own experience and creates less pressure than sharing with the whole group.
- **Groups of 3-5.** Small groups allow for lively discussion, with everyone able to participate.
- **Whole group discussions.** With some topics, it's useful to hear everyone's perspective.
- **Snowball method.** For anonymous large-group sharing, have everyone write down their response, crumple up the paper and toss it in a basket. A facilitator mixes the crumpled papers together and passes one to each person in the circle to read out loud.

SHOW
US YOUR
HAPPY

First things first.

We created agendas to get Project Happiness started in your club. You can either use them or toss them aside and create your own. Project Happiness has no rules. It's a journey that can unfold in many ways. There are things you'll want to set up before that journey can begin, so be sure to cover your bases, then plunge in and let your club's happiness adventure begin.

think
HAPPY
BRO!

Meeting 1: GET YOUR CLUB EXCITED.

Talk about gratitude to start the meeting.

Gratitude has powerful physiological effects on your brain and body. Researchers found that when we think about someone or something we truly appreciate, our bodies calm themselves. Gratitude triggers the calming branch of our autonomic nervous system and produces a more even heart rhythm, which may reduce the risk of heart attacks and relieve hyper tension.

Talk about why happiness matters.

Stress and negativity are everywhere today. We hear it on the news and see it every day. War, bullying, disease, loneliness, hate and fear are all by-products of those negative feelings. But they don't have to be. Science shows us that the more people expand their own happiness, the kinder they are to themselves and each other.

SHARE WHAT PROJECT HAPPINESS IS AND ISN'T.

Project Happiness is:

- Exercises, discussions, games and tools that help you discover what makes you happy.
- Preventative wellness. It teaches you tools that can help you better cope with difficult situations.
- Based on neuroscience and positive psychology.

Project Happiness is not:

- A mental health service. People needing help for critical situations should refer to resources such as local mental health organizations, a crisis hotline or clinical provider. Encourage them to connect with professionals qualified to help. www.projecthappiness.org/programs/relatedresources



CLUB EXERCISE: Throw a wad of paper or balloon around the room. Whoever catches it has to say what they're grateful for.

GET ORGANIZED.


Assign teams or people to do the following tasks:

- **Like Project Happiness on Facebook** to stay up to date on the happiness movement. Connect with other clubs and ask about their activities.
- **Register with Project Happiness.** Visit www.projecthappiness.org, register your club and stay in touch. The most active clubs can win prizes at the end of the year.
- **Talk to your principal about screening the Project Happiness DVD for the entire student body** if you decide to purchase it. Download the letter to share with your principal in the resource section of www.keyclub.org/projecthappiness.
- **Create posters and flyers, write an article for your school paper or post a blog** talking about the importance of happiness.

HAPPY PEOPLE. LESS BULLYING.

Bullying can take many forms, but it usually includes the following types of behavior:

- **Physical:** hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, scratching, spitting, etc. Damaging or taking someone's stuff may also be considering physical bullying.
- **Verbal:** name calling or insulting; making racist, sexist or homophobic jokes; using sexually suggestive or abusive language or offensive remarks.
- **Indirect:** spreading nasty stories about people, excluding them from social groups, spreading malicious rumors, sending abusive mail, email or text messages.
- **Cyberbullying:** any bullying carried out electronically, such as online comment sections and text messaging.



CLUB EXERCISE: Give everyone a piece of paper and have them write down the types of bullying they've seen in their school. Talk about it. Who bullies who? Are people bullied at their jobs? At home?

SHARE:

Let them know that research says anti-bullying programs do not work. A recent study from the University of Texas, Arlington, published in the Journal of Criminology concluded that anti-bullying programs are actually having a negative impact on the problem. The only way to create change is to change people from the inside out. And that, in part, is why we are participating in Project Happiness. Maybe if we're happier, we can teach others to be happier too.

CLUB EXERCISE: Set your intentions for yourself and the group. Give everyone a piece of paper and an envelope. Have them write a letter to themselves about where they are currently in their lives, what they want and where they hope to be by the end of the school year. Seal the envelope and don't open it until the end of the school year.

CLUB EXERCISE: Ask the group how their school would be different if teachers and students were happier. What sorts of announcements might you hear over the speaker if your entire school was dedicated to happiness? i.e., "Susie's rocking a new pair of sandals today and Leron's sporting an incredible smile that is making everyone a little happier." Have people share their answers or save them to open your next meeting.

Meeting 2: CREATING A SAFE PLACE.



Free to be me.

To get the most out of Project Happiness, members need to feel safe. You need to trust and respect one another. Encourage members to be open-minded and non-judgemental to help create a safe environment for sharing.

SAFE-PLACE QUALITIES TO CONSIDER.

- **Active listening:** Respect others while they're talking by not interrupting.
- **Nonverbal cues:** Body language and nonverbal responses can be as disrespectful as words.
- **"I" vs. "We":** Speak from your own personal experiences instead of generalizing.
- **Focus on ideas:** Ask questions, but remember that this isn't a place to judge or attack someone.
- **Agree to disagree:** Hear and explore perspectives that are different from your own

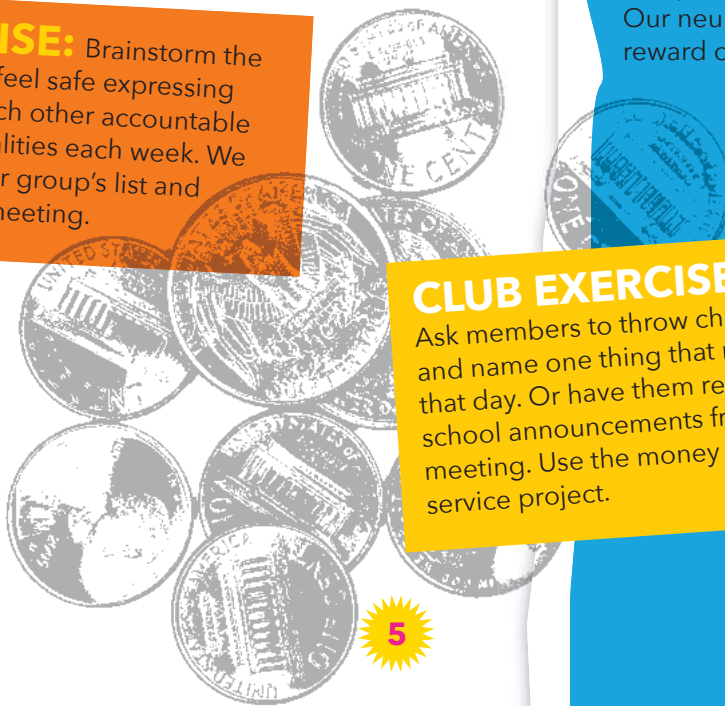
Happiness is contagious.

When we make other people happy, we end up making ourselves happy too. Our brains contain something called a mirror neuron. These neurons allow our brains to mirror other people's feelings and emotions. If we see someone crying, we feel their sadness even though we aren't actually experiencing a sad situation. When we see an athlete get hurt on the field, we feel their pain, even though we are perfectly safe sitting in the stands or our living rooms. Pathways in our own brains are activated when we see other people's emotions. That's why we know, happiness is contagious.

When people work together, doing positive things for others, our feelings of kindness and compassion grow. So do levels of dopamine. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter linked with the brain's complex system of motivation and reward. Our neural pathways of pleasure and reward can actually multiply.

CLUB EXERCISE: Brainstorm the qualities you need to feel safe expressing yourself, then hold each other accountable for bringing those qualities each week. We suggest typing up your group's list and displaying it at every meeting.

CLUB EXERCISE: Happy change. Ask members to throw change in a bucket and name one thing that made them smile that day. Or have them read their happy school announcements from your last meeting. Use the money for your next service project.





SPREADING HAPPINESS.

CLUB EXERCISE: Brainstorm ideas on how you could make your school or community a happier place.

DECIDE: Determine which of these projects your club wants to do now or at a later meeting. You can look for additional ideas on spreading happiness in the Project Happiness Handbook at www.keyclub.org/projecthappiness and www.projecthappiness.org.

CLUB EXERCISE:

Download the three worksheets for measuring self-confidence, resilience and happiness. Find them in the resource section of www.keyclub.org/projecthappiness. Give everyone a copy and an envelope to seal them in. If there is time ask everyone to fill these out during the meeting. If not, ask everyone to return them at the next meeting. When they are completed, collect the sheets and keep them in a safe place. Repeat this Exercise at the end of the school year and compare your answers.

TRACKING HAPPINESS.

Can you really become happier? Share the chart on the left. As you can see, a full **40 PERCENT OF HOW YOU FEEL** is totally up to you. You can train yourself to think happier thoughts and to behave in ways that increase your happiness. But you don't have to take our word for it. Fill out the worksheets now, then fill them out again at the end of the school year. We think you'll be amazed at how your attitudes shift and happiness grows.

How to get the most out of Project Happiness.

There are many tools you can use for your Key Club's happiness journey. The Project Happiness Handbook and DVD both cover seven aspects of happiness. You can also do research on your own if you wish to dive deeper into specific areas. Many resources can be found at www.keyclub.org/projecthappiness and www.projecthappiness.org.



SPREAD HAPPINESS AT SCHOOL

www.keyclub.org/projecthappiness

Here you'll find community service projects your club can conduct to create a happier school environment. What do students in happier school environments look like?

Science says happier students:

- Learn tools to handle stress better
- Discover smart ways to help themselves and their friends
- Have healthier, more positive relationships
- Bully less and are nicer to be around
- Sleep better at night
- Have an easier time learning new things
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Happy Community Service Projects

Host a Project Happiness Film Screening

Schedule a time to screen the [Project Happiness documentary](#) in the school auditorium. Make announcements and hang posters to advertise the film and invite everyone to attend. Let students know that Key Club is about to start a Happiness Movement, based on neuroscience, positive psychology and mindfulness and everyone is encouraged to take part.

A week before the screening work with Key Club members to create fun thank you cards for the estimated number of students that will attend. If you have cards left over, don't worry, these can be used to spread even more happiness.

Organize a group of club members to stand outside the auditorium entrances and complement people as they enter. This amps up the feeling of happiness for everyone who enters.

Inform attendees that fun things will be happening in school during the school year, and to be prepared to Get Your Happy On!

If time permits hold group discussion at the film's conclusion. Download the film discussion guide from www.keyclub.org/projecthappiness.

Stickers love

Use the stickers provided in the Happiness Toolkit and download more [stickers here](#). Write encouraging messages to people and place them all around your school. Or just use sticky notes.

Share the message

Ask students, teachers, parents, janitors and coaches what makes them happy. Ask them to share examples of short-and long-term happiness in their lives or any tips they have on being happy. Write a report about it for your school or local paper. Post it on the school website.

Share gratitude

Organize a school employee appreciation day. Honor the people who make a difference in your school community that don't usually get recognition. Janitors, cafeteria employees, secretaries, school nurses, and counselors.

Honor teachers with a special teacher appreciation luncheon. Schedule students as waiters and waitresses who will serve the teachers lunch and present them with thank you cards.

Change the school cafeteria into a coffee house. Set-up a small stage in one section of the cafeteria. Promote the coffee house ahead of time and schedule guitarist, ukulele players, etc. to sit and play nicely during lunch while everyone eats. Make posters to post around the cafeteria giving it a coffee house look. Place thank you notes and messaging on each of the cafeteria tables.

Create a gratitude wall. Ask for permission to access one wall in a prominent area of the school. Cover the wall with butcher paper, and set-up a table next to the wall with instructions asking students to use markers to write what they are most grateful for on the wall. The plan is to fill up the entire wall with positive messaging and doodles.

Happiness paper quilt. Create a happiness wall one piece of paper at a time. Provide students with a 8 1/2 x 11 inch piece of paper and ask them to draw what makes them happy. This can be done during the lunch hour or perhaps during home room. Gather all the drawings, sort out any negative messaging and then post all the sheets of paper one after the other on a wall using painters tape. This will make a beautiful happiness quilt.

Leave your hand print. Cut out paper hand prints. Distribute these to students and ask them to write down how they hope to leave their hand print (make a difference) in the world. Post all the hand prints on a prominent wall at school, using painters tape to adhere the hand prints.

Make a movie. Use the school audiovisual resources to make a video for YouTube. Interview students to find out what behaviors they most want to see change within the school walls and create a video that offers instruction on how students can reach out and help other students. Here's an example of what one group of students did at Park Tudor School in Indianapolis, IN titled, [Ask, Care, Tell](#).

Compliment everyone. Set up a table or just gather a group and compliment everyone as they walk through the entrance of your school, at the gate of a sporting event. "Nice shoes", "Great hair cut", "You've got a nice smile." Want to make it even more fun, create compliment signs that you can hold up as people walk by.

Reach out to others

Organize a happiness book club. Sharing the message of how everyone can achieve happiness through various practices is as easy as reading a few good books. Invite others to join you in reading the books included on the [Happiness Book List](#) to learn more about how to increase optimism and share this with others. Use the school library as your meeting place. Order the [Project Happiness Handbook](#) to share with your school library.

Create happy announcements. Use the helpful information you learn in the Project Happiness Handbook to write informative messaging to be included in with morning announcements each morning. Tips to help students begin their own happiness journey.

Start a mindful meditation group. Work with teachers at school or a counselor who has experience with mindful meditating. Meditating is a way of using focused attention to calm the mind and body. Here is a [description of mindful meditation](#) by Jon Kabat-Zinn, MD. Schedule the same time every day to focus on sitting quietly and meditating. Here are some [meditation resources](#) to review. Remember to invite everyone involved to be a part of your Key Club.

Start a Circle of Happiness. Download a free [Circle Kit](#) from the Project Happiness website and start a Circle of Happiness at school or in the community. These materials will help you discover proven ways to thrive and grow sustainable happiness habits. Helpful online resources make inviting others to participate easy.