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SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING MATTERS

Newsletter of ENSEC (European Network on Social and Emotional Competence)
Issue 14: April 2017

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Welcome!

On behalf of my four co-chairs, our founding chairs, and myself I would like to welcome you to the 14th issue of the ENSEC newsletter.

As usual, we supply you with information around new publications, conferences and events from ENSEC member countries. Find out more about workshops and conferences held in the UK, Greece, and Croatia in this issue!

Check the website for the **ENSEC conference 2017** to be up to date with the conference programme and social events. The conference organizers are working at full speed to deliver you an unforgettable event. At this year's ENSEC conference, we will hold our bi-annual **member meeting** and hope for your attendance and input. If you are unable to attend, please email your thoughts, critique and suggestions how ENSEC can continue to provide great networking opportunities, and what can be improved in the future! Email to carmen_huser@web.de

In this issue, you will also find:

Tasmin Ford and Matt Allwood would like to share information about the Pupil Behaviour Questionnaire which can be used to measure student behaviour in primary/ elementary school age. A free download is available.

Emotional literacy is at the centre of the 'Vegetable Garden of Emotions' activities which Luigina Mortari and Federica Valbusa provide insight.

Sue Roffey writes about one of the ASPIRE principles for a positive emotional classroom environment. See also the available training workshops in the events section.

We would appreciate your comments on the matters discussed in this newsletter, please bearing in mind that the work of ENSEC is being done by chairs who are all volunteers, and on top of busy jobs.

We would love some interesting features for the next edition. Please send any contributions to me (Carmen_huser@web.de) as a Word document so that it can be cut and pasted – no logos please. We have started to accept longer features to share richer, detailed knowledge throughout the network. However, this is a newsletter and not a journal – so no long academic papers accepted!

Thank you!

NEWS FROM THE ENSEC BOARD OF CHAIRS

Dear ENSEC Colleagues,

As a network, ENSEC's aim is to provide a platform to meet and share knowledge and practices, learn from each other and with each other. Collaborations, dialogue, and working with partners have always been at the heart of our ambitions – and we hope to promote these as much as possible. We want to support your quests for finding and creating such collaborative teams.

It was a pleasure to hear that one of our members could reach out to the network to find partners for an ERASMUS+ project applications. Many of you followed the invitation only within a few days – in fact, so many that decisions had to be made who to include. It was wonderful to read the following email:

“first of all I would like to thank you a lot for your help forwarding our project idea within your network. I have received a lot of interest from your colleagues to take part in the project and eventually found two great organisations which were selected to take part in the project. Actually I was not expecting to receive so many responses at the same time (...) Hope to cooperate with you in the future and thanks again for your support!”

Sometimes, urgent requests like in this example reach us, and we wish to be of support. However, we wish to encourage you even more to establish relationships and create collaborative groups beyond grant applications. What we hope for the future is to see more formations of Special Interest Groups (SIG), which can lead into developing ideas for projects and publications and much more on a sustainable basis. Please make use of the ENSEC conference in Sweden this year, as well as our newsletter to call for expressions of interests for future networking. (For example, in this issue, David Camps from Palma, Spain, wishes to start conversations around two issues. Read more in ‘News from ENSEC members’.) Please do not hesitate to contact us for supporting your interest in starting a SIG. We will do our best to kick-start your plans.

Now, it is my turn to send out a request to those who will be at the ENSEC conference in June: anyone who is interested in brainstorming how to improve the newsletter, country representation, SIG formation, social media presence etc. please contact me prior to or during the conference (carmen_huser@web.de); let's have a chat and get some ideas down on paper to create ENSEC's future communication.

Thank you,

Carmen Huser (ENSEC co-chair, membership, website & newsletter)

Dear colleagues,

I am writing with an update to clarify the position for my own university since the UK Prime Minister Theresa May notified the European Union (EU) that the UK is leaving the EU, officially triggering Article 50, in particular with regard to applications for funding from the EU that might involve a UK university as a partner.

This is an extract from the ongoing guidance that the University of Surrey is giving to staff and students in their regular newsletter.

“In terms of our research funding status in a post-Brexit era, we are seeing very strong bidding activity and our recent success rates have been very high at 23 per cent, which is well above sector average. Although others are reporting a reluctance of EU partners to include them in bids, this has not been the Surrey experience so far. We are encouraging our academics to continue to develop novel and creative research proposals and to target funders both in the UK and EU.

The National Agency for Erasmus+ in the UK, a partnership between the British Council and Ecorys UK, has reaffirmed its commitment to the programme and its benefits. The National Agency strongly supports continued full membership of the programme for the UK through to 2020, so that at least 250,000 people across the UK have the chance to study, train or volunteer abroad, and that UK organisations can continue to collaborate on international projects. 2016 was the most popular year so far for Erasmus+ in the UK and even greater take-up is expected in 2017. Successful Erasmus+ applicants in 2017 will be awarded funding for the full duration of their projects, and all beneficiaries should continue their projects with their partners as usual through to completion. At a University of Surrey level, we have renewed our Erasmus+ agreements with all our partners and have received enthusiastic support from them indicating that, despite Brexit, they anticipate continuing to see us as a key partner for student mobility and other collaborations”.

Helen Cowie (ENSEC Chair, Research & Fundraising)

UPCOMING CONFERNCES & EVENTS

UPDATES: 6th ENSEC Conference: Diversity

Date: 7-9 June 2017

Venue: Stockholm, Sweden and Helsinki, Finland

People from more than 25 different countries and five continents have registered for the conference so far! There is still room for more. Welcome to register at www.oru.se/ensec2017

The organizers are currently operating at full speed to prepare the timetables for the conference programme, as well as social events, such as a sightseeing tour in Helsinki.

More information: <https://www.oru.se/om-universitetet/konferenser/ensec/>

Circle Solutions Introduction Training

Date: 12 June 2017

Venue: London, UK

An introduction training for implementing Circle Solutions into the classroom is available in June in London (just after the ENSEC conference!). Attending the Introduction workshop to Circle Solutions is a prerequisite for the Trainer program taking place on 13th and 14th June 2017. This gives accreditation to train whole staff groups.

In this issue of the ENSEC newsletter, Sue Roffey introduces one of the principles of Circle Solutions, which can give you an idea if this workshop is of your interest.

More info on www.circlesolutionsnetwork.com or

Email Sue Roffey: sue@sueroffey.com

**ERFCON CONFERENCE:
9th International Conference of the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation
Sciences University of Zagreb**

Date: 16 – 19 May 2017

Venue: Zagreb, Croatia

The ERFCON conference attracts interdisciplinary research ranging from rehabilitation sciences, education sciences, social pedagogy, criminology and social integration, and speech and language pathology/ logopedics.

Also have a look at the **pre-conference day dedicated to resilience** and on the 17th May: Margaret Barry from NUI Galway will hold a workshop on mental health promotion and wellbeing of children and youth. Margaret Barry's workshop is **only 20 euros** and could be attended even if people are not interested in the main conference.

- **Preconference “Growing resilience: researching beyond academia” will be held on 16th of May 2017, at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences University of Zagreb, Croatia.** The preconference event will explore many different aspects of resilience with the emphasis on meaningfully engaging youth and communities in the research process so that we can change social structures that support adversity in order to foster resilience of people at risk for social exclusion. Preconference link: <http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/additional-events/growing-resilience-researching-beyond-academia>
- **Preconference “Mindfulness: research and practice” will be held on 16th of May 2017, at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences University of Zagreb, Croatia.** The preconference aims to explore different aspects of mindfulness and compassion in order to better understand their potential in the prevention and treatment of various mental, emotional, and behavioural problems, and the promotion of mental health in general. Preconference link: <http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/additional-events/mindfulness-research-and-practice>
- **Workshop "What works in the promotion of mental health and wellbeing of children and young people?" will be held on 17th of May 2017, at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences University of Zagreb, Croatia.** In this workshop, **Professor Margaret M. Barry**, the famous creator of the mental health promotion approach (2001), will address current policy frameworks and evidence-based strategies for the promotion of mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

You could find more information on link below:

<http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/additional-events/what-works-in-the-promotion-of-mental-health-and-wellbeing-of-children-and-young-people>

General information about ERFCON:

<http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/>

1st International Summer School for School Psychologists

Date: 24-28 July 2017

Venue: Crete, Greece

We would like to inform you about the **1st International Summer School for School Psychologists** which will take place in Crete, Greece on July 24-28, 2017. The theme of the Summer School is “**School Psychology at Crossroads: Changes, Challenges, Choices for the Well-Being of All Children!**”.

International speakers will present their important work which is targeted to professionals and practicing school psychologists. We have also created a versatile and rich cultural and social program for the participants.

Information about the upcoming summer school and registration can be found at our website www.ispi2017.com. The registration is now open.

Please forward this information to other colleagues, professionals, agencies and universities.

Organizers:

Anastassios MATSOPOULOS, Ph.D.

Ass. Professor of School Psychology

Director of School Psychology Lab

Director of MA “Psychoeducational Interventions for
Preschool & Elementary School Children”

Research Center of University of CRETE

GREECE

&

Mariza Gkavogiannaki, M.Sc.

School Psychologist & Research Associate of the School Psychology Lab

Center for School Psychology, Rethimno, Crete, GREECE

NEWS FROM ENSEC MEMBERS

Call for networking

Dear Ensec members,

We are new to the network, we are a small but passionate associate research group, from Palma (Balearic Islands, Spain). We are interested in making new connections, in order to share experiences, research updates, funding opportunities, and to network with people like you, who enjoy the social and emotional learning field.

We have several research concerns right now, in which we invite you to open up the discussion, one is a project that we have featured in research gate:

"Dear researchers in the field of social and emotional learning (SEL), we ask for your comments, suggestions, collaboration, in helping us open this research area of "borrowing" from the "common elements and practices" approach in mental health, and translating this into the SEL field. The aim of this project, first of all, is to gather related research, foster field discussions, and raise awareness of this trend. We believe, in opening this line of research, that we can advance in better understanding of the field, and the need to keep exploring strategies, that go beyond the sole "programs" view, for expanding evidence-based best practices, even when scarce resources are in place."

Project link : <https://www.researchgate.net/project/En-busca-de-los-elementos-comunes-en-el-aprendizaje-socioemocional-mas-alla-del-enfoque-basado-en-programas-Common-elements-and-practices-approach-in-social-and-emotional-learning>

The other one, is a question that we have posed also on research gate, about the lack of consensus about the different social and emotional learning practices that we can encounter in the practice. There is no validated measure, list, test, inventory, coding system that you can use to collect and categorize SEL practices in a structured way.

Question link :

https://www.researchgate.net/post/How_would_you_categorize_social_and_emotional_learning_practices_from_a_teaching_point_of_view_Is_there_any_inventory_or_coding_system_available

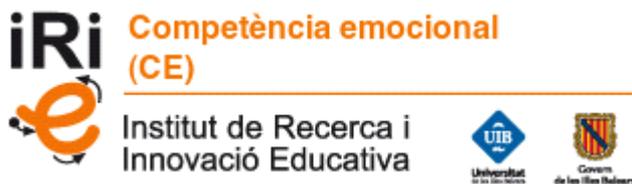
So we are looking forward to start the conversation with all of you, to learn from each other, and at the same time, to enjoy working together in the advancement of this

field.

You can contact me in: d.camps@uib.es

Yours sincerely and congratulations for your work and commitment, it is a pleasure for us to be part of this network.

David Camps



The Pupil Behaviour Questionnaire

Authored by Tasmin Ford & Matt Allwood

This questionnaire is a measure of behaviour in the classroom for primary / elementary school children.

Current behaviour assessment tools are either too lengthy and/or do not focus school based behaviours. This led to the development of the Pupil Behaviour Questionnaire (PBQ) which measures low level disruption in the classroom for primary school pupils. Due to the questionnaire's brevity, it is feasible for teachers and teaching professionals to complete one on each child in their class as well as to use them to monitor the impact of behaviour management plans with individual children.

The questionnaire is freely available to download at <http://medicine.exeter.ac.uk/research/healthresearch/childhealth/child-mental-health/pbq/>.

We have tested the validity and reliability by comparing it to the already extensively validated Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) using data collected about children aged 4-9 years old across 80 schools in South West England.

Results available on request from the author.

Tamsin Ford

Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

T.J.Ford@exeter.ac.uk

The 'Vegetable Garden of Emotions': A Metaphor for Emotional Education

Authored by Luigina Mortari and Federica Valbusa, University of Verona (Italy)

In order to address the problem defined as 'emotional illiteracy', it is increasingly important to develop experiences for emotional education in which children can be involved from the earliest levels of schooling. Based on this premise, we developed an educative project whose aim was to facilitate children in the fourth grade of primary school in reflecting on their own emotions. The principal activity of the project is the 'journal of emotional life', a diary that encourages the narration and analysis of an emotion that a child feels during the course of a day. In order to help children to analyse their own emotions, we also introduced the metaphor of the 'vegetable garden of emotions', which creates an association between an emotion and a vegetable- or fruit-producing plant. Every time the children narrate an emotion in their diaries, they are also required to associate the emotion with a plant. The activity is carried out every day, *note, in alternate weeks*, for a total of eight weeks over a period of four months.

The educative path is structured as follows:

- In the first week of the activity, the children are only required to narrate their emotion and to draw a plant.
- In the second week of the activity, the children are also required to write the fact that gives rise to their emotion, by placing it in the ground that gives rise to the drawn plant.
- In the third and fourth week of the activity, the children are also required to write the manifestations produced by their emotions, by placing them in the fruits or vegetables produced by the drawn plant.
- In the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth week of the activity, the children are also required to write the thoughts which, like the sap, nourish their emotions, by placing them in the stem of the drawn plant.

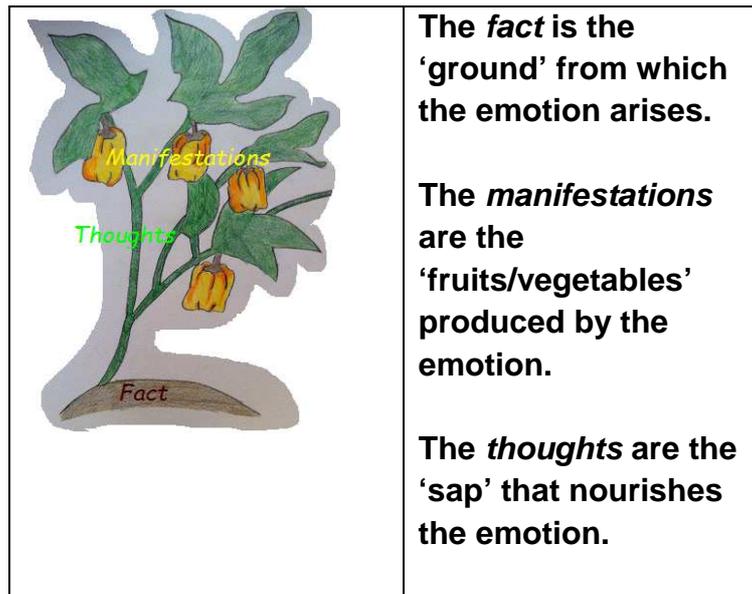
Week of the activity	Required elements
First week	Narration and drawing
Second week	Narration, drawing, and fact
Third and fourth weeks	Narration, drawing, fact, and manifestations

Fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth weeks

Narration, drawing, fact, manifestations, and thoughts

In the alternate weeks that do not involve the activity, the researcher or teacher can read the diaries in order to verify the levels of emotional self-understanding that have been achieved by the children.

The metaphor of the 'vegetable garden of emotions' can be graphically represented and synthetically explicated as follows:



A qualitative study that was carried out on data already collected from this activity has confirmed the educative effectiveness of the project.

For further information, please contact federica.valbusa@univr.it

Want a positive emotional environment for learning? Here's how!

Authored by Sue Roffey

A focus for many teachers is classroom control – keeping the kids in line so that maximum learning takes place. What actually happens is that teachers take all the responsibility for the classroom climate and can wear themselves out in the process. When relationships are not centre stage they often get replaced by constant repetition of the rules, sometimes kept but often broken or side-stepped.

As relationships and emotions are an integral component of the learning environment, the ASPIRE principles not only apply to social and emotional learning but to everything that happens in school.

ASPIRE stands for Agency, Safety, Positivity, Inclusion, Respect and Equity. These principles are not just the basis of the Circle Solutions pedagogy but the foundations of relational wellbeing.

I will be talking about all six principles at the ENSEC conference in June but here I am focusing on just the first – Agency. Basically, this means being given the right to make decisions about what concerns you and taking responsibility for the outcomes of these.

Richard Ryan, with his colleague Edward Deci, are well known for the theory of self-determination and how much that matters for wellbeing and resilience. The three components of this theory are the basic human needs for autonomy, relatedness and competence. This is similar to Dan Pink's theory of motivation. Pink's research found that people are motivated to give of their best when the three drivers of autonomy, mastery and purpose are in place. All of these are intrinsic, not extrinsic motivators.

Autonomy is central to both theories. I use the word agency rather than autonomy because the work I do with young people (and their teachers) engages them as a group, not as individuals. Agency empowers the group to make decisions and take responsibility together. To do this you give everyone a voice and collate what is shared. Students / people are likely to make decisions on behaviour that fits with both their values and what they need. When you are working with a whole class the focus becomes what the class needs to function well, be emotionally safe and enjoy learning. One person cannot dominate and everyone is included. Each person is more likely to endorse group decisions because they have been empowered to make them and are invested in their operation.

One simple example of this is to ask the class to work in small groups of 3 or 4 to devise a recipe for a safe and happy classroom. What ingredients would you need? How much of each. What do groups have in common? How can these be put into practice? Another example is role play. Someone is asked to role play a student with a particular need and each small group talks about what feelings they would have if they were that person, what would they want to happen and what would this class be prepared to do to support them. This is always hypothetical – Circles never address incidents, only issues. The Safety principle means no-one is ever asked to disclose anything personal.

Circle Solutions is not a stand-alone intervention. It is a strengths and solutions based pro-active framework for building healthy relationships, resilience and

responsibility. It is both a pedagogy for SEL and a framework for wellbeing across a school. It has been developed and refined over ten years and is in use in schools across the world. If you want to know more perhaps start by reading the chapter Learning Healthy Relationships in Carmel Proctor's Positive Psychology Interventions in Practice (2017) published by Springer (the draft submission can be downloaded [here](#)) For academic articles read McCarthy and Roffey (2013) or Dobia et al on the Aboriginal Girls Circle (2014) both on academia.com. Two further research projects are under way.

If the link to Sue's publications is not working, please copy this URL into your browser: <http://www.sueroffey.com/articles/>

Training is available in June in London just after the ENSEC conference: Intro to Circle Solutions for those wanting to do this in their own classrooms is on June 12th. Attendance at the intro is a prerequisite for the Trainer program taking place on 13th and 14th June. This gives accreditation to train whole staff groups. More info on www.circlesolutionsnetwork.com or email me sue@sueroffey.com

NEW PUBLICATIONS

William G. Nicoll, Ph.D. of the Resilience Counseling & Training Center, North Conway, New Hampshire, USA recently published two invited articles for the **International Journal for School Based Family Counseling, Vol 6:**

- 1) ***A Resilience-Focused Conceptual Framework for Working with School Related Problems***
- 2) ***Resilience-Focused Family Counseling & Consultation: Applications with school related problems.***

Both of these articles can be downloaded free at either the IJSBFC website:

www.schoolbasedfamilycounseling.com/journal.html

Or from the Resilience Counseling & Training Center's website:

www.resiliencecounselingcenter.com/publications.html.

Other articles of possible interest related to resilience promoting strategies with children, schools and families are also available for free downloading via the 'newsletters' link on the centre's website.

