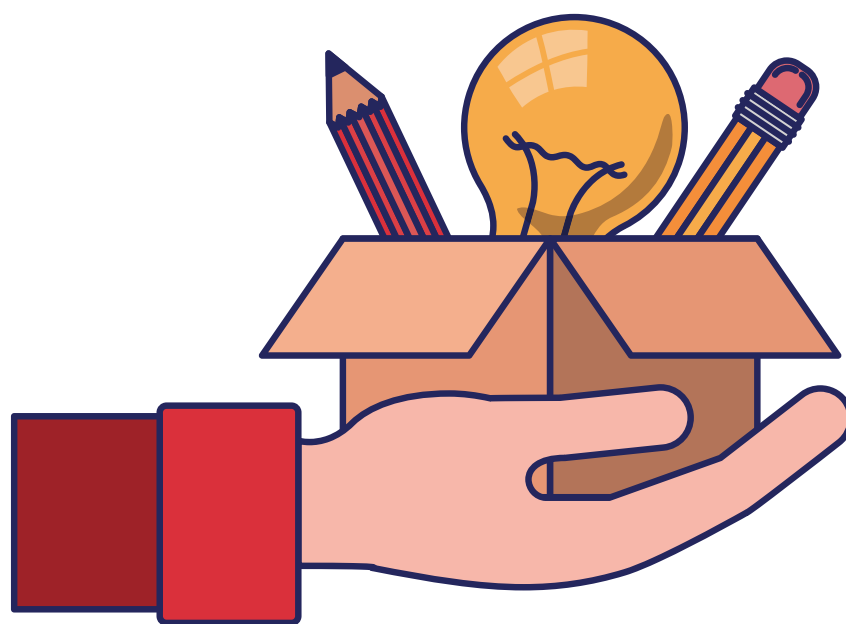


Manual of Good Practices

Back to School, the Foundation of Happiness





Back to school

foundation of
happiness

PROJECT: Back to School, the Foundation of Happiness

COORDINATOR: Elementary school Otetz Paisii

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Introduction

The ultimate goal of this project is to develop a social and emotional curriculum emphasising happiness to encourage motivation in students and train teachers and include parents on how to approach primary school students and create conditions for happy children and students. A manual outlining good practices that do just that is crucial for this project.

Educators will get a booklet and training toolkit to raise awareness about students' social and emotional aspects, encourage creativity, and teach about the effects of a positive mindset and how to balance academic skills.

This project contains chapters on:

- Social and Emotional Training
- Happiness in Schools and Classroom
- Positive Mindset Education
- Preventing Isolation & Depression caused by Distance Learning & COVID
- Activities for School and Outdoors
- Exercises and Games

This manual can be applied to many educators/learners, but it is most relevant to teachers of children aged 6 to 10 years old.



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Social and Emotional Training



This chapter includes education about initiative, perseverance, leadership, adaptability, and confidence in abilities.

Social and emotional support also leads to emotional intelligence and social metacognition.



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Design Champions

Project-based Training in Design Thinking program

ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OTETZ
PAISII

RESOURCE:

<https://bg.rpplane.com/>

DESCRIPTION

The most successful project-based training program in Bulgaria. This type of training is that the traditional way of acquiring knowledge and skills has been replaced by an exciting and exciting method of imparting and acquiring knowledge. The classroom is becoming a natural place for innovation.

During their formative years, children learn and develop at an impressive pace.

The biggest challenge for everyone today is the way we learn. This affects everything in our lives - what we need to succeed, how happy and prosperous we can be and how we can change the environment around us for the better. We need much better ways to develop and make a habit of crucial life skills (or "21st-century skills").

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Teachers:

- They get the opportunity for personal and professional development.
- They become part of an active community of progressive and aspiring teachers.

Students:

- They solve a real-world problem.
- They learn while having fun. They play a leading role in every mission.
- They work in a team and help each other.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Knowing and controlling our emotions is a real superpower - **emotional intelligence**.

Self-knowledge - to observe and recognize emotion while experiencing it

Emotion management - to deal with them so that I experience the right emotion at the right time; to realize what is behind a feeling; to find ways to deal with negative emotions - fear, sadness, disgust, anger.

Motivation - to direct our emotions to achieve a specific goal, to suppress our desired impulses, and to be able to "postpone pleasure" when necessary.

Empathy - to be sensitive to the emotions of others and to make sense of the visible point; to evaluate how people feel certain things differently.

Relationships - how we influence other people's emotions; how we develop communication and communication skills (verbal and nonverbal)

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Problem-solving, creativity, teamwork, communication, curiosity, initiative, perseverance, leadership, adaptability, confidence in abilities.



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Teaching Outside the Classroom

ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OTETZ
PAISII

DESCRIPTION

These activities stimulate the activity of students in relation to the studied study material. Going outside the classroom, they can communicate freely and informally with each other. They get acquainted with separate cultural institutions. This practice stimulates greater motivation and interest in the learning process.

Children are individuals with different skills and rates of development, with huge potential that is not always revealed in the classroom.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Extracurricular activities create appropriate conditions for discovering and developing skills, imagination and creativity
- A positive attitude towards national culture, history and building a patriotic feeling for the homeland and the native place.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Students have confidence, independence, feel free and are actively involved in this type of activity. They study without difficulty and willingly, they feel significant. They accumulate knowledge that leads to personal growth and satisfaction, national pride and willingly pass on what they have learned.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Developing skills, imagination and creativity, positive attitude, national culture, history, patriotic feeling



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My Heart - Psychological Training

ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OTETZ
PAISII

DESCRIPTION

Students have the task to draw a heart on a white sheet. The teacher instructs them that in this heart they should write with real names or symbols all the important elements that have a place in their heart. There are no restrictions that it is only people. The idea is to check what is important in a student's personal world and what is important to them. This practice is useful because by drawing, students talk about their emotional world. Those who want to tell the class who has a place in their heart. The drawing can provide an in-depth analysis of who and what is important to students. The teacher's last question is: Is there a place for you in your heart?

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Development of social and emotional intelligence;
- Improving emotional metacognition;
- Improving social metacognition;

KEY TAKEAWAY

Helping students get to know themselves better and think more deeply about what is important in their own world. It supports the psychological health of students as well as their emotional and social development.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Low social and emotional intelligence
- Incapability of handling big emotions
- Lack of awareness about one's own personal emotional state



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"How do you feel today?"

Emotional Check-up

LANGUAGE SCHOOL
SKY

RESOURCE:

[Emotional Check-up](#)

DESCRIPTION

Each class in a certain subject starts with the so-called "Check-Up" - students are invited to mark their current emotional state in several ways: choosing a corresponding picture from a printed worksheet, coming to the whiteboard or pointing to a poster in the room.

Depending on the work planned for the class on some of the days, all or only those who point to the most intense emotions may be invited to elaborate on why they feel this way. Once a week the used worksheets are kept in front of the student and the teacher writes mind mapping exercises discussing different ways in which emotions can influence decisions or even performance in class.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

For both groups:

- Development of social and emotional intelligence;
- Improving emotional metacognition;
- Improving social metacognition;
- Indirect positive influence on group work and academic achievements.

Note: Teachers can use this game to explore the close relation between students' emotions and their results in school. They can also use it as a way to get to know each person in the group after the initial introductory phase at the beginning of the school year.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Helping students pay attention to their current emotional state can help both teachers and students develop and maintain personal mental hygiene and further improve their social and emotional intelligence in order to maintain their sense of happiness.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Low social and emotional intelligence

Incapability of handling big emotions

Lack of awareness about the current emotional state and its influence on actions and performance



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Emotional Training of Taking Charge

SMART IDEA

RESOURCE:

[Taking Charge](#)

DESCRIPTION

The idea of taking charge is an example of excellent behaviour to improve your emotional and physical health. This practise is focused on emotional training.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

We can work to change adverse events by deliberately noticing what is positive:

- The practice of stress reduction techniques, such as mindfulness meditation or aerobic exercise.
- The shift in focus to the positive emotions in daily life.
- Work to identify meaning and purpose in your life.
- Get support from others.
- Practice self-compassion.

KEY TAKEAWAY

You're in charge is the mantra of this practice. People learn how a holistic approach to happiness can assist wellness, contentment, meaning and connection.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Stress; Lack of Control, Lack of Drive



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Emotional Training For Students

SMART IDEA

RESOURCE:

- [1. Developing Grit](#)
- [2. Edutopia](#)

DESCRIPTION

Richard Davidson, an emotion researcher, claims that cognition and emotion collaborate in a seamless, integrated way to assist us in perseverance. To combat things like isolation or anxiety successfully, teachers must assist children in developing both cognitive and emotional abilities. Here are some research-based ideas for doing both.

According to the world's foremost expert on the subject, Angela Duckworth, dealing with emotion and resilience may be learned. "Kids may have the wrong beliefs and misunderstand skill development...beliefs that stand in the way of tapping into performance traits." When students struggle with a task, they may believe that they cannot solve the problem and give up. Students need to understand that it is ok to feel confused when learning something new, which is expected. We may show students that making mistakes or taking a long time to finish an assignment is natural, not a failure signal.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Mindset shift
- Emotional intelligence
 - Especially emotional self-awareness
- Active way of thinking to influence emotions



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KEY TAKEAWAY

The way individuals think and hold their beliefs influences their emotional state. To control emotions, a change in mindset from passive to action needs to be made.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Stress; Lack of Control, Lack of Drive



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How Schools Used Transactional Analysis (TA) To Strengthen Positive TSR 1

EDUKOPRO

RESOURCE:

[Source of TA](#)

DESCRIPTION

The training in TA resulted in an effective change in teachers' mindsets. When teachers had greater awareness of their ego states and life positions and those of their students, they began to communicate better with their students. Also, when teachers had a better understanding of their students' life scripts, they had more empathy for them. As a result, the schools witnessed a noticeable improvement in teacher-student interactions. For example, when a teacher noticed that a student was in a rebellious child's ego state, the teacher consciously 'stayed blue' by choosing to use the 'nurturing parent', 'firm parent' or 'adult' ego state instead of the 'critical parent' ego state, to engage the student.

Teachers started asking more profound questions about a student's life script whenever misbehaving instead of scolding the child outright. In Clementi Primary School, the promising results from a small-scale study by a group of Primary Six teachers prompted a whole-school implementation with the blessing and support of school leaders. In Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School (Secondary), the core team judiciously implemented vital concepts and strategies in bite-sized portions to help boost teachers' confidence in applying the TA approach.

In Northland Secondary School, school leaders actively helped their staff connect the dots between TA concepts and strategies in day-to-day school operations. Students felt cared for when their teachers showed concern and interest in them. Interestingly, in Clementi Primary and Northland Secondary, the working relationships among the teachers also improved.

The school-wide use of the TA approach saw the emergence of a common language among staff for everyday interaction, communication and culture-building. For example, teachers encouraged one another to 'stay blue' when emotions ran high in a given situation, and they would immediately be reminded of what that meant.

Northland Secondary School set up a Blue Room for meetings with parents. The name was adopted as a reminder to 'stay blue', that is, to remain calm when engaging angry parents.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Teachers' mindset and awareness of how to act in situations in their ego get involved
- Increase in empathy towards students
- Improvement in teacher-student interactions

KEY TAKEAWAY

The way teachers think and the mindset they have can deeply affect their students as well, which is why it's important for teachers to show care and concern towards their students.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Students feel cared for by their teacher's actions
- Improvement in their relations



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Bounce Back

RESOURCE:

[Positive Psychology](#)

DESCRIPTION

The Bounce Back program and building resilience

Researchers Toni Noble and Helen McGrath (2008) devised a practical, cost-effective, and efficient classroom resiliency program called Bounce Back, the first positive education program globally. Noble and McGrath (2008) argue that teaching resilience to young children is most useful for lasting change. The most pressing need for increased resilience is during students' transition into secondary school.

The Bounce Back program is targeted at upper primary and lower secondary students, as adolescence is a critical period of change and stress for students. Bounce Back addresses two key areas: the environmental factors that build up psychological capital and the personal coping skills that students can learn, highlighted by many researchers such as Reivich and Shatté (2002) and Barbara Fredrickson (2001).

Noble and McGrath (2008) provided a series of practical, day-to-day school activities that helped students feel connected to their peers, school, and the community. Their research showed how schools could create a more supportive environment, both within the school and in students' families and communities.

Bounce Back provides practical tools such as a responsibility pie chart, which guides children to realize that all negative situations are a combination of three factors: their behaviour, the behaviour of others, and random events. Using the responsibility pie chart to understand a specific adverse event helps pupils learn what they can change and can't, developing their sense of initiative and responsibility.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Students develop coping skills
- Positive psychology
- Resilience
- Confidence

KEY TAKEAWAY

In preventing people from berating themselves for things that were not their fault and learning to understand what they could do to resolve the situation. Bounce Back curriculum provides resources and suggestions for teachers and exercises for pupils. The exercises are designed to encourage pupils to develop optimism in the classroom and grow an accepting and light-hearted attitude. Bounce Back is how positive psychology research can be transmuted into tools to help people flourish.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Lack of optimism
- Low levels of confidence



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Using Your Curriculum and Teaching School Values

EDUKOPRO

RESOURCE:

[Positive Psychology](#)

DESCRIPTION

Character and values are an essential part of the hidden curriculum but must be explicitly taught. A well-planned SMSC curriculum woven across all subjects is essential. It teaches pupils the school values they need to succeed. UNICEF's Rights for Children provides an excellent framework for teaching children about school values. Debates in school elections and enterprise activities are a favourite amongst the student body and can raise self-esteem and confidence. They can also help teach the fundamentals of democracy and workplace attitudes.

Putting It Into Practice

Some schools focus on one school value a week and someone per month through assemblies, PSHE lessons and dedicated class slots. These slots are usually 10 minutes a day or half an hour a week. Other schools appoint 'Value Ambassadors' representatives from across the classes. They champion the school values to their peers. For younger children, many stories convey school values. Using a range of familiar stories focusing on the value of the week/month is great for younger children. This works well when followed up with role-play or hot seating.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Teaching children about school values
- Increase in:
- Resilience, aspiration, determination, tolerance, respect, and team spirit



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Scheduling regular time to spend on school values and sharing responsibility for promoting them is a positive way of helping pupils and parents become part of your overall ethos.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

School values that are oftentimes forgotten by students



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Pedagogy of Laughter

RESOURCE:

1. [Instituto CRIAP](#)
2. [Rir Agora](#)

DESCRIPTION

Training Description

Laughter Yoga is a revolutionary idea developed by the Indian doctor Dr Madan Kataria in 1995. It is currently practised in more than 110 countries and combines laughter, as a form of exercise, with deep breathing from Yoga. The concept is based on scientific studies that voluntary laughter provides the same physiological and psychological benefits as spontaneous laughter. Initially, it started with social laughter clubs but has since been introduced to many schools in India and other countries.

Pedagogy of Laughter Training Topics

- Evaluation of the Laughter quotient.
- What is Laughter Yoga?
- Concept, history and philosophy.
- Link between Yoga and Laughter.
- Practical exercises.
- Bollywood Laughter Yoga Dance.
- Voluntary Laughter vs Genuine Laughter.
- Difference between Laughter Yoga and Humor.
- Why do our children and young people need to laugh more?
- Benefits of Laughter in Schools.
- Laughter Yoga Dynamics
- Gibberish;

General objectives

The Workshop on Pedagogy of Laughter has the general objective of:

Know the practical applications of Laughter Yoga in the Educational context and learn about the immeasurable benefits that it provides to the body and mind.

- Experience a Laughter and Meditation Yoga Practice session and learn how to get involved in this practice in different day-to-day situations.
- Learn to laugh on your own and have some practical ideas on bringing more laughter into your lives.



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DESCRIPTION

Specific objectives

In Training in Pedagogy of Laughter, the student must:

- Recognize your Laughter Coefficient;
- Apply laughter and deep breathing exercises;
- Implement strategies to laugh more daily;
- Differentiate voluntary laughter from genuine laughter; implement laughter and meditation dynamics for children and young people.

Teaching Methodology

To attend this training in the e-learning modality, it will be necessary:

- Functional computer equipped with a sound card, headphones with microphone, webcam and Internet connection.
- Browser: Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox;

This training takes place in e-learning mode: teaching methodology composed of asynchronous and synchronous sessions. Asynchronous sessions correspond to the period of independent study; synchronous sessions correspond to the actual classes in which the trainer is in direct contact with the class in the virtual room through which they interact with the trainees and streamlines the session using presentations, videos and other teaching materials. The training will be theoretical-practical and has the active participation of students in all proposed activities. It will cover the presentation and discussion of specific topics related to the area and the discussion and analysis of practical cases.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

An innovative workshop that allows you to acquire playful tools for day-to-day: it allows you to work and encourage your self-esteem and learn about new forms of communication and solve everyday situations.

It is assumed that the acquisition of skills allows the inner child's development and, consequently, cultivate and feed all this in the children for whom they are responsible for educating.

Target audience: Parents, Educators, Teachers, Technicians of Educational Action, Special Education and all those interested in Education.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Key words: Laughter Yoga; Humour in classrooms;

Key takeaway: by applying this methodology in the schools and classrooms, teachers and educators are working on stress relief, anger management, relaxation and mental health of children!

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

The Workshop on Pedagogy of Laughter is aimed at Teachers, Educators, Psychologists, Education Technicians and Parents.



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"Nino and Nina: Competence Program" and "Growing by Playing"

JUMPIN HUB

RESOURCE:

1. [Nino & Nina](#)
2. [Nino & Nina 2](#)
3. [Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

Competencies Pre-Program and the Growing by Playing Program:

It seeks to promote the development of social and personal skills, helping children deal with their world autonomously and independently. Nino e Nina is a 2-year Skills Program that emerges to respond to the difficulties expressed by Educators and Families in dealing with the lack of discipline of children, a consequence of the lack of rules that many of them show, with the bit of autonomy characteristic of this age group and in the understanding and intervention in the face of the various problems (emotional and relational) that children demonstrate in their daily lives. "Growing by Playing" presents itself as a relevant prevention strategy in the school environment with a duration of 4 years, promoting socio-emotional skills and psychological adjustment in children within the area of Health Promotion and Education and giving response to problems such as the lack of rules and other issues related to disciplines, such as lack of self-control, school failure and demotivation, childhood depression and the beginning of bullying.

WHAT IS THIS PROGRAM?

Nino e Nina: Skills Program and Growing by Playing Program aims to promote personal and social skills among preschool children (Nino and Nina) and the 1st Cycle of Basic Education (Growing by Playing). They include actions of a playful-pedagogical nature, based on an early preventive intervention, integrating and promoting psychosocial skills. In comics and interactive games, they approach body awareness, discipline, self-control, the management of emotions and thoughts, behaviours, self-esteem, forms of communication and assertiveness that are very attractive and fun, decision-making, and problem-solving.

WHAT DOES THIS PROGRAM DO?

They provide a set of playful experiences, organized in the classroom, using a set of manuals, divided by age and based on cartoons and interactive games, seeking to develop strategies that promote protective factors and the prevention of risk behaviours, as well as the involvement of educational agents in this process. For the development of projects, teachers receive specific training credited throughout the school year.

WHOM IS IT INTENDED FOR?

Target group: PPreschoolchildren (from 4 to 6 years old) and 1st cycle of primary education.
Strategic group: Teachers, education assistants and guardians.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

WHAT RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED?

These programs, in the opinion of the educators, make it possible to improve the behaviour and attitudes of children, individually and in groups, that is, in the context of the classroom and at recess. It was found that the children were able to apply self-control strategies autonomously and were more tolerant of their peers, requiring less adult intervention in resolving minor conflicts. These changes allow students to achieve tremendous academic success and more positive self-esteem while learning skills of autonomy and independence.

Educators are guaranteed additional support in terms of strategies and effectiveness, which unfortunately is not available in our schools and is lacking.

About students, the primary beneficiaries of the project, it is possible to verify behavioural changes to decrease risky behaviour and increase the skills worked. These changes were registered by the students themselves and by the Educators.

As for the process of family participation in schools, greater involvement of parents and family is achieved in their children's day-to-day lives, in responding to their children's needs, helping to create greater family investment in each one of these children.

KEY TAKEAWAY

This program seeks to promote the development of social and personal skills, helping children to deal with their world in an autonomous and independent way.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Childrens autonomy and independence;
Mental health and well-being;



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"The Sooner, the Better" program - Programa Quanto Mais Cedo Melhor (P-QMCM)

JUMPIN HUB

RESOURCE:

1. [ENCONTRAR+SE](#)
2. [Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

"The Sooner, The Better" is a program developed by ENCONTRAR+SE based on a decade of experience in the development and implementation of programs to promote mental health, and well-being and combat stigma in the school context. "The Sooner, The Better" is part of the "Integrated Approach to Active Inclusion Program (AIIA) promoted by the Porto City Council, financed by the POISE operational program within the framework of the NORTE2020 Programme, to promote socio-emotional skills and child mental health in the school context. It is based on an integrated approach, consistent with the whole-school approach, directing its actions to students, guardians, teachers and other educational agents to promote mental health in children attending the 1st cycle of primary education.

"The Sooner, The Better" Program aims to:

- promote socio-emotional skills;
- promote mental health literacy;
- to develop, together with parents and educational agents, educational skills that promote environments favourable to healthy development;
- to develop, together with parents and educational agents, skills in signalling and referring children's mental health problems;
- promote a school (and family) environment that is more open to the topic of mental health/illness.

In the 2019/20 school year, "The Sooner, The Better" was developed in 24 3rd year classes (and some 2nd-year classes) from five groups of schools in the municipality of Porto. In total, around 520 children received our program in their classrooms.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

"The Sooner the Better" Program works towards the development and implementation of programs to promote mental health and well-being and combat stigma in the school context, among students, through an intervention with students' teachers and parents/tutors. Throughout this project, students develop emotional intelligence skills, problem-solving skills, and mental health literacy.

KEY TAKEAWAY

This project has the objective of promoting socio-emotional skills and child mental health in the school context.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Mental health; mental health literacy; emotional intelligence



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Happiness in the Classroom / Schools



This chapter includes education about reducing stress and fatigue, positive affirmations of children and enjoying quality education.

Supporting environment and systems to celebrate the achievements of children is also a part of this module



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I Love My School

**ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OTETZ
PAISII**

RESOURCE:
[Lightsource Charity](#)

DESCRIPTION

The objective of the project 'I Love My School' is to support education, improve and provide a comfortable and relaxing learning environment in schools, and increase the creative potential and awareness of children through school decoration.

We want to inspire children to seek new knowledge by supporting them in believing in their dreams and making them come true. We want every child to say, "I love my school!" This project aims to educate students about the aesthetic attitude and desire to help each other and be responsible for the environment. It is proven that warm and bright colours stimulate our mind and body and improve our physical health. Light and cool colour tones soothe the mind, balance and relax.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Improved the visual learning environment
- Tranquillity and comfort in classrooms
- Motivation and satisfaction of students
- Creating moral values for children through positive affirmations and words
- Responsibility and respect for nature and the surrounding environment
- Aesthetic attitude towards the world
- Teamwork and partnership between students, teachers and parents



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Improves students 'and teachers' state of mind
- Increases satisfaction and motivation for learning
- Reduces stress and fatigue
- Improves children's success
- Changes students 'and teachers' emotions and attitudes
- Influence of positive affirmations on children's education
- Create virtues in children
- Create moral and ethical values
- Stimulate children to believe in themselves and in their dreams

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

The unattractive and boring school environment. Depressing and monotonous-looking classrooms that further influence students' positive thinking and happiness.



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Morning Routine

JU OŠ
"ALEKSA ŠANTIĆ"

RESOURCE:

[WGU](#)

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

The first few minutes of class are crucial because they set the tone for the day's rest. By establishing a classroom morning routine, you can make life easier and save time while teaching your students an efficient way to achieve more.

Children tend to respond positively to structure, and having a predictable classroom morning routine will show students what's expected of them every day. As long as it's carefully taught and modelled, you can ensure that your students will learn efficiently and productively.

KEY TAKEAWAY

The beginning of the day is crucial, so it should start with quality. Students need habits, and routines, so choose them well so that the day is quality and effective for students and you.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Too many components
- Fit routines over time
- Demanding routines



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Music Therapy

JU OŠ
"ALEKSA ŠANTIĆ"

RESOURCE:

[Modulations Therapy](#)
[Music Therapy Works](#)

DESCRIPTION

Music therapy is utilized in school systems across the World to help students meet physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and academic goals. Board-certified music therapists (MT-BCs) work with classroom teachers, special services departments, and other licensed therapists to help students thrive. Some school districts have music therapists on staff, others contract with a local MT-BC, and others use music therapists in consultant roles.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Music therapy has many benefits within a school system. Music therapists work together with principals, educators, and therapists to identify individuals or groups of students who could benefit from music therapy. These are often students with complex needs or not reaching their potential through traditional instruction or therapy services. Educators who see students thrive in response to music therapy interventions frequently become our strongest advocates.

Music is a primary motivator or learning strength of the student. The student shows increased progress towards IEP goals when music therapy interventions are utilized, or

The IEP team is supported uniquely through music therapy.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Music Therapy is an ideal medium for children who may not be able to access verbal counselling and need a safe environment to express their emotions. Work can be most effective when 1:1 and directed at individuals' specific needs, but small group work (maximum of 5 pupils) can be undertaken to address social and relational issues. Pupils do not need a musical background to benefit from music therapy.

Music Therapy can also help to support nurture group principles as it sets out to establish a safe, comfortable, secure environment where there is an emphasis on helping pupils to explore feelings and encounter positive relationships with adults and with their friends.

Where nurture groups are in the process of being formed or even wish to introduce new elements, the Music Therapist can:

create a calm atmosphere, facilitate social skills, generate post-play discussion, address bonding and attachment issues, support relaxation techniques, and facilitate communication between adults and children.

The aim is to increase pupils' abilities to express themselves and therefore improve academic understanding and social awareness skills and promote better engagement with the curriculum.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Investing in children's materials
- Finding space in school
- Overstimulation
- Trigger
- Additional training



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Happy Classroom

JU OŠ
"ALEKSA ŠANTIĆ"

RESOURCE:

[Laughology](#)

DESCRIPTION

A classroom should be a space where happiness takes precedence, where children are always met with a smile and positivity. It's a space where their well-being is as important as their academic achievements.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Creating a happy classroom isn't just about smiling every day. It's about developing an environment that looks after the whole child and helps them build strategies to feel happier about all aspects of their lives. As teachers, we are privileged to be a constant, positive influence in the lives of our pupils, and this is a position we should feel proud of. Creating a happy classroom is just the beginning.

By creating a classroom with a transparent support system, children's overall happiness and confidence can increase. Celebrating individual and group achievements can do much to enhance the happiness in your classroom. Studies have shown that reward and recognition can go a long way to boosting people's confidence and morale. When we achieve our goals, our brain sends messages to our body to say, 'Well done you!' We release neurotransmitters such as serotonin (the happy chemical) and dopamine (the motivation and reward chemical), which help us feel great.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

In both children and adults, the levels of dopamine and serotonin in our bodies play a part in our overall wellbeing, digestion and sleep. The more serotonin and dopamine, the happier we tend to be. Celebrating mistakes can help here too. Creating a happy classroom starts with an understanding of the importance of a growth mindset and of learning from our mistakes.

As much as stickers and smiley faces can work wonders with happiness, enjoyment of intrinsic happiness is also important. Build-in time for children to reflect on things they are proud of and why.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Insufficiently well-defined work plan



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Emojis

JU OŠ
"ALEKSA ŠANTIĆ"

RESOURCE:

[Edutopia](#)

DESCRIPTION

Welcoming emojis into the classroom is one way to use student experience to develop school skills. Rather than detract from learning goals, our students' rich social media lives can contribute to deeper learning. By connecting to skills our students already use online, perhaps we can make school seem even more relevant.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Emojis add a refreshing bit of fun to the classroom mix. Students relish their momentary expertise in the classroom, and teachers can embrace what may seem a bit foreign.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Teachers do not have to be emoticon experts to use them in the classroom. After all, the use of emojis is constantly evolving, so it is almost impossible to know every emoji. Students almost always know more about using emoticons than we do, but that knowledge gap offers real opportunities. By asking questions, students can press the edges of the explanation and notice inconsistencies. When students explain how the context of emoticons affects meaning, let's listen to learn.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Too many vague, incomplete emojis
- Vague instructions for using an emoticon



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European Network of Healthy Schools - SHE Network

ASPIRA

RESOURCE:

[Schools for Health](#)

DESCRIPTION

If children work and learn and never play, they can get good grades and achieve excellent results. But what happens to their bodies? The European Healthy Schools Network brings together 45 member countries from the European region. It focuses on integrating school health promotion into European education policies.

They say that a healthy school looks after the health and well-being of pupils and school staff. To this end, a structured and systematic plan is being implemented, including seven essential components: a healthy school policy, the physical school environment, the social school environment, personal health knowledge and skills, competencies for action, and links with the community and health services.

The SHE Network promotes research and disseminates good practices for health promotion in schools. Among the many exciting resources, it offers, three SHE Network briefing papers present an analysis of the situation in health-promoting schools.

They have produced guides and tools for teachers, providing a wealth of information on healthy eating, physical activity and childhood obesity prevention. Publications are available in English, Russian and Slovenian.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students:

- becoming independent and powerful

Teachers:

- Getting the know-how how to implement different activities to the holistic approach of health in the level of school for its students.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

The analysis provides scientific evidence on the importance of health promotion in schools. The documents also provide comprehensive information on schools' networks and partnerships for health promotion.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Health issues relating to stress.
- Fixing unhealthy environments in school - also regarding students' well-being.



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Improving Well-being at School

DESCRIPTION

Students' well-being and success in and outside school depend on their ability to use their competencies for democratic culture. Since well-being has many facets, improving students' well-being in schools requires a whole-school approach involving teachers and parents. Schools should provide lessons focused on the responsible use of the Internet, the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle and how to prevent or cope with health problems in collaboration with those involved, including health and social services, local authorities and civil society organisations.

Well-being is essential at school because schools have an essential role in supporting students to make healthy lifestyle choices and understand the effects of their choices on their health and well-being. Childhood and adolescence are critical periods in developing long-term attitudes towards personal well-being and lifestyle choices. The social and emotional skills, knowledge and behaviours that young people learn in the classroom help them build resilience and set the pattern for managing their physical and mental health throughout their lives.

Schools can provide students with reliable information and deepen their understanding of the choices they face. They are also able to provide students with the intellectual skills required to reflect critically on these choices and on the influences that society brings to bear on them, including through peer pressure, advertising, social media and family and cultural values. There is a direct link between well-being and academic achievement and vice versa, i.e. well-being is a crucial prerequisite for achievement, and achievement is essential for well-being. Physical activity is associated with improved learning and the ability to concentrate. Firm, supportive relationships provide students with the emotional resources to step out of their intellectual 'comfort zone' and explore new ideas and ways of thinking, which is fundamental to educational achievement.

Well-being is also essential for developing critical democratic competencies. Positive emotions are associated with developing flexibility and adaptability, openness to other cultures and beliefs, self-efficacy and tolerance of ambiguity.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students:

- Building resilience
- Development of democratic competencies
- Better learning outcomes

Teachers:

- Know-how and tools on how to support students for developing of healthy lifestyle and increase well-being among students

KEY TAKEAWAY

Well-being is the experience of health and happiness. It includes mental and physical health, physical and emotional safety, a feeling of belonging, purpose, achievement and success. Well-being is a broad concept and covers a range of psychological and physical abilities. Five significant well-being types are said to be:

- Emotional well-being – the ability to be resilient, manage one's emotions and generate emotions that lead to good feelings
- Physical well-being – the ability to improve the functioning of one's body through healthy eating and good exercise habits
- Social well-being – the ability to communicate, develop meaningful relationships with others and create one's emotional support network
- Workplace well-being – the ability to pursue one's interests, beliefs and values to gain meaning and happiness in life and professional enrichment
- Societal well-being – the ability to participate in an active community or culture.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Absence
- Disinterest in school
- Misunderstanding of self and others
- Individualism



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Skills that Increase Well-being: Happify

SMART IDEA

RESOURCE:

[Happify](#)

DESCRIPTION

This is an excellent example of a well-funded app and an informative website that explains how to apply positive psychology, CBT, and mindfulness to one's life in order to be happier. All three contribute to happiness.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Savour - Savoring is a quick and easy way to boost optimism and reduce stress and negative emotions. It's the practice of being mindful and noticing the good stuff around you, taking the extra time to prolong and intensify your enjoyment of the moment, making a pleasurable experience last for as long as possible.

Thank - The simple act of identifying and appreciating the things people do for us is a modern-day wonder drug. It fills us with optimism and self-confidence, knowing that others are there for us.

Aspire - Feeling hopeful, having a sense of purpose, being optimistic. You can feel more upbeat about your future and your potential.

Give - Giving is an obvious thing to do. When you give someone something, you make them happier. But what you might not know is that the giver—not the receiver—reaps even more benefits. Numerous studies show that being kind makes us feel less stressed, isolated, and angry. Still, it makes us feel considerably happier, more connected with the world, and more open to new experiences.

Empathize - Empathy is a powerful word packed with lots of different interpretations. It's the ability to care about others. It's the ability to imagine and understand the thoughts, behaviours, or ideas, including those different from ourselves.

Revive - Physical health is vital to our overall sense of well-being. The food we eat to fuel our bodies, exercise, and the amount and quality of sleep we get has a significant impact on our health. Revive is a call to action to do something good for yourself today.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Gratitude training
- Appreciation for everything
- Empathy
- Hopefulness and self-motivation

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Lack of appreciation; Lack of Hope, Lack of Motivation, Non-proactiveness



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Value Self-Realisation

SMART IDEA

RESOURCE:

[Ten Key Actions](#)

DESCRIPTION

Realizing the Value was an 18-month project that aimed to synthesize what is known about the person and community-centred approaches for health and well-being and provide recommendations on how to make the most of them. This training catalogue provides practical learning and examples of excellent practice from the five Realizing the Value local partner sites.

This learning guide was developed in close collaboration with the websites, based on evidence and their own practical experience, and advice to others looking to learn more about a person- and community-centred strategies.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Knowing how to value each other's presence
- The importance of being able to work alongside successful and hardworking people will make potential bullies use their energy upon something better and more productive (turns them away from becoming bullies in the process)
- Youth workers and the entire community, in general, are going to benefit from more younger people that are willing to engage and help out through volunteering.
- Develop solid and sustained networks as an integral part of implementing and scaling up person- and community-centred approaches.
- Value the role of people and communities in their health and wellbeing, including through co-production, volunteering, and social movements for health.
- Make greater use of behavioural insights in implementing person- and community-centred approaches and spreading change.
- Community, and social enterprise sector, working alongside people, families, and communications.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

People must work differently to put people and communities first in health and wellbeing. Working styles and methods are only one aspect of knowledge that company leaders need to be aware of for their workers to form a community around them.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Community Dynamics



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Science of Happiness (Educate for Happiness)

JUMPIN HUB

RESOURCE:

1. [Escola de Pais](#)
2. [Educar Felicidade](#)

DESCRIPTION

Based on evidence from a research area in psychology - Science of Happiness (or Positive Psychology), it is proposed a Program of activities, training and workshops aimed at Children, Youth, Families, Educators and Teachers for the development of personal, social and emotional to promote Happiness, self-confidence and self-esteem, psychosocial well-being, mental health (reducing risk behaviours and health costs) and positive relationships. Some key competencies are developed through the Program: Emotional Intelligence, self-knowledge, empathy, communication and interpersonal skills, resilience, critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, initiative and decision-making.

The implementation of the project is carried out at three levels:

Activities for Children and Young People - carried out in Schools, from pre-school to high school, with activities that promote Happiness, self-esteem, confidence and personal development; implemented by a network of certified monitors to implement the project and activities.

Training for Teachers and Educators - so that Teachers and Educators can develop skills in their students and their personal development, using the latest methodologies of Positive Psychology and Emotional Intelligence, it's offered Certified Training made by qualified professionals.

Workshops for Parents and Families - to provide Parents and families with tools and concepts of Positive Psychology and Science of Happiness, with dynamic sessions to reinforce parenting skills.

Each program session will always be evaluated and monitored to demonstrate results and contribute to the continuous improvement of the project and evidence of the benefits of participating in this Program. This project is being implemented in schools, youth centres and educational institutions, city councils and parish councils, colleges and institutions from north to south of the country. The contents are adapted to the age groups of the target audience, involving brief group sessions and, later, individual guidance in small groups.



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DESCRIPTION

About the program promoter:

They are a team of professionals in Psychology and Health with experience in developing and implementing programs to reinforce skills in schools and training in methodologies to be implemented, namely Positive Psychology, Cognitive Behavioral Psychology, Emotional Intelligence and Public Health Promotion.

As a promoting entity, the Happy Age Association - is an educational and personal development association for children, young people and families. A non-profit art promotes activities in the most diverse areas, education, personal development, health and well-being.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Considering that the development of children and young people is dependent on the different contexts in which it takes place, it is intended to provide the various educational agents and youth workers (formal and informal) with tools to be applied daily, necessary for the positive attitude and positive communication, family and individual well-being and academic and personal success.

Using a face-to-face, experiential and dynamic methodology, themes such as Personal Development, Self-knowledge, Happiness, Positive Psychology, Positive Education, Optimism, Well-Being, Self-Esteem, Positive Emotions, Values, Conscious Parenting, Social relationships and Emotional Intelligence are worked on.

KEY TAKEAWAY

This program has a holistic approach with trainings and workshops aimed at Children, Youth, Families, Educators and Teachers, for the development of personal, social and emotional to promote Happiness, self-confidence and self-esteem, psychosocial well-being, mental health (reducing riskbehaviourss and health costs) and positive relationships

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

With this practice, we are fostering happiness, positive education and positive psychology, emotional intelligence and children's well-being.



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House of Emotions

JUMPIN HUB

RESOURCE:

1. [Source](#)
2. [Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

The House of Emotions is a health promotion project implemented since 2008-to 2009, with an intervention focused on developing socio-emotional skills. It covers, on average, ten kindergarten rooms and about 230 children and families.

It aims to provide children with diverse learning contexts allowing them to experience, express themselves, share, and discover themselves and others to promote their harmonious development. It fosters the articulation between two areas of most significant influence on the child's development: family and school.

Privileging the involvement of families to foster their articulation and proximity to the school, the project unfolds based on a central character, the Guardian, who sends two messengers to the kindergarten room and a wooden house that has all the empty rooms that will be filled with conquered objects as the children overcome the proposed challenges.

Through an action/reflection methodology, supported by playful and pedagogical activities, sessions are held with children who are encouraged to express emotions and experiences related to the proposed activity. At the same time, the family is invited to participate in specific activities, such as intergenerational sessions. Together with the children, carry out some challenges and sessions with a health professional whose objective is to discuss child development issues.

At the end of the school year, all houses are complete and have been transformed by each group, reflecting the different experiences and creativity.

The project is aimed at kindergarten teachers, children in preschool education and their families.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

This project was implemented since 2008-to 2009, covering an average of 10 kindergarten rooms and about 230 children and families per school year. In global terms, it has been evaluated positively by the different actors (children, families and early childhood educators) in the various actions carried out, raising a growing interest and adherence within the educational community.

An assessment is also made by applying the Self-Regulation Behavior Scale (ACE) in three domains: Self-inhibition, Self-assertiveness, and Emotional Knowledge, with a positive impact occurring at the level of all of them, with the most significant improvement at the level of Emotional Knowledge.

These data reinforce the importance of this type of intervention at an early age to promote and improve socio-emotional skills, contributing to the prevention of risky behaviours and promoting the health and harmonious development of each child.

KEY TAKEAWAY

This project aims to provide children with diverse learning contexts allowing them to experience, express themselves, share, discover themselves and others, in order to promote their harmonious development.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Healthy parenting;
- Healthy development of children



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CIEE - (Club of Emotional Intelligence in Schools) Organising the Way you Work in School

JUMPIN HUB

RESOURCE:

1. [Educare](#)
2. [Inicio De Blogue](#)

DESCRIPTION

The "CIEE Project - Club of Emotional Intelligence in Schools" is a project that aims to promote emotional intelligence through the education and development of emotional skills and thus provide students with tools that allow them to live a healthier life, more cheerful and happier, reducing risky behaviours and contributing to better results in school, family life and society. Born in defence of the Doctorate Thesis of Professor Manuela Queirós, when an examiner tells her: "I hope this great work is not to stay in the drawer", she takes the body for the first time in the academic year 2005/2006, at Escola EB2 / 3 of S. João da Madeira where this teacher exercises the functions of a teacher.

During the academic year, this teacher developed her work in the field of Emotional Intelligence teaching with students from various classes of the 5th and 6th year of schooling, using ancestral techniques of relaxation, breathing and others. This teacher provided her students with interior tools that allowed them to call the Club the place where they "learn to be happy", such were the differences and the evolution that have operated in their lives.

Thus, the "CIEE Project - Club of Emotional Intelligence in Schools" was born and is a specific training program for the emotional skills that make up emotional intelligence: emotional perception and expression, emotional comprehension and emotional regulation in oneself and others. This program is not only dedicated to students but also teachers and parents.

Today, twelve schools currently have their Club of Emotional Intelligence in Schools in full swing, with 18 teachers, 11 psychologists and about 300 students from the second cycle to upper secondary education.



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DESCRIPTION

Steps for implementation:

- Sessions with students about emotional management issues

The students have a block of 90 minutes a week during in which they acquire tools that allow them to know themselves better, healthily deal with their emotions (perceive what is going on with them and regulate their procedures), laugh, meditate and learn that, after all, having a happier life depends only on each one and the knowledge that each one has of himself, that is, how it works, using the computer analogy, its software and hardware - emotions, feelings, feelings and your brain. Each session counts of one teacher and one psychologist.

- Sessions with parents (exhibitions and meetings) on disciplinary and emotional management issues

Once a month, there is a 90 minutes session with the parents of the students in the Schools, where the parents learn techniques to deal with their emotions healthily and support their children in this process.

- Sessions with teachers on the themes of disciplinary and emotional management

Every 15 days, there is a 90 min session for teachers, focusing on concentration exercises, strategies to identify emotions, and moments to understand the emotional vocabulary. Plus, this is the moment when a psychologist Couches the teachers to support students and parents in this process.

There is an initial part, a fundamental part, and a final part in each session.

The initial part starts by working on mindfulness meditation, and paying attention to the present moment, to what is happening. The participants learn to calm the body, be still, and focus their attention on a focus. That focus may be breathing or one of the five senses. After, there is an excellent set of exercises that are used in the sessions, according to the mood of the group. The fundamental part works on the emotional components of the emotional intelligence model. It begins to work on emotional perception, identifying emotions in ourselves and others, and working on reading emotions. The participants learn to identify emotions through facial expressions, body expressions, and voice. They learn to identify their own emotions, which for them is a bit more complicated. Plus, there is an emotional component, in which they learn to know which stimuli trigger emotions and which emotions provoke. Why does sadness arise, why does anger arise, why does fear arise. We work with the primary emotions. We also work with stories and learn to identify the diverse emotions of stories. They learn to use their emotions, which are the most valuable emotions for accomplishing any task. Last is the third part which works on emotional management and strategies for regulating emotions. They learn to create positive emotions through a sense of humour and laughter. They learn relaxation techniques with creative visualization. The last activity is gratitude and positive thinking. All sessions end with an exercise of gratitude.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

The work done with the students/teachers and parents, in the field of disciplinary and emotional management, at the national and international levels provided:

- Decreased behaviours of indiscipline
- Decreased aggressive behaviour
- Increase in the development of children's emotional/relational capacities
- Increased school success
- Better classroom / school environment
- Decreased levels of anxiety and stress in the teachers

KEY TAKEAWAY

This project aims to promote emotional intelligence through the education and development of emotional skills. Thus, it provides students with tools that allow them to live a healthier life, be more cheerful and happier, reduce risky behaviours and contribute to better results in school and family life and society.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Fostering Children's autonomy and independence



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CIEE - (Club of Emotional Intelligence in Schools)

Organising the Way you Work in School

JUMPIN HUB

RESOURCE:

1. [ITAD](#)

DESCRIPTION

This is a workshop destined for parents, educators, teachers, and other educational professionals and is structured for a one-day session (6hours).

Goals of the workshop:

- Develop the competence of autonomy and responsibility
- Learn to deal with harmful and destructive feelings
- To favour the development of positive social and emotional skills
- Promote behavioural plasticity
- Conflict management

Program:

1. Children and the various stages of development
 - 1.1 Developmental Psychology
 - 1.2 Necessary skills
2. Rules and norms: moving from theory to practice
 - 2.1 Rules to help the child
 - 2.2 What are the selection criteria?
 - 2.3 What are the limits of the rules?
3. Ways to deal with frustration and impulsiveness
 - 3.1 Learning to say no
 - 3.2 Communication strategies
4. Practical reflections on educational strategies



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

It is intended with the training:

- Facilitate contact and learning skills
- Privileging healthy and positive development
- Promote respect, empathy and relational skills
- Ways of positive and assertive communication with children
- Know how to manage children's doubts
- Educate to stop the growth of dictators

KEY TAKEAWAY

This project aims to train parents, teachers and educators and equip them with tools to educate their children about happiness and well-being!

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Promoting children's independence and autonomy while fostering their mental health and well-being.



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Positive Mindset Education



This chapter includes education about being positive, using positive psychology, mindfulness, mental attitude and development.



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Be Positive

ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OTETZ
PAISII

DESCRIPTION

The student's task is to write a word that is their positive wish for the other part of the class. They are instructed to think and write their positive wishes on a small coloured sheet. Be smiling, be good, do good, help, and love their family. They are given some time to think. When all the students are ready, everyone shares their attitude with others and sticks their sheet on a large white sheet. At the end of this training, the teacher says that these are the class's wishes. They are placed in a prominent place in the classroom and are read systematically by different students. The idea here is to turn students' positive thoughts into class rules. After a few weeks, students can be given a task to draw a picture for each wish. In this way, there will be a drawing, and a written wish - positive thoughts are perceived in three different ways - they can be seen, read and heard.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Supports students' positive thinking.
- Forms moral and social foundations in students.
- Develops students' emotional expression and intelligence.
- Develops and enriches students' vocabulary.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Helping students develop their emotional and social intelligence and positive attitudes towards others.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Low social and emotional intelligence.
Developed vocabulary.
Lack of a positive educational environment.



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Positive Psychology

JU OŠ
"ALEKSA ŠANTIĆ"

RESOURCE:

1. eric.ed.gov
2. [Positive Psychology](#)
3. [School Reachout](#)

DESCRIPTION

A learning environment that uses positive psychology focuses on giving all students a chance to build their resilience and learn to cope with and manage challenging situations. Positive psychology in the classroom can also have practical benefits.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Both students and faculty using positive psychology in the classroom benefit from a more robust immune system, increased resilience, a better capacity to deal with stress, fewer feelings of depression, increased life satisfaction, better attention and awareness, increased creativity, better problem solving and cognitive flexibility, more vital social support, better relationships, and longer, healthier life (Keyes, 2007). It may also enhance student well-being and classroom engagement (Myatt, 2016).

Positive psychology is based on the notion that we are motivated to develop into our best selves and reach our maximum potential. Martin Seligman, a pioneer of positive psychology, defines it as 'the scientific study of the strengths that enable individuals and communities to thrive. The field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, cultivate what is best within themselves, and enhance their experiences of love, work, and play' (Positive Psychology Center, University of Pennsylvania). Our students also have these internal drives, which we can tap into as instructors. By using positive education (the field that applies positive psychology principles to encourage students to flourish), we can help our students reach their full potential.

Evidence suggests that we can do this by teaching skills related to well-being, including positive emotions, resilience, engagement, and a sense of meaning (Seligman et al., 2009; Twenge & NolenHoeksema, 2002).



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KEY TAKEAWAY

This varies for each classroom environment, but a positive classroom environment will have the following characteristics:

- a safe, welcoming atmosphere
- a sense of belonging among students
- trust between students and the teacher
- willingness in students to ask questions, participate and take risks
- clear expectations, and fair and honest feedback, from the teacher and students

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- The unreality and naivety of positive psychology
- Lack of clear criteria for what is positive or good
- Danger of becoming an ideological movement



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Developing a Healthy Sense of Self-worth

ASPIRA

RESOURCE:

1. [Slovenia Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

Activities to develop a healthy sense of self-worth, self-esteem, and positive self-worth in pupils. Implementation with pupils in Year 3. The counsellor carried out the activities in collaboration with the class teacher.

Description:

Activities to develop a healthy sense of self-worth, self-esteem, and positive self-worth in pupils.

Activity:

The counsellor carried out the activities in collaboration with the class teacher.

1. WHAT IS HAPPINESS?

Discussion about what makes me happy in life, what makes me happy, and when I am happy. Each pupil then makes their HAPPINESS BAG and presents it to their classmates.

2. A FRIENDLY MESSAGE

Pupils write a kind message to their parents. They thank them for all the good things they have done for them. They present it to their classmates and then give it to their parents.

3. MY FRIENDSHIPS

Talk to the pupils about friendship, what they like to do with their friends, how they help each other, and what they like about their friends. They write this down on a worksheet and present it to their classmates.



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DESCRIPTION

4. MY COAT OF ARMS

Pupils make their coat of arms, in which they write their unique skills, favourite people, favourite place and most important achievement. They then present their coat of arms to their classmates.

5. SOME THINGS ABOUT ME

Students introduce themselves differently by saying and writing down as many different things about themselves as possible. They then present these to their classmates.

6. THE BEST THINGS ABOUT ME

Pupils think about what they think their friends like best about them. So they think about themselves from their friend's point of view. They then present this again to their classmates.

7. TODAY IS A DAY FOR PRAISE

Students imagine that today is a day for praise when they have to praise themselves for five things they have done well and are proud of. They write these on the worksheet with a star. They then present the star to their classmates. We presented this activity together with the pupils at the international symposium "School autonomy in the educational function" at our school as an example of good practice.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students:

- to avoid a feeling of "being a failure."
- to avoid negative feelings
- to build friendship
- to find your happiness

Teachers:

- to build group dynamics in class
- to build positive energy in class



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KEY TAKEAWAY

The conclusion was that if you are happy with yourself, you don't argue with your classmates, you don't scold them, don't say bad things to them, behave nicely towards them, cooperate with them, and help them when needed. All this contributes to a better feeling in the classroom and better academic performance.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Feeling unhappy, feeling of “being a failure”, bad school work, conflicts in class, etc.



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Developing a Healthy Sense of Self-worth

ASPIRA

RESOURCE:

[Mindfulness in Schools](#)

DESCRIPTION

Mindfulness in Schools Project is the most established provider of mindfulness training for schools, delivering world-leading curricula for classroom-based mindfulness. The materials are based on rigorous research in clinical psychology and neuroscience, written by teachers for teachers, and used successfully in a wide range of educational contexts.

The pandemic has shown just how vital the connections that we build with each other are and how important it is to bring foundational mindfulness skills to children and those who care for them.

An 8-week mindfulness course allows you to learn mindfulness for yourself and develop your practice. The course is for those employed by a school or who work within an educational setting regularly or is the parent or carers of a child still in education and who are new to mindfulness. It combines the convenience of an online course that you can complete in the comfort of your own home with the intimacy of live, face-to-face delivery.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students:

The benefits of mindfulness for school staff have been well researched. See Professor Katherine Weare's paper Evidence for Mindfulness: Impacts on the Wellbeing and Performance of School Staff. In particular, reported benefits of mindfulness include:

- a reduction in stress, burnout and anxiety
- a reduction in the sense of task and time pressure
- an improved ability to manage thoughts and behaviour
- an increase in coping skills, motivation, planning and problem solving
- an increase in self-compassion and self-care

Teachers:

Mindfulness in schools is not just about children and young people; it is also very much about those who care for them. The benefits of mindfulness in the adult world are well-researched and the positive impact it can have on teachers, counsellors and carers is central to MiSP's vision. These benefits include:

- stress regulation and reduction,
- increased self compassion and
- increased teaching efficacy.

KEY TAKEAWAY

MiSP delivers a toolkit that can anchor a child for life. Rather than a quick fix, they forget just as fast as they learned it. They help bring mindfulness to schools to achieve a culture shift in their approach to children's mental health and wellbeing.

Schools are confident in their programme because they treat the teaching of mindfulness as seriously as they would any other subject.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Anxiety
- Low motivation
- Fear of failure



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Classroom-based Positive Psychology

SMART IDEA

RESOURCE:

[Wholebeing Institute](#)

DESCRIPTION

More holistic techniques are becoming more popular in the classroom as schools move away from an unyielding focus on student standardized test scores. One of them, in particular, has earned praise across the board, and it is positive psychology. This approach illustrates how to apply it in the classroom.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Ability to reflect on and discuss ideas and emotions -> Ability to reflect and communicate about thoughts and feelings
- Sense of community when implementing this practice
- Helps from teachers and students alike
- The feeling of safety and inclusivity



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- The ability to wisely and non-judgmentally promote the principles of good psychology, as everyone is a participant in it
- Introspective reflection
- Journaling - is a reflective process that can help people connect with their thoughts and feelings. This practice can help you better understand yourself and can be a helpful tool for self-reflection and problem-solving.
- Skills to design an approach that is fully inclusive for students and teachers

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Self-judgement; Non-inclusion; Isolation



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How to Combine Positive Psychology with Support Groups

SMART IDEA

RESOURCE:

[Positive Psych. Groups](#)

DESCRIPTION

The efficacy of psychological treatments for increasing happiness is, in many ways, the centrepiece of positive psychology. The ultimate goal of positive psychology is to improve the lives of individuals through understanding and applying the principles to lead a happier, more productive life. Positive psychology can assist you and your organization by enhancing performance, promoting happiness, reducing stress levels, and encouraging people to embrace their potential. However, incorporating concepts such as virtues, talents, and mindfulness.

This support network has the potential to increase well-being, connectedness, hope, life purpose, and vocational calling – and that is just the tip of the iceberg.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Positive Psychology aims to:

- Improving the mental well-being of the population
- Teaching and advocating for positive psychological concepts like gratitude training, developing strength and virtues, emotional intelligence;
- Improving the positive psychology concepts to be happy;
- Individual and group sessions on these themes are essential to increasing awareness of the importance of teaching them.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- It is considerably simpler to be happy when you take a positive approach to life.
- It's simpler to be happy when you have someone to discuss things with (accountability groups).
- Gratitude training

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Isolation, Feeling Alone, Feeling Unsupported



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Mindset Development Mental Attitude

SMART IDEA

RESOURCE:

1. [FNAC](#)
2. [Guide inc](#)
3. [Youtube](#)

DESCRIPTION

There are two mental attitudes, and only one is conducive to achievement. Carol S. Dweck, a Stanford University psychologist and an international authority on success and motivation, has developed in her research over the last several decades a genuinely innovative concept. The power and influence of our mental attitude, the way we see life and approach it, strongly affects personal and professional success.

Mental attitude is not just a personality trait: in fact, it explains how we become optimistic or pessimistic, and defines our goals, our approach to work and social relationships, and the way we educate our children. It is a critical element in determining whether or not individuals can reach their full potential.

There are two fundamental types of mental attitudes: fixed and progressive. Some people first view talent and abilities as predetermined at birth, which they do not improve throughout life. This is the path to stagnation and demotivation. Those with a progressive mental attitude, on the other hand, believe that skills can be developed over time and perseverance. This is the path of opportunity — and success.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Lifelong Learning

A mental attitude encourages you to enjoy learning and discovering your full potential—and failing—without worrying about what others think.

Higher Self-Esteem

We learn to keep our emotions in check with humility when we have a mental attitude since we know there is always room for improvement.

Self-esteem entails being brave enough to take chances and aspire for more excellence, even if it appears complicated. A mental attitude helps us understand our strengths and weaknesses as we approach new challenges, thus increasing our capacity for navigating toward success.

The Power of Saying "Yet" or "Not Yet"

We're often conditioned to believe that it's our errors more than anything else that defines us. Only one crucial word captures the link between failure and learning with a development mentality. That word is "yet."

In all cases, the mental attitude practice centres on potential and possibility. It teaches us to tell ourselves, "I'm not where I want to be yet, but I'll get there in due course with hard work and perseverance." Teaching our learners the power of "yet" can have a keen impact on their outlook of themselves and their personal experiences

KEY TAKEAWAY

The power and influence of our mental attitude, the way we see life and approach it, strongly affects personal and professional success. It is a key element in determining whether or not individuals can reach their full potential.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Low Self-Esteem,; Negative Perspection



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Progressive Mental Attitude

SMART IDEA

RESOURCE:

1. [FNAC](#)
2. [Guide inc](#)
3. [Youtube](#)

DESCRIPTION

There are two categories of mental attitudes, and only one is conducive to success. Carol S. Dweck is a Stanford University psychology professor known for her expertise on success and motivation in the context of education. She has developed in her research over the past few decades a genuinely innovative idea — the power and influence of our mindset and the mental attitude with which we approach life decisively influence personal and professional success. Mental attitude is not just a personality trait: in fact, it explains how we become optimistic or pessimistic, and defines our goals, our approach to work and social relationships, and the way we educate our children. It is, as a result, a crucial distinction to be able to reach one's full potential.

There are two fundamental types of mental attitudes: fixed and progressive. Those with the first believe that talent and abilities are defined from the outset and do not change throughout life. This is the path to stagnation and apathy. On the other hand, those with a progressive mental attitude believe that students can develop talent with time and persistence. This is the path of opportunity — and success.

In this book, Carol Dweck shows efficiently how it is possible to foster a progressive mental attitude at any time in life, boost self-esteem, motivation, concentrate, and generate resilience and passion for learning — the foundation of outstanding achievements in all areas.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Lifelong Learning - A growth mindset helps you enjoy learning and exploring your potential—and messing up—without worrying about what anyone thinks.

Higher Self-Esteem - When we have a growth mindset, we learn to temper triumph with humility because we know there is always a way to improve.

The Power of a Three-Letter-Word - In the end, much of our lives are spent focusing on what we learn and what mistakes we make. It's inherent in our academic careers, working lives, and relationships of every definition. Unfortunately, we're often conditioned to believe that it's our errors more than anything else that defines us. There's one simple word that can sum up the crucial connection between failure and learn with a growth mindset. That word is "yet."

In all cases, the growth mindset practice centres on potential and possibility. It teaches us to tell ourselves, "I'm not where I'd like to be yet, but hard work and perseverance will get me there in time." Teaching our learners the power of "yet" can have a keen impact on their outlook of themselves and their personal experiences.

KEY TAKEAWAY

There are two types of mental attitudes, and only one leads to success - the Progressive Mindset

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Fixed Mindset; Demotivation



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Actualisation of a Growth Mindset Pedagogy

RESOURCE:

[Science Direct](#)

DESCRIPTION

The teacher Anne praised strategies, progress, and effort and rarely used the kind of personal praise that teachers with a fixed mindset tend to use (Jonsson & Beach, 2012), which is likely to demotivate the students when they face challenges and failure (Mueller & Dweck, 1998). By giving constant feedback, Anne guided the actions of her students, motivated them to commit to the work, and developed their self-knowledge about their progress. In the following example, Anne does not praise the student's qualities but rather the student's skills, and she continues by setting the next learning aim. This mode of communicating informs the student that there is no point in doing a task that is too easy; rather, it is crucial constantly to find challenges that benefit learning: "Let's look back a bit because you were absent when we worked with these ... well, you can start. You already draw such beautiful numbers, so there's no point in practising them now, but you can start from here. Tell me, how many balloons are here?" (Observation data, Critical incident 28)

It was also typical of Anne to praise strategies and verbalize different learning strategies and methods of reasoning. For example, one of the students came up with the correct conclusion faster than the others. Instead of praising his speed, Anne asked the student to explain what method of reasoning he used, praised that, and then explained the method to the other students. In general, teaching-learning strategies were of vital importance for Anne. For instance, in talking about the most essential aims in her work, she mainly mentioned helping her students learn to study and learn to learn:

Anne says that she hopes her students will learn persistence and become hard-working and learn to collaborate. Lots of things are involved in that; you have to respect others and value yourself.

Anne thought that making students understand that failures are inevitable is essential, which is why she also regarded it as necessary that students see teachers making mistakes: "Often I make mistakes by accident, but sometimes I make them on purpose so that the children can see their teacher perhaps does not always know things."

The Finnish national core curriculum likewise emphasizes the importance of this by stating that experiences of success encourage students to learn more and understand that failures and incorrect answers are part of the learning process.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Foster students' process-focused thinking
- Teacher awareness on how to help students facing challenges and avoid failure
- Students are encouraged to progress
- Student persistence and perseverance

KEY TAKEAWAY

By giving constant feedback, Anne guided the actions of her students, motivated them to commit to the work, and developed their self-knowledge about their progress. Students were encouraged to step out of their comfort zone and progress. Having a variety of different strategies with which you will host classes will help get students more engaged.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

School and teachers being helpful when facing difficult situations, they are there to help and not discourage



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The Jigsaw Classroom

RESOURCE:

[Positive Education](#)

DESCRIPTION

The jigsaw classroom is a technique in which students are split into groups based on shared skills and competencies. Each student is assigned a different topic and told to find students from other groups given the same topic. The result is that each group has a set of students with different strengths collaborating to research the same topic.

In positive psychology-influenced curricula, more power is given to the students to choose their curriculum, and they are given responsibility from a much younger age. In these types of classroom settings, students are treated differently when it comes to praise and discipline

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- The influence of positive psychology has even extended to classroom dynamics
- Empowering students
- Promoting critical thinking, proactiveness, autonomy

KEY TAKEAWAY

A group exercise that aims to pair two or more students and have them collaborate on a particular topic. The goals are to promote autonomy from a young age and help students have the responsibility for a more minor part of the class.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Lack of initiative
- Stale classes
- Inability to be more involved during classes
- Students feel more positive because their input is relied on and appreciated



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A Decrease in Depression and Anxiety-connected Symptoms

RESOURCE:

[Positive Education](#)

DESCRIPTION

To help facilitate happiness and wellbeing, Seligman et al. (2005) came up with several techniques to aid the integration of positive psychology. Although the research was initially done with adults, these techniques can be applied in classroom settings to help integrate positive psychology into students' daily lives. The first activity involved having individuals list three good things that happened during the day. They were then asked to provide an explanation detailing these events and give reasons why they were so beneficial. The second activity surrounded using signature strengths differently. Each participant was given an online inventory of character strengths and then asked to identify their top five character strengths. After identifying their strengths, participants received individualized feedback and were asked to strategize workable ways to use these strengths in daily life.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Helps facilitate happiness and wellbeing
- Applied in classroom settings to help integrate positive psychology into students' daily lives.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Positive psychology is a great way to decrease depression and anxiety-related symptoms among participants.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Lack of self-belief



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The Maytiv Program

RESOURCE:

[Research Gate](#)

DESCRIPTION

The Maytiv positive psychology-based program aims to increase students' sense of joy, satisfaction, engagement, meaning, social support, achievement, and overall psychological well-being. In some respects, the Maytiv program is similar to other school-based interventions in that it promotes socio-emotional competencies and creates engaging and supportive school systems. Like emotion regulation training, it addresses topics such as awareness of emotional states and the development of the capacity to monitor and regulate positive and negative emotions (Graziano et al., 2007). The Maytiv program also promotes social and emotional skills, fosters positive interpersonal relationships, and supports acts of empathy, similar to SEL programs (Elias et al., 1997).

The program emphasizes identifying and enhancing core character strengths and imparts universal virtues to students, as in character development programs (Lickona, 1991). However, the Maytiv program also seeks to deepen and broaden students' skills, experiences, and knowledge on additional components that have not received much attention in other SEL programs and may be particularly influential on adolescents' SWB. For example, the program concentrates on gratitude (Emmons & McCullough, 2003), compassion (Neff, 2009), flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991), mindfulness (Burke, 2010), hope (Marques, Lopez, & Pais-Ribeiro, 2011), perseverance (Duckworth et al., 2007), and character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). In the convergence of these unique elements, coupled with the aspects of the program that are similar to existing interventions, the Maytiv program has the potential to act as an integrative intervention that functions as a bridge between educational approaches and practices in the field of SWB.

Both the training for teachers and the curriculum for the students include 15 lessons lasting 90 min each (two academic hours) every two weeks. The teacher's lesson precedes the lesson they are trained to deliver the following week. Beyond the 15 lessons, teachers also receive two 90-minute introductory sessions to positive psychology at the beginning of the process.



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DESCRIPTION

Step 1: Stories (20–30 min). Stories are used as the springboard for teaching the material in the curriculum. Students are exposed to 2 to 3 stories in each lesson and learn to derive specific lessons and action items from them. The stories are about famous and lesser-known figures; they are taken from the Bible, mythology, famous literary works, psychological experiments, and children's books. They are presented through various media: movies, novels, short stories, excerpts from epic tales, or plays. Additionally, other forms of art such as paintings, photographs, sculptures, and music are used to reinforce and build on the ideas within the stories.

Step 2: Exercises (30–40 min). In each lesson, the students are given 1 to 2 exercises to be completed in pairs, small groups, or together as a class. Based on the notion of learning through imitation, many of the exercises involve acting (for example, playing a character, inventing alternative endings to the stories, and engaging in improvisational theatre exercises). They are also exposed to other activities ranging from guided visualization to team-building exercises, cognitive behavioural therapy techniques, mindful meditation, sharing personal stories, and drawing.

Step 3: Discussion (10–20 min). After the exercise, or as part of it, students discuss around two to four guided questions generated by the teacher and students. The questions relate to the story or the accompanying text and the exercise. The purpose of the discussion is to aid students in better understanding and retaining the information, ultimately making the material "their own."

Step 4: Writing (10–15 min). In each lesson, students can write about the story, the exercise, or the discussion. The writing exercises include analyzing themselves and the stories or texts, free association through journaling, and reflecting on the relevance of the material to their lives.

Step 5: Action. The final step aims to 'take the ideas and make them real.' Taking action is considered an essential step in assimilating and internalizing the material. 'Action' can take the form of preparing a poster for class, delivering a speech or a workshop about the material (an effective way to learn is to teach), volunteering in a school or the wider community, or adopting certain behaviours for a chosen amount of time. Most of the action tasks are completed in the two-week interval between the lessons, except for longer or more complex tasks (such as delivering a speech or volunteering), which may be carried out throughout the entire year.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Translating the positive psychology approach into tangible tools and skills that can be integrated into their daily lives

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Low levels of: a sense of joy and satisfaction, engagement, meaning, social support, achievement, and overall psychological well-being



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Positive Attitude Program (Programa Atitude Positiva)

RESOURCE:

1. [ATV](#)
2. [Research Gate](#)

DESCRIPTION

Positive Attitude is a Program for the promotion of healthy behaviours and the prevention of risky behaviours, focused on the development of students' socio-emotional skills and the promotion of school adjustment during the cycle transition. The project includes activities aimed at all school agents, making it easier for them to be elements of promotion and maintenance of these skills.

The Positive Attitude project started in the 2004/05 academic year in the 2nd and 3rd cycle schools of Campelos, Maxial and São Gonçalo (Torres Vedras municipality). This academic year, the project was supported by the Torres Vedras City Council and the Institute of Drugs and Drug Addiction. It was initially more focused on providing training for parents and guardians, teachers and educational assistants. The project also included intervention with students in socio-cognitive development sessions. Based on this valence, an initial version of the Socioemotional Skills Development Program was implemented for the 7th year.

The project covers about 2000 people, most of the students, teachers, parents, educators and youth workers, in the various activities developed by the Psychologists who collaborate on the project.

Currently, the project integrates four actions that aim, in general, to develop socio-emotional competencies, creating more favourable conditions for the adoption of healthy behaviours and the reduction of risky behaviours. In this way, the project supports the creation of conditions for school and life success, either directly through intervention in school cycle transitions or indirectly through skills development programs, information and awareness actions and the training of agents in the use of specific tools.

Action 1 - Dissemination and awareness

Action 2 - Evaluation, referral and monitoring

Action 3 - Develop skills

Action 4 - Positive transition



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DESCRIPTION

Action 1 - Dissemination and awareness

- Inform the agents and the target population about the nature and stages of the project;
- Identify the main problems and the characteristics of the target population and agents;
- Disclosing the Project to future partners;
- Share experiences, at national and international levels, in order to achieve a continuous improvement of results.

Action 2 - Assessment, referral

- Assess the risk and balance factors to identify groups with which it is necessary to intervene;
- Identify or create instruments for the evaluation of programs;
- Assess the impact of the socio-emotional skills programs developed by the Positive Attitude Project for the 1st Cycle and for the 2nd and 3rd Cycles;
- Assess the impact of the school adjustment program on the transition to the 2nd Cycle, called Positive Transition;
- Assess the level of satisfaction of the students who attended the programs with the activities developed.

Action 3 - Develop skills

- Develop skills to protect young people;
- Involve peers in changing the behavior of young people at risk;
- Promote students' socialization skills;
- Develop students' Self-Concept, in its various dimensions;
- Promote the learning of working tools with young people, by teachers and operational assistants, in order to reduce risk factors and increase protection factors;

Action 4 - Positive Transition

- Increase knowledge about cycle transition processes;
- Develop a specific intervention program;
- Promote school adjustment;
- Reduce the rates of concern associated with school transitions;
- Detect situations of future intervention in terms of socio-emotional skills;



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

The Positive Attitude Project aims to promote healthy behaviours and prevent risky behaviours in children and adolescents, from the 4th to the 9th year of schooling, through Socioemotional Learning.

In its guide, there are identified improvements and benefits for children and youngsters, interrelated areas of cognitive, social and emotional competencies as crucial for the promotion of healthy behaviour:

- self-awareness
- Social consciousness
- self-control
- relational skills
- responsible decision making.

Several investigations show that these competencies are protective in bullying behaviours, negative peer pressure and health risk behaviours (involving sex and drugs), with students with better socio-emotional skills presenting better academic results and better social integration.

KEY TAKEAWAY

The project integrates four actions that aim, in general, to develop socio-emotional competencies, creating more favourable conditions for adopting healthy behaviours and reducing risky behaviours.

In this way, the project supports the creation of conditions for school and life success, either directly through intervention in school cycle transitions or indirectly through skills development programs, information and awareness actions and the training of agents in the use of specific tools.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

1. Information and awareness for community involvement in the project;
2. Individualized assessment and responses;
3. The development of skills, including socio-emotional learning programs for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle, as well as training for parents and guardians, operational assistants and teachers;
4. The Positive Transition program - school adjustment in the transition to the following cycles



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Prevention of Isolation, Depression, Distance learning and COVID



This chapter includes activities for personal development, mental attitude and mental health, teaching distance learning and awareness.



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School Library - Learn and Have Fun

ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OTETZ
PAISII

DESCRIPTION

We live in a world of new technologies, but children's love for books has not disappeared. Working together with the school library clarifies how little is needed to arouse children's interest. Shows that answers to all questions can be found in books. Striving to break the common notion of the library as an institution, daily friendly meetings are held with students, not only in the library but also in the classrooms - stories are read that arouse interest, arouse curiosity and desire for lifelong learning.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

The activity of the library is related to several events that are initiated to expand the worldview of students and awaken creative abilities. Given the circumstances, a virtual school was established, a library where students join with great desire and interest.

Visits to the school library are an effective way to overcome stress and isolation. They form a desire to read, a love of books and motivation to learn new things.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Helping students learn new things differently and excitingly. They are motivated and actively involved in the projects implemented in the school library.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Overcoming the stress of isolation and motivation to read and learn.



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Extracurricular Activities with a Personal Development Team

ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OTETZ
PAISII

DESCRIPTION

Our team noticed that the students were nervous, distracted, and unwilling to learn after the first block. The children lost their habits of learning and motivation. Lack of social contacts, social isolation and face-to-face communication is all these. We decided to use the capacity of our development team, which includes two psychologists, two resource teachers and a speech therapist, to be useful to the students. The personal development team is involved in the activities. Training is conducted with the classes. If necessary, individual conversations and training are held when individual work with students is needed.

Conversations are necessary and useful in all classes. Students share what worries them and what they think is the reason for this demotivation. Without realizing it, they conduct therapy at these meetings. There are good results that everyone hears the worries and fears of others. The same practices can be applied to parents concerned about health, development, and learning difficulties due to the pandemic and online learning.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Students develop their emotional and social intelligence
- Children's awareness is improving.
- Calmness and comfort at school
- Motivation and satisfaction of students
- Create sharing habits
- Understanding the importance of social contacts and personal communication with classmates, teachers
- Teamwork and partnership between students, teachers and parents



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Helping students realise the importance and significance of learning in a real environment. To understand how important it is for them not to be afraid to share their worries and that they are not alone. Building students' emotional and social intelligence.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Emotional passivity in students; Unwillingness to share and build social relationships with other students and adults; Self-absorption, and falling into emotional states can have serious consequences for students' development.



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Imagining a Happy Place in Pairs

RESOURCE:

1. [Monday Campaign](#)
2. [Character Effect](#)

DESCRIPTION

Help students learn how to cope with stress using visualisations - ask them to imagine a place where they feel absolutely happy and teach them how to use it after they are done with school work earlier than others in some classes. Ask them to "invite" a friend to their happy place by telling them about it and what they are invited to do with them there. Have them switch places. They can draw a picture if they want to share it with the class.

Important: Setting a rule about who controls the happy place before inviting someone else is important and can teach young students about politeness and respect for others' personal space.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Development of social intelligence;
- Improving emotional metacognition;
- Improving social metacognition;
- Teaching others manners;
- Encouraging pair work and bolstering relationships within the group.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Pair work with a close friend can help students learn how to share experiences and to offer or receive feedback. By doing this, they learn that happiness can be supported in groups and is not a solitary achievement.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Low social and emotional intelligence
Lack of awareness about others' emotional state



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Teaching at Distance Learning - Good Practices at Your Fingertips

ASPIRA

RESOURCE:

[Amcham](#)

DESCRIPTION

The new reality has brought different and entirely new ways of working, and distance learning requires working and engaging in an excessive amount of planning, coordination, and teaching. Teachers found themselves in a unique situation that they were unfamiliar with, bringing countless new questions and dilemmas. The team made this tool of Učitelj sem! (I am a Teacher) www.uciteljsem.net brought many information and recommendations for distance learning that they have gathered and developed in their workshops during the pandemic and with the help of teachers and headteachers who have shared their opinions and good practices with them.

They emphasize that school is a place to acquire knowledge and a place of education, learn social skills, socialize, and be a living organism. Although people need interaction, face-to-face contact, touch, and hugs until the new reality is coming, this handbook helps teachers work remotely and help them with ideas.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Encourage children to develop the skills and competences of the future.
- Tips for online schooling for teachers (communication, how to keep the audience's attention, setting objectives and making demands on staff (for headteachers), online platforms etc.)



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KEY TAKEAWAY

The Učitelj sem! Team emphasize that school is a place to acquire knowledge and a place of education, learn social skills, socialize, and be a living organism. Although people need interaction, face-to-face contact, touch, and hugs until the new reality comes, this handbook helps teachers work remotely and help them with ideas.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Student engagement, even when school is at a distance.
- Making sense.
- Increased engagement.



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Distance Education During the Covid-19 Epidemic - a Survey by the Slovenian Institute of Education

ASPIRA

RESOURCE:

[ZRSS](#)

DESCRIPTION

The survey was carried out with 7382 primary and secondary school teachers, 24684 pupils, 406 primary and secondary school headteachers, and in seven focus groups with 16 head teachers and 32 headteachers, i.e. just under a third of all primary and secondary school teachers, a tenth of pupils and two-thirds of headteachers. The survey was very comprehensive, and the results are presented comparatively between groups of teachers (classroom, subject and secondary) and comparatively between pupils in VIO 1, VIO 2 and secondary.

The study analysed different distance education practices during the Covid-19 epidemic in Slovenia. The research covered several areas: the experience of distance teaching/learning, the organisation and conduct of classes, the use of digital technology to realise learning objectives, the realisation of learning objectives themselves, didactic strategies and methods of distance teaching, the evaluation of knowledge, the self-assessment of competence in distance education, the benefits and challenges, and the cooperation with different stakeholders.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students:

- to identify students' experiences of teaching and learning at a distance during the Covid-19 epidemic

Teachers:

- to identify the prevailing experiences and practices of distance education of Slovenian teachers at different levels of education during the Covid-19 epidemic and their experiences of collaboration with different stakeholders,
- To identify the prevailing characteristics of pedagogical leadership during the school closures from the perspective of headteachers.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

The survey results show that students rated distance learning during the novel coronavirus epidemic as more challenging than classroom teaching, but on the other hand, they also rated distance learning as interesting and creative. The negative aspects were mainly the lack of social contact, both with classmates and teachers. A significant number also missed the teacher's explanation. Few pupils stated that they did not know how to use a computer, and about 20 % had to share a computer with family members. On the positive side, they felt that they could schedule their work during the day and did not have to perform in front of their classmates. Among secondary and upper primary school pupils, a large proportion, over 30 %, found it easier to learn in this way.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Minimise the negative impact on students and also teachers regarding online schooling.



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Epidemic of Courage: How to Find the Courage to Live a Bold Life?

DESCRIPTION

Katarina Veselko

Attitude to vulnerability.

Vulnerability is mostly understood as weakness, risk, and high emotional exposure, something that defines us as easy prey. Vulnerability is not a weakness. Vulnerability is courage up close. The fear of failure prevents us from entering the arena, as this fear keeps us at its door - at the edge.

Opinions of “my” people. These are opinions that count. Those who sit in the support section and cheer for us. Courage is a skill - of dealing with vulnerability, clarity of values and meaning, building trust and psychological security and overcoming obstacles and failures.

Courage goes step by step. First, we feel our vulnerability, and we feel fear. Then we need to remember that this is human, that it is okay, that we are not going to deny these emotions, but that we are compassionate towards ourselves. Then we have to remember - why I am here and why I do it (clarity of values). We remember people we trust, who support us in this - in this way, we feel safe and aware that even if we fall, we will survive, and we will recover. After this process comes the choice of courageous action

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students:

- Awareness and acknowledgement of one's own weakness is not a reflection of failure, but of courage.

Teachers:

- the importance of being in a supporting section for students.
- understanding the process of courage, which will lead teachers to support students with the journey of finding their happiness



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Courage is a skill, so it is teachable.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Anxiety
- Fear
- Uncertainty



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CoAction Against COVID-19

RESOURCE:

1. [Youtube](#)
2. [ProChild Colab](#)
3. [CM Guimaraes](#)

DESCRIPTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused drastic changes in the lives of children and their families. In response, the Guimarães City Council, the Psychology Association of the University of Minho (APsi-UMinho), the Psychology Research Center of the University of Minho (CIPsi) and the ProChild CoLAB seek to promote the well-being of children and families in this pandemic period.

Surveying will be carried out, and the evaluation of mental health problems of all children between 3 and 10 years old attending pre-school education and the first cycle of the public network in the municipality of Guimarães. The specialized, individualized, and free psychological intervention will be available for children and families who need it.

Children stand out as a risk group about the adverse effects on mental health resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing the risk or aggravating existing situations of lack of protection in socioeconomic, family or foster care contexts (Sistovaris et al., 2020). Thus, although most children do not develop a traumatic response, it has been shown that loss, fear and stress, strongly associated with COVID-19, exacerbate existing mental health problems and contribute to a higher incidence of related disorders. With stress (Qiu et al., 2020). A recent international study, coordinated by the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Lisbon and ProChild CoLAB, showed that the COVID-19 pandemic is associated with high anxiety levels among children in the national context.

To respond to the expected increase in mental health problems in children during the COVID-19 pandemic, a community intervention project was designed in the municipality of Guimarães. This project, promoted by the Municipality of Guimarães, the Psychology Association of the University of Minho (APsi-UMinho), the Psychology Research Center of the University of Minho (CIPsi) and the ProChild CoLAB, aims to:

- assess and monitor, in a community context, the impact of public health measures during a pandemic period on the mental health of children between 3 and 10 years old;
- validate the implementation of community action to respond to children's mental health problems in the context of a pandemic



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DESCRIPTION

To this end, it includes two phases:

1. Screening and assessment of mental health problems of all children between 3 and 10 years old attending pre-school education and the first cycle of the public network in the municipality of Guimarães. For this, it will be necessary for parents to fill in online questionnaires available on the ProChild platform accessible from their profile on the +Cidadania platform;
2. Specialized, individualized and free psychological intervention for children and families in need. Thus, the second phase is exclusively dedicated to children and families with indications of possible psychological problems. In case of confirmation and consent, the child and family will be integrated into online or face-to-face psychotherapy sessions conducted by accredited psychologists.

Who are the targets of the project?

- Guardians (holders of parental responsibilities) and their children between 3 and 10 years old attend pre-school education and the first cycle of the public network in the municipality of Guimarães.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

This project “seeks to respond to the expected increase in mental health problems in children during this period of the pandemic, which has implied a profound change in ways of life and greater distance between children themselves”.

Through this process, it is intended to evaluate and monitor, in a community context, the impact of public health measures during a period of a pandemic on the mental health of children between 3 and 10 years old, as well as to validate the implementation of community action to respond to children's mental health problems in the context of a pandemic.

Specialized, free and individualized psychological support is provided by professionals from the University of Minho Psychologists Association. Follow-up is carried out for approximately two months and, if necessary, can be extended.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Children are suffering directly from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, increasing mental health problems, anxiety and frustration. It is necessary to draw an appropriate intervention with a holistic approach for children and parents.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Mental health problems, anxiety, frustration,



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"UPA faz a diferença" (UPA Makes the Difference) - Awareness/Pro-mental Health Actions

JUMPIN HUB

RESOURCE:

1. [UPA](#)
2. [Encontrarse](#)

DESCRIPTION

UPA Faz a Diferença is a project aimed at young people, students of secondary education aged between 15 and 18 years, whose general objective was to contribute to the increase of knowledge about mental health issues, in the sense of, on the one hand, to encourage the early seeking of help and to reduce stigmatizing and discriminatory attitudes and, on the other hand, to raise awareness of the need to promote mental health.

With the implementation of UPA Faz a Diferença, it was possible to:

- (1) Assess knowledge about mental health issues;
 - (2) Survey myths and beliefs about mental health problems;
 - (3) Convey information about the main warning signs and symptoms for the risk of mental disorder;
 - (4) Publicize the UPA Movement – United to Help, whose motto is "Stand up against the discrimination of mental illness", to raise awareness of the impact of self/hetero-stigma; and finally,
 - (5) Assess the effectiveness of the initiative and future intervention needs.
- The development of the UPA Faz, a Diferença project, involved two phases: (1) pilot study and (2) awareness-raising actions.



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DESCRIPTION

(1) Pilot study

In the first phase, a pilot study was carried out, which consisted of holding discussion groups with secondary school students and their educational agents (parents, teachers and school directors). This first phase allowed the construction of the evaluation questionnaire to be used within the project and the design of the intervention.

(2) Awareness actions

The second phase of the project involved carrying out awareness-raising actions for mental health in the “partner” secondary schools involving a group of 500 students aged between 15 and 18 years old. The actions were carried out with classes of the 10th, 11th and 12th grades of public and private schools on the North Coast of Portugal.

THROUGHOUT THE SESSIONS, SEVERAL CRUCIAL QUESTIONS ARE ADDRESSED, SUCH AS:

- What are mental health issues?
- What is depression? The anorexia? The bulimia? Dementia? The schizophrenia? The dependencies...?
- What are its causes and risks?
- What consequences do they have?
- Who can be affected?
- Is it possible to treat? Like?
- How can we help someone with a mental health issue?
- What can we do to promote our mental health and that of others?



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

The UPA MAKES A DIFFERENCE project has the general objective of contributing to the increase of knowledge on mental health issues in 500 young people from secondary education to raise awareness of the need to promote mental health.

Each awareness-raising action consists of two sessions, during which issues related to mental health problems and the need to promote mental health are addressed.

With this project, the figure of the Citizen UPA (Unidos Para Ayudar) was created, which represents a young person who, having a broader knowledge about mental health issues, has the necessary tools to promote mental health and fight against discrimination against women. People with mental illness.

In order to help UPA Citizens with their tasks of promoting mental health and fighting discrimination, the Sticker Art Book was created, a book consisting of stickers with messages related to mental health issues. Allied to the Sticker Art Book, a contest is taking place, within which the best photograph in which the material available in the book has been used will be awarded.

KEY TAKEAWAY

This project has the general objective of contributing to the increase of knowledge on mental health issues in young people from secondary education in order to raise awareness of the need to promote mental health.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Mental health; stress; anxiety;



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School / Outdoor Activities



This chapter includes activities that are considered extracurricular or with a changed environment for students to learn from and be engaged



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Brainstorming

ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OTETZ PAISII

RESOURCE:

-

DESCRIPTION

Brainstorming is one of the most common strategies for creating ideas. This is a creative technique for working in a group, through which the team tries to come up with a solution to a problem, collecting a list of ideas that arose spontaneously and are shared by students in the group. There are variations of the strategy, and the classic type of brainstorming is presented.

- Non-standard ideas are welcome;
- There must be a certain time (usually a few minutes);
- The ideas of the participants should not be criticized, but only recorded;
- All ideas are recorded no matter how they sound;
- A comfortable shared space should be provided around which students can gather (a common table);
- There should be no more than eight students in the team because it will not be possible to listen;

It is important to ensure that ideas are upgraded, that more are invented;

In the beginning, there may be a need for a facilitator in each team to monitor the decision of the team

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

It is an interactive, unstructured process that allows you to get the most out of the creative capacity of the participants.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Students create group ideas.
- The strategy activates a creative exchange of ideas and knowledge;
- Many and varied ideas are generated.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Method of group work stimulates creativity to generate suggestions, develop ideas or solve problems.



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Lego Robotics Club and Art Club

RESOURCE:

-

DESCRIPTION

Art therapy is a way of expressing specific emotional or physical problems through art. It is not about creating fantastic works of art that express themselves in a way that will positively impact personal development and development. It also improves sensorimotor skills, including eye-hand coordination and sensory stimulation.

When children have the opportunity to express themselves, they achieve a true sense of self and identity. They are able to evaluate the determination of their choice, establish preferences and have a sense of accomplishment. All this confirms this and helps them to build themselves as conscious and happy individuals.

LEGO kits are an interesting way for children to learn and have fun. Education in this field provides practical experience in developing communication skills, creativity, teamwork and critical thinking. The language in which the robots are programmed is visual and can be downloaded to any computer and laptop. It has been specially developed by LEGO for robotics and programming training. Each set allows children to create without limiting their imagination and opens new horizons in the world of robotics. They have solutions for the youngest 5-6 years old and can be extended to older students who would like to do robotics!

Robotics and art clubs give children the freedom to do what they like and learn many new things without realising it. At the same time, the clubs entertain them and motivate them to participate actively - most importantly, we see happy and smiling students. Isn't this the main goal - to raise and teach healthy, motivated, inspired and happy children?



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Helping to develop and upgrade children's interests. Students are focused on improving their knowledge and improving their intelligence. Develops abstract thinking and teamwork skills, and social and emotional intelligence of students.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

This practice can be useful against lack of motivation, stress, dissatisfaction, children's social and emotional passivity, boredom and unwillingness to work in a team.



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ART THERAPY

JU OŠ
"ALEKSA ŠANTIĆ"

RESOURCE:

1. [We are Teachers](#)
2. [AASA](#)

DESCRIPTION

Art therapy is a blended field of therapeutic practice that combines art and psychology, utilizing the creative process, artistic techniques, and external artwork to support individuals to develop self-awareness, explore emotions, and address unresolved conflict or trauma.

Art therapy has also been used to help individuals, particularly young children, develop social skills and raise self-confidence. It's a fantastic addition to positive psychology, as at its core, it seeks to help individuals overcome emotional or psychological challenges to achieve a greater sense of personal wellbeing.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Art therapy is a creative and engaging way to address inappropriate behaviours such as bullying; identify an individual's barriers to learning; increase student retention; support special needs students; enhance academic performance; provide gifted youth with a new skill; increase motor and sensory skills; and, exciting kids' learning experience.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Art therapy is a therapeutic process that integrates psychotherapy and art. It can help kids explore their emotions, improve self-esteem, relieve stress, and ease anxiety and depression. It can express and reconcile emotional conflicts, encourage self-awareness, problem-solving, reduced anxiety, increased self-confidence, working traumatic experiences and negative aspects of life.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Investing in children's materials
- Finding space in school
- Additional room cleaning after
- Additional training



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Class Mascot

JU OŠ
"ALEKSA ŠANTIĆ"

RESOURCE:

1. [Minds in Bloom](#)
2. [Kathleen Morris](#)

DESCRIPTION

A class mascot adds a little bit of fun and lightness to your classroom culture. Of course, little kids love it, but even big kids have fun with a class mascot. Older kids will enjoy a "cool" mascot rather than a "cute." The idea of a class mascot is nothing new. The fantastic thing is that now with blogs, class mascots can be a real public symbol for you and help to give your class a unique identity. Class mascots can be "friends" that help the students on their learning journey.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Mascot plays various roles in the classroom. Sits and watches over the class to make sure they are doing the right thing. He also can make his own video about quality commenting tips. Sometimes, Mascot writes about his weekend on the interactive whiteboard, and the students have to "help" them edit his writing. When students don't have a partner to read to, the mascot is always there and loves to listen to stories. The mascot is also a role model commenter (he has his own email and avatar).



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Having a class mascot adds a little fun and humour to the classroom and supports students.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Lack of Humor
- Interaction
- Engagement & Entertainment



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The Child Still Lives in Me - A Competition for Students and Parents

**ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OTETZ PAISII**

RESOURCE:

-

DESCRIPTION

The competition is in the schoolyard. Each team includes a student and a parent. The idea of the competition is to remind adults that they were all children. The competition is very emotional; children and students and all teachers participate willingly, and the atmosphere is very positive. Parents and teachers participate with smiles, forget about their problems, play with students, and ignore the stress of a busy day.

In the situation after the isolation and the accumulated emotional deficiencies due to covid isolation, our competition greatly affects students and their parents. The games we include in the competition are: jumping with sacks, running with a balloon on your feet, basketball, volleyball, football, table tennis.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students and parents

- Positive thinking through play.
- Anti-stress effect.
- Supports relationships and communication between children and adults.
- Emotional growth.
- Physical activity develops a healthy lifestyle, and has a positive effect on online learning.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Helping students and parents pay attention to their emotional state. It can help teachers, students and parents to develop and maintain personal mental hygiene and further improve their social and emotional well-being.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Emotional and social distance. Improving the physical and emotional state of students and parents.
- Feeling of real happiness, closeness and communication.



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Teaching in Nature

JU OŠ "ALEKSA
ŠANTIĆ"

RESOURCE:

[Greater Good](#)

DESCRIPTION

Nature restores children's attention. Attention is important for learning, but many kids have trouble paying attention in the classroom, whether it be because of distractions, mental fatigue, or ADHD. Luckily, spending time in nature—taking a walk in a park and even viewing nature out the window—helps restore kids' attention, allowing them to concentrate and perform better on cognitive tests. Just like adults, children are less stressed when they have green spaces to retreat to occasionally, helping them to be more resilient.

Studies have found that holding a class outdoors one day a week can significantly improve the daily cortisol patterns of students—reflecting less stress and better adaptation to stress—compared to kids with indoor-only instruction. Also, in a study looking at children in rural environments, those with more nature nearby recovered better from stressful life events regarding their self-worth and distress.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Kids seem to like classes outdoors. Research suggests that kids are more engaged in learning during outdoor classes and upon returning to their classroom afterwards—even if the subject they return to is not nature-related. Many children—particularly those with ADHD—have trouble with impulse control, which can get in the way of school learning. Green space near kids' homes helps them have more self-discipline and concentrate better. Also, parents of kids with ADHD report that when their kids participate in activities outdoors versus indoors, it reduces their ADHD symptoms.

While physical fitness is important for children for many reasons, one that may not immediately come to mind is its role in learning. In particular, cardiorespiratory fitness seems to support efficient cognitive processing, and kids with higher fitness levels do better academically. Though it's not clear that nature affects physical fitness directly, it is true that the more time kids spend in nature, the better their cardiorespiratory fitness. Having access to nature may encourage children to be more physically active and keep in shape longer as they age.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

The social and physical environment in which children learn can make a difference in their academic success. Letting kids spend time in settings with natural elements or giving them structured nature experiences can make for a calmer, socially safe, and fun learning environment. And being outdoors can also enhance peer-to-peer relationships and student/teacher relationships needed for learning, even for students who otherwise feel marginalized socially.

Some argue that nature provides a rich tapestry of “loose parts”—sticks, stones, mud—that encourage pretend play and exploration, creativity and problem-solving. Indeed, teachers’ and principals’ observations suggest that children’s play becomes strikingly more creative, physically active, and social in the presence of loose parts.

We need to do more to bring this important resource into our schools. Architects and city planners should keep trees and green areas in and near schoolyards. And teachers and principals should incorporate lessons outdoors and use recess not as a reward for good behaviour but as a way to rejuvenate students’ minds for the next lesson.

By doing so, we won’t only benefit our kids’ psychological well-being—though that’s reason enough! We will likely help them perform better in school, too. And, as a connection to nature breeds more care for nature, we may also be inspiring the future stewards of our natural world.

Humans evolved to grow and thrive in natural environments, and research is showing the costs of indoor childhoods. It’s time to cure “nature deficit disorder” in our kids by giving “nature time”—not just studying and extracurricular time—the importance it deserves

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Health & Safety regulations,
- Weather
- Supervision of students,
- Natural Hazards,
- Following curriculum requirements,
- Additional paperwork.



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Online Team

LSS

RESOURCE:

[Edutopia](#)

DESCRIPTION

Organising group online collaboration meetings with students to perform tasks together via different collaboration tools - for example, a group illustration for a written or heard text or playing an online board game, connected to the learning material (like mathematical "Snakes and Ladders").

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Providing an opportunity for group gathering and overcoming isolation;
- Improving group dynamics;
- Improving knowledge in the form of a game.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Group work is still possible during isolation and when used creatively and purposefully it can help students overcome anxiety and depression via personal contact with an already familiar circle of people.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Anxiety
- Depression in students
- Difficulty in acquiring the taught material



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School in Nature

ASPIRA

RESOURCE:

1. [SLO Government](#)
2. [CSOD](#)

DESCRIPTION

At the Nature School, pupils can discover, learn about and experience nature and their wider surroundings. In doing so, they learn to be independent and develop various motor and social skills. It is a part of the educational system (primary schools) in Slovenia, financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

Nature School is an extension of the curriculum for different subjects, which takes place over several days at a time outside the school premises. Through a variety of activities in nature, pupils learn about their immediate and wider environment, while also developing contacts with peers, social skills and work habits. They test or extend their knowledge through various practical tasks, and there is also an emphasis on sports activities such as swimming, skiing and hiking.

Each primary school organises an outdoor school for its pupils. In its annual work plan, it defines its content, how it will be implemented and how it will be financed. It also chooses the setting or place in which the school will take place. These are usually holiday homes, camps, hotels or the homes of the Centre for School and Extra-Curricular Activities (CŠOD), which meet safety and hygiene requirements and are also financially suitable.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students:

- Sport in an outdoor school.
- Developing peer relationships and student-teacher relationships.
- Getting used to independence, taking responsibility.
- To enable the development of a positive self-image, independence and communication skills.
- Develop teamwork.

Teachers:

- The context in which the School in Nature takes place makes it easier for teachers to realise many of the more difficult objectives to achieve with pupils in a traditional school setting.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

For all participants, a school in nature is an invaluable experience that significantly contributes to improving the quality of mutual relations, to more lasting and useful knowledge for pupils, developing social skills, getting used to independence, taking responsibility ... Many participants describe the experience of a school in nature as a relaxed, but still very working environment, experientially richer environment, as an environment that is not time-constraining, as part of a pedagogical process that is different and has many advantages. Or, as Goleman says (1997), a thought that "sits in the heart" is differently persuasive than a thought, that comes from the head.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Unmotivated, breaking the routine, learning in a different environment, finding meaning.



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Implementing Trait-focused Pedagogy for Academically Competent Students

EDUKOPRO

RESOURCE:

[Science Direct](#)

DESCRIPTION

It is worth noting that the three students whom Anne reflected as having different kinds of emotional and motivational barriers to learning, specifically, lacking courage or persistence, not accepting teacher help, and giving up easily, were also the ones she described as academically competent.

Here are some examples:

"I have this one very competent student; she is outstanding in almost everything, and I don't even know what she already knows and can do because she is so shy and guarded and like ... encouraging her does not work at all I have been thinking, like, I will let her muster up her courage, and at some point, because she is so intelligent, she will be willing to express it too." (Preliminary interview)

"Mm, well, he is like, there is no point in pushing him; he must be given time. Sometimes the whole lesson goes like this... if something happens already in the morning, an instance where he seizes up, then the whole day can be ruined for him. ... He is academically very competent, but there are problems in these types of situations and different social situations." (STR interview, Critical incident 23)

It was clear that Anne put considerable trust in the competence stability of the students of whose abilities she had been convinced, which is typical of Finnish teachers (Kärkkäinen & Rätty, 2010). We also observed this among our growth mindset teachers (Rissanen et al., 2018a). Anne's strategy for supporting her competent but anxious students was not to put too much pressure on them to avoid defensive reactions and encourage them to trust their skills and abilities. She considered it important to give these students time and trusted that their gradual maturation process would lead them to overcome the emotional barriers to learning. Since the students' academic progress was sufficient, she did not regard their occasional lack of effort and persistence as too worrying, and she wanted to be "sensitive".



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Students being encouraged but not pressured to be more outgoing with their thoughts
- Created a support system for students that are quiet, shy or not confident enough

KEY TAKEAWAY

Academically competent students are usually those that refuse help, lack courage, or are not persistent. The solution to getting them to be more outgoing was to not push them too much, but to give them time and space and over time start to trust in their skills.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Lacking courage or persistence
- Not accepting teacher help
- Giving up easily



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Exercises / Games



This chapter includes various activities during, instead of, or after lessons.



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DESCRIPTION

Breathing exercises are a powerful way to teach social-emotional learning (SEL), support a healthy immune system and find those times within your daily schedule to incorporate some calming activities.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Taking deep, deliberate breaths can calm students and teachers physically and mentally. Deep breathing techniques activate the parasympathetic nervous system (part of the nervous system that controls reactions to stress) and redirect the mind to a simple task, distracting from anxious thoughts.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Though most of us breathe on autopilot as we focus on more “important” things, our breathing lays the foundation for how we live our lives. And how we breathe affects the quality of our life. Children of all ages can feel their bodies relax when they breathe deeply and slowly. They enjoy sharing how their yoga breathing makes them feel, both inside and out. Over the years, several studies have been conducted on deep breathing. The results have shown that deep breathing can:

- Calm emotions
- Reduce stress
- Allow the body to relax
- Enhance focus
- Improve overall health

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- lung diseases by students/breathing problems
- wrong and breathing mistakes



Classroom Exercise Breaks

JU OŠ "ALEKSA
ŠANTIĆ"

RESOURCE:

[Kids Health](#)

DESCRIPTION

Teachers can help improve test scores and student behaviour by incorporating physical activity breaks into their daily classroom routines.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Kids doing light physical exercises breathe normally as they do basic gross motor activities at a controlled pace. Moving through positions more quickly will increase the cardio workout.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Research has shown that students who do brief bursts of exercise before taking tests score higher. In addition, regular activity breaks during the school day can help sharpen students' abilities to focus and stay on task.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Student health problems,
- Space for performing exercises.



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"Find My Family" - Emotional Cards Game

LSS

RESOURCE:

[Powerful Mothering](#)

DESCRIPTION

Using printed cards with characters representing a certain emotion to make students aware of the spectrum of each emotion by explaining that each emotion has a "family". Each child in the group takes one random card, and they start looking for its family - e.g. the sad card needs to find the disappointing card and the upset card.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

For both groups:

- Development of social and emotional intelligence;
- Improving emotional metacognition;

KEY TAKEAWAY

Helping students make the connection between certain emotions and tracing their progression, which relates to the way they experience and influence the feeling of happiness.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Low social and emotional intelligence
- Lack of awareness about one's own personal emotional state



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"Say it Better"

LSS

RESOURCE:

-

DESCRIPTION

The teacher says a sentence and asks students to rephrase it to sound more excited, angry, sad, happy, etc. or to make it neutral if it isn't.

Together they analyse the included vocabulary, tone of voice, facial expression, etc.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

For both groups:

- Development of social and emotional intelligence;
- Improving emotional metacognition;
- Improving social metacognition
- Improving vocabulary

KEY TAKEAWAY

By concentrating on the verbal expressions of emotions, students can learn to recognize and assess their and others' current mental states.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Low social and emotional intelligence
- Limited Vocabulary, poor language knowledge
- Lack of self-control



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DESCRIPTION

In exercises including graphic representations of people (which in language classes happen very often), the teacher uses the opportunity to both activate prior language knowledge and to improve students' knowledge of emotions by asking them guiding questions regarding the possible emotional state of the characters and eliciting answers about the possible reasons behind this. After the exercise is over, the teacher may invite the students to rewrite or retell the story.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Development of social and emotional intelligence;
- Improving emotional metacognition;
- Encouraging active use of imagination and creativity

KEY TAKEAWAY

By using their imagination and creativity, students can be taught that everyone is a teller of their own story and that sometimes there are second chances to correct a mistake or cope better even in real life thus leading to an increase of hope and positivity in their life.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Low social and emotional intelligence
- Limited Vocabulary, poor language knowledge



Brainstorming: How Many Ways to Do it?

LSS

RESOURCE:

-

DESCRIPTION

Project-based group tasks of different nature, given by the teacher at the end of a learning module to demonstrate the acquired knowledge without limiting the execution method - for some, it might be writing a short text, for others - drawing the words, for others - acting them out or dancing them.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Encouraging active use of imagination and creativity;
- Fostering self-confidence and curiosity

KEY TAKEAWAY

Giving students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning progress in ways they are comfortable with boosts their confidence and helps nurture their natural curiosity, which in turn improves their mood and sense of happiness.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Low self-confidence
- Scepticism and lack of enthusiasm for the learning material
- A feeling of boredom and unhappiness



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DESCRIPTION

In free time between classes or in a specifically designated class at the end of the week form a circle where each student is allowed to share one thing that made them happy and one thing that made them unhappy during the past days. The teacher then asks them what they would do if these two situations happened again. If the student allows it, other students can provide their insight, too

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Improving social and personal metacognition;
- Activating the reflection process, which allows students to plan their future actions in similar situations;
- Improving group dynamics.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Group work within the class carries the potential to help individuals cope with emotions and gain instruments to influence their sense of happiness.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Low social and emotional intelligence
- The incapability of handling big emotions
- Lack of awareness about one's emotional state



DESCRIPTION

Locating the feelings of happiness and unhappiness along with all the other feelings in the body using the body scan technique or via a discussion about where in the body each student experiences those - e.g. "When I am happy, I feel it in the stomach", or "When I am sad I feel it in my chest".

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Development of social and emotional intelligence;
- Improving emotional metacognition;
- Improving social metacognition;
- Indirect positive influence on group work and academic achievements.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Teaching students the explicit connection between the mental and the physical - the soul and the body helps them acquire techniques to influence their external experiences and to have some control over their own sense of happiness.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Low social and emotional intelligence
- The incapability of handling big emotions
- Lack of awareness about one's emotional state



DESCRIPTION

Students act out classical stories where characters feel happy or unhappy and the others have to guess the story.

Then they have to act it out in the opposite way - for example, if the princess is sad, they have to make her happy by changing the story.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Development of social and emotional intelligence;
- Improving emotional metacognition;
- Encouraging active use of imagination and creativity;
- Improving cultural knowledge and literature knowledge.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Children's stories are an easy and efficient way to teach emotional intelligence and to empower students to take control of their sense of happiness.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Low social and emotional intelligence
- Limited Vocabulary, poor language knowledge
- Creative block or undeveloped creative capabilities
- Sense of hopelessness in students due to traumatic or unhappy personal circumstances



DESCRIPTION

Students get a secret kindness buddy to do a kind act during the week. At the end of the week, they reveal their buddies and reflect on how it felt to be kind.

Why Does It Matter?

Peer acceptance and a sense of belonging help to create a classroom climate that is warm and welcoming. Indeed, students who feel like they belong in school — that they matter to their teachers and peers — show greater academic achievement are more engaged and motivated in school and suffer from fewer psychological and social problems such as depression, peer rejection, and bullying. Hence, giving students the opportunity to intentionally practice kindness and reflect on what it feels like to give and receive kindness can help build classroom and school climates where kindness is a social norm.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students and teachers:

- Building group dynamics.
- School class is a nicer place to be.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Evidence That It Works

A study of nine to 11-year-olds found that those who performed three acts of kindness, compared to those who created maps of places they had visited, increased their well-being and popularity among peers.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Bullying
- Low learning outcomes
- Stress.
- Anxiety
- Not willing to go to school



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DESCRIPTION

Everyone gets a chance to be the Cool Kid. When you are the Cool Kid, we will all look for things you do well and gather compliments to share at the end of the day/week. When we notice and share each others' positive actions and attributes, we build each other up and create a stronger classroom community.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

Students:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills

Teachers:

- Toll to effectively teach students social/interpersonal processes

KEY TAKEAWAY

Children who score higher on measures of social competency (e.g., "is helpful to others," "shares materials," "resolves peer problems on their own," etc.) are more likely to graduate from college, secure a full-time job, and have better mental health. They are also less likely to have a criminal record, receive public assistance, and/or have substance abuse problems.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Feeling inferior
- Bullying
- Poor psychological well-being in children
- Dissatisfaction



DESCRIPTION

This practice talks about the concept of everyday courage. The five-second rule, also known as the everyday courage rule, is a concept introduced by Mel Robbins. The rule is simple – when you feel like you want to give up or hesitate before taking action, count down from five and then take action. This will help you overcome your fear and hesitation and push through towards your goal.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

“Metacognition”

The ability to actively prevent forming of bad habits such as procrastination, self-doubt or not wanting to do the right thing

KEY TAKEAWAY

When you feel yourself wavering (or know you should do something), but your instincts fire up, use the Rule. You have five seconds. Count backwards to yourself, 5-4-3-2-1, then move. If you don't move within five seconds, your brain will kill the idea and you'll talk yourself out of doing it.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Uncertainty; Self-prevention



DESCRIPTION

Hard work, dedication, and a strong work ethic will go far for many people, but it takes perseverance or grit to truly achieve success. Grit is most aptly described as possessing a strong drive and passion for one's long-term goals. Grit gives resilience to life's problems, helping people to achieve happiness. The good news is grit can be acquired. Through her research, Duckworth was able to prove that grit isn't necessarily an intrinsic quality; it is a skill that can be learned by just about anyone. Here are ten ways to develop grit.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Potential outcomes for students are new ways of thinking about failure - setbacks are learning opportunities
- Perseverance can be achieved through outside support
- Perseverance can help with strong emotions
- Being resilient is also a way of being optimistic

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Ability to perceive setbacks as a way to learn new things and find opportunities
- Perseverance as a skill is developed better with a support group with likeminded people
- Handling powerful or difficult emotions
- Time management
- Optimism

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

Lack of time; Difficult Emotion; Negative perception



DESCRIPTION

Game: Don't break the Ice, played in a large group.

The game can be played by two or more individuals or groups that may want to divide into teams. The purpose of the game is to get your opponent to break apart the plastic block constituting the "ice" so that the game's figure falls. Since only two hammers are provided with the game, the children must share them while they take turns "breaking the ice".

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS/TEACHERS

- Fostering autonomy within students
- Creating better teamwork
- Enhances student's social skills and mindfulness

KEY TAKEAWAY

Students are meant to work as a team to "break the ice", and they have to work collectively, thus helping them work on their social skills.

PROBLEMS WE ARE SOLVING/ KEYWORDS

- Lack of opportunities to socialize
- Children do not have a well-developed concept of working in a team



Contributing Organisations

ESOP	Elementary school Otetz Paisii	Bulgaria
JUOS	JU OŠ "Aleksa Šantić"	Bosnia And Herzegovina
LSS	Language school sky	Bulgaria
ASPIRA	Zavod Aspira	Slovenia
SMART	Smart Idea	Slovenia
EDUKOPRO	Edukopro	Bosnia And Herzegovina
JUMPIN	Jumpin hub	Portugal

This document was funded by the Erasmus+ Programm of the European Union. The purpose of this manual is to share great educational examples that teachers can use in their teaching, with several categories.



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Back to school
foundation of
happiness