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## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING MATTERS**

Newsletter of ENSEC (European Network on Social and Emotional Competence)

Issue 7: September 2014

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## Welcome!

On behalf of myself, my four co-chairs and our two founding chairs, I would like to welcome you to the 7th ENSEC newsletter.

First of all, we would like to thank again our former chair Katherine Weare for her valuable contribution and support in the past years. We understand and respect her decision to withdraw from the board of chairs. Katherine promised to continuously support ENSEC in a consultative role. Fortunately, with the upcoming ENSEC conference 2015, we could obtain the services of Celeste Simoes not only as an organising host for the conference, but also as enacting chair. Celeste has been an ENSEC member for some years and contributes to research and teach in social-emotional education at the University of Lisbon, Portugal.

Lisbon will also be the venue for the 2015 ENSEC conference. The call for papers has been announced earlier this year. Please stay tuned for the most recent information via the ENSEC website!

The board of chairs has further gained support through the first three volunteering country representatives for ENSEC. These are:  
Carrie-Anne Myers from the City University London, representing the United Kingdom,  
Anastassios Matsopoulos from the University of Crete, representing Greece,  
Carmel Cefai, from the University of Malta, representing Malta.

We would like to thank our first volunteers and believe that their engagement will be of great value for the ENSEC community. Please do not hesitate to contact us, if you are interested to contribute actively to ENSEC by representing your country, or if you have any suggestions and ideas for this role. As a democratic network we rely on your feedback and participation!

We would like to thank all those who contributed to this newsletter. We would appreciate your comments on it, 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](mailto: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!



**UPDATE**  
**5<sup>th</sup> ENSEC CONFERENCE 2015**

**CONFERENCE THEME:**  
**SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND CULTURE**



**SAVE THE DATE: 1 – 4 July 2015**

The Faculty of Psychology (Faculdade de Psicologia) at the University of Lisbon, has been confirmed as the location of the 2015 ENSEC Conference. The Faculty of Psychology offers excellent venue, as it is situated in the centre of Lisbon near to the heart of the city and conveniently placed for hotel accommodation.

We would like to remind delegates that the Call for Papers is now open, and is available on the ENSEC Website (<http://enseceurope.org>). There are opportunities for delegates to present individual posters and papers, a symposium or panel session, or a pre-conference workshop.

There is a registration group discount for colleagues presenting together, and we are delighted to be able to offer free entrance to the Gala Dinner to delegates who could offer a pre-conference workshop. The pre-conference workshops may be presented in both English and Portuguese and in 2015, we are inviting delegates to present particular programmes and approaches to promoting Social and Emotional Competence from different contexts and cultures.

STAY TUNED AND CHECK LATEST NEWS ON THE ENSEC WEBSITE:  
<http://enseceurope.org/>

## UPCOMING CONFERNCES & EVENTS

### DISTANT LEARNING PROGRAMME FOR TEACHERS DELIVERED BY PROM



PROM (Professionalisation des acteurs de la mobilité en éducation) is a European project aiming to provide a comprehensive professional training programme to European teachers by distance learning, to support the management, planning and implementation of mobility initiatives.

Over the last two years, the ProM Project team has worked to create new and innovative mobility tools to help teachers and teacher trainers to develop their mobility management skills and to provide professional training on how to establish and run mobility programmes with their students.

Join us on the **9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2014** to mark the completion of this initiative at the Centre international d'études pédagogiques (CIEP), in the beautiful former porcelain factory at Sevres, near Paris. Discover the results of the project and how the ProM self-assessment tool and mobility management training modules can help you in your teaching context.

Check our website for registration for this event: <http://www.prom-mobile.eu/en>

Partenaires du projet



Ce projet a été financé avec le soutien de la Commission européenne. Cette publication n'engage que son auteur et la Commission n'est pas responsable de l'usage qui pourrait être fait des informations qui y sont contenues.

**CONFERENCE:**  
**"Mind the gap:**  
**Reducing the gap between lower attaining students and their peers"**

VENUE: Cass School of Education, University of East London, Stratford  
Campus, Water Lane, Stratford  
DATE: Saturday October 11th, 2014

The University of East London, School of Psychology and School of Education, invite to the Annual Conference in conjunction with SEBDA.

Speakers include Dr Mark Fox, Dr Laura Cockburn, Dr Miles Thomas, Daniel Sobel, Dr Mary Robinson and students from the Schools of Education and Psychology. They will present their research and interventions for raising the achievement and well being of children and young people with complex needs. These include Mindfulness, Resilience building, Positive Psychology, Solution focused brief therapy, and a social skills programme. Dr Mark Fox will present a key note speech entitled IT'S NOT ABOUT THE GAP. He will address the issues that a parent faces when their child is not progressing at the same rate as their peers. Drawing on the concept of Quality of Life he will argue that there are always differences between children. For many parents the issue is not about the gap but society accepting their child is normal even when they are different. He will suggest that education is about helping the holistic development of the child and ensuring that they are able to fulfil their own expectations as adults.

For more information about registration please visit the SEBDA website:  
<http://www.sebda.org/events-and-training/events/>

## **NEWS FROM ENSEC MEMBERS**

### **WANTED: COLLABORATORS FOR DEVELOPING RESOURCES ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

Lucia Capasso works at the International Baccalaureate global centre in The Hague, Netherlands. The organisation is currently in the process of developing resources on social and emotional learning and is currently looking for possible collaborators.

The International Baccalaureate® (IB) is a non-profit educational foundation, motivated by its mission, focused on the student. Founded in 1968, we currently work with schools across the world to develop and offer four challenging programmes to students aged 3 to 19 years: the Diploma Programme (DP), the IB Career-related Certificate (IBCC), the Middle Years programme (MYP) and the Primary Years Programme (PYP).

The MYP development team is currently seeking to develop resources to promote social and emotional learning (SEL) in IB World Schools.

We are at an early stage in the development of this new curriculum support material but are already in contact with IB World Schools to gather testimonials and/or resources with regard to implementing SEL.

In order to complement these resources, we would be interested in developing partnership with your organization to further promote SEL and offer IB World Schools a wider range of materials.

Has your organization developed SEL resources that you would be willing to share with the IB community? These resources could be targeted to a varied audience in the school community (teachers, students, learning support, leadership team, parents) and take various forms.

We look forward to hearing from you and your ideas on a possible collaboration on this project. Please do not hesitate to contact us ([myp.curriculum@ibo.org](mailto:myp.curriculum@ibo.org)) should you have any questions.

## CALL FOR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ON BULLYING

Bullying is recognized internationally as a pervasive and often neglected problem which can have serious consequences for victims, bullies and witnesses. Although the growing body of research on school bullying has increased, it is still one of the greatest social and health risk to youth all over the world (WHO, 2011). Many European countries are facing the increase in anti-social behaviors at schools due to changing demographics, higher unemployment, community disintegration, crisis or re-emerging antagonisms. The pattern of exclusion from dominant peer group seems to be changing, forcing educators and teachers to adjust to newly emerging ingroup and intergroup situation. It seems necessary to research the area of peer group exclusion in European schools and, which seems even more important, to identify, describe and promote effective school policies. We therefore aim to call for ENSCEC members working in the field of education who are planning to cooperate by forming a Special Interest Group (SIG). The SIG aims to design international research which would comprehensively address social problems related to exclusion, victimization and bullying. Recognizing the opportunities given by The EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation – Horizon 2020 we would like to participate in one of the programs within “Europe in changing world-inclusive, innovative and reflective Societies.”

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## Call for Special Interest Group in Resilience in Education (SIG-R)

*“ENSEC is devoted to the development and promotion of evidence-based practice in relation to socio-emotional competence and resilience amongst school students in Europe”.*

As the above excerpt from ENSEC’s mission statement illustrates, one of the objectives for the establishment of ENSEC was the development and promotion of evidence based practice in resilience in schools. Resilience is particularly concerned with positive growth and wellbeing amongst vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people, seeking to bring about equity and social justice in our society. We are therefore calling any interested ENSCEC members who would like to join us in a special interest group in Resilience in education (SIG-R) to send us an email at [carmel.cefai@um.edu.mt](mailto:carmel.cefai@um.edu.mt). The objective of SIG-R will be to facilitate networking and collaboration between members including exchange of material and resources, conference presentations, placement visits, and collaborative research

## Enhancing Teacher Resilience in Europe (ENTREE)

ENTRÉE (2013-2015) is a two year EU Comenius Lifelong Learning project on the enhancement of teacher resilience in Europe. The project is focused on developing a multilevel teacher training framework in teacher resilience, making use of both face-to-face and self-directed online training approach. It will also develop a self-assessment tool which gives young and developing teachers feedback on their resilience profile. ENTRÉE is coordinated by the University of Aachen in Germany and includes six European partners, including the University of Malta, St Patrick’s College at Dublin University Ireland; ISPA Higher Institute of Applied Psychology in Portugal, Euroface Consulting in the Czech Republic, the Center for Practical Teacher Training (ZfsL) Juelich in Germany, and Curtin University and Murdoch University in Australia. Further details may be found at: <http://entree-project.eu/en/>

## BEING HERE: AN APP DESIGNED TO IMPROVE YOUR RECOGNITION OF EMOTIONS

It is a common experience that emotions play a critical role in our lives, define the quality of our personal experience and limit or increase our potential. The importance of combining traditional education that develops cognitive and technical skills and education that deals with social and emotional skills is now universally acknowledged, both in the more strictly pedagogical and political fields and the economic sector. This free APP for Apple and Android, allows you to keep regular track of your emotional state and to write down what conditions led to the perception of a specific emotion. In addition to making a valuable contribution to young people's and adults' knowledge about themselves, the APP is also an innovative tool that is used in the social-emotional education classes in middle school, high school and college, but can also be used to evaluate people's liking of a specific event or the emotional life of a specific group.

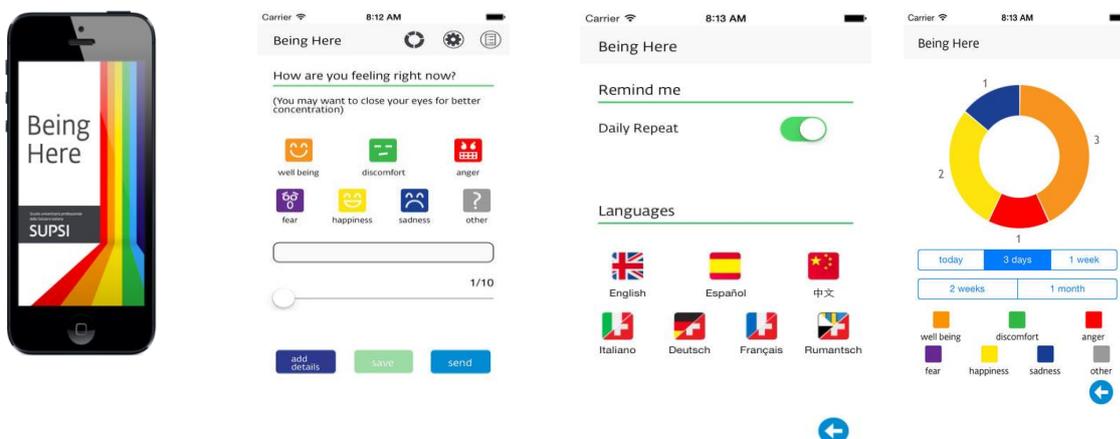
This APP had been designed by Davide Antognazza, Ed.M. and others at the Department of Education and Learning, University of Applied Science and Arts of Southern Switzerland, based in Locarno (Canton Ticino). It is an easy, quick and intuitive tool that everybody can carry in his pocket or purse, which can support the understanding of your emotional life.

For more information, please visit

[www.beinghere.ch](http://www.beinghere.ch),

[dfa-blog.supsi.ch/chiamalemozioni/](http://dfa-blog.supsi.ch/chiamalemozioni/) ,

or write to [dfa.chiamalemozioni@supsi.ch](mailto:dfa.chiamalemozioni@supsi.ch)



## I LOVE YOU BUT YOU'RE DRIVING ME NUTS: A PARENTING APP

A parenting app, *I love you but you're driving me nuts*, gives parents ideas for getting along with teens, at the same time guiding them to become responsible and caring adults. It is based on the award-winning curriculum, *The Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14 (SFP 10-14)*. Tens of thousands of parents and young people in the US and thirteen European countries as well as Central and South America have benefitted from the program. Young people who have attended the SFP 10-14 with their parents have higher academic outcomes, significantly less drug and alcohol use and abuse and less aggression towards peers and adults in randomized trials. Parents have shown increased skills in setting limits as well as expressing love and concern with their pre teens and teens. The World Health Organization conducted a Cochrane Collaboration review of thousands of programs designed to reduce substance abuse in teens and named the SFP 10-14 the top program, most likely to produce positive outcomes in a variety of settings. The authors of the app are Virginia Molgaard, Ph.D., first author of the SFP 10-14 and Birgitta Kimber, Ph.D. co-author of “Älskade förbannade tonåring”, a book also based on the SFP 10-14 and successfully used by parents for the past years in Sweden.

The app presents materials based on concepts and learning styles contained in the SFP 10-14. The examples in this app have been expanded from the original program for use with older teens as well as pre-teens and younger teens. *I love you but you're driving me nuts* has discussions, tools and examples using cartoons to help parents learn skills in communication, handling power struggles in situations common to families with teens and dealing with more serious problems. Communication, with both your child and your partner, is vital in parenting, so a lot of emphasis is placed on communication – both your own way of communicating, and also your child's and your partner's ways. There are other areas still to cover, and there will be a follow-up to this app, where the authors discuss issues related to school, sex, and the Internet, and also how to look after yourself as a parent.

The app is available in both Apple and Android versions, on the App Store or from Google play, respectively. To download it, or find out more about the authors, please visit [www.teenagetools.com](http://www.teenagetools.com)

## Growing up emotionally –The Chameleon’s Game

The Department of Education and Learning at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland (SUSPI), together with the Centre for Resilience and Socio-Emotional Health at the University of Malta, have launched the online emotions game called The Chameleon’s Game. This board game was developed and produced by Davide Antognazza, Lorenza Kyburz and Marlène Bucher (SUSPI) with the collaboration of Fabrizia Gendotti, and has been translated and published in English by the Centre for Resilience and Socio-Emotional Health at the University of Malta. This educational tool has the goal of encouraging the development of social and emotional skills such as self-awareness, managing emotions, social awareness, making responsible decisions and interpersonal skills. The game is based on a story that introduces the play. It can be played at home with the family, or in the classroom with the students. Children can play together, but the game has been designed to allow children and adults to play together, providing the opportunity to discuss one’s social and emotional life. The Chameleon’s Game provides a board, a guide on how to play, and 96 cards, and it may be downloaded and printed free of charge from [www.um.edu.mt/cres/publications](http://www.um.edu.mt/cres/publications) (as from October 2014).

You don’t play the Chameleon’s Game in order to win, you just win every time you play!



## MOTHERS WHO BELIEVE THEY CAN SHAPE THEIR DESTINIES GIVE CHILDREN A HEAD START

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### **Abstract**

*We propose a model in which parents have a subjective belief about the impact of their investment on the early skill formation of their children. This subjective belief is determined in part by locus of control (LOC), i.e., the extent to which individuals believe that their actions can influence future outcomes. Using a unique British cohort survey, we show that maternal LOC measured during the 1st-trimester strongly predicts early and late child cognitive and noncognitive outcomes. Further, we utilize the variation in maternal LOC to improve the specification typically used in the estimation of parental investment effects on child development.*

Research published by the Centre for Economic Performance (CEP) at the London School of Economics found that babies born to mothers who hold a strong belief that their fates are in their hands, rather than down to luck, performed significantly better in their GCSEs 16 years later.

The paper is available online: <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1293.pdf>

Conclusion are based on analysing data drawn from the Children of the 90s project, a long-term study of the lives of more than 10,000 young people born in the Bristol area. The data comes from the Children of the 90s (otherwise known as ALSPAC). <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alspac/>

The study tracks the formation of a key personality trait known as the 'locus of control' - people's subjective belief in their ability to influence their life which is formed in infancy and stabilizes in adulthood. Psychologists claim that people can be classified along a continuum on the locus of control scale. This study suggests belief in the ability to change your life is formed in infancy. At one extreme are people with a very internal locus who believe they can entirely direct the course of their own lives. At the other extreme are people with a very external locus who believe their life is entirely determined by luck or fate and feel they have little power to change things. Most people are somewhere between these two extremes.

Warn Lekfuangfu and Nele Warrinnier, two members of the CEP research team which analyzed the data, said previous studies show that, compared with people who have a strong external locus of control, those who have a strong internal locus tend to invest more in their education, live a healthier lifestyle and search for a job

more intensively when unemployed. The academics also claim, *“Our study simply offers new evidence that they also tend to make better parents as well.”*

Another member of the team, Dr Francesca Cornaglia, an economist from Queen Mary University of London, said the research clearly showed the influence of a mother’s personality was substantial: *“Holding other things constant - including family background, mother’s education and children’s own locus of control - we find that children whose mothers ranked in the top 25% of the internal locus of control scale tended to obtain total GCSE scores around 17% higher than children whose mothers ranked in the bottom 25%.”*

Professor Nattavudh Powdthavee, a senior author of the study, said that mothers who have a higher perceived sense of control over their life early on tend to believe in a more hands-on approach to parenting. He said that, *“This is simply because they strongly believe their actions will make a difference in their child’s life.”* He also said, *“Consequently, they tend to engage their children in more cognitively stimulating activities such as reading and singing. This seems to have given their children a head start in terms of cognitive development.”*

## **Conclusions**

*“This paper provides the first empirical evidence on the intergenerational benefits of locus of control. Using extremely rich cohort data, we show that locus of control of the mother measured at the 12th week of gestation significantly predicts educational attainment and emotional health of the child at aged 16. The results are robust to controlling for a battery of maternal characteristics at the time of birth, as well as both parents’ education and the child’s own locus of control. We also provide evidence of a positive and statistically significant link between maternal locus of control and early child outcomes, which include measures of language developmental skills and socio-emotional skills. We attribute our findings to the evidence that mothers with internal locus of control are more likely to believe in the importance of active parenting style and, as a result, tend to engage their children in more cognitive stimulating activities (e.g. reading and singing) than mothers with external locus of control...”*

This brief account of recently published research by Professor Powdthavee on Locus of Control and parenting, education, lifestyle and job search raises additional questions about the link to the mother’s locus of control and the impact upon the child. This research raises additional questions about the development and implementation of positive interventions to influence Locus of Control in mothers, fathers and children.

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## Role of Emotional Intelligence in achievement

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The ultimate goal of education is to provide individuals with the emotional and academic skills necessary for academic and workplace success, as well as to develop informed and responsible community members (Elias, Arnold, & Hussey, 2003). Recent years have seen an explosion of deep interest, debate, and even controversy regarding concepts related to emotional intelligence (EI). Unfortunately, the controversy over defining emotional intelligence, recognizing differences in its conceptual and empirical base, and determining the appropriateness of its practices has kept emotional intelligence from its rightful integrative place, with respect to educating youth (McLaughlin, 2008).

In the last few years, there has been a growing awareness that social and emotional factors play an important part in students' academic success and it has been claimed that those with high scores on EI perform better (Rodeiro et al., 2012, P. 521). Howard Gardner presented his Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory, and (MI) gave birth to the idea of Emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence can be defined as a construct including a set of abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustration, controlling impulses and delaying gratification, regulating ones' moods and preventing distress from swamping the ability to think, emphasizing and hoping (Goleman, 1995, p.34).

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been found to be a predictor of life satisfaction, healthy psychological adaptation, positive interaction with peers and family, and higher parental warmth. Lower emotional intelligence has also been found to be associated with violent behavior, illegal use of drugs and alcohol, and participation in delinquent behavior (Stys&Brown, 2004, p.2). Research on the predictive significance of EI over IQ was spurred by Goleman's initial publication on the topic which claimed that emotional intelligence could be "as powerful, and at times more powerful, than IQ" (Goleman, 1995, P. 34).

Scholars started to investigate emotional intelligence and academic achievement (e.g. Fahim & Pishghadam, 2007; Walker, 2006; Barisonek, 2005). Fahim & Pishghadam, (2007) found that academic achievement was strongly associated with several dimensions of emotional intelligence. It has been accepted that scholars'

attention should be directed to the issue of affective factors in educational settings since emotions and emotional factors have a crucial role in students' personality and academic life (Alasmari, 2014, p.179). Much research has been conducted in the field of (EI) assuming that emotionally intelligent persons are successful in both life and education (Goleman, 1995). In the same context, Petrides, Friderickson& Furnham, 2004; Shuttes, Schuetplez& Malouf, (2001) stated that EI proved to be useful in classrooms and in cognitive tasks.

Preeti (2013, p.8) stated that academic achievement without emotional intelligence does not indicate future success and absence of emotional intelligence also indicate the weak personality and ability to build relations at working place as well in schools. Advocating the same trend, Azizi, et al., (2012, p.2) concluded that the level of emotional intelligence contributes to and enhances the cognitive abilities in student. Thus, to produce a competent generation, persistence of the emotional intelligence in student is essential. It is needed to inculcate the development of emotional intelligence skills into the Curricula because of its impact in improving academic achievement of students (Nwadinigwe & Obieke, 2012, P. 395).

Abdelhafez & Hassan (2011, P.14) asserted that emotional intelligence is nowadays considered to be a vital element in achieving success and recommended to start teaching its components in Egyptian schools and universities so as to raise the levels of students' GPA (grade point average). Nelsen & Nelsen, (2003) assumed that academic retention and achievement would be improved if emotional skills were taught to students. Festus (2012, P.13) concluded that apart from cognitive factors, emotional intelligence of students also affects their academic achievement in mathematics, and recommended that there was need to include emotional intelligence curriculum in schools.

Bharti& Sidana (2012) asserted that the high level of EI can help calm the mind and thus it increases the absorption and comprehension of the given information. Consequently, it contributes to achievement. It is recommended that academic achievement would be enhanced with the use of EI training. The significant correlation between EI and achievement is reported by many researchers (e.g., Preeti, 2013, Yahaya et al., 2012, Ferrando et al., 2011, Nasir& Masrur, 2010, Singh et al., 2009, Rode et al., 2007, Parker at al., 2004; Nelsen& Nelsen, 2003) which revealed that significant and positive correlation was found between EI and achievement.

## **Conclusions**

Considering the definition of EI, it is necessary for college of education students to have the ability to understand personal emotions and others' ones because EI became one of the topics gaining importance in terms of controlling and channeling emotions inside and outside classroom. University staff members should integrate

emotional intelligence dimensions into syllabi so as to improve emotional and affective competency of youth at that critical age. It is worth noting that understanding the influence of emotional intelligence on achievement enables lecturers to cater for non-cognitive aspects (e.g., EI) during the teaching and learning processes.

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS BY ENSEC MEMBERS

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20% discount for ENSEC members on a new book on social and emotional learning by Carmel Cefai and Valeria Cavioni, *Social and Emotional Education: Integrating Theory and Research into Practice* (2014, Springer Publications). The book synthesizes concepts, findings, and best practices for a complete guide to planning, implementing, and evaluating social and emotional education (SEE) programs in schools. Emphasizing "caught" as well as taught lessons, the book offers a whole-school framework for SEE, with content, rationales, assessment tools, and age-appropriate strategies. Interventions are also included for use across subjects, to engage learners and assist students with behavioural and emotional difficulties. And the lessons travel beyond the classroom, involving the whole school, families and communities. Roger P Weissberg, CASEL President and CEO describes the book as a "valuable resource for teacher preparation and for professional learning communities of educators" while Maurice Elias, Director of the Rutgers Social-Emotional Learning Lab, NJ, USA, calls it an "extraordinarily compact and valuable book ...an essential resource for practitioners, researchers, and policy makers". To receive a 20 percent discount, please enter code CEFAL at checkout on the publisher's website

<http://www.springer.com/psychology/child+%26+school+psychology/book/978-1-4614-8751-7>

**Cefai, C. & Camilleri, L. (2014) A Healthy Start: Promoting mental health and wellbeing in the early primary school years. *Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties*. DOI: 10.1080/13632752.2014.915493**

Mental health problems in children represent a significant international health concern, with up to one in five children using mental health services during the course of any given year. Identifying the processes of what prevents social, emotional and behaviour difficulties and promotes healthy development from an early age can make a significant contribution to the promotion of positive mental health in children. This article describes a longitudinal study which sought to identify the risk and promotive factors as young children move from the early to junior years in primary school. Multilevel analysis was used to identify the individual, classroom, school, home and community factors that predict change in social, emotional and behaviour difficulties and in prosocial behaviour in the early school years. It also calculated the cumulative effect of the various risk and promotive factors on the

pupils' well-being and mental health. The article presents the windows of vulnerability and opportunity for young children's healthy development, proposing a trajectory for healthy development in early and middle childhood.

**Cefai, C., Ferrario, E., Cavioni, V., Carter, A. & Grech, T. (2014) Circle Time for Social and Emotional Learning in Primary School. *Journal of Pastoral Care in Education*, 32 (2), 116-130. DOI: 10.1080/02643944.2013.861506.**

This paper discusses the findings and implications of a semi randomized control trial study on the effectiveness of Circle Time (CT) on primary school students' social and emotional learning, as well as classroom teachers' and students' experience of CT. A social and emotional learning programme was delivered through CT by trained classroom teachers across the years in one primary school, with other classrooms serving as control groups. The classroom teachers completed the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) at pre and post intervention, while the CT teachers also completed a questionnaire on their experience of implementing circle time in the classroom. The CT students also completed a questionnaire on their own experience of CT. The SDQ scores suggest that CT students showed less internalized difficulties when compared to their control peers, while the qualitative data from both teachers and students suggest that the CT students also exhibited less behaviour problems and more prosocial behaviour. The study identifies various strengths and weaknesses of the programme and makes recommendations on how it could be organized more effectively in the classroom. The paper concludes that rather than taking CT as the default option for nurturing such values as student empowerment, inclusion and equity, there is a need for further rigorous studies on the impact of CT not only on students' social and emotional learning and behaviour, but also on the classroom relationships and climate.

**Cefai, C., Matsopoulos, A., Bartolo, P., Galea, K., Gavogiannaki, M., Zanetti, M.A., Renati, R., Cavioni, V., Pavin Ivanec, T., Šarić, M., Kimber, B., Eriksson, C., Simoes, C. & Lebre, P. (2014) A Resilience Curriculum for Early Years and Elementary Schools in Europe: Enhancing Quality Education. *Croatian Journal of Education*, 16 (2), 73-94.**

About twenty percent of school children experience social, emotional and behaviour problems during the course of any given year and may need the use of mental health services. The number may rise to up to fifty percent amongst children coming from socio-economically disadvantaged areas and from vulnerable communities. The economic crisis which Europe is undergoing at the moment has exacerbated the risks among those already facing disadvantages such as unemployment of young people and new families, increasing poverty and social disadvantage for the whole communities and regions. These challenges underline

the need to equip children from an early age with the requisite skills to help them overcome the challenges and obstacles they are set to face in such circumstances while providing healthy and protective contexts which promote their health and well-being. This paper describes the development of a resilience curriculum for children in early years and primary schools in Europe with the aim of enhancing quality education for all children, including the most vulnerable ones. It presents and discusses the curriculum framework developed from the existing literature, including the key principles, processes and themes underlying the curriculum.

**Askell-Williams, H., & Cefai, C. (2014) Australian and Maltese teachers' perspectives about their capabilities for mental health promotion in school settings. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 40, 1-12.**

Policy makers identify schools as settings for promoting students' positive mental health. However, mental health promotion is not typically addressed in pre- or in-service teacher education. This paper reports Australian and Maltese teachers' perspectives about their capabilities for mental health promotion. Although participants reported favourable attitudes, many indicated concerns about capabilities such as Knowledge, Parenting Support and Self-efficacy. Multilevel modeling showed differences between county, gender and year level, but not between years of teaching experience. Curriculum initiatives for mental health promotion require opportunities for teachers to build their capabilities in this relatively new domain of school and teacher responsibility.

**Clark, M. & Cefai, C. (2014) School Careers and Delinquent Involvement: A retrospective investigation into the schooling experiences of habitual offenders. *Malta Review of Educational Research*, 8 (1), 33-64.**

This paper investigates the schooling experiences of young people who pursued a criminal career and consequently became habitual offenders. The data presented are part of a larger grounded theory project on criminal career development among Maltese male youth. The narrative approach adopted in the study allows one to explore offenders' school careers from their perspective and adopts an inductive design. While the direction of the link between schooling and juvenile delinquency remains complex and contested, exploring the role of the school in delinquent development has important implications for intervention. This paper shows how school experiences have important implications for the development of delinquent careers and are an important contingency in relation to early onset of delinquency. Participant's negative school experiences and adjustment, engagement in truancy and labelling within the school context are some of the key themes which emerged from the students' narratives. Although not conclusive, the data from this study implies that dissatisfaction with the educational experience combined with

other contingencies, may set the stage for more serious delinquency in and out of school.

**Lam, S., Jimerson, S., Wong, B., Kikas, E., Shin, H., Veiga, F., Hatzichristou, C., Polychroni, F., Cefai, C. et al. (2014). Understanding and Measuring Student Engagement in School: The Results of an International Study from 12 Countries. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 29 (2), 213-232.**

The objective of the present study was to develop a scale that is appropriate for use internationally to measure affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions of student engagement. Psychometric properties of this scale were examined with data of 3,420 students (7th, 8th, and 9th grade) from 12 countries (Austria, Canada, China, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Malta, Portugal, Romania, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States). The intraclass correlation of the full-scale scores of student engagement between countries revealed that it was appropriate to aggregate the data from the 12 countries for further analyses. Coefficient alphas revealed good internal consistency. Test–retest reliability coefficients were also acceptable. Confirmatory factor analyses indicated that the data fit well to a second-order model with affective, behavioral, and cognitive engagement as the first-order factors and student engagement as the second-order factor. The results support the use of this scale to measure student engagement as a metaconstruct. Furthermore, the significant correlations of the scale with instructional practices, teacher support, peer support, parent support, emotions, academic performance, and school conduct indicated good concurrent validity of the scale. Considerations and implications regarding the international use of this student engagement in school measure are discussed.

**Rae, T. (2014). Supporting the well-being of girls. *Education and Health*, 32(2)**

In this article, Dr Tina Rae describes her recent research conducted into the topic of girl's pressures and issues in an outer London Borough underpins and informs the development of a programme to support the well-being of girls. A group of girls and young women who were presenting with a range of behaviours which were felt to be putting them at risk – both emotionally and physically in a wide range of contexts were identified by inclusion managers and SENCOs in schools. Staff were keen to explore the reasons and contributory factors and to also ensure that the girl's views were elicited. The general discourse around these young women appeared to be one of negativity in that they were regarded as putting themselves at risk due to their daily behaviour and apparent self-harming behaviours.

Feedback from staff within the local authority had also highlighted concerns regarding early sexualisation of these students and a range of substance abuse

which seemed to put them at risk from males and also engaged them in negative patterns of self-harming behaviours which mitigated against personal and educational progression and development. It was therefore felt appropriate to conduct a series of focus groups in order to elicit the girls' views – what was it that they felt concerned about and what kind of intervention or support at a school-based level might they consider most helpful?

**Thornberg, R., & Jungert, T. (2014). School bullying and the mechanisms of moral disengagement. *Aggressive Behavior*, 40, 99–108.**

The aim of the present study was to examine to what degree different mechanisms of moral disengagement were related to age, gender, bullying, and defending among school children. Three hundred and seventy-two Swedish children ranging in age from 10 to 14 years completed a questionnaire. Findings revealed that boys expressed significantly higher levels of moral justification, euphemistic labeling, diffusion of responsibility, distorting consequences, and victim attribution, as compared with girls. Whereas boys bullied others significantly more often than girls, age was unrelated to bullying. Moral justification and victim attribution were the only dimensions of moral disengagement that significantly related to bullying. Furthermore, younger children and girls were more likely to defend victims. Diffusion of responsibility and victim attribution were significantly and negatively related to defending, while the other dimensions of moral disengagement were unrelated to defending.

**Thornberg, R., Thornberg, U. B., Alamaa, R., & Daud, N. (2014, online). Children's conceptions of bullying and repeated conventional transgressions: Moral, conventional, structuring and personal-choice reasoning. *Educational Psychology*, 99–108. doi: 10.1080/01443410.2014.915929**

This study examined 307 elementary school children's judgments and reasoning about bullying and other repeated transgressions when school rules regulating these transgressions have been removed in hypothetical school situations. As expected, children judged bullying (repeated moral transgressions) as wrong independently of rules and as more wrong than all the other repeated transgressions. They justified their judgment in terms of harm that the actions caused. Moreover, whereas children tended to judge repeated structuring transgressions as wrong independently of rules (but to a lesser degree than when they evaluated bullying) and justified their judgments in terms of the disruptive, obstructive or disturbing effects that the actions caused, they tended to accept repeated etiquette transgressions by arguing that the acts had no negative effects or simply that the rule had been removed. The findings confirm as well as extend previous social-cognitive domain research on children's socio-moral reasoning.

**More publications by our members:**

Cowie, H., Huser, C., & Myers, C.-A. (2014). The use of participatory methods in researching the experiences of children and young people, *Croatian Journal of Education*, 16(2), 51-66.

Pavin-Ivanec, T., Miljević-Riđički, R., & Bouillet. D. (2014). Kindergarten Teachers' Resilience and Its Relation to the Parental Behaviour of Their Mothers and Fathers. *Croatian Journal of Education*, 16(2), 109-124.

Rae, T. (2014). Supporting the well-being of girls. *Education and Health*. 32(2).

Rae, T., & Piggott, E. (2014). *Supporting the Well Being of Girls An Evidence-based School Programme*. London: Routledge

Rae, T. (2014). *60 Mindful Minutes fostering mindfulness in the nurture group*. London: Nurture Group Network

Rae, T. (2014). *Supporting Successful Transition from Primary to Secondary School. A Programme for Teachers*. London: Routledge