



European Network for
Social and Emotional Competence

Newsletter

Issue 29
December 2023

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING MATTERS

Greetings!

We are delighted to extend a warm welcome to all as we embark on the 29th issue of the ENSEC newsletter.

In this issue, you can look forward to vibrant news featuring the latest books and articles that delve into the realms of Social and Emotional Learning.

Additionally, we will spotlight innovative projects from various corners of the world, showcasing the impactful engagement of SEL in action.

Anticipating the upcoming year, as we prepare for the 9th ENSEC Conference Social Emotional Learning for Lifetime Achievement in Chania, Greece, from 5th to 7th September 2024 we invite you to join us on this journey of exploration, discovery, and advocacy for the profound impact of Social and Emotional Learning.

Despite the challenges and uncertainties that have shaped our experiences, we at ENSEC firmly believe in the enduring value of humankind and how SEL plays a pivotal role in fostering connections, personal growth gratitude and compassion.

Thank you for being part of the ENSEC community.

Editors: Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić & Paula Lebre

<https://www.enseceurope.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/enseceurope/>



SEL INITIATIVES

Call for papers - 9th ENSEC
Conference

PUBLICATIONS

International Journal of
Emotional Education

New books and papers

PROJECTS

Master programme in
Resilience in Education

Taiwan Happiness Village
Emotion Education
Association

What Does ChatGPT Think

“Eduskills+SEL” – new
Erasmus+ project

CALL FOR PAPERS

9th ENSEC Conference in Greece

Theme: *Social Emotional Learning for Lifetime Achievement*

Where: Chania, Greece

When: 5-7 September 2024

Important dates:

Proposal Submission Deadline: January 15, 2024

Proposal evaluation results: March 2024

Early Registration: May 2024



HOME ORGANIZERS PROGRAMME SUBMISSION KEYNOTE SPEAKERS REGISTRATION DESTINATION ▾ IMPORTANT DATES SPONSORS



Submit
your
abstract



<https://ensec2024.gr/submission>

Contemporary studies in SEL, mental health, resilience, well-being in educational context & PROMEHS

Webinar as project activity at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka, Croatia

Within the university project Development of the Program for the acquisition of micro-qualifications in educational work for the enhancement of mental health and well-being (UNIRI_CLASS_A1), which was initiated at the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Teacher Education as the continuation of the PROMEHS curriculum implementation in Croatian kindergartens and schools, webinar named: CONTEMPORARY STUDIES IN: SEL, MENTAL HEALTH, RESILIENCE, WELL-BEING IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT & PROMEHS was held on **September 28th 2023**.

Experts in the field of socio-emotional learning and resilience, same as PROMEHS main coordinators held their very interesting lectures reflecting contemporary research in this important field, and the program of the webinar could be seen below. The aim of the webinar was to enhance competencies of project members to be ready for educating Croatian teachers in the field of mental health, SEL, resilience, well-being in education and PROMEHS.

PhD Full Prof. Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić,
sanjatv@uniri.hr

Name of the presenter	Presentation title
Prof. PhD. Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić (Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka, Croatia)	Introduction to the online education
prof. PhD. Ilaria Grazzani (University of Milano-Bicocca, Milan, Italy)	Promoting social and emotional competence in early years education: from research to practice
Dr. Valeria Cavioni, PhD. (University of Foggia, Foggia, Italy)	Teachers' mental health matters: results from a successful experimentation
prof. PhD. Carmel Cefai (University of Malta, Malta)	<i>A systemic, whole-school approach to mental health promotion</i>
Prof. PhD. Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić (Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka, Croatia)	<i>Q&A with concluding remarks</i>



Transition periods in childhood and adjustment in kindergarten and primary school

Symposium held at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka, Croatia

Ensuring the well-being of children during transitional periods in childhood, especially when they take place in the context of care and education, is one of the main tasks of kindergartens and elementary school. These are periods that are often challenging for children and parents as well as for educators and classroom teachers. On the other hand, they are learning situations in which children (and parents) are confronted with new challenges in their lives and develop coping strategies that remain formative throughout their lives. At the same time, certain developmental domains are exposed to early influences to a significant extent during the transitional phases, such as the social-emotional domain and, in particular, the development of attachments and general relationships with others. At the institutional level, the nature of transition periods necessarily involves different educational institutions with different curricula, raising questions about their collaborative practices and whether there is room for improvement.

The contemporary research on transition deftly shifts the focus from whether the child is ready for kindergarten/primary school to whether and to what extent the kindergarten/school is ready for the child, so that today we are talking about kindergarten/school adjustment rather than kindergarten/school adaptation. Therefore, the aim of this symposium is to update the topic of transition from family to kindergarten and from kindergarten or preschool to elementary school and to offer guidelines for improving the quality of transition periods in childhood through critical questioning in the form of theoretical presentations and lectures based on examples of good practice.



As a part of the Days of the Faculty of Teachers Education in Rijeka, on **October 27, 2023**, a scientific and professional symposium. The organizers of the Symposium were the Faculty of Teachers in Rijeka and the project team of the UNIRI project: "Well-being of children in transitional life periods: Empirical validation of the Ecological-Dynamic Model" [unirdrustv-18-11]. Invited presentations included theoretical frameworks of transitional periods in childhood, and examples of good practice from institutions for early preschool education and primary schools. The symposium aroused great interest both in terms of attendance (a total of 90 participants) and discussions based on presentations.

PhD Full Prof. Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić, sanjatv@uniri.hr

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM		
Time	Presenters	Presentations
9,30-9,40	Full prof. PhD. Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić & Aleksandra Smolić Batelić, assistant	Symposia opening
9,40-10,00	Full prof. PhD. Sanja Smojver Ažić	The role of early relations and attachment in the context of transition to and adjustment in kindergarten
10,00-10,20	Assoc. prof. PhD. Dunja Anđić	The relationship with nature, play and learning in nature as well-being determinants of children's transition periods in primary schools
10,20-10,40	Preschool teacher Amelia Lušetić, Full prof. PhD. Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić & Doris Velan, pedagogue	How to make the unknown known – an example of good practice for the transition from family to kindergarten
10,40-11,00	PhD. Sonja Ivić	Doll as support for children's transition from kindergarten to school
11,00-11,20	Full prof. PhD. Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić	Children's well-being and educational transition periods: review of Uniri project activities
11,20-11,30	Full prof. PhD. Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić & Aleksandra Smolić Batelić, assistant	Discussion and conclusions of symposia
Programme committee: Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić, Darko Lončarić, Ivana Mihić, Ester Vidović, Vesna Katić Organisation committee: Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić, Sanja Skočić Mihić, Jasminka Mezak, Aleksandra Smolić Batelić, Zlata Tomljenović		

17th Associations Round Table Brussels at the Marriott Grand Place

24 November 2023



UNION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS
Union des Associations Internationales

The Union of International Associations (UIA) Round Table Brussels 2023 is an event designed for participants working in and with international associations.

Please, see all the topics of the programme and the schedule at

<https://uia.org/roundtable/2023/bxl/>

10th Associations Round Table Asia-Pacific at the Lotte Hotel, Seoul, South Korea

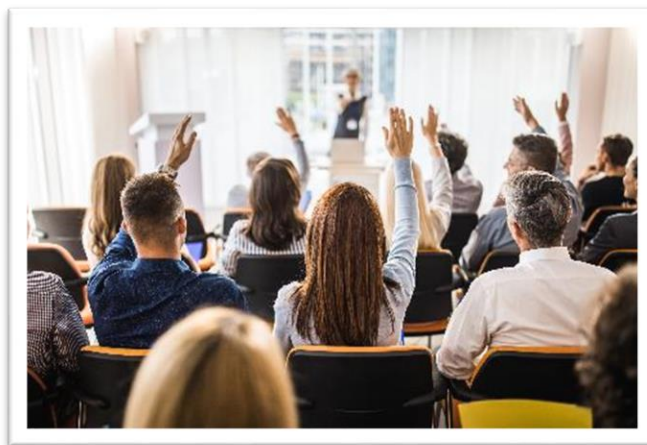
11 & 12 October 2023

**Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI), and
Sustainability (UN-SDGs): Trends and Practice**

See all the topics of the programme and the schedule at <https://uia.org/roundtable/2023/ap/>

UIA is an independent non-profit research institute founded in 1907 which has documented and promoted the work of international associations for more than 115 years.

The UIA Round Tables provide an opportunity to learn through networking and through practice, to meet other international associations and share experience and knowledge to help you run your organization better.



Carol Williams
roundtable@uia.org

Arts-based Capacity Building and Training (ACBT)

India (Jammu & Kashmir), June – November 2022

Type of mission: 10 Online Training sessions and 10 Online Coaching sessions with KEF-PFEL

Beneficiaries: 152 teachers

In partnership with: Kaivalya Education Foundation (KEF) and Piramal Foundation for Education Leadership (PFEL)

With the kind support: Sofina Covid Solidarity Fund

Art therapy team: Programme Supervisor - Sara Simon (UK); Sibylle Cseri (Spain); Art Therapists - Blanca Romañá (Spain); Cristina Ramos (France); Latika Joshi (India); Yen Chua (Singapore); Saoni Banerjee (India); Renu Thomas (UAE); Roshni Bhatia (India)

Mission Notes & Impact: A two-phase project for Indian teachers working in the region of Jammu and Kashmir was implemented. KEF is a systems transformation and behaviour change organisation, working on the most complex problems in the Indian education system. Partnering with State Governments, and National Council for School Leadership, KEF operates in 27 States and 2 Union Territories in India, works in about 400,000 schools. PFEL is an initiative of Piramal Foundation that works on inculcating the right mind-set and leadership skills to Government School Headmasters, to positively impact the quality of education in public schools. The project first consisted of a 30-hour training to give an insight into arts-based activities for Social Emotional Learning in the classroom. The training was followed by coaching sessions in smaller groups and aimed at deepening the knowledge and putting into practice the acquired arts-based tools with the children. In total we trained 10 groups of about 15 teachers each. For each group we selected 1 head arts therapist and 1 assistant arts therapist assisting her. The mission provided the teachers with theoretical knowledge on Social Emotional Learning and child psychological development through the use of arts based tools and techniques which can be used to support the children under their care. It also equipped the teachers with arts-based self-care and coping tools and techniques for themselves.

India (Bangalore). July – December 2022

Beneficiaries: 34 teachers

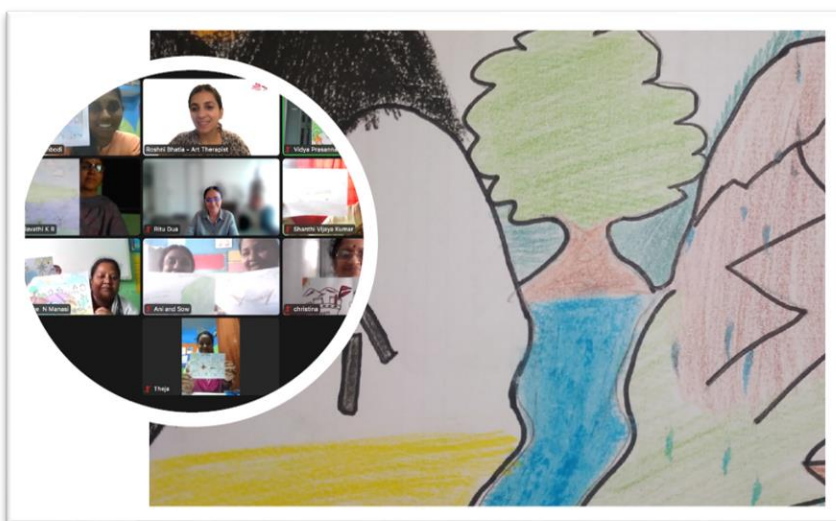
In partnership with: Parikrma Humanity Foundation

With the kind support of: SOFINA Covid Solidarity Fund

Art Therapist: Roshni Bhatia

Assistant Art Therapist: Ritu Dua

Mission Notes & Impact: The Red Pencil also pursued the collaboration initiated in 2021 with the Parikrma Humanity Foundation by offering additional coaching sessions to 4 groups of teachers. The 4 Groups met once a month for 6 months from July to December with the arts therapist to receive additional coaching. Overall, 34 teachers in Bangalore benefitted from the advice of our arts therapist.





Story of Change I Ira's Story

Country:
India

Type of art therapy:
Arts-based Capacity
Building and Training

I have started using puppets and masks with my students to discuss various topics. I also have created an arts corner in my classroom. I notice that the students are much more interactive now and even the shy ones are participating who never did before. After introducing these methods I realise the impact of such work, I am feeling motivated to do more.



Ira and student choosing greeting

Ira (pseudonym), a grade 2 teacher, shared her process during the coaching sessions, where she has begun integrating visual teaching using puppetry and storytelling. In the image below, a puppet created with socks and other household items, is seen having a conversation with themselves about a dilemma they are facing about telling the truth or not. This was a topic from the ethics lesson's curriculum. Similarly, another narrative on caring for the elderly was depicted using drawing and ice cream sticks.

Ira shared several such instances where she had created visual tools to assist her teaching methods. It was particularly interesting to see the diverse ways in which she had adapted the training to her teaching method despite challenges of material resources for students and time constraints. Ira's process demonstrated that the training had a sustainable impact that was beyond participants merely replicating the activities that they experienced but translating methods of visual thinking and critical reflection to fit their students' needs and context.



Ira, Collection of hand puppets used in the classroom

This was further illustrated through the application of an intervention that Ira found on the internet where students can choose what type of greeting they want from the teacher before they enter the classroom. Ira had created a chart with options such as a hug, a shake hand, a high 5 and more.



It was really a wonderful experience with students. I have done many arts-based activities with students, and they were so excited to express themselves by drawing."

Jyoti,
Teacher who participated in the ACBT



The arts-based capacity building and training has changed me a lot as a person and as a teacher. It helped me to reduce my stress and anxiety and to build a stronger relationship with my students.

Suhail,
Staff who participated in the ACBT



Story of Change II Aziza's Story

Country:
Lebanon

Type of arts therapy:
Parents' group session

Aziza's daughter suffers from cancer. Both her son and daughter attended individual arts therapy sessions. She joined the parents' group from the onset. The art therapist invited participants to create an artwork, reflecting on life challenges, but also on hope. Aziza shared about her pain, tears, but also shared about her own spirituality that brought her peace at the most challenging and hard moments of her daughter's journey with cancer.

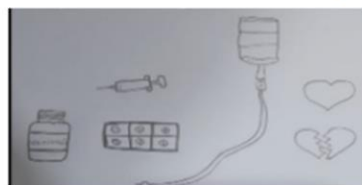


At the second session, Aziza appeared excited and looking forward to the session. The art therapist suggested for the group to create a mandala (above, left) to contain negative feelings in a healthy way. Aziza shared that for her, it was as if she is adding into her

mandala everything she likes and hiding them all in there, protecting them. She added thoughts about her pain, but also the strengths she discovered within her and helped her overcome her difficult times. She said how important it is to share one's experience with others, reflecting in this group, as human beings can inspire each other in finding hope and positive aspects, mainly through the hardest times.

At a next session, the art therapist invited the group to create an artwork reflecting on their feelings. Aziza created her artwork, shared about broken hearts, hard and challenging moments, and the medical process her daughter went through at the hospital. However, she added that she is finding support within this group, relating to others and sharing different experiences that brought her some hope and soothes her pain. She appeared less tensed at the end of the session, adding some positive and fun thoughts.

During the last session, the group shared how beneficial arts therapy sessions were for them, but also how they were able to process their feelings and feel supported. Aziza expressed that the group helped her reflect on life as a journey. She represented the whole group in a sailing boat, full of different feelings, but also that they are not alone in all that. She reflected on spirituality, added few quotes and words of affirmation: hope, patience, resiliency, and self-care.



The role and importance of emotional intelligence in the family, educational and work context

The first Croatian conference on emotional intelligence

Zagreb, Croatia, December 7th

The first Croatian conference on emotional intelligence was held at the Faculty of Croatian Studies of the University of Zagreb on December 7th, entitled "The role and importance of emotional intelligence in the family, educational and work context". The conference was officially opened by the dean of FCS, prof. Ph.D. Mario Grčević and the president of the program and organization committee of the conference, Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. Dario Vučenović from the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Croatian Studies. The invited lecture was held by Ph.D. Vladimir Takšić, professor emeritus from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka, who briefly presented the findings of the last 30 years of research into the construct of emotional intelligence.

In the first thematic block of the conference on education, prof. Ph.D. Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić presented the possibilities of applying the PROMEHS curriculum, and associate prof. Ph.D. Anela Nikčević-Milković reflected on the connection between children's and parents' emotional literacy, while Marina Bujas, doctoral student presented the results of research on the importance of emotional intelligence in an inclusive school.



Publication of the International Journal of Emotional Education, November 2023

Volume 15 Issue 2 of the International Journal of Emotional Education (IJEE) has just been published by the University of Malta

Nine papers and four research reports by various authors from around the world address issues related to initial teacher education and relational and affective pedagogy and teacher wellbeing, the social and emotional competence of Heads of school and teachers' motivation, personality factors and resilience, mindfulness practice and resilience, the role of team-based activities in physical education in improving cooperative conflict management, and the impact of social and emotional programmes on students' outcomes and on teachers' wellbeing.

The IJEE is an indexed, international, electronic journal which is distributed free of charge and supported by an international board of reviewers with high level expertise in the field. It may be accessed at www.um.edu.mt/ijee/



L-Università ta' Malta

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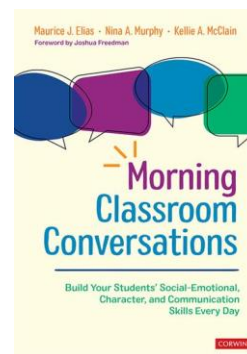
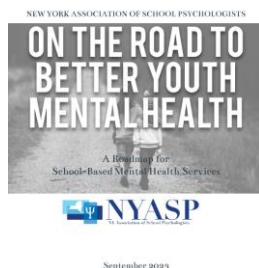
Morning Classroom Conversations

Build Your Students' Social-Emotional, Character, and Communication Skills Every Day

Since the onset of COVID-19, there has been a continuous concern about the state of youth mental health. During lockdowns in 2020, levels of stress and anxiety increased due to stressors such as loss of a loved one or decreased socialization; these still have an impact today. Rates of depression have skyrocketed; so much so that approximately 15% of teens suffered a major depressive episode in the last year, a figure that has been replicated in many countries worldwide. The New York Association of School Psychologists (NYASP), recently published a [roadmap for school mental health services](#) which highlighted the uniquely positioned support that schools can offer in mitigating the current mental health crisis.

One area of need that has become quite apparent is the need for conversation skills. Students require the crucial skills of conversation in order to be productive members of society. The state of mental health in the United States paired with the social hesitation that naturally occurs during adolescents (which likely was exacerbated by COVID-19) reduces participation in the classroom. Lack of sophisticated conversation abilities- which include listening- can impair both higher education and job success and advancements. Conversation is an underutilized tool which allows opportunity to build relationships and connect in a meaningful way.

Classroom environments serve a crucial role of support in student growth. Teachers are often looking for ways to connect with students, especially since the global pandemic. All humans seek social connection, and when educators can provide opportunities for connection within the classroom, meaningful learning occurs. Classrooms are places where conversation skills can be explicitly encouraged. With all of this in mind, [Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character Development \(SECD\) Lab](#) has developed [Morning Classroom Conversations](#). Morning Classroom Conversations (MCCs) are 10-15 minute daily conversation times that exercise youth SEL muscles and promote students' sense of autonomy, community and confidence.



Teachers foster a “brave space” by starting with approachable and fun prompts such as, “(thumbs up/thumbs down) Beach or mountains” or “Who are your favorite people in music or sports?” This will allow youth gain the comfort needed for self-expression, as the class expands to questions relating to skills such as emotion regulation (i.e., “What do you do to self-regulate in difficult situations?”) or communication (i.e., “ While listening, what are some ways that you can ensure that you are understanding?”) Then, Conversation Leaders move into conversations about virtues: “What does it mean to be a good person?” “Is it better to be kind or rich? Why?” “What are you like when you are at your best?” Many of the conversation prompts provide opportunities for reflection and sharing, such as, “If someone were to follow you around for 30 days, what would they say about you?”. With the consistent structure of daily conversation and the expanding complexity of questions and topics throughout the year (and across years, when feasible), students are given a unique opportunity to develop neglected skills and foster social-emotional and character development.

Educators who are interested in learning more about this topic should check out *Morning Classroom Conversations: Build Your Students' Social-Emotional, Character, and Communication Skills Every Day*. This book includes three years' worth of structured conversation prompts for students in middle and high school, alternate models for implementation for those who are unable to have daily conversations, and an overview of the underlying structures and goals of Morning Classroom Conversations.

For more information please visit <https://us.corwin.com/en-us/nam/morning-classroom-conversations/book276563>.

*Nina Murphy, Psy.D. and
Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.
SECD Lab at Rutgers University*

L'apprendimento sociale ed emotivo. Teorie e buone pratiche per promuovere la salute mentale a scuola

Book

The book is focused on the evolution of SEL concept, the intervention programs from kindergarten to high school, and the tools to assess the effectiveness of the SEL programs.

<https://www.mulino.it/isbn/9788815386830>

VALERIA CAVIONI ILARIA GRAZZANI

L'apprendimento sociale ed emotivo

Teorie e buone pratiche per promuovere la salute mentale a scuola



il Mulino

Validation of Italian students' self-ratings on the SSIS SEL brief scales

Abstract paper

Despite increasing interest in measuring social and emotional learning (SEL), there is a lack of European-validated tools for assessing the efficacy of SEL programs. The aim of this study was to validate an Italian version of the social skills improvement system (SSIS) SEL brief scales–student form. Methods: Participants were 1,175 students (mean age: 11.02 years; SD: 2.42; range: 8–16 years; males: 46.8%) recruited at schools in Northern Italy. Statistical analyses and results: Initial confirmatory factor analysis encountered a series of challenges, implying non-convergence of the original five-factor measurement model (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making) based on the Collaborative on Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) competency framework established with students in the United States. Further exploratory and confirmatory analyses supported a four-factor model that remained partially invariant across gender groups. The Italian version of the SSIS SEL brief scales was thus shown to be an efficient measurement tool for estimating social and emotional learning in students. Discussion: We discuss the implications of findings in relation to selecting valid and reliable instruments for assessing children's and adolescents' SEL competencies, while considering the culturally situated nature of the constructs under study.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1229653/full>

Valeria Cavioni, Elisabetta Conte, Ilaria Grazzani, Veronica Ornaghi, Carmel Cefai, Christopher Anthony, Stephen N. Elliott and Alessandro Pepe

Opening the door of self-disclosure: Supporting adolescents' journey from loneliness to friendships

Paper

In the current era, many teenagers experience loneliness. My new review article which was published in European Psychologist deals with the association between self-disclosure, loneliness and close friendships among adolescents. I would be happy to share the article with ENSEC members and receive reactions and thoughts:

Korem, A. (2023). Opening the door of self-disclosure: Supporting adolescents' journey from loneliness to friendships. *European Psychologist*, 28(2), 122-132. <https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2023-73762-001.html>

Dr. Anat Korem, Anat.korem@mail.huji.ac.il



First Joint Master programme in Resilience in Education opens October 2023

The first edition of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Programme in Resilience in Educational Contexts has opened in October 2023 at the University of Malta. 18 students from different countries around the world are attending the two-year full-time programme, awarded conjointly by the University of Malta, University of Crete, University of Lisbon, and University of Suceava, Romania.

Applications for scholarships for the second edition starting in October 2024 are open and close on 31st December 2023.

For further information please visit:
www.flourishproject.mt



Figure 1 - The students attending the Joint Master Programme in Resilience in Education, 2023-2025

Taiwan Happiness Village Emotion Education Association

Responding to calls from a local elementary school, the Peitou Association, a local non-profit organization in Beitou District of Taipei City, Taiwan, started the social and emotional learning program, called EQ education, in 2001. Because of the popularity of the program, the Taiwan Happiness Village Emotion Education Association, a national non-profit organization, was established in 2013 to further facilitate the promotion of SEL in Taiwan.

We developed our own curriculum, called Happiness Curriculum, which has twelve volumes from Grade 1 to Grade 6, with one volume for each semester. (Fig. 1). We involved the parents and the teachers to deliver the curriculum in the classroom. Each semester we train the parents from the participating schools, which requires 40-50 hours of training (Fig.2) and then through collaborative teaching with the classroom teacher, the curriculum is delivered to the students (Fig.4).



Figure 1 - Happiness Curriculum



Figure 2 - Parents in training sessions

It should be noticed that both the training and the curriculum are free. During the scholastic year 2022-2023, about 180 schools and 3500 classes joined our program, and we trained 1800 parents, with the curriculum delivered with 87000 pupils.

To raise the attention of the education and mental health authorities in Taiwan, we also organized international forums on social and emotional learning in 2014, 2017 and 2023 in which we invited guest speakers from abroad to present the latest development of SEL. The 2023 forum, held in Taipei City on October 23 and Chiayi City on October 25, attracted about 1500 participants (Fig. 4).

Huei-Tysr Chen



Figure 3 - Activities in the classroom



Figure 4 - Panel discussion during the 2023 Forum

What Does ChatGPT Think About SEL?

ChatGPT is a relatively new player in the SEL space. As ENSEC expands and deepens its SEL-related work, it seems like a good idea to share what ChatGPT understands about SEL. In particular, we asked ChatGPT to tailor its response to certain forms that we thought might capture the interest and attention of different groups of people.

ChatGPT is able to adapt to different literary forms and still provide engaging information. We were particularly impressed with ChatGPT's ability to differentiate between SEL and its 2.0 version, Social-Emotional and Character Development (SECD). ChatGPT was able to provide an insightful haiku and an entertaining limerick. We were particularly interested in seeing how ChatGPT captured SECD's emerging emphasis on the construct of "purpose." We asked the question in two slightly different ways, and the different results—both inspiring—illustrate how sensitive ChatGPT is to the nuance of what it is asked to generate. Finally, we were impressed with ChatGPT's understanding of SEL's appeal and importance. You can see that in the SEL Ad. ChatGPT even provided the illustrations, unasked. Aren't you ready to sign up after reading it?

We note the occasional inaccuracy and that asking ChatGPT the same question at different times produces slightly different answers, presumably because different inputs to ChatGPT would have taken place during the gap in time. That said, it seems clear that the inputs into ChatGPT include quite a sophisticated understanding of SEL and SECD. At the very least, ChatGPT appears to be an aid to creative applications of SEL and SECD to engage different potential audiences. For ENSEC members, it will be relevant to see if ChatGPT produces equivalently valuable information in native languages, or whether the English language data base is more comprehensive, such that materials are best generated in English and then translated into particular languages as appropriate.

Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.

Director, Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab (www.secdlab.org)

Edward Dunkelblau, Ph.D.

International Coordinator, Academy for Social-Emotional Learning in Schools (SELinSchools.org)

SEL: A poem in Dr. Seuss Style

In the land of learning, oh so grand,
There's something special, understand?
It's called SEL, it's quite a treat,
A way to make our hearts beat, beat, beat!
SEL, you see, is all about feelings,
Understanding, like warm, fuzzy dealings.
It teaches us to know what's inside,
The emotions we can't easily hide.
With SEL, we learn to be aware,
Of our own feelings, here and there.
Happy, sad, or maybe confused,
We discover how we're amused!
Next, self-management takes the stage,
Like a conductor on a grand parade.
We learn to control our impulses,
And manage our feelings, like wizards with spells.

Now, social awareness, oh what a delight,
We learn to see the world in a new light.
Empathy grows like a colorful flower,
Helping us connect, hour after hour.
Responsible decision-making is key,
It's like a map for you and me.
We think before we act, oh so wise,
Making choices that will make us rise.
And in relationship skills, oh so cool,
We learn to work as a team, not a duel.
Communication and cooperation, you see,
Help us build friendships, as tight as can be.
So, in the world of SEL, we find our way,
Learning and growing, day by day.
With kindness and care, like a Dr. Seuss rhyme,
We create a world that's truly sublime!

An SEL Poem

In the classroom, we gather 'round,
To learn emotions, all safe and sound.
SEL, it's quite the art,
To master feelings, from end to start.
First, there's Anger, a fiery beast,
Makes you frown, to say the least.
But with SEL, we'll find the way,
To tame that temper, come what may.
Next comes Joy, oh so sweet,
Makes your heart skip a joyful beat.
We'll laugh and dance, and learn the knack,
Of spreading smiles, without looking back.
Sadness, too, is in the mix,
Bringing tears and little tricks.
But with SEL, we'll understand,
It's okay to cry and lend a hand.
Fear may visit, causing fright,
In the day or in the night.
SEL will teach us to be strong,
To face our fears, and carry on.
Now, meet Calm, the cool, collected friend,
Helping stress and worries to mend.
With deep breaths and a tranquil mind,
SEL shows us how to unwind.
SEL is more than just a trend,
It's how we grow, how we mend.
So, let's embrace it, don't you see,
With SEL, we'll all thrive and be glee!
With humor, laughter, and lots of cheer,
We'll master emotions, never fear.
In the world of SEL, we'll play our part,
Learning to be funny, kind, and smart!

An SEL Haiku

Emotions unfold,
In hearts, young and old,
We learn, SEL's gentle path.

An SECD Poem

In classrooms where young hearts bloom and
grow,
Social and emotional skills they sow.
Character development, a path they tread,
In these verses, their journey's spread.
With empathy as their guiding star,
They learn to see things as they are.
In the tapestry of feelings, they weave,
Compassion's thread, they proudly believe.
Self-awareness, their lantern's light,
Illuminates the shadows of inner sight.
They embrace their strengths and flaws alike,
In the mirror of self, they find insight.
Resilience, their armor in life's strife,
They conquer challenges, sharp as a knife.
With every stumble and every fall,
They rise anew, standing tall.
Integrity is their moral guide,
In truth and honesty, they take pride.
Their words and actions in harmony dance,
Building trust with every chance.
Through patience, they learn to endure,
And in forgiveness, they find the cure.
Mistakes forgiven, grudges set free,
In unity, they find harmony.
In these classrooms, SEL takes its place,
Nurturing hearts with grace and embrace.
Character development, a lifelong art,
In these young souls, it finds its start.
So let us cherish these lessons learned,
In each poem and story, let SEL be discerned.
For in social, emotional, character's embrace,
We find the beauty of the human race

An SEL Limerick

In classrooms, we teach SEL's art,
Emotions, they play a great part.
With kindness, we strive,
In this journey we thrive,
Building character from the heart!

A Poem about Purpose

In the tapestry of life, a thread so fine,
We seek a purpose, our guiding sign.
Through the mists of uncertainty, we strive,
To find the reason we're truly alive.
In the quiet moments of self-reflection,
We search our souls for our own direction.
A purpose, like a distant, shining star,
Guides us through challenges, no matter how far.
Some find it in service to others' needs,
Planting kindness like a handful of seeds.
Others in creativity, they soar and create,
Crafting beauty that can truly captivate.
For some, it's family, their love and care,
Nurturing bonds beyond compare.
In learning and knowledge, purpose may dwell,
As we seek wisdom, stories to tell.
In every sunrise and in every night,
In laughter, in tears, in every fight,
In moments of joy, in moments of sorrow,
Our purpose is there, today and tomorrow.
So, let's embrace our purpose, whatever it may be,
For it gives our lives meaning, sets our spirits free.
In purpose, we find our truest grace,
A guiding light in life's vast and wondrous space.

A Poem about Finding Purpose

In the search for purpose, we journey on,
Through life's twists and turns, from dawn to dawn.
A quest to find meaning, a path to define,
To unlock the treasures within, so divine.
Sometimes it's elusive, like a hidden key,
But deep within us, it longs to be free.
It's a puzzle we ponder, a question we ask,
As we navigate life's intricate, twisting task.
With each passing moment, a clue may appear,
In the laughter of children, a loved one's sincere tear.
In passions we pursue, in dreams we embrace,
We inch ever closer to finding our place.
It's not always grand or famous, you see,
Purpose can be found in simple glee.
In lending a hand, in a kind word spoken,
In every small gesture, the heart awoken.
It's a journey of self, a lifelong endeavor,
To unearth the purpose that makes us feel clever.
To enrich our existence, to give life its meaning,
In the tapestry of our days, a purpose gleaming.
So, don't be discouraged if it's yet to be clear,
Your purpose is waiting, so have no fear.
In the moments of joy, in lessons well learned,
Your purpose is evolving, for which you've yearned.
With time and with patience, in each choice you make,
You'll find your purpose, no need to forsake.
In the tapestry of life, you have a unique place,
Embrace the journey, and you'll find your grace.

Advertisement for SEL

🌟 *Unlock the Power of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)* 🌟

Are you ready to transform education and empower the next generation? Look no further than our cutting-edge Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program!

🧠 *Why Choose SEL?* 🧠

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🚀 *Boost Academic Success: Research shows that students with strong SEL skills perform better in school, improve test scores, and excel in teamwork.*

💪 *Build Resilience: Equip your students to handle life's challenges with grace and confidence, promoting mental well-being and resilience.*

👏 *Foster Positive Relationships: SEL teaches effective communication, conflict resolution, and empathy, strengthening bonds within the classroom and beyond.*

🌍 *Prepare for the Future: In an ever-changing world, SEL equips students with the skills they need to thrive personally and professionally. [Continue]*

Early childhood life education –program for SEL enhancement in kindergarten

Kindergarten Pčelica – Zagreb, Croatia

In the modern and complex environment, social and emotional competence are recognized as prerequisites for a harmonious and fulfilled coexistence with others. From an early age, there was a need to encourage the development of these competencies with the aim of acquiring social skills and emotional regulation. The Pčelica Kindergarten IN Zagreb (Croatia) recognized the importance of early stimulation of emotional and social development as the basis for the harmonious and complete development of every child.

Studying the teachings of Loris Malaguzzi, Juergen Zimmer, Stanley Greenspan and Penelope Leach, action research was conducted in which they saw the early childhood and preschool education institution as a learning community. In changing the paradigm from teaching to research, they were guided by questions: what children are trying to understand, what they already know, what they are currently learning and what they could and would like to learn. Stanley Greenspan's work "The Development of a Healthy Mind" inspired the study of six stages of development in which the development of intelligence and healthy emotions is encouraged in the early development of children. Based on these learnings, new approaches were explored that included activities associated with each stage of development.

1. The first stage emphasized creating a sense of security to achieve calmness, attention and interest in the world around you. Activities that stimulate this stage are establishing eye contact, mirroring children's feelings, exploring comfort and discomfort, holding, hugging, rocking, rolling, and encouraging movement and muscle activity.

2. The second stage recognizes the formation of close bonds and attachments as the foundation of connecting with others. Activities such as following, interpreting and respecting the child's signs and rhythms, harmonizing, nurturing intimacy, accepting feelings, tenderness, mimicry, grimacing, joint dancing and movement games contribute to the development of this phase.

. 3. The third stage follows the first two and leads to two-way communication. The activities carried out in this stage are recognition of facial expressions, mirroring and responding by harmonizing, floor-time, communicating with the body, maintaining and expanding communication circles, non-verbal expression of feelings, verbal interpretation of states and feelings, verbal setting of boundaries, play of funny sounds, faces and feelings and games communication circles.

4. The fourth stage helps children solve problems and form their sense of self. Activities that stimulate this stage are two-way vocalizations, two-way emotional exchanges, mutual touches, interactive movements in space (wrestling games), interactive motor patterns such as give-and-take games, hunting, hide-and-see, imitation games; communication through space, such as setting boundaries with gestures and speech, imitating and encouraging initiative. Children need help expressing their emotions verbally and non-verbally and expanding their emotional range. Social interactions with peers, complex gestural dialogues and prolonging interactions lead us to the next stage.

5. The fifth stage in which children discover the world of ideas is encouraged by using and expanding ideas in pretend play, using the body in communication, setting meaningful boundaries, symbolic expression. Symbolic self-awareness, expanding and elaborating ideas, naming ideas, feelings and concepts, involving multiple teammates, group floor-time and chatting.



6. The last, sixth stage includes all previous stages and leads to the creation of bridges between ideas. This is the stage reached by children at the age of 4 when they test reality, learn to think emotionally and abstractly. Then children's emotions organize ideas into themes and categories, and experiences are connected to abstract concepts. Children are encouraged to self-reflect when describing their feelings and to help them learn to control their impulses and regulate their feelings. Assertiveness and triangular thinking are prerequisites for developing empathy, maintaining perspective and mood, and developing self-esteem. The ability to engage in dialogue, encouraging discussion, prolonging dialogue, broadening thinking, debating and seeking compromises influence the building of a cohesive self-awareness, social relations and group connection.

Relying on Greenspan's teaching on stages of development and Penelope Leach's ideas, work with children was organized on three levels. The first level included children of nursery age from one to three years old, with whom the teachings and activities of the first five stages according to Greenspan were applied. The goal of this level was to create a sense of security in the child, to establish contact and a strong emotional bond between the educator and the child, by establishing and maintaining relationships through daily activities, as well as creating cooperative and partnership relationships of trust between educators and parents. The second level included children from three to five years old and referred to the sixth stage according to Greenspan and was called Getting to know myself and the world around me (who I am, what I can do, what I know, how I feel).

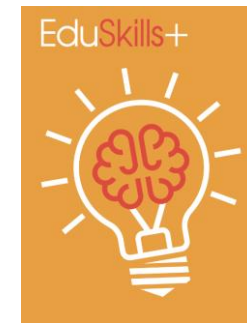
The goal of this level was to free the child from the dominance of verbal teaching and guidance, encourage experiential learning and personal initiative while respecting the personal pace of development, providing opportunities for research, recognition, naming and expression of emotional states and feelings through different modalities. The third level led to discovering, getting to know and developing the potential of each child. The goal of this level was the development of the child's competences and identity: the development of social and civic competences such as independence, cooperation and tolerance, communication skills and communication in the mother tongue, the development of the ability to observe, express and create with different artistic modalities, as well as supporting all forms of creativity. By encouraging and supporting the child's curiosity, initiative, joy of discovery and experimentation, a sense of community and joy in living and learning together was encouraged.

The program was realized through project methods of work, which included topics such as safety and self-protection, children's rights, the CAP violence prevention program, and projects initiated by children in cooperation with educators and parents. At all the mentioned levels, an open curriculum was implemented in which the child with his needs, interests and life situations was at the centre.

<https://vrtic-pcelica.zagreb.hr/>

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Eduskills+SEL: Fostering Social and Emotional Learning in Kindergartens

New Erasmus+ project

Our world is becoming increasingly fast-changing and diverse. Skills like cooperation, communication and compassion are gaining importance in this environment and there is a big need in today's societies to engage with new ways of thinking. Especially social and emotional skills are a crucial factor in determining how well people adjust to their environment and how much they achieve in their lives. But they are not only crucial for the individual; they are just as important for the society. There is an expressed need to holistically teach these skills to the next generation from a very early age on. The new Erasmus+ project [“Eduskills+SEL: Fostering Social and Emotional Learning in Kindergartens”](#) aims at exactly this.

The importance of Social and Emotional competencies

Social and emotional competence influence many important life outcomes; they influence development and cognitive skills and have a major impact on later mental health and well-being. For most children, the exposure to constructive patterns which enable them to develop robust social and emotional skills is a matter of luck. However, scientific evidence confirms that social and emotional skills are learnable and as their impact is so important for the individual and the society, their implementation should not be at the mercy of good or bad luck. Unfortunately, not all kindergartens have access to high-quality materials in this area and therefore not all kindergartens are able or sufficiently informed to implement these topics. Most of the programs on the market are relatively expensive and many kindergartens can't afford these programs. Highly engaged teachers therefore develop their own materials but are in doubt if the quality of those is sufficient.

Creating accessible materials to teach SEL in kindergartens

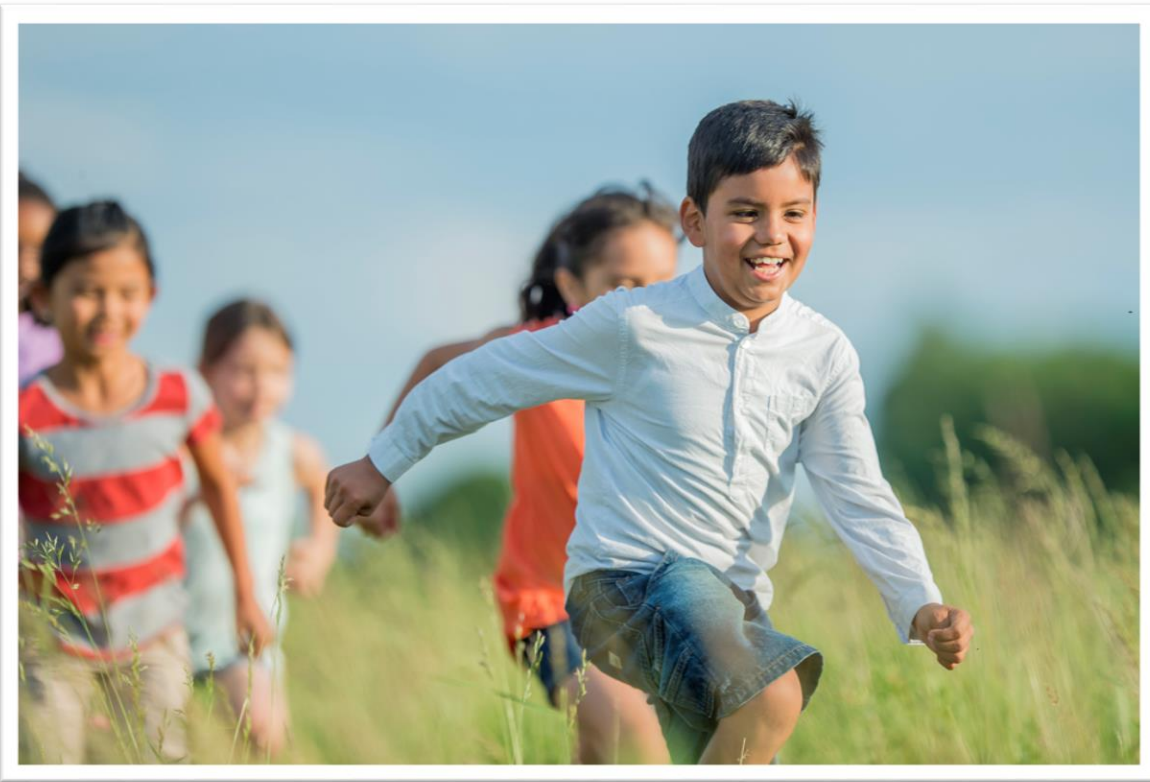
There is an expressed need in kindergartens for materials for Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) which are high-quality, free, and can be used by all interested kindergartens throughout Europe, no matter the availability of national programs.

Based on this need, eight organisations from different countries are now collaborating on the project “Eduskills+SEL: Fostering Social and Emotional Learning in Kindergartens”. All the involved organisations believe that kindergartens should be able to include SEL into their work, get access to high quality and freely available materials as well as to a variety of different approaches to the topic in order to be able to choose the approach which is suitable for their kindergartens and their specific group. This project aims at developing such an offer and with it contributes to a better-quality early education which focuses on a holistic approach to the child and fosters their development in academic, personal, and health-related areas.

The development of the Eduskills+SEL Methodology for kindergarten teachers has already begun and will be completed in 2026. The materials will include online Eduskills+SEL Guidelines for teachers and parents with accompanying activity plans as well as ready to use materials for SEL with an emphasis on topics concerning outdoor activities and early media education. As part of the project, teachers will be trained, and materials will be piloted in three participating kindergartens throughout Europe. A new website for teachers with all the materials will be programmed and added to the already existing Eduskills+ portal.

Cooperation across the European Union

This project is being funded with support from the European Commission as part of the Erasmus+ programme. Eight organisations from four different European countries are collaborating on this project: Studio Gaus GmbH, Deutsche Liga für das Kind e.V. (Germany); Inter-kulturo d.o.o, Vrtec Tezno Maribor (Slovenia); Università degli Studi di Perugia, IC Montecastrilli (Italy); Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka, Croatia and Dječji vrtić Pčelica (Croatia). ENSEC is an Associated partner in this project.



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