Social and Emotional Education. An International Analysis

Fundación Botín Report 2013

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The Botín Foundation is committed to an education that promotes the healthy growth of children and young people, fostering their talent and creativity to help them become autonomous, competent, charitable and happy. It promotes an education that generates development and contributes to society's progress.

There are three areas of focus for this: **Intervention** (*Responsible Education* Programme), **Training** (scholarships and programmes such as the *Master's Degree in Social, Emotional and Creative Education*) and **Research** (the *Platform for Innovation in Education*).

The contents and opinions expressed in this report are entirely the responsibility of their authors.

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Preface

A third trip around the world

It was five years ago that the Botín Foundation embarked upon a thrilling adventure in the form of its *Innovation in Education Platform* which set out to survey and report on the state of Social and Emotional Education in different parts of the world by means of analysing significant endeavours being undertaken in these countries.

Since then, the Foundation has published two reports, in 2008 and 2011, analysing countries such as Germany, Spain, the USA, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Sweden in the first report, and Australia, Canada, Finland, Portugal and Singapore in the second.

We are now ready to release a third trip around the world –published as the *Botín Foundation Report 2013*– which surveys Social and Emotional Education practices in Argentina, Austria, Israel, Norway and South Africa. As on the previous occasions we would like to thank the authors of the chapters, the editor, Belinda Heys and Christopher Clouder –director of the working group– for the time and effort they have invested in the report.

The fact that 16 countries have now been surveyed shows just how important this line of educational research is for the Botín Foundation. Greater knowledge about educational endeavours around the world which highlight children and teenagers' wellbeing, their emotional, cognitive and social development, and which employ creative and effective strategies to achieve this, provides the Botín Foundation with useful pointers and models to continue developing successful tools and methodologies for its own *Responsible Education* programme in Cantabria. Indeed, the implications run even deeper than this, as the Foundation's programme was extended to Madrid last year, and will now be launched in La Rioja and Navarra.

Undoubtedly, this is one of the most constructive ways to progress. Only exhaustive knowledge about what is happening in the world can provide us with answers to help find the right path and successfully progress in our specific contexts.

This twofold global and local quality will also be embraced by the Botín Centre –the most important project in the Botín Foundation's history to date– designed by the architect Renzo Piano, which will open to the public in the summer of 2014 in the centre of the city of Santander.

The Botín Centre will use the arts to contribute to the development of creativity necessary for enriching the economic and social life in Santander. As a major new art centre for Spain and one of the leading centres on the international art scene it will become a meeting place for locals and visitors and will enhance the life of the city with art and culture.

In addition, the Centre will use the arts to generate emotions to encourage people's creative capacities. In this fashion it will become a pioneering place in the world for the development of creativity. It will be a place where experts and specialists will be able to further and extend the Arts, Emotions and Creativity research already being carried out by the Botín Foundation thanks to a series of partnerships – such as the one set in motion this year with the Emotional Intelligence Centre at Yale University.

What better way could there be to prepare for this important occasion than to read fresh reports written by international experts about the current state of affairs in the field of social and emotional education in their countries? Once again we would like to acknowledge our gratitude to them for gathering at our table and helping us to arrange another trip around the world where new and exciting experiences are waiting to be enjoyed and assimilated.

Iñigo Sáenz de Miera
General Director of the Botín Foundation

"Expression in itself, or the language of emotions as it has sometimes been called, is certainly of importance for the welfare of mankind."

Charles Darwin

Introduction

FUENTE DE LOS DESEOS

Education for the Unexpected

Christopher Clouder

> "As educators have long known, it is simply not enough for students to master knowledge and logical reasoning skills in the traditional academic sense. They must be able to choose among and recruit those skills and knowledge usefully outside of the structured context of school and laboratory. Because these choices are grounded in emotion and emotional thought …. When we educators fail to appreciate the importance of students' emotions we fail to appreciate a critical force in student's learning. One could argue, in fact, we fail to appreciate the very reason that students learn at all."[1]
> (Immordino-Yang, M. H. and Damasio, A. *We Feel, Therefore We Learn: The Relevance of Affective and Social Neuroscience to Education.* 2007)

When this series of studies of Social and Emotional Education was started in 2007 we had little idea that it would lead us to investigating innovative educational practices in sixteen countries. Throughout this research, with the on-going generous support of the Botin Foundation, we have found common human factors that exhibit themselves in a myriad of ways depending on complex local factors, cultural influences and interactions, ideals and individual courage and awareness. That the children need an education that is relevant to their present condition and prepares them for their future is not contested, but what that condition is and what the future holds for them is. We coined the term Social and Emotional Education, after much debate, precisely to try and catch that change in educational thinking with all its diversity and contradictions. We have not been looking for universal programmes that would resolve the dilemmas of 21st century education but have rather explored practices and effectiveness in all the countries we have studied to show that whatever is or has been achieved is the result of unique circumstances, committed school communities and insightful practitioners. By sharing these experiences the hope is that others will also find their own way, encouraged and inspired by what we publish and disseminate. Our findings consistently show that children who experience learning for life as an enriching and innovative experience, as well as a challenging one, will be more able to confront the uncertainties ahead with understanding, creativity and a sense of responsibility.

Our findings consistently show that children who experience learning for life as an enriching and innovative experience, as well as a challenging one, will be more able to confront the uncertainties ahead with understanding, creativity and a sense of responsibility.

The world seemed turbulent enough at that time, in 2007, but is certainly even more turbulent now, as changes and pressures accumulate like storm clouds around us, what dramatic prospects lie ahead for our children? One possible reaction is to retreat into the past and that has become the educational policy of some countries we have been looking at. So much so that an updated version of previous reports could be quite different from the original chapters. But resorting to an anachronistic educational perspective is hardly a sustainable answer in a fast evolving world and is unlikely to provide our children with the abilities they will need in an unforeseeable and seemingly daunting future. The frequently noted disconnect between the classroom and the world of work needs to be bridged, especially in volatile times when we are expected to change our careers, if we are lucky enough to have one, every few years and have to live with more flexible identities.

The Knowledge Works Forecast 3.00[2] speaks of regenerating the learning ecosystem in the face of five disruptive forces, the sources of which have already been placed into our daily lives. They list: **democratised start-ups**, which will lead to disruptive social innovations such as open access to start-up knowledge, expertise and networks becomes more prevalent; **high fidelity living**, as data floods human sense-making capacities and people will be able to target more precisely their interaction with the world; **de-institutionalised production**, within which human activities will increasingly be independent of institutions and these activities become more ad-hoc, dynamic and networked; **customisable value webs**, allowing new business models to become more creative in interacting with their customers; and **shareable cities**, where urban infrastructure is shaped by new patterns of human connection and contribution. What might have sounded like science fiction not so many years ago is no longer so, as these issues have become increasingly acute in the last few years. Vaclav Havel wrote from his prison cell in 1975 "*For we never know when some inconspicuous spark of knowledge may suddenly light up the road for the whole of society, without society ever perhaps realising how it came to see the road. Even those other innumerable flashes of knowledge which never illuminate the path ahead… fulfil a certain range of society's potentialities – either its creative powers or simply its liberties*".[3] When such knowledge becomes a spark that kindles a new thought or innovative experience then that deeply affects our emotional life and is the goal of all good teaching. Improvisation is a spur to learning and developing.

Not the least disruptive is the increasing prevalence of disorientating youth unemployment, which raises fundamental questions as to what our schools are for if they do not provide preparation for flourishing in uncertainty and developing the necessary skills of resilience and creativity. The OECD claims that 26 million young people, 15 to 24 year olds, in the rich world are not in employment, training or education. The World Bank database puts a figure of 260

million for young people in the developing world who are "inactive". The *Economist* puts the total global figure at 290 million who are neither working nor studying – almost a quarter of the world's young people. And these figures might not even include all the young women who in certain countries are not considered part of the workforce because of cultural traditions and practices.[4] These tragic circumstances leave deep scars, blight lives at a time of personal high expectations and energy, and form social and familial tensions that affect more people than the young people themselves. The countries where there is a close relationship between education and work, such as Germany, have the lowest rates of youth unemployment and, with luck, these countries could provide examples of good practice for others to emulate. This state of affairs is in itself a pointer to the need to change the way we prepare the next generation for their futures. On the other side of the scale the demand for highly skilled knowledge workers and researchers has grown enormously, tripling, in Portugal alone, in the 14 years between 1996 and 2010.[5] This demand has led to an unprecedented expansion in tertiary education systems, with countries vying for success in the global market. Adding the factor of opportunities for full-time work declining and part-time work increasing and the need for a greater flexibility of skills the pressure for training and school reform is unavoidable.

Most of the countries we have written about have undergone a financial crisis lately but often such financial turmoil is symptomatic of something deeper that is awry in our societies and touches on the values we hold and exemplify. "*Although the crisis was initiated and propagated by deficiencies in the global financial system and regulatory mechanisms, its consequences for individual lives go far beyond the economic effects to issues such as unemployment and drastic decreases in earnings and assets. There are concerns that the crisis has led to a decline in individuals' health, political trust and social engagement.*"[6] It may be under the radar of many commentators but our children will also not be immune to these effects. "*Again, education is assumed to have the potential to strengthen civic and social engagement. As with health, however, the relationship is two-way: while education can influence civic and social engagement, people's levels of civic and social engagement can have a marked influence on their educational success and on the distribution of educational opportunity.*"[7] In a new world of infinite connection brought about by technological innovation as well as by our immediate personal connections in our daily contacts with each other the balance is difficult to find. Obesity, poverty and cyberbullying deeply affect children's emotional lives and learning capacities and are societal problems as well as individual ones.

Even if schooling itself is unable to change, or is too tardy in doing so, the young people in school certainly are and this inevitably will lead to new tensions. The onset of puberty among young girls has fallen by five years since 1920 and this drop continues at the rate of five

"...while education can influence civic and social engagement, people's levels of civic and social engagement can have a marked influence on their educational success and on the distribution of educational opportunity" (OECD, 2010).

months for each passing decade. Boys too are showing similar tendencies. Childhood, as it was known in the past, is becoming briefer and the need to prepare intellectually and emotionally for adulthood is greater than ever. Schools cannot ethically stand aside from this phenomenon and should be empowered to tailor their curricula and methodologies accordingly. Without this the sense of irrelevance of our educational institutions will increase. The image in the first page of Galdós' novel *Fortunata and Jacinta* comes to mind where two students at the back of the class fry an egg while the undisturbed professor meanders on about metaphysics.

In her book *Don't go back to school: a Handbook for Learning Anything* Kio Stark recounts a series of interviews with independent learners which reveal four key common tangents: learning is collaborative rather than alone, the importance of academic credentials in many professions is declining, the most fulfilling learning experiences tend to take place out of school, and those happiest about learning are those who learn out of intrinsic motivation rather than in pursuit of extrinsic rewards. When she interviewed people who did go to school about what they liked most about the experience they unanimously cited '*other people*'. Michael Fullon's research into the startling improvement in educational achievement in Ontario comes to a similar conclusion in that collaborative cultures in which teachers focus on improving their teaching practice, learn from each other and are well led and supported by school principals, results in better learning for students. This peer culture is 'interactive professionalism' and "*It turns out that blatant accountability focusing on tests, standards and the like is not the best way to get results…..there is no greater motivator than internal accountability to oneself and ones' peers. It makes for a better profession, and it makes for a better system*".[8] Such thinking has been taken up, for example, in the Lumiar schools in Brazil where they realise that knowledge is not enough and the future will be built by those who can collaborate and apply insight and sound judgement to different and unexpected challenges.

These challenges are the moments of learning that come unexpectedly and unplanned. It is precisely because they are not anticipated that they have the power to transform things.

Consequently we have to educate ourselves for the unexpected, as in the Swedish poet Thomas Tranströmer's wonderful poem *Romanesque Arches* on the spark that enables us suddenly to appreciate our own hidden potential and that of other people: On entering a vast and dark Romanesque church accompanied by a group of jostling tourists he had an unexpected experience where–

> *Vault gaped behind vault, no complete view.*
> *A few candle flames flickered.*
> *An angel with no face embraced me*
> *and whispered through my whole body:*
> *"Don't be ashamed of being human, be proud!*
> *Inside you, vault opens behind vault endlessly.*
> *You will never be complete, that's how it's meant to be."*
> *Blind with tears*
> *I was pushed out on the sun-seething piazza*
> *together with Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Mr. Tanaka, and Signora Sabatini,*
> *and inside each of them vault opened behind vault endlessly.*
>
> **(Romanska Bågar**, Tomas Tranströmer from *För Levande och Döda.*
> *Trans. Robin Fulton, 1989)*

Collaborative cultures in which teachers focus on improving their teaching practice, learn from each other and are well led and supported by school principals, results in better learning for students.

We live in a state of unprecedented 'jostling', be it caused by our increasingly crowded planet, the threat of over-use of the earth's resources and the conflicts that could ensue, technological impingement on most of our waking hours and rampant economic rivalry at an international level. In such a frenzied time we easily forget that our children's' education is also about enjoyment and the healthy development of their individuality combined with an awareness of the potential of others. In an age of utilitarian policymaking where the striving for measurable effectiveness, increased political sensitivity to quantifiable competitiveness and national political ambitions to obtain higher-ranking scores in international league tables increasingly

dictate the educational agenda, we run the risk of losing other factors that contribute positively to human well-being. Is it a heresy to suggest that school should be fun as well as challenging? That learning learn as an end in itself creates a positive attitude to oneself and the world? That schools should also be places of social learning that open our minds to other people and other ways? That in the process of becoming we need not feel ashamed of our imperfections? The view that academic success is a product of cognitive skills has ruled educational policy for decades and test scores tend to become the ultimate arbiter of success. Yet as Paul Tough demonstrates in his book *How Children Succeed* it is becoming more widely recognised that it is the non-cognitive skills like curiosity and persistence that are highly predictive of success, "*…character strengths that matter so much to young people's success are not innate; they don't appear in us magically, as a result of good luck or good genes. And they are not simply a choice. They are rooted in brain chemistry, and they are moulded, in measurable and predictable ways, by the environment in which children grow up. That means the rest of us –society as a whole– can do an enormous amount to influence the development of children.*"[9] And this influence we can wield for good or ill.

We have to educate ourselves for the unexpected.

In a hyperactive and driven world we can forget children too have the right to stillness. "*Boredom is not comfortable but out of this empty space much creativity can be born. Nature abhors a vacuum and we try to fill it. Some young people who do not have the interior resources or the response to deal with that boredom creatively then sometimes end up smashing up bus shelters or taking cars out for a joyride.*"[10] Children require stand-and-stare time and that can stimulate imagination as many artists testify. Instead, this uncomfortable space is frequently filled with screen time or an abundance of activity driven on by parents who feel either guilty or wish their children to 'progress' and achieve as rapidly as possible. Children, like adults, need time to reflect on their learning and behaviour. If we wish to develop a social ethos that encompasses qualities such as respect, honesty, compassion and dignity this starts in childhood and at school.

> "*A good way to rid oneself of a sense of discomfort is to do something. That uneasy, dissatisfied feeling is actual force vibrating out of order*"
> (William Morris).

This ability to find your own individual path in life in an uncertain world calls for self-motivation and that is even more determinative in finding fulfilment within societies that can no longer offer traditional pathways and careers. Children and young people need enthusiasm, not just repetitive curricula geared exclusively to obtaining high exam results "*That is the way to learn the most, that when you are doing something with such enjoyment that you don't notice that the time passes.*" (Albert Einstein).[11] Love of learning can become a way of life in a practical as well as in an ideal sense and to cope with the complexities of modern life it is sorely needed.

It is the non-cognitive skills like curiosity and persistence that are highly predictive of success (Paul Tough, 2013).

Czikzentmihalyi called this propensity 'flow', and by that he meant being so absorbed in a task that challenges you to do the best that you can. In fact it means learning by doing. In his influential book *Creativity* he suggests that human beings are torn between two opposite impulses: the least effort imperative and the claim of creativity. "*However, unless enough people are motivated by the enjoyment that comes from confronting challenges, by discovering new ways of being and doing, there is no evolution of culture, no progress in thought or feeling.*"[12] And this is the flow we find naturally in play. Children are naturally creative, that is what we call play. Yet in many schools that behaviour is confined to the playground and excluded from the 'serious work of learning'. "*…we realize how much children are capable of. At the same time we see that adults have a role in creating the conditions for children to exercise their agency by giving room for initiative, providing a rich environment and engaging in 'companionable' relationships with children. The latter includes standing side by side with children and developing ourselves as much as the children do in their interactions. Lack of imagination can be seen as our major obstacle in changing our view of the child and making education more effective.*"[13] When children spend time playing they develop a cognitive skill, among other things, called 'executive function'. This is not a particularly felicitous term but it includes the ability to self-regulate, to observe and understand your emotions and then to adjust them accordingly. Through this children can learn to control their emotions and behaviour, exert self-control and self-discipline and can resist impulses that could be either detrimental to them or socially harmful. These are key factors for thriving in unstable conditions. Children able to manage their feelings are better able to learn. And poor executive function is connected to high drop out rates, drug use and criminal activity. However, pressurised early schooling is causing children's

play to be diminished and with it important personal and social skills. Play is increasingly viewed as a waste of time when cognitive skills are set as a premium with no view to the long-term impact of this deprivation. With this perspective the value of Social and Emotional Education in raising our awareness and changing our ways could be vital.

When discussing the role of emotions in schools it should not be forgotten that teachers have emotions too. Although research into emotional management in teaching is not voluminous we "*ought to inquire into how teachers manage their emotions in an era of accountability, standardization and marketization that has tended to ignore the caring aspects of teaching and divested teachers' attention from emotionality to measurable school outputs.*"[14] Here we enter the realm of personal and cultural determinants which are vastly differentiated but a common thread is the quality of care for the children or students and the teacher's sense of responsibility. Emotions occur in social interactions and children's exposure to teachers' emotions has a deep impact on their development and well-being, especially as 'their' teacher is for a period an important focal point in their lives. And it is the unexpected moment in the classroom or other learning contexts which illuminates our emotions and that the children recognise and respect. Scripted and programmed teaching does not prepare us sufficiently for this moment of pedagogical artistry. But when that artistry is fully experienced a new path reveals itself to the teacher that if followed with courage and inspiration becomes an enthusing, illuminating and emotionally satisfying moment that creates a sense of community and hope - a moment that is remembered in times of adversity and setback by both students and the practitioner.

In the chapters in this third International Analysis of Social and Emotional Education there are many unexpected insights. In all cases we have put the educational practices in the context of their countries, their history, geography, culture and educational principles. But we are looking beyond what is rooted in the past, however much that should rightfully be acknowledged and respected. Our role has been to find the seeds of the future of our children's education in the present in the hope that recognising what has value and meaning for them now can be disseminated for others to be encouraged and inspired to continue this task.

> *"The future is not something that happens, but something that is constructed - constructed on our choice, or our failure to choose… The nature of the major problems we face show us clearly the nature of these choices. They are not technical but moral choices. They are a statement of what we believe a good society to be."*[15]

Christopher Clouder FRSA was appointed in 2009 the Director of the Botín Platform for Innovation in Education, based in Santander, Spain, which promotes social and emotional education and creative learning in schools across the world. From 1989 to 2012 he was the founding CEO of the European Council for Steiner-Waldorf Education, speaking for 700 European Steiner schools in 27 countries. He has had a long teaching career working with adolescents and in teacher education. In 1997 he co-founded the Alliance for Childhood, a global network of advocates for the quality of childhood. He gives keynote lectures at conferences, universities and teacher education courses internationally on educational matters, play and imagination in childhood, cultural evolution and challenging contemporary issues around childhood, creativity and social and emotional education. He has published numerous books and writes articles on education and childhood. He is also currently the Pedagogical Director of il Liceo dei Colli in Florence.

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Argentina

Social and Emotional Education in Argentina:
Amid Certainties and Hopes

Isabel María Mikulic

Abstract

Recent analysis of the field of education in Argentina presents us with a state of affairs in which exclusion and educational deficit at primary school level appear now as structural problems – social inequality is revealed as an enduring factor and one that has a clearly regressive effect on children who are most at risk. This is not a negligible matter if one takes into account that according to the latest statistics there are currently 42,087 primary and secondary schools in the country, of which 31,787 are state schools and 10,300 private schools, attended by 7,523,700 and 2,948,900 pupils, respectively. Primary and secondary education is both free and compulsory for children from 5 to 17/18 years old.

> ## (In Argentina) exclusion and educational deficit at primary school level appear now as structural problems – social inequality is revealed as an enduring factor and one that has a clearly regressive effect on children who are most at risk

In Argentina emotions have traditionally been largely overlooked as significant developmental processes, and this is especially true at schools where intellectual and cognitive aspects have absorbed, almost exclusively, all the attention. Over the last few decades, however, one can detect a growing concern among school principals and teachers who wish to offer the best that they can to the Argentinian educational scene and who have started thinking in terms of social and emotional education.

> ## In Argentina emotions have traditionally been largely overlooked as significant developmental processes…

Emotional Intelligence is the concept that arouses most interest in the field of education, perhaps because it represents the interrelation of two key terms: intelligence and emotion. Another main aspect of this approach is resilience, which arises from a need to find new approaches that work both in schools and in classrooms. Educational authorities and teachers have frequently encountered new problems and have attempted to use old solutions to deal with them, which often end up worsening the situation. Accordingly, new, innovative concepts are needed to build work strategies to harness optimism and hope. Three examples of this are:

Case Study 1. Emotional Education Programme at the Washington School

This private, bilingual, secular and co-educational school is located in the residential Belgrano district of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires and was founded in 1950. It was designed to be a participatory place, open to free thought, creativity and acceptance of diversity for its 600+ pupils from 2 to 18 years old. It is an open-minded educational system, receptive to changes in teaching practice and didactics. Accordingly, it has developed and implemented an Emotional Education Programme that draws on the ideas of leading theoreticians and on the results obtained from prior educational programmes and research in this field carried out in various parts of the world. Since 2011 its plan for managing life, improving self-awareness, self-confidence, self-regulation of emotions and increasing empathy and collaboration, has been added to the ordinary school timetable. (The programme has been infused into the timetable – e.g SEE is part of language lessons, art lessons, mathematics lessons, and so on). The aim is to develop social and emotional competencies through a participatory and active methodology which facilitates questioning, dialogue and communication.

Case Study 2. "You Cannot Learn or Grow Without Affection.
A programme designed to strengthen affective, cognitive and linguistic resources"

This programme has been run since 2004 in Paraná, in the Entre Ríos province, under the supervision of researchers of the Centro Interdisciplinario de Investigaciones en Psicología Matemática y Experimental (CIIPME - Interdisciplinary Research Center of Mathematical and Experimental Psychology) directed by Dr. Richaud. It is designed to attend to the educational needs of children who are at risk due to environmental factors. It is built upon three main pillars: the children, the parents and the teachers. Children, who begin taking part in the programme from the age of 4, are given prior cognitive and social and emotional evaluation at the two state schools with the highest psychosocial risk rates in the area. These children demonstrate high levels of undernourishment, high rates of having to repeat grades, a high percentage of unemployed parents, poverty and serious socio-affective problems such as family violence or abuse.

The programme is incorporated into the school curriculum and it involves the joint work of the research team with teachers in out-of-classroom meetings to add activities that strengthen resources in school planning in keeping with curricular content, in the classroom and during the entire time children attend school.

Case Study 3. "Positive Emotional Climate Programme
(Clima Emocional Positivo en el Aula, CEPA)"

Positive Emotional Climate in Classrooms Programme (CEPA) has been developed by Lic. Marino.

This programme has been designed by Maria Cecilia Marino. In order to promote the training of teachers in social and emotional competences, she designed a specific toolset which provides teachers with resources to create a positive emotional climate in the classroom and respond to the particular needs of children between the ages of 5 and 9. These materials are divided into two groups a) those used with the whole class, b) those used individually. The aims of the programme are to:

- Promote metacognitive skills for better learning processes.
- Collaborate in creating a positive climate which reduces conflicts and helps learning.
- Give teachers the opportunity to reformulate their practice, use reflection in their practice and be trained professionally
- Develop in children self esteem, autonomy and self-knowledge in order to regulate their behaviours.

The featured case studies reflect progress and promising horizons, yet they also demonstrate unjust social inequality because only a very few children are beneficiaries of inclusion in Social and Emotional Education programmes. We are certain that Argentina as a country deserves to include these programmes to all school curricula and we shall not abandon the hope that the debt owed to children by providing them with social and emotional education will soon be paid in full.

Isabel María Mikulic is a Doctor of Psychology, a Psychologist and a Social Worker. She works as Postgraduate Secretary and Full Member of the Doctoral Committee of the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Buenos Aires. As the Director of the Masters in Psychodiagnostics and Psychological Assessment, she is in charge of courses such as Construction and Adaptation of Psychological Evaluation Instruments, Psychodiagnostics and Psychological Assessment Research and of Thesis Seminars. She is the Tenured Professor responsible for the courses of Psychological Diagnosis and Exploration Theory and Techniques and Psychological Evaluation Research Practice in Context. As a researcher she has been awarded the highest category (I) for professors and researchers, by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Argentina. She has specialized in building and adapting instruments for evaluating Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, Socio-Emotional competencies and other variables from the Positive Psychology perspective. She has been awarded a variety of scholarships and grants to carry out research into Emotional Intelligence, Resilience and Quality of Life in various contexts of applied psychology such as educational, legal, environmental, rural, and health settings. She has directed and she directs scholarship students and doctoral theses about Emotional Intelligence in the context of School, Family Resilience, Social and Emotional Competencies for the Disabled, among others. She is a referee of research articles and projects and an expert referee for the Argentinian National Committee of University Evaluation and Accreditation. She is a co-founder and member of the Board of the International Society for Emotional Intelligence. She serves as a Member on the Scientific Committee of the 4th International Emotional Intelligence Congress and on previous editions of the Congress. She is author of numerous books and refereed articles, and is a member of various international associations such as the American Psychological Association (APA), the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP) and the Inter-American Society of Psychology (SIP).

Introduction

Children in Argentina have the right to fully develop their potential; it is the State, however, which has the fundamental responsibility to generate the conditions in which this right may be exercised. This presents a major challenge and involves both the government and society as a whole. The evidence confirms that "early education" is a crucial aspect for broadening and improving children's opportunities to receive stimulation and socialization (2012, ODSA-UCA-Fundación Arcor). Nevertheless, another quite striking detail is that school attendance alone cannot break down social inequality. Recent analysis years Argentina has progressed rapidly towards acknowledging the rights of childhood (Law 26.061). In particular, the 2006 National Education Law (Law 26.206) constituted an important advance by regarding education as a social right that needs to be guaranteed by the State. Among its main objectives was to establish compulsory middle school education (13 – 17/18 years), full day school (from the morning to the afternoon) for primary schools (6 – 12 years of age) and the universalization of nursery place for 4 year olds at pre-school level (4 – 5 years old). In addition, the 2006 Educational Finance Law (Law 26.075) – the main ob-

From the perspective of adults in Argentina the principal "social debt" society owes to children and young people is the right to a quality education (an opinion expressed by 62%; DII-ODSA, 2009).

in Argentina presents us with a state of affairs in which exclusion and educational deficits at primary school level, and which is even worse at secondary level, appear now as structural problems. Social inequality is revealed as an enduring factor in Argentina and one that has a regressive effect on the boys, girls and teenagers who are most at risk (2010, ODSA-UCA-Fundación Arcor).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) meant a major step forwards towards the recognition of universal rights in childhood. However, two decades after its establishment, we need to ask ourselves whether it is being put into practice effectively in Argentina. Access to a quality education is a fundamental right declared in article 28 of the Convention. In the past few jective of which was to increase investment in education, science and technology– to 6% of the country's GNP. Currently, a new finance law for education is being debated with the aim of investing between 8.5% and 10% of the GNP in education, science and technology in 2015, increasing the investment per pupil and achieving a greater equity across the provinces of Argentina. This is not a negligible figure if one takes into account that there are currently 42,087 schools in the country (including both primary and secondary) of which 31,787 are state schools and 10,300 private schools: the former being attended by 7,523,700 pupils and the latter by 2,948,900 pupils.

From the perspective of adults in Argentina the principal "social debt" society owes to

children and young people is the right to a quality education (an opinion expressed by 62%; DII-ODSA, 2009). Regardless of the social status of the respondent this was the principal demand, viewed as a right which has yet to be put into practice, and one that is not dependent on social status, although it tends to be mentioned more often as the level of social status of the respondent increases (54% in very low levels, 60% in low levels, 61% in medium levels and 71% in the medium-high levels). Social inequality is very noticeable when taking into account the perceptions of the most or least satisfied respondents. Among higher social status re-

The factors affecting the growth of a child during the first years of life are not only related to physical health, habitat and food, but also to cognitive, social and emotional skills. During this process the multiple "emotional and social stimuli" children are exposed to provide opportunities for discovery, language-building, the development of imagination and concepts (Salvia, 2010). We know that half of infants between the ages of 2 and 4 do not receive schooling, and educational exclusion tends to increase in line with the levels of poverty (2009, ODSA-UCA-Fundación Arcor).In Argentina there are no opportunities for pre-school

Until recently Argentina has been a collectivist society where people have valued and respected diversity. However, the socialization process is becoming increasingly individualistic.

spondents the tendency to rate education as "very good" increases, whereas lower social status respondents tend to rate education as poor or average. These tendencies can be observed in relation to the type of school –for example, private education has a "very positive" image in comparison to state education, and likewise the poor or average rating of state schools is double that of private education (2010, ODSA-UCA-Fundación Arcor). No significant differences may be observed in these perceptions based on the region of the country, metropolitan area or inner city. The results suggest that there is a strong awareness of the shortcomings of educational quality in Argentina where nearly 7 out of every 10 adults recognize the need for and demand better education for children (2010, ODSA-UCA-Fundación Arcor).

infants and children to receive social and emotional education.

Until recently Argentina has been a collectivist society where people have valued and respected diversity. However, the socialization process is becoming increasingly individualistic. This style of socialization segments social groups: putting some children in sealed-off neighbourhoods, with clubs, exclusive sports grounds and play areas and schools with open-air spaces, and others in overcrowded schools with common playgrounds, passageways and corridors, football pitches and parks situated far away from where the children live. Another factor causing homogenization –which does not imply the building of relationships of equality – is the effect of commerce, which

targets infants as consumers and "customers", proposing values and loaded concepts, redefining the meaning of childhood and designing new social routines. Why is it that despite recognizing the socializing force of commerce today, there are no proposals on the table to enable children to play with one another and exchange experiences in improved and enriched school environments, bringing boys and girls together in an independent and free framework and involving exploration, adventure, surprise and emotion? Why is social and emotional learning not included on the educational agendas of those in charge of guaranteeing the right to a wholistic education? Furthermore, to make progress in educational programmes for children and teenagers integrating emotional and social learning not only implies improving the quality of life today, but also invests in achieving rewarding lives for future generations (physically and mentally healthy citizens possessing productive and creative abilities within a socially integrated environment).

This is a challenge for state policies and for projects carried out by third sector organizations. It is not simply a question of providing more places at schools, building new schools, or of supplying more computers; but one of preparing teachers who can create classroom climates which support children's educational, cultural, emotional and social needs. This will enable children to learn through having fun and to become future citizens of a better world.

The Argentinian Educational System

¨Each of our nations is a people of peoples, developed through processes of biological and cultural interaction and mingling. The value of pluralism –of races, ethnic groups and cultures– is es-sential to our identity and should be reinforced through education.¨
World Education Forum: Latin American Statement (Dakar, 2000)

To achieve a complete picture of social and emotional education in Argentina one needs to consider the various aspects involved in the educational system of this Latin American country – its underlying historical, cultural, religious, political and institutional aspects.

At the same time as the national states were founded in Latin America, at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, educational systems were established to organize, programme and coordinate educational tasks. These systems were based on three main pillars: national education, education contributing to increased social mobility and schools as a solution to social problems.

When the Europeans arrived in the fifteenth century the Americas already possessed highly developed centres of aboriginal culture spread across various regions of its vast territory. Little remains of them now, and in Argentina the native population accounts for less than 1% of the total population –which exceeded 42 million inhabitants in 2012. This is partly due to the establishment of major centres of Spanish, Italian and German immigrant populations which preferred Argentina to other Latin American countries. Of the fourteen original native groups, the main ones were the Araucanos or the Mapuches in the Patagonian provinces, the Collas in the northwest, the Tobas in the northeast and the Matacos across the whole of the north. Although most of the aforementioned native peoples had their own languages, they had a high degree of acculturation and the official language was Spanish, although in some areas Guaraní was used. Religion is another important aspect when it comes to

considering education in Argentina, as one cannot ignore the role of the Catholic Church since the colonial era. The majority of the population describe themselves as Catholic, despite there being freedom of worship. In Argentina not all provinces include religion as part of the official education curriculum.

Following the proclamation of Independence from Spain in 1816, Argentina became embroiled in internal power struggles until the teenth century marked the beginning of an organized educational system when the Common Education Law, No. 1420, was promulgated. This law, passed in 1884, which had arisen from the need to improve literacy among both the native Argentinian population and the large waves of immigrants, made primary education –between the ages of six and thirteen– compulsory (Martínez, Larrechea & Chiancone, 2010). This education was typically:

From 1850 to 1900, Argentina received a large influx of European immigrants, which swelled the ranks of the new working classes.

1850's when a period of national organization accompanied by a reorganization of education began. Domingo F. Sarmiento carried out laudable work in promoting state education and the establishment of schools. From 1850 to 1900, Argentina received a large influx of European immigrants, which swelled the ranks of the new working classes. These immigrants were integrated into the working classes and climbed the social ladder thanks to the importance that was awarded to education. New religious orders and congregations that combined their pastoral mission with educational work (both at primary and secondary level) arrived in Argentina during this same period. The second half of the nine-

a Public (State)
b Free
c Organised into grades, by age
d Secular

This law helped to strengthen national identity, to homogenize society, to socialize norms and values and to educate future citizens to live democratically in a young nation which was gradually being built up. Education contributed greatly to social cohesion, integrating immigrants, and it generated an upwardly mobile society. This was one of the factors that contributed to the formation of the middle-class in Argentina.

Education contributed greatly to social cohesion, integrating immigrants, and it generated an upwardly mobile society.

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, education played a fundamental role in the creation of a modern Argentina. The first Inter-American Conference on Education was held in 1882, and in 1883 a school census was held which revealed the low school attendance rate among children of school age. In those years numerous plans to globally organize the education system were implemented. Education practices in schools, however, remained unchanged. In this panorama of industrial growth, it was typical of schools to act as mediators in introducing immigrants and the working classes to political and economic life.

In the aftermath of the 1930's, with the world economic depression and the revolution, General Uriburu rose to power. At a cultural and educational level there began a strong search for national identity which produced a consequent re-evaluation of popular culture. In 1934 the first National Conference about Illiteracy was held, which reached an overriding conclusion about the need to coordinate national and provincial efforts in order to deal with this issue. Furthermore, in tune with the ascent of the working classes, skilled technical and professional education was intensified. During the governments of Domingo Perón (1945-1955), the Ministry of Education of the Nation was established (1949) which made two five-year plans which envisaged the creation of primary and middle level schools, the publishing of textbooks and the extension of school enrolment to the entire population.

From the sixties the new school movement began to exercise a strong influence especially through the thinking of Dewey (Campbell, 1995), who explored in his works the close relationship between democracy and education. Dewey's thinking fuelled the zeal of Argentinians to build a future democratic society. However, in 1966 a revolution took place which installed the military in power until 1972. A short-lived educational reform was proposed in this period based mainly on the concepts of educational planning and organization in conjunction with bringing subjects up to date and renewing teaching practice. In 1968, in keeping with the concepts of lifelong learning, the National Department of Adult Education and centres for further education and teacher training were strengthened during the *Justicialista* government (1973-1976) giving priority to primary education and adult training, the aim being to reduce the rates of illiteracy and semi-illiteracy.

Until the 1990's, the Argentinian educational system was regulated by legislation which brought the following levels into being: 1) preschool with a duration of two or three years for children from three to five years of age; 2) compulsory primary school with a duration of seven years; 3) middle school level with a duration of five or six years; 4) higher education consisting of universities, technical colleges and teacher training colleges. Political changes in the eighties and economic changes in the nineties brought about a new wave of educational reforms to improve the overall quality of the educational system and to implement genuine equal opportunities. After the military government (1976-1983) there was a return to democracy, which has continued as the form of government up until today. The new government showed special interest in education and in 1984 it organized the first National Teaching Conference designed as a consultation with the populace in order to design the country's education system.

The Argentina of the nineties set out to accomplish a structural transformation of education and the nation and it pledged to devote more resources towards these transformations.

In 1993 the Federal Education Law No. 24.195 was passed. Put into effect in 1996, the Law organized all levels of the educational system and extended compulsory schooling by two years, from age 5 to age 14 (i.e. to the ninth year of Basic General Education). The federalization of the educational system achieved by means of decentralization policies and the consolidation of the Federal Education Council, which was the project and programme coordinator, formed the backbone of these reform proposals. In 1993 the Social Educational Plan was implemented to remedy the failings of the educational system. It was especially aimed at the most needy sectors of the population and the National System of Evaluation of Educational Quality was established to periodically obtain information about the academic performance of pupils and other factors impacting on learning, such as self concept, school climate and so on. In 2006, the National Education Law No. 26.206, which replaced the Federal Education Law, was sanctioned. It posed reforms to the educational system's structure and further extended the length of compulsory schooling. Some of society's demands for the educational system were introduced, such as the teaching of a foreign language from primary level, universal compulsory education for all sectors of society in Argentina, the integration of people with special educational needs into ordinary schools, cultural diversity and sex education, among other things. The Nation State, the provinces and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, are responsible for planning, organizing, supervising and funding the national educational system in a coordinated and synchronised fashion. Primary and secondary education have a twelve-year duration but the various jurisdictions may opt for a system that consists of either 7 years of primary and 5 years of secondary or 6 years of primary and 6 years of secondary. The educational system's current structure according to the laws in force consists of:

- INITIAL LEVEL: 45 days old to five years olds (from five years old education is free and compulsory, from 45 days old to five years old is free but not compulsory).
- PRIMARY LEVEL: first grade to sixth/seventh grade (6 to 11/12 year-olds) – free and compulsory education
- SECONDARY LEVEL: from first to fifth/sixth year (11/12 to 17/18 year-olds) – free and compulsory education
- UNIVERSITY AND NON-UNIVERSITY HIGHER EDUCATION: courses lasting 4, 5 or 6 years – free – not compulsory.
- QUATERNARY EDUCATION: Post-graduate courses, Masters, Doctorates and specializations.

Free, compulsory education was extended to cover 5 year-olds up to the completion of secondary education (17/18 year-olds).

Social and Emotional Education

In today's Argentina, in which the real significance of education is the fundamental contribution it makes to building a fairer society, education is perceived in legal terms as a public benefit and a personal and social right guaranteed by the state. Despite proposals aiming to improve educational quality (Federal Council Assembly Meeting on the 27th of November 2003) it remains to be seen how education's basic goal, namely the full development of each individual's whole personality, is to be achieved. As part of this development, one would expect both cognitive and emotional aspects to come to the fore as central factors needing to be fostered. In Argentina, as in many other countries, emotions have traditionally been largely overlooked as significant developmental processes, and this is especially true of schools where intellectual and cognitive aspects have demanded, almost exclusively, all the attention. Over the last few decades, however, one can detect a growing concern among those who wish to offer the best of

Today's socio-cultural situation demands a change from educational institutions, where the emphasis should no longer be entirely on the transmission of knowledge, but on the possibilities to improve pupils' overall development (Filella, Ribes, Agulló & Soldevila, 2002).

themselves in the Argentinian educational scene and who have started thinking in terms of social and emotional education. In the light of the progress made in the subjects of psychology and education and the profound behavioural changes that have affected pupils' interaction and coexistence (such as violent behaviour and bullying), these teachers, psychologists, psycho-pedagogues[i] and other educational experts –often working alone and occasionally supported by the management staff at the schools where they work– feel the time is ripe for a transformation of the teaching-learning process. Today's socio-cultural situation demands a change from educational institutions, where the emphasis should no longer be entirely on the transmission of knowledge, but on the possibilities to improve pupils' overall development (Filella, Ribes, Agulló & Soldevila, 2002).

Emotional education is by definition an ongoing educational process, the central objective of which lies in encouraging emotional development as an indispensable complement to cognitive aspects, since both are essential for the comprehensive development of an individual's personality (Bisquerra, 2000). Argentina has taken its first steps in using this approach, supported along the way by two contemporaneous occurrences: a) the rise of Positive Psychology as a new way to evaluate the strengths, rather than the pathologies of individuals, in educational en-

vironments and, b) the application of the concept of emotional intelligence to educational settings.

In order to understand the interconnection of the concepts of emotion and cognition in the recent birth of social and emotional education in Argentina, one needs to look at how these same concepts have been traditionally treated and how the need to put them in relation to one another first arose.

A) Positive Psychology and new ways of evaluating strengths in education

Over the years, the predominant growth of theory and research in psychology has been centred on negative emotions, and on human weakness in general, which has given rise to a disciplinary framework with a strong bias towards the pathogenic, and this has led in part to psychology being identified as psychopathology or psychotherapy (Vera, 2006). Psychology, a product of that almost exclusively pathological approach, has developed effective and efficient intervention models for numerous psychological problems, to the detriment of progressing in developing methods and strategies aimed at obtaining and optimizing the resources and strengths of individuals (Vázquez, 2006). However, the study of subjective wellbeing, i.e. the exploration of human strengths and the factors that contribute to human happiness, has very recently begun to be regarded as a relevant

subject. This is how Positive Psychology came into being. It began so recently that the official launch of so-called Positive Psychology is generally accepted as occurring at the inaugural lecture given by Martin Seligman (1999) in which he described it as the scientific study of positive experiences, positive individual traits, the institutions facilitating its growth and the programmes helping individuals to improve their quality of life.

In Argentina, as in the rest of the world, a great change has occurred in psychological research which demonstrates a predisposition to deal with the positive and preventative aspects rather than the negative and patholog-

life, mainly due to the lack of an effective evaluative toolset, required by those interested in this subject.

In the realm of education it is essential to attend to the healthy development of children and teenagers as a key part of their social development, thus reflecting the importance of focussing on protective aspects, on the development of their potential and on their personal and community skills, more than on the risk factors. This new perspective, brought by Positive Psychology, provides educational practitioners with new tools for promoting a reduction of vulnerability, centering on the acquisition of competencies to allow life's ad-

Although in South America Positive Psychology has devoted much time to studying infants (Kotliarenco, Cáceres & Alvarez, 1998) little research has been done targeting the evaluation of strengths in school environments …

ical ones which have traditionally been the object of study (Guerrero & Vera, 2003; Simonton & Baumeister, 2005). The objective of Positive Psychology is precisely to direct this change in Psychology towards the development of people's strengths. Accordingly, the main task for prevention is to study and understand how these strengths and virtues are adopted by children and teenagers. This is the key to preventing so-called mental disorders (Seligman & Christopher, 2000). Although in South America Positive Psychology has devoted much time to studying infants (Kotliarenco, Cáceres & Alvarez, 1998) little research has been done targeting the evaluation of strengths in school environments and focussing on this vitally important stage of

versities and risks to be confronted creatively, to overcome negative outlooks, to encourage this change of perspective and instil in children the ability to responsibly control their own destinies. Therefore, in addition to the need to generate programmes and trials based on social and emotional education, one must underline the importance of having access to specific tools capable of evaluating the effectiveness of the practical work and interventions undertaken along these lines. As has been pointed out previously, one of the challenges of implementing emotional education programmes is related to the difficulties in obtaining reliable data to check whether the aforesaid programmes have brought about any improvement (Bisquerra, 2006).

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS	VARIABLES STUDIED
Social and Emotional Competencies Inventory (Mikulic, 2013)	Evaluation of social and emotional competences considering nine dimensions: empathy, emotions regulation, assertiveness, communication, autonomy, self-efficacy, optimism, consciousness, prosocialization,
Inventory of Child-Adolescent Quality of Life (ICV, Mikulic, 2004)	Evaluation of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with life in 19 domains of life, such as, for example: health, self-esteem, religion, recreation, study, creativity, family relationships, environment, community, and teachers as resilient guides.
Structured Interview to Evaluate Risk and Protective Factors and Resilience Potential in Adults (ERA, Mikulic & Crespi, 2003, 2007)	Evaluation of Resilience Potential by means of gathering and categorizing risk and protective factors, taking into consideration the ecological framework of which the subject is part: · Personal (self-esteem, optimism, humour, introspection, affective style in coping with difficulties, creativity and independence) · Familial (unconditional acceptance, familial support, positive emotional atmosphere, communication, flexibility) · Social (social community support, social participation, work and school opportunities).
Structured Interview to Evaluate Strengths in Children and Adolescents (EFNA, Mikulic & Fernández, 2005)	Study of Strengths based on the following dimensions: · Personal Factors (self-esteem, sense of purpose and of future possibilities, problem solving ability, optimism, mood) · Factors (ability to relate to others, capacity to forgive, ability to build significant relationships) · Underlying Family Strengths (presence of significant others, capacity to provide support, presence of positive models, support given) · Strengths in Friend and Peer Groups (trust within peer groups, emotional support, integration in the group) · Strengths at School (possibility to study, integration into a school).
Structured Interview for the Evaluation of Teaching Practices (EPD, Mikulic & García Labandal, 2006)	Evaluation of teaching practice considering the following dimensions: · Personal · Interpersonal · Institutional · Social · Didactic · Values
Structured Interview to Evaluate Strengths in Children and Adolescents in School Contexts (EFNA-E, Mikulic & García Labandal, 2008)	Evaluation of the strengths in children and adolescents in school contexts, from the point of view of Resilience. It consists of 4 levels of analysis. Personal, familial, friendships and school.
Inventory of Resilient Potential of the Family (IPRF) (Caruso & Mikulic, 2009)	Evaluation of Resilience Potential of the Family according to thee dimensions: · Family System of Beliefs · Family Organizational Patterns · Family Communication
Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue, Petrides & Furnham, 2001, 2003; Argentinean Adaptation, Mikulic, 2010)	This instrument is based on the Trait Emotional Intelligence model which measures various dispositions of domains of personality, such as empathy, impulsiveness, assertiveness, self-esteem. It includes 15 subscales and 4 EI factors.
Emotional Skills and Competencies Questionnaire (Vladimir Takši, 2000; Argentinean Adaptation, Mikulic, 2010)	Evaluation of Emotional Intelligence using the dimensions: · Emotional Perception and Understanding · Emotional Expression · Emotional Management
Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2002; Argentinean Adaptation, Mikulic, 2012)	Evaluation of Emotional Intelligence using the dimensions: · Emotional Perception and Understanding · Emotional Expression · Emotional Management
Positive Emotions Scale in Children (Oros, 2008)	Evaluation of Positive Emotions based on the five core emotions: joy, serenity, gratitude, friendliness and personal satisfaction.
Analogical-Visual Joy/Happiness Scale (Oros, 2008)	This scale consists of prints of facial expressions arranged sequentially from happy to sad (including a neutral expression). Using this tool children are asked to point to the facial expression which best reflects their emotional state.
Interview for Evaluating Serenity (Oros, 2008)	An evaluation of serenity based on teachers' reports. It consists of a questionnaire the teacher has to fill out for each of his or her pupils.
Prosocial Reasoning Scale in Children (Lemos & Minzi, 2010)	Evaluation of prosocial reasoning in 7 to 8 year-old children.
Experience of Flow Questionnaire for Children and Adolescents (Mesurado, 2008)	Evaluates two aspects of the experience of flow: affective quality and cognitive activation on the one hand, and achievement perception and positive feedback on the other.

Figure 1. *Instruments to assess social and emotional education in children, young people and adults.*

In the light of the need for valid and trustworthy evaluation tools, over the last few decades in Argentina much effort has been put into building, adapting and validating tools to permit some of the pillars of emotional education – resilience, positive emotions, Capacity for Innovation; Emotional Support; Significant Others, Resilient Guides.3) The Friends or Peer Relationship level consider : Close Friend; Emotional Support in Peer Groups; Confidence in Peer Groups; Group Self-esteem and Significant Relationships in

Children's perceptions of their own strengths at school focused on Problem Solving; Self-confidence; Empathy; Optimism; Self-esteem, Life Purpose and Morality.

strengths, emotional intelligence and social and emotional competencies – to be evaluated. Some of these are described in Figure 1.

The aforementioned instruments have been proven to be valid and reliable and they can be used both in research and practice, in particular in the implementation and evaluation of programmes seeking to incorporate the emotional factor into educational settings. As an example, we will describe the strengths evaluated by means of a tool specifically designed in Argentina for this purpose called the **Structured Interview for Evaluating Strengths in Children and Adolescents in School Contexts** (EFNA-E, Mikulic & García Labandal, 2008). This test evaluates strengths in children and teenagers in school contexts, from resilience approach, and it consists of 4 levels of analysis: Personal, Family, Friends, and, School. 1) The Personal level consists of a variety of protective factors such as: Self-esteem; Problem Solving; Personal Recognition; Humour; Self-confidence; Empathy; Optimism; Initiative; Satisfaction with Life; Introspection; Acceptance of Limitations; Capacity for Forgiveness; Independence; Social Skills; Creativity; Life Purpose and Morality. 2) The Family level include: the Capacity to provide Support to others; Dialogue; the

Peer Groups. 4) The School level consists of: School as a Protective Shield; Personal Characteristics of Teachers; School Rules; School Climate; having the possibility to study; Teacher Morality; Significant Relationships in the School Context; Teacher Acceptance; and Teacher as a Resilient Guide.

In a research conducted in Buenos Aires City with the participation of four schools from low-income areas, 516 students (59% girls, 41% boys) showed strengths coming from personal level were significantly important. Children's perceptions of their own strengths at school focused on Problem Solving; Self-confidence; Empathy; Optimism; Self-esteem, Life Purpose and Morality. They also admitted that the Recognition as an expression of the acceptance and attachment of the others, was one of their weak points as they felt vulnerable due to the lack of them. In the family level, children stressed the strengths referred to the Capacity to provide Support to others; Significant Others and Emotional Support. And they distinguish as their weak point the lack of dialogue. In the friends level, as the group of reference, they perceived as strengths to have Close Friends; their Confidence in Peer Groups and Significant Relationships in Peer Groups, especially

classmates. In the school level there are specific resources or strengths as perceiving School as a Protective Shield; their Relationship with their Teachers; School Rules; their Possibility to study; Significant Relationships in the School Context; and Teacher as a Resilient Guide showing their satisfaction with the process teaching-learning. The weak points reported by the children focused on the school climate and the personal characteristics of the teacher.

This analysis allowed school authorities to design some strategies of intervention considering both strong and weak points perceived by the children in the school context as they informed them. Not only children's perception has been taken into consideration but also it was used to better school conditions of the teaching-learning process.

Emotional Intelligence in Schools

In Argentina, Emotional Intelligence is the concept that elicits the most interest in the field of education perhaps because it represents the interrelationship of two key terms: intelligence and emotion. Despite attempts by several theories to demonstrate the predominance of one term over the other, numerous other theories defend the important role both aspects play in the comprehensive development of the individual (Gardner, 1995; Goleman, 1995; Mayer, Di Paolo & Salovey, 1990; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Historically, the debate around the construct of intelligence has focussed on identifying its principal components and the factors that may explain individual differences. Alfred Binet (1817-1911) developed the first intelligence scale for children which aimed to detect learning disabilities and allowed a child's mental age to be calculated. In 1920, Thorndike pointed out that there were three kinds of intelligence: abstract, mechanical and social. In this manner, he added the social component to his definition, since he

understood social intelligence to mean the ability to act wisely in human relationships (Thorndike, 1920). Years later in the United States, Wechsler regarded intelligence as an individual's overall capacity to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his/her environment (Wechsler, 1944). Spearman (1927) defended the notion of general intelligence or a "g" factor, that is, he regarded intelligence as a single entity (Peña del Agua, 2004). In contrast, Thurstone (1938) defended the notion of an intelligence made up of independent aptitudes ("s" factors). It was out of this context of debate that in the 1990s the focus of attention shifted towards other forms of intelligence such as Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 1993), Successful Intelligence (Sternberg, 1995), Social Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Howard Gardner's (1993) ideas, unlike those of Sternberg, made a big impact in Argentina because, as he himself remarked during a visit to the country, they help us to understand the conditions in which education occurs, since the seven forms of intelligence allow for seven ways of teaching instead of just one (Hatch & Gardner, 1993).

Emotional Intelligence is the concept which has generated the greatest acceptance among those who wish to bring about changes in education in Argentina. Salovey & Mayer used the construct of Emotional Intelligence for the first time in psychology in 1990 (Mayer, DiPaolo, & Salovey, 1990; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The ability model proposed by these authors defines Emotional Intelligence as the capacity to manage and regulate emotions in both ourselves and in others, and to harness the emotions as guides for thought and action (Mayer & Salovey, 1995; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). Originally developed to explain why some people appear to be more emotionally competent than others, it consists of four interrelated abilities (Mayer &

Salovey, 1995): a) the ability to accurately perceive emotions, includes the ability involved in identifying emotions in faces, voices, photographs, music and other stimuli petencies, motivational aspects and a variety of cognitive abilities (Boyastzis, Goleman & Rhee, 2000). Another Emotional Intelligence model, unlike the others, views the ability to

Some authors (Salovey & Sluyter, 1997) have identified five basic aspects of emotional competence: cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy and self-control.

(Grewal & Salovey, 2005). b) the ability to use emotions so they may facilitate thought and reasoning, involves the ability to harness emotional information in order to facilitate other cognitive processes. c) the ability to understand emotions, in particular the language of emotions: to comprehend information about relationships through the emotions and to understand and navigate the transitions from one emotion to another. This ability is also used to describe emotions. d) the ability to manage emotions in both ourselves and in others; this trait is the one most often associated with the definition of Emotional Intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Mayer & Salovey, 1995).

The ability model, however, is not the only model. Petrides & Furnham (2000, 2001) conceptualized Emotional Intelligence as a personality trait or as emotional self-efficacy. In this fashion, the construct may be described as a collection of self-perceptions and behavioural dispositions related to emotions which mould the affective personality traits of normal adults (Petrides & Furnham, 2000; 2001). Additionally, a mixed model of Social and Emotional Intelligence was developed (Bar-On, Tranel, Denburg & Berchara, 2003) which takes a very broad view and regards Emotional Intelligence as a collection of stable personality traits, socio-emotional com-

process relevant emotional information as being independent from stable personality traits (Grewal & Salovey, 2005).

Along these lines, another concept –which refers to socio-emotional competencies– is proving to be particularly important in the development and support of Argentinian ventures in social and emotional education. This notion has been derived from Emotional Intelligence theories combining all the knowledge, capacities, abilities and attitudes needed to appropriately understand, express and regulate emotional phenomena (Bisquerra, 2002). Two major aspects may be discerned in these socio-emotional competencies: a) self-reflective abilities (intrapersonal intelligence), related to the identification of one's own emotions and to an appropriate regulation of them; b) the ability to identify what other people are thinking and feeling (interpersonal intelligence), an aspect that involves social skills, empathy, and appreciation of non-verbal communication, among other things. Some authors (Salovey & Sluyter, 1997) have identified five basic aspects of emotional competence: cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy and self-control. This viewpoint is coherent with the concept of Emotional Intelligence developed by the aforementioned authors.

More recently other theoretical models have appeared, proposing a description and classification of socio-emotional competencies, in particular the proposals by Graczyk (2000), Payton et al. (2000), Saarni (1997, 2000), Bisquerra (2003) and CASEL (2006). Despite the differences between the models mentioned here, all of the authors agree in situating socio-emotional competencies as generic or "key" competencies, in consideration of their importance and their applicabil-

Furthermore, there is empirical evidence attesting to the relationship between socio-emotional competencies and academic success, and, by extension, success in life (Zins, Weissberg, Wang & Walberg, 2004).

In light of those results, the development of socio-emotional competencies would appear to be an essential task and schools the perfect setting for fostering these competencies which positively contribute to children's so-

Emotional education is an on-going and permanent process, and as such it needs to be present at all levels of the school curriculum and in further education at all ages too.

ity to a wide range of human life situations (Eurydice, 2002). The development of these competencies, considered essential for life, leads to an emotional education that is an *¨on-going and permanent educational process, one that strives to foster the development of emotional competencies as an essential part of every individual's comprehensive development, with the goal of preparing him or her for life. The objective of all this is to increase personal and social wellbeing¨* (Bisquerra, 2003, p.27). Emotional education is an on-going and permanent process, and as such it needs to be present at all levels of the school curriculum and in further education at all ages too. A number of studies have confirmed that socio-emotional competencies affect the development of personal traits and skills that are enormously useful when facing the challenges of daily life and coping with adversity, in this manner promoting pupils' health and psychological wellbeing (Fernández Berrocal & Extremera, 2002; Pena & Repetto, 2008; Vera Poseck, 2004).

cial and personal wellbeing. This calls for proper long-term social and emotional training and to achieve it this same education needs to be incorporated into Argentina's basic objectives and curriculum content. If one wishes to incorporate social and emotional education into schools and Further Education it is important for teacher training and the building of significant competencies to be considered by strong social institutions (Martínez Larrechea & Chiancone, 2010), a challenge that Argentina must face as it looks toward the third millennium.

Teachers as Resilient Guides

The word "resilience" is a term of Latin origin (resiliens- lientis, active participle of *resiliere*: to bounce back) which social science has borrowed from physics. Over the last decades of the twentieth century a new aspect appeared in the arena of child care. The inspiration for it came from the quality of resistance observed in materials, namely resilience. This notion spread to the

> ## Love and personalization are essential in schools where resilience is built in pupils, something that can be obtained by creating an environment based on affective personal relationships (Henderson & Milstein, 2003).

psycho-social sector where it was understood to mean the possibility of recovering from adverse situations. Broadly speaking one could say that it stands in opposition to the concept of vulnerability, which indicates the impossibility or difficulty of recovery from a challenging situation.

In Argentina the use of resilience in the field of education arises from a need to find new approaches that work both in schools and in classrooms. Educational authorities and teachers have frequently encountered new problems and have attempted to use old solutions to deal with them, which often end up worsening the situation. In order to deal with these problems innovative concepts are needed to build new strategies which harness optimism and hope. Love and personalization are essential in schools where resilience is built in pupils, something that can be obtained by creating an environment based on affective personal relationships (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). The main building block of resilience for each pupil is a trust relationship, even if this is with a single adult, from either within or outside the family.

Schools may nurture the development of resilient behaviour by building school climates characterized by encouraging close bonds, setting clear and strict limits and by teaching life skills (Nuñez, 2005). Additionally, provision of care and support, setting and conveying high expectations and offering opportunities for significant participation help to build resilience. The process of building resilient behaviour may be facilitated via personal interaction with the pupil. These interactions between teachers and pupils should communicate optimism and centre on the pupil's strengths, and should include the incorporation of resilience building factors into how the school is structured, its teaching strategies and programmes. Resilient children's behaviours can be understood as those capacities and actions which aim to bolster the struggle to retain a sense of the meaning of life and development in the face of adversity.

The most important aspects to encourage resilience are: self-esteem, creativity, a sense of humour, cooperation, affective relationships, a social network and personal ideology, among others (Vanistendael, 1995).

> ## The most important aspects to encourage resilience are: self-esteem, creativity, a sense of humour, cooperation, affective relationships, a social network and personal ideology, among others (Vanistendael, 1995).

According to Melillo & Suárez Ojeda (2002) for individuals to be resilient it is of vital importance to have support from another significant person. This is because the fact that this person accompanies the individual through thick and thin, invariably expressing his or her unconditional love, even when this role includes repressing or forbidding a particular type of behaviour, is very effective. Accordingly, the teacher as a resilient guide is the person who stimulates and compliments the child or teenager on his or her achievements, creativity, humour, and initiative – the person who helps solve problems but still allows the individual to solve the problem him/herself. In this manner the educator takes on a role of significance afforded to him or her by the child or teenager. The introduction of this concept is key to evaluating children who are going through a stage in their lives in which the support networks around them play a major role. As their

(12 or 13 year-olds) to analyse whether teachers and teaching practice might act as guides for the development of resilient behaviour. The school population was made up of 516 pupils of both sexes (59.5% female and 40.5% male) from underprivileged socio-economic backgrounds enrolled at the City of Buenos Aires State Schools. 68 teachers were part of the study, 16% male and 84% female between the ages of 22 and 68, and the majority of whom (80%) had been teaching for more than 10 years. This research employed the Inventory of Child-Adolescent Quality of Life mentioned in Figure 1 (ICV, Mikulic, 2004) which allows satisfaction/dissatisfaction to be evaluated in 19 domains of life such as health, self-esteem, religion, recreation, study, creativity, family relationships, environment, community, and the teacher as a resilient guide. Pupils record the importance and satisfaction they assign to each of these domains and the positive or negative

Pupils derive enormous life satisfaction from the presence of a significant other from the school environment who works as a resilient guide.

identity is formed, the function of these "others" has a specific purpose, not only as people with whom they identify but also as guarantors of emotional and affective stability. There, if a child perceives his/her teacher as a resilient guide it is because the child feels supported by this teacher.

A study which demonstrated that teachers can act as resilient guides against adversity (G. Labandal, 2009), was carried out in Buenos Aires while researching situations that arise during the transition from Primary School (12 year-olds) to Secondary School

effects they have on their perceived quality of life. They also rate the availability of facilities they can utilise as sources of resilience. On examining the quality of life profiles as perceived by the pupils, their quality of life was seen to be strongly influenced by family and school variables. There is single point of convergence with regard to the Teacher as a Resilient Guide since this person is very important to the young person. Pupils derive enormous life satisfaction from the presence of a significant other from the school environment who works as a resilient guide.

When reviewing teachers' interviews, held using the Structured Interview for the Evaluation of Teaching Practices mentioned in Figure 1 (EPD, Mikulic & García Labandal, 2008), some interesting details come to light about aspects of teachers' work that can assist them in operating as resilient guides:

- The pleasure of teaching
- The choice of a teaching career is motivated by a desire to help and serve others
- A high regard for the vocation of teaching
- Social commitment to the vocation of teaching
- The importance of attachment
- Interpersonal relationships, humour and discussions with pupils

We might ask ourselves, therefore, whether being a resilient guide is part and parcel of "being a teacher". Teachers stress *"I didn't study in order to give classes to these kinds of kids"*, *"Nobody prepared me to cope with this kind of situation with these pupils"*, *"I need somebody to tell me what I need to do with them"*.

- What are they trying to tell us with these remarks?
- Are they saying there is more to teaching than knowing one's subject?
- What kind of preparation are they demanding?
- Why do they feel they need to resort to other experts for help with dealing with certain situations?

One teacher confesses *"In the capital there is a group of schools known as 'the violence belt schools'. I chose to work in one of them. Everybody told me "that's the worst school of all, it's the worst of a bad bunch". Hearing that made me want to panic and run in the opposite direction, yet, at the same time, it felt like a challenge. I felt it would be worthwhile. I chose the challenge of showing up"*.

Unpredictable and unique situations require decisions hard to foresee from the perspective of one's previous professional routines or from skills acquired in academia. Therefore teachers are obliged, among other things, to continuously reflect upon their practice, and revise it where necessary, taking into consideration not only their conceptual frameworks but also the reality. From this standpoint, teachers have to begin where their students are and to take their interactions with their students as the point of departure for a new teaching-learning process. Pupils will do less when less is expected of them. We should not forget that resilience is a capacity that can be learned and in order for this to happen it must be taught.

Positive Psychology and resilience seek to "nourish the best aspects" of children, guiding one's efforts as a teacher towards stimulating students' empathy, their capacity for forgiveness, achievement expectations, their ability to envisage a better future for themselves, and the ability to build significant relationships, among other things. For a while now, there has been an awareness in Argentina of the need to establish state policies favouring inclusion and integration. Furthermore, there is an increasing need to train teachers in the latest approaches to social and emotional education.

In recent times, interest in emotional education programmes –which other countries that are leading the way in this subject have implemented in schools– has notably increased thanks to progress made in the disciplines of psychology and education, and to profound changes that have taken place in the processes of interaction and coexistence among pupils. From the year 2000 onwards, individual efforts to transform teaching practices made by teachers, psycho-pedagogues, psychologists, principals and many other actors in the educational process may be

observed. Their wish to constantly improve their pedagogical proposals has led them to train themselves in social and emotional education. These "isolated cases" have started to build networks by means of publications, research, conferences and teacher training at educational institutions that have taken up the challenge of incorporating these incipient ideas into their study plans. Some examples of these are: I don't want to quarrel (Sosa Cabrios, 2012), Emotions Click (Bosio,

school located in the Belgrano district of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires. Founded by Mrs Mercedes Mallo Drobot Palmer in 1950, the School developed under the motto "A true education kindles the old, brings forth the new, involves a lifetime of learning", and turned out to become a space of participation, open to reflection, creativity and acceptance of diversity. This school has more than 600 pupils from 2 to 18 years old, of different nationalities, and its objective is to offer a

… there are no national, provincial or municipal programmes including Social and Emotional Education as part of an official learning process at initial, primary or secondary levels.

Colantuono, Mazziotti and Paturlanne, 2011), the Emotional Education Teacher Training (Latorre, 2011) and Emotionally Positive Atmosphere in Classrooms Programme (CEPA, Marino, 2009). The CEPA programme is described in greater detail in the case study section of this chapter.

However, there are no national, provincial or municipal programmes including Social and Emotional Education as part of an official learning process at initial, primary or secondary levels. Sadly, only a few, very few, individual efforts have managed to bring programmes into existence, fuelled by the iron will of a few people who have resiliently fought against despondency. What follows in this chapter is in part a tribute to the determination of these pioneering individuals.

Case Study 1. Emotional Education Programme at the Washington School
The Washington School is a bilingual (Spanish-English), private, secular and mixed

quality educational service at a high academic level, which fosters the development of physical, intellectual and moral competencies, preparing people who are able to manage their own growth and who are able to act in a humanitarian and social manner. The school strives to stimulate the physical, psychological and spiritual abilities of its pupils, an appreciation of culture in the building of identity, the promotion of ethical values – such as respect, truth, peace, justice, solidarity and critical thought– as well as the exercise of responsible freedom. It is an open-minded educational system, receptive to changes arising in teaching practice and didactics. This openness to change, exploration of values, personalized monitoring of pupils and emotional stability, are its main identifying features.

This school has developed and launched an Emotional Education Programme (EEP) based on the ideas of leading researchers in this area and on the results obtained from

Figure 2. Emotional Education Programme Axis (Eep)

prior educational programmes carried out in various parts of the world. This EE Programme started as an answer to an underlying need to find support to bolster the building of intercultural relationships within the school. The design stage of this programme adhered to the premise of keeping an open mind, being flexible and integrating

by Vivas, Gallego y Gonzalez (2006) on emotional intelligence and education, have proved especially valuable in developing this programme's accessible approach. In this programme Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to identify and manage emotions, both one's own and those of others. This is the foundation of emotional compe-

… when chronic anxiety, rage or feelings of sadness interfere with a child's thoughts, working memory has less power to process learning. This implies, at least partly, that academic success depends upon the ability of the student to maintain positive social interactions.

contributions from several disciplines such as Neuroscience, Positive Psychology and Cognitive Psychology, among others. The succinct contributions of the book "Educate Emotions",

tence, understood as an acquired skill that can be developed through training and education. In keeping with P. Fernandez Berrocal, an author whose work has played an important

role in this programme, EI is defined as "the ability to recognize, understand and regulate emotions in ourselves and in others" (Fernandez Berrocal & Ramos, 2002 p. 20). From this viewpoint, EI is an ability involving three processes – perceiving, understanding, and regulating one's own emotions.

Another author whose work – specifically her techniques to help children relax their bodies, calm their minds and pay more attention – has inspired this programme is L. Lantieri, who founded ¨CASEL¨ (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning) together with D. Goleman. The developers of this programme consider it important for educators and parents to be aware that when chronic anxiety, rage or feelings of sadness interfere with a child's thoughts, working memory has less power to process learning. This implies, at least partly, that academic success depends upon the ability of the student to maintain positive social interactions. The most effective way for all children to obtain better heart lessons is for these to be included as part of the school day and as part of one's home life. Additionally the programme has incorporated some of Bisquerra's (2000, 2002, 2006) contributions regarding emotional competencies.
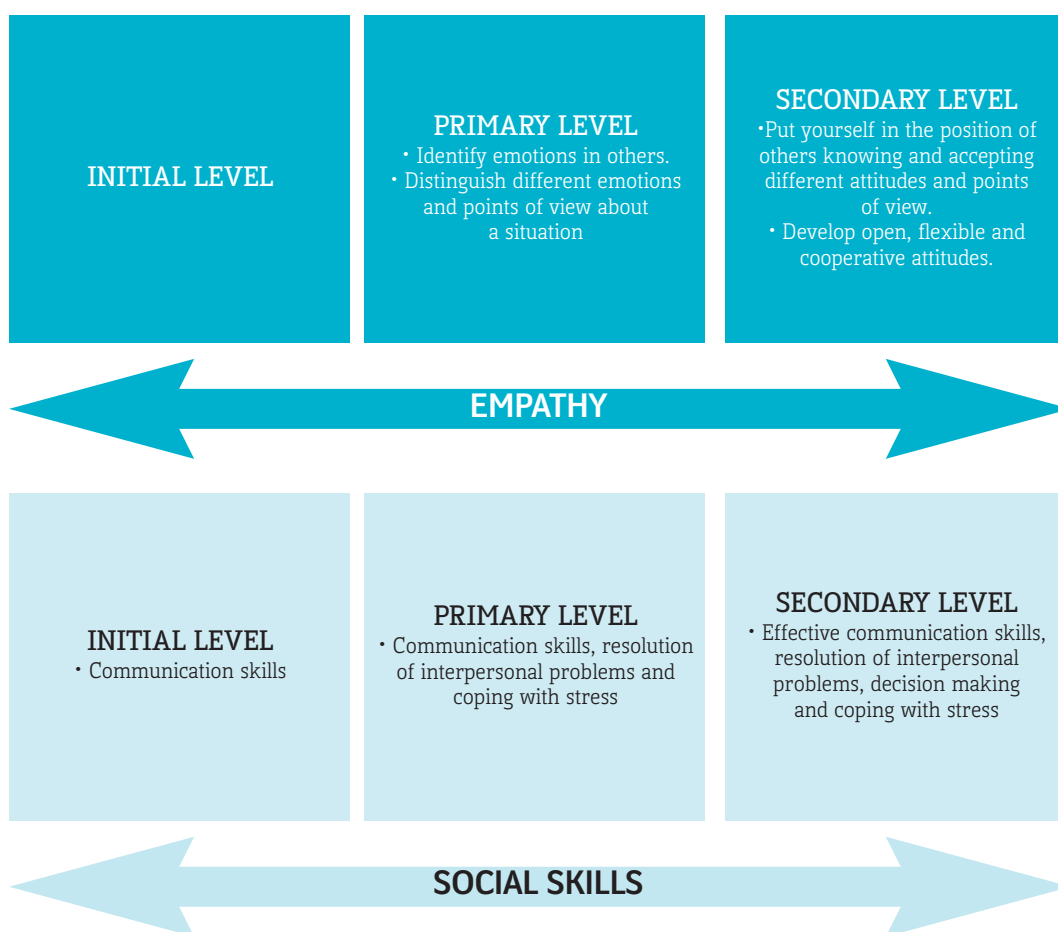
Since 2011 the programme has been a part of the ordinary school timetable and has included a plan for teaching the managing of life, improving self-awareness, self-confidence, the self-regulation of emotions and reducing those reactions which create minor disturbances in the classroom, getting in the way of learning, increasing empathy and collaboration. The aim is the development of children and teenager's social and emotional competencies to help them face the challenges and opportunities of life, today and in the future, by stimulating personal and social wellbeing. To achieve this, a fuller knowledge and management of one's own emotions and

the ability to effectively interpret, interact and relate to the emotions of others must be acquired. A participatory and active methodology is employed which elicits questioning, dialogue and communication. The didactic process is organized around a set of interconnected activities and around work arranged along the following four axes which focus and centre the tasks in the classroom;

1 **Emotional Self-Awareness**: is an awareness of one's internal states, resources and intuitions. It is recognizing one's emotions and the effect they have on one's body, behaviour and thought.
2 **Emotional Regulation**: is the ability to adequately manage emotions. It entails becoming aware of the relationship between emotion, cognition and behaviour, having good coping strategies and the ability to self-generate positive emotions.
3 **Empathy**: is the ability to perceive other people's inner emotional worlds and experience. It is the root of emotional communication and of building positive relationships with others.
4 **Social Skills**: are learned behaviours which manifest in interpersonal relationships and are characterized by knowing how to behave in a socially acceptable manner in a specific environment. They facilitate the disclosure of needs and conflict resolution, the expression of rejection of negative pressure and coping with criticism and hostility.

Below you will find a description of the objectives of the programme for initial and primary levels for each of the four axes:

1 Self-Awareness:
Initial Level (2 to 5 years old): identify and name basic emotions such as joy, sadness, annoyance, surprise and fear.
Primary Level (6 to 12 years old): identify and name basic and complex emotions

INITIAL LEVEL	PRIMARY LEVEL · Identify emotions in others. · Distinguish different emotions and points of view about a situation	SECONDARY LEVEL ·Put yourself in the position of others knowing and accepting different attitudes and points of view. · Develop open, flexible and cooperative attitudes.

EMPATHY

INITIAL LEVEL · Communication skills	PRIMARY LEVEL · Communication skills, resolution of interpersonal problems and coping with stress	SECONDARY LEVEL · Effective communication skills, resolution of interpersonal problems, decision making and coping with stress

SOCIAL SKILLS

such as shame, euphoria, envy, anxiety, jealousy, guilt, etc.

2 Emotional Regulation:
Initial Level (2 to 5 years old) express emotions in words (taking the first steps in emotional literacy).
Primary Level (6 to 12 years old): express your emotions and learn about the interactions between emotion, cognition and behaviour.

3 Empathy: (this aspect is addressed first in primary school – 6 to 12 years old)
Primary Level (6 to 12 years old) Identify emotions in others. Distinguish emotions and different approaches to the same situation.

Secondary Level (13 to 17 years old) To learn and accept others' points of view or ways of thinking or feeling. To develop an open, flexible and cooperative attitude.

4 Social Skills:
Initial Level (3 to 5 years old) Communication skills
Primary Level (6 to 12 years old) Communication Skills, interpersonal problem solving, taking decisions, coping with stress.
Secondary Level (13 to 17 years old) Effective Communication Skills, interpersonal problem solving, taking decisions, coping with stress.

*Expert Teacher Training and
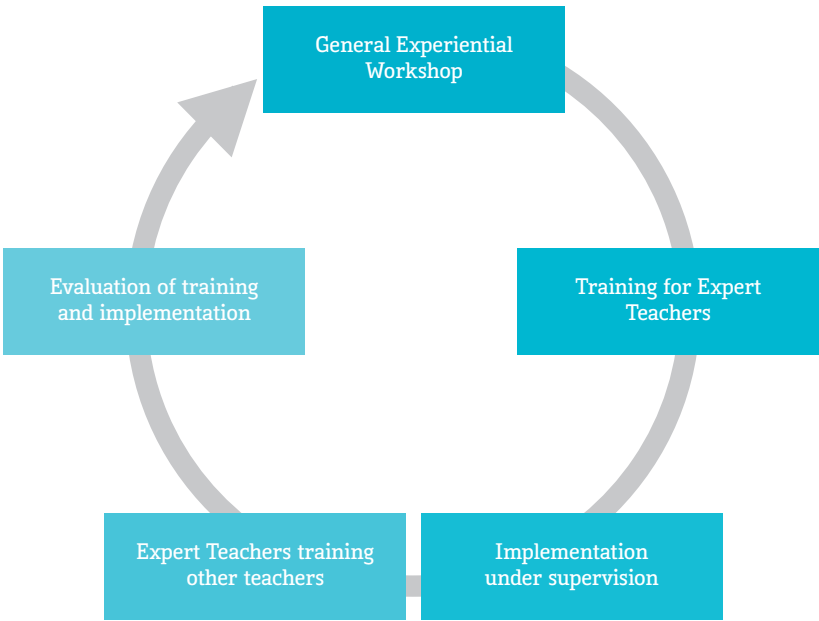Preparation for Emotional Education*
The developers of this emotional education programme at Washington School regard it as

the teachers themselves did not yet possess these qualities. On other occasions, they were asked to emotionally educate pupils when they themselves had not yet had the opportu-

"We cannot convey things we don't have, nor demand things we cannot ourselves give" (Vaello Orts, 2009).

essential to provide teacher training and preparation in order to familiarize teachers with emotional self-awareness competencies, emotional regulation, understanding and emotional empathy and social and emotional abilities. This training seeks to avoid the controversy which rages at educational institutions today: "We cannot convey things we don't have, nor demand things we cannot ourselves give." (Vaello Orts, 2009). Often teachers have been asked to instruct children to be empathetic, assertive, considerate, motivated, enthusiastic and grateful, when

nity to be emotionally educated, nor to take part in training. Furthermore, one should not forget that many practicing teachers were trained according to an education aimed at mid-twentieth century schools. The expert teacher training and preparation programme being implemented parallel to the implementation of the EEP by the Washington School is aimed at settling this controversy by training emotionally competent teachers. The aim is to train emotionally intelligent teachers capable of creating an enthusiastic and flexible atmosphere in which pupils feel inspired to be

Figure 3: Expert Teacher Training and Preparation for Emotional Education.

more creative and to show what they are able to do. This does not mean that a teacher's main task is to create excitement, optimism and enthusiasm for tasks, but rather to en- to develop both teachers' personal and so- cial competencies in the classroom. It em- ploys a methodology based on thoughtful- ness and real life experience. Both group

… a teacher's main task is to … encourage an atmosphere of cooperation and confidence in the classroom, something which is only possible by integrating the development of emotional intelligence into the curriculum (Davalillo, 2003).

courage an atmosphere of cooperation and confidence in the classroom, something which is only possible by integrating the develop- ment of emotional intelligence into the cur- riculum (Davalillo, 2003). This expert teacher training and preparation is designed as a dy- namic and on-going process.

This Expert Teacher Training Programme for emotionally intelligent classrooms aims

and individual dynamics are worked on to refine a variety of social and emotional competencies using relaxation, mindfulness techniques, role-playing, storytelling, music, drama, art, the analysis of videos and films, and so on. Meeting are held fortnightly and they began in 2012. In addition, General Workshops dealing mainly with Emotional Education are held twice a year – one at the beginning of the school year and the other at

COMPETENCIES	PERSONAL COMPETENCIES "My emotions"	SOCIAL COMPETENCIES
Self-Awareness Emotional Perception And Expression	Emotional Awareness	Non-Verbal Messages
Empathy and Compassion	I can identify my feelings and those of my colleague	Empathy I know how to identify with the emotions felt by my pupils
Emotional Regulation and Social Skills	Regulation Of Our Emotional States. I Can Overcome My Frustration When Things Do Not Go Well.	Resolution Of Interpersonal Conflicts "I Am One Of The Teachers Who Creates Harmony At School"

the end – which are open to all the centre's educational staff. These workshops provide an opportunity for staff to share their experiences, anecdotes and the emotions aroused by the implementation of the programme's activities in their classes. The aim is to share experiences, ideas, acknowledgments and gratitude among colleagues in order to enrich each person's emotional world and promote wellbeing.

The Expert Teacher Training Programme facilitates the use of teachers' own emotional, social and creative competencies to attain a higher level of personal and social wellbeing; and to improve the quality of the teaching-learning processes through the use of these competencies. Training prepares them to master various tools of psycho-educational intervention by becoming familiar with innovation programmes from around the world that incorporate the promotion of social and emotional competencies into teaching practice.

Evaluation and Impact of the Emotional Education Programme

In order to comprehensively rate social and emotional learning, pupils, teachers, school management staff and parents alike take part in the programme's evaluation process. It is an active and on-going process included as an

valuable competencies, such as the putting into practice of abilities and resources to resolve interpersonal conflicts experienced by pupils on a daily basis at school, are also rated.

Work takes into account an evaluation approach that includes classic measurement instruments based on questionnaires and self-reports filled out by both pupils and teachers. Throughout the year pupils and teachers perform self-reports and an open, written interview in which they are asked to evaluate the personal and social benefits of the programme and to rate their level of satisfaction. On most occasions, these questionnaires consist of short verbal statements in which pupils evaluate their EI by estimating their levels in specific emotional abilities by means of a scale used to obtain a "perceived or self-reported level of emotional intelligence" which reveals pupils' beliefs and expectations about whether they can perceive, discriminate and regulate their emotions.

A second evaluative approach is also employed which groups together rate the so-called ability measurements or EI execution measurements comprising a variety of real, daily emotional tasks which the pupil has to resolve in school life (for example, participation in wellbeing campaigns, conflict resolution for interpersonal problems in the class-

The main objective of the (Programme) evaluation is to help guide and stimulate pupils' judgement and self-evaluation.

emotional education activity. The main objective of the evaluation is to help guide and stimulate pupils' judgement and self-evaluation. Consequently, the feedback they receive from teachers is very important. In addition,

room and coping with stressful situations). The real execution task is an alternative evaluation since it strives to change the predominant evaluation culture, which is centred on static evaluation instruments such as pencils

and paper and hence can only explore the realm of stated knowledge, whereas this alternative seeks to observe the pupils' competencies in action. To achieve this, teachers record situations in which pupils display assertiveness in their interpersonal relationships, use and management of uncomfortable emotions and promotion of positive emotions.

An example of this is the launching of campaigns promoting wellbeing at school, which seek to prepare the way for putting social and emotional competencies into practice. Each school grade has a week set aside to foster positive emotions within the school community. The First Level, for example, has a "Week of Joy Campaign". This campaign posits that emotions are contagious. How can this particular emotion be encouraged in the whole school? For example, the day starts with a morning greeting and a riddle, a joke, listening to a specific piece of music, or showing a video before the pupils enter the classrooms.

In 2013 a third evaluative approach is being added, via the application of psychological and pedagogical instruments for evaluating classroom atmosphere, emotional discrimination capacity, attention to positive emotions, affective regulation levels and the degree of tolerance when facing stress caused by frustration.

To learn about what they say about this experience we can hear what the teachers of the school have to say:

Nowadays, all students and teachers at Washington School - Primary- are sharing the benefits of systematic work on EE (Emotional Education) and this job has helped us achieve a common language in our daily work within and outside the classrooms. Many are the mo-

ments when we spontaneously find ourselves referring to our emotions or how to regulate them; empathy is hard but essential to the present and the future of all human beings, considering we are members of a society full of conflict and change. This year, 2013, Washington School has PEACE as a leading concept to work on. The Programme allows us to deepen our knowledge from a different perspective, knowing that this is a path we want to keep on walking along together with the whole community.
María Celia Méndez Casariego, Head of Primary

The Social and Emotional Educational Programme is a new perspective on education because nowadays it is necessary to create classes that develop social and emotional skills in order to help children develop their emotions. Our programme has a global view of the children considering their minds, bodies and emotions. It focuses on: social abilities, positive emotions, self-esteem, communication skills, empathy, self-confidence and awareness of their emotions and thoughts.

As a teacher, I could see that the programme encourages my students to be more responsible, persevering, creative, critical and more in contact with their emotions. In my class we work on their strengths, to recognize them and to see them in others. Once a week we do an activity in which two children receive positive words, phrases and feelings from their peers. First, they write them down, then we read them aloud and finally, we stick them on a poster which is given to the protagonists at the end of the day. This activity joins the group in a positive way and also encourages better learning conditions.

As a teacher, I could see that the programme encourages my students to be more responsible, persevering, creative, critical and more in contact with their emotions.

I think it is also very important to train teachers in this programme. In our school we have different workshops that help us put the programme into practice in a professional way. Last year, the focus on our training was to work on our own strengths. These meetings help us to know ourselves better in order to help others. We, teachers, have to create a safe environment in which students feel free to grow, to learn and to be themselves. We have to know how our children think, what they want, how they feel and what they need, in order to learn. David Souso said: "When a concept fights with an emotion, the emotion wins." It is our responsibility to give significance to their learning, to show them that it has a connection with real life, that it's useful and relevant. In this way, we'll help them work with more commitment and enthusiasm.

Alejandra Rudniki. Spanish Teacher 4th Grade. Primary School.

Case Study 2. "You Cannot Learn or Grow Without Affection. A programme designed to strengthen affective, cognitive and linguistic abilities"

In 2004 a social and emotional evaluation and cognitive diagnosis of children was undertaken – at the request of the General Education Council (CGE) of Argentina's Entre Ríos province – at La Delfina School, who face the highest psycho-social risk in Paraná. The following year, 2005 and up until the present, an intervention programme began to be systematically, intensively and longitudinally implemented with first grade children (six years old). At the request of the General Education Council (CGE), the programme was extended in 2007 to include at risk[i] Initial Level pupils (4 and 5 years old) at the Nuestra Señora de Lourdes School.

La Delfina School is located in the San Agustín district of the city of Paraná, which is one of the largest emergency settlements[ii] in the Entre Ríos province. In this district the programme worked with children from the so-called Villa María which is located on the banks of the Antoñico stream – the most polluted waterway in Paraná because it receives waste from all of the city's sewers. In Villa María children have high levels of undernourishment, a significant number of children have to repeat grades at school, there is a high percentage of unemployed or sporadically employed parents doing odd jobs, eking a living from sifting through refuse, or doing low qualified work, and the majority of families live below the poverty line and suffer from serious socio-affective problems, such as family violence, abuse, ill treatment, drugs and alcoholism.

The Nuestra Señora de Lourdes School is located in the Nuestra Señora de Lourdes district, 10 blocks from the city centre. The children who attend this school come mainly from the poorer districts, their families have insufficient finances and, as before, with socio-affective and family problems.

The "You Cannot Learn or Grow Without Affection" is a programme developed to

At the same time the programm staff works with parents and careers ...

strengthen the emotional, cognitive and language resources of children at risk from extreme poverty. This programme is carried out thanks to the efforts of the research team at the Interdisciplinary Centre for Research in Mathematical and Experimental Psychology (in Spanish CIIPME, "Centro Interdisciplinario de Investigaciones en Psicología Matemática y Experimental" CONICET) The programme, which has been designed to provide relevant knowledge and can be used to help fulfil the educational demands of children at risk due to environmental factors, is built on three main pillars: the children, the parents and the teachers. It is intensive, because it is incorporated into the school curriculum and it involves joint working between the research team and the teachers. This joint working consists of: a) out-of-classroom meetings that add activities to strengthen these abilities in school planning in correspondence with curricular content, and b) in the classroom and during the entire time children are at school, by the work of the teacher assisted by a researcher who observes this work, the reactions of children and at the same time provides professional support when needed.

The programme is extensive and is intended to be carried out with the same group of children throughout their entire schooling from age 5 until the age of 18. The programme is run at the schools because there is some evidence to suggest that the results of external, sporadic and discontinuous SEE programmes may fade over time (Richaud de Minzi, 2007).

The project leaders regard it of utmost importance to work together with health centres and child protection associations, in order to attend simultaneously to the children's mental and physical health. They take the problem of undernourishment seriously, managing and obtaining, by means of monitoring nutrition levels, the necessary increase in diet. There is a place inside the school where children have lunch. The school provides the meals and they can supervise that each child receives what is needed for a balanced diet. Special attention is paid to those having problems for not having enough food at home at night. At the same time the programme staff work with parents and carers because without them the results obtained at the school are diminished, if not lost altogether, when the child returns to his or her home (Richaud de Minzi, 2007).

The programme is extensive and is intended to be carried out with the same group of children throughout their entire schooling from age 5 until the age of 18.

The programme aims to reinforce the personal resources:

1 **Attachment**. The emergence of an attachment system is clearly regarded as critically important to our species; therefore to increase these strong and healthy bonds between children and their carers or any other significant adult for the child is an essential part of any intervention plan.

2 **Positive interpersonal relationships with parents** contribute to children's social and cognitive development and to socialization. This turns relationships with carers into an indispensable resource for satisfactory development (Richaud de Minzi, 2007).

3 **Executive functions**, which include skills of goals setting planning, problem solving and self-regulation of behaviour, all of which are primordial aspects of attaining significant learning.

6 **Social skills** play a vital role in the acquisition of social, cultural and economic capital. Children who are not able to behave appropriately in social situations experience social alienation and rejection. Social competencies are critically important both for the present and future development of the child.

7 **Coping** refers to the strategies used to resolve conflict situations on and off the school premises. Functional coping styles predispose individuals to regard drawbacks and frustrations positively and these functional coping styles are predictors of psychological wellbeing.

The work with the parents

The first step with parents is to perform a survey, by means of interviews with the children and their parents, about the living conditions of each of the families of the children

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Two main aspects are focused on in workshops with parents: the strengthening of parents' emotional resources and training parents so that they may also help strengthen their children's emotional resources.

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4 **Linguistic capacity**, equips the child with the most powerful tool for communication and abstract conceptualization not to mention proficiency in the use of written language, which is absolutely essential in our society.

5 **Positive emotions** consist of joy, serenity, friendliness, gratitude and personal satisfaction, among other things. To frequently experience positive emotions favours effective, flexible and creative reasoning and encourages perseverance when facing possible failures.

recently enrolled in the programme. In addition to this, activities seeking to integrate parents into the life of the school and to involve them in the education of their children are held. It is considered important to influence parents and to produce changes not only in their attitudes, motivations and skills, but also in variables such as awareness and defence of civil rights and duties, health, diet, etc. (Richaud de Minzi, 2007).

Two main aspects are focused on in workshops with parents: the strengthening of

parents' emotional resources and training parents so that they may also help strengthen their children's emotional resources. Firstly, information related to the parents is gathered in order to start working in different workshops on alternative problem solving approaches where parents talk about their own problems with their children. For these children it is very important to have self-confident parents who can control their emotions and react adequately in the face of a crisis. Soon afterwards parents can draw on this work when interacting with their children – in other words, they learn to better perceive their own children by means of this prior self-reflection. The objective is to reinforce the emotional resources of the children's parents and/or family relatives, so they may realize the importance of supporting their children, and stimulating their self-esteem, social skills, etc., during childhood.

In addition, sometimes psycho-educational workshops led by experts are held at the schools, with the goal of: (a) Favouring better family-school-community ties, (b) strengthening parental competencies, namely the cognitive, emotional and behavioural abilities parents already possess, (c) providing adequate models of educational approaches and parenting practice, especially talking through and modelling alternatives to physical punishment and with-holding affection, (d) offering knowledge about family factors that support children becoming and remaining well balanced, with a special emphasis on positive emotions and, (e) teaching healthy styles of communication and skills for conflict resolution.

Independently of the conceptual content being taught and of the types of interaction chosen for each workshop, it is important to ensure the main theme selected for each meeting does not divert parents' attention towards their own flaws or incompetence thus fuelling their feelings of guilt and frustration. Although this process of recognising one's areas for development is necessary to enable change to occur, the workshops strive to emphasize the parents' resources, not their shortcomings.

The work with teachers
Encompasses:

A Using the technique of modelling: one of the programme coordinators comes to the classroom twice a week, interacts with pupils, develops strategies with them to encourage an active coping approach to their problems, and works with the pupils on their social skills, cognitive abilities, controlling impulses and positive emotions.

   • The teacher first observes and then participates in the same session The teacher receives on-going feedback from the programme coordinator.

B Monthly meetings with teachers: these are held to provide training (theoretical and practical). Strategies for effective classroom interventions are taught (building up the pupils' resources: their social skills, coping abilities, positive emotions, cognitive abilities, etc.)

C Endeavour to provide teachers with the theoretical and methodological framework of the intervention. The rationale of the intervention is to strengthen the cognitive, social and emotional resources of children at risk of extreme poverty.

D Manuals for stimulating memory, attention, positive emotions, etc., are drafted for teachers to use in their work with the pupils.

E After this training, the teachers themselves design a school curriculum, proposing

teaching strategies and activities linked to fostering children's cognitive, social and emotional resources.

Basically, the teacher training plan includes: (a) on-going training for teachers at the schools participating in the programme; (b) a day of training once a month directed at teaching and management staff at the schools in the city of Paraná where the pupils are considered at risk of poverty. This theoretical and practical teacher training for initial and primary school levels has reached about 400 teachers, principals and supervisors; making an impact on 12 schools where the pupils are considered to be at risk.

The work with children

A programme aimed a developing children's resources was held for children at risk. The programme consisted of two weekly two-hour sessions over four weeks, at which a programme coordinator and an observer work with the children on reinforcing attachment, impulse control, planning and social skills.

- They played the "semaphore game", which includes the rule of raising one's hand to speak, and not interrupting when someone else is speaking. For this purpose the teacher has a "semaphore poster" and she points the colour to corresponding to the child in that moment. In the case of a conflict she also can use the "semaphore game" to solve it showing who was speaking and who was to listen. This is important as in some contexts the "semaphore" is not taken into account, it is a symbol very often disregarded by parents and children. Other activities include making up rhymes using the pupils' names, creating a friendly, affectionate atmosphere, paying attention to each pupil individually to build attachment, creating a feeling of belonging, providing a network of support to boost interpersonal confidence;

- Telling of personal experiences in order to understand events from children's daily lives in the classroom and help to produce stories which may be understood by people who do not share their environment;

By means of a meticulous diagnosis, which has the aim of adjusting the programme's interventions in the appropriate manner to each group, an evaluation is made of the children's cognitive, affective and social abilities.

Diagnosis and Evaluation

A precise *diagnosis* of the specific risk situation faced by a child is deemed necessary to decide the type of intervention that will be required. Accordingly, it makes no sense to talk about set programmes, but rather about *collections of strategies* which will be applied according to the resources that need reinforcing and the strengths which the pupils demonstrate that they possess.

Based on this meticulous diagnosis, and with the aim of deciding on the right type of intervention for each group, the children's cognitive abilities but also their emotional and social maturity are evaluated. To this end, tests have been designed and adapted to evaluate the abilities needed to initiate learning to read, to write and to do mathematics. The programme coordinators also make use of instruments to evaluate the children's emotional abilities (attachment, the quality of their relationships with their parents or carers, positive and negative emotions), cognitive abilities (impulse control, the ability to pay attention, to plan), social skills, personality, coping and phonological awareness. Depending on the diagnosis, work begins to develop the children's learning skills so that pupils may subsequently successfully begin to engage with the school curriculum. At the same time a number of psychological processes are addressed

Furthermore, a survey about the situation and circumstances of each of the families of the children is carried out by the team at the very beginning of the year and then once a month it is revised and subsequently worked on in psycho-educational workshops. Each child's personal situation is continuously monitored, and any changes are addressed by the teachers and parents quickly and in an appropriate manner. Included to this end are:

A the informative-formative aspect which is carried out along eight main axes: knowing and exercising civil rights and obligations, health, diet, education, family climate, housing, work and wages;

children, based on strengthening attachment, impulse control, inhibitory control, social skills, planning and meta-cognition. These results confirm that strengthening children's resources diminishes their perception of danger and permits them to cope more successfully (Richaud de Minzi, 2007). On the other hand the increase in attachment and therefore of impulse control, in parallel with the stimulation of planning and metacognition, help children to analyse a problem, restructuring it cognitively in a positive way and thus managing their emotions. At the same time, by increasing attachment and social skills the child trusts others and asks for help, which at the same time reinforces the

The results obtained so far have demonstrated a noticeable increase in the use of functional coping strategies by the at-risk children, based on strengthening attachment, impulse control, inhibitory control, social skills, planning and meta-cognition.

B the psycho-social aspect which focuses mainly on the following areas: 1) self-esteem, emotional bonds and social skills, creativity and humour, parents' social network and their feeling of belonging, 2) recognition and perception of children's resources, parents' communication styles and expressions of affection towards their children. The diagnostic process is carried out by means of administering several questionnaires either developed for the Argentinian context or adapted for it For details of the instruments employed please see Appendix A.

The results obtained so far have demonstrated a noticeable increase in the use of functional coping strategies by the at-risk

child emotionally (decreased emotional dyscontrol). Furthermore, the use of these strategies permits the child to resolve the problem successfully.

Lastly, with regard to the premise that discontinuing an intervention or intervening less intensively in these resources means they become weakened, it was recorded that interrupting an intervention does indeed have a negative effect on progress obtained in coping with threats. The results indicate that comprehensive interventions to support the resources of children at environmental risk seem to have a major positive effect on their development, especially in terms of the children being better able to cope with actual threats. However, for the intervention to

maintain, and even increase, its effectiveness on resources/strengths it needs to be intensive and continual (Richaud de Minzi 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2009a, 2009b; Musso, López, Iglesias, 2007; Oros, 2008; Lemos, 2007; Ghiglione, 2007; Lemos, 2010; Iglesia & López, 2009).

Case Study 3. "Positive Emotional Climate Programme (Clima Emocional Positivo en el Aula, CEPA)"

The Positive Emotional Climate in Classrooms Programme (CEPA - "Clima Emocional Positivo en el Aula") has been developed by María Cecilia Marino who works as a psycho-pedagogue in primary and secondary schools. She founded an institution especially devoted to offering emotional and social education training to teachers, and she also edits books focused on this subject. She trains teachers and pedagogues in techniques regarding socio emotional strategies to be applied in the classroom. Her experience as a teacher at primary level and her work as a professor at university level has helped her to understand the teachers' needs as well as the needs of pupils. So Marino started training teachers in different schools (both primary and secondary

which provides teachers with resources to promote a positive emotional climate and respond to the particular needs of children between the ages of 5 and 9 in the classroom. These materials are divided into two groups a) those used with the whole class, b) those used individually. The aim is to empower teachers with their own potential resources especially regarding communication, emotional and personal skills

So this Programme has different aims:

A Promote metacognitive skills for better learning processes.
B Collaborate in creating a positive climate which reduces conflicts and helps learning.
C Give teachers the opportunity to reformulate their practice, use reflection in their practice and be trained professionally.
D Develop children's self-esteem, autonomy and self-knowledge in order to regulate their behaviours.

The training takes into consideration emotional intelligence and some concepts regarding the functions of the brain in relation with emotions, in the classroom context. This

… this programme helps pupils' impulsiveness, lack of confidence in schoolwork, concentration problems, problems connecting the content of different subjects together, (and) inflexible thinking …

level), leading a team of psycho-pedagogues. She wrote a book called "Emotional Education: Programme of Activities for Initial and Primary Level" (Cappi, Christello, & Marino, 2011) with two colleagues and promotes the training of teachers in social and emotional competences. She designed a specific toolset

approach is centered in emotional education, emotional consciousness, self-esteem and social skills. It also provides an emotional vocabulary and works on the importance of understanding non-verbal cues. It stresses the importance of listening and communicating without violence. It proposes meditation and

body relaxation and breathing and many other techniques to calm down. Music is shown to be an important means of redirecting emotions. In this way, this programme helps pupils' impulsiveness, lack of confidence in schoolwork, concentration problems, problems connecting the content of different subjects together, inflexible thinking, etc. As an example one of the components of this toolset can be mentioned, a giant pair of glasses bigger than the face of the children and of a bright colour. The objective of these glasses is to use them to promote creativity and imagination, for example, by asking a child to put them on and enquire "What do you think you could see if you were a (specific) toy (a different toy may be mentioned according to different children's cultural roots) Or it could be said "These glasses turn whatever you want to be invisible. What would you like to be invisible and why?" Also, if there is a conflict, the teacher can give the glasses to one of the children and ask him/her about some positive aspect of the classmate. If the teacher needs to work with some emotion in particular she can give the glasses to the pupil and say that he/she can see his/her heart with those glasses and ask him/her to describe what he/she can see there.

Another interesting element is a very brightly coloured hat which is also used to promote creativity and imagination. Children can be asked to put the hat on and answer a question as if he/she were Santa Claus. The hat can be worn if it is the birthday of a pupil for him/her to be distinguished from the rest and receive some supporting wishes. Children can also put on the hat to represent a particular feeling, for example, anger or sadness.

Each of the elements in the toolset is described in a Teacher's Manual where the aim of the object is explained, the conceptual framework and the way it could be used, with some recommendations.

This Programme has been proved (Cappi, Christello, & Marino, 2011) to help the teachers to work in a pleasant climate and be satisfied with their teaching process. Also from the pupils' point of view, children feel that they can express their emotions, regulate feelings and better their interpersonal relationships. A long list of schools from different parts of Argentina, especially from Buenos Aires Province, are adopting this Programme at primary level. They receive an intensive training and start using the toolset to promote teacher training in social and emotional competences. Many testimonies recognize that pupils have registered an important change in their behaviours and interpersonal relationships and classroom climate has improved as a consequence. Though it depends exclusively on the goodwill of the teachers or some headteachers who are interested in transforming classroom climates, it is probably one of the best beginnings as it has been spread out only through teachers' recommendations. Teachers know what is good for their classes, so it is a hopeful beginning of something new.

Conclusions

On the 18th of May 2008, in El Salvador, the Ibero-American ministers of Education took what is now considered to be a historic decision: to promote «Educational Goals 2021: the education we would like for the Bicentenary generation» (Organization of IberoAmerican States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI), 2010) . The date chosen for this announcement was no accident. The project was introduced in the lead-up to the decade of the Bicentenaries of the Independence of the majority of Latin American countries (2010 to 2020). The idea was to take advantage of the motivation a historical event of such magnitude will generate in Latin American societies. Its goals are enormously ambitious: to improve the quality and equality of education in order to take a stand

against poverty and inequality and, in this manner, favour social inclusion. It sets out to tackle decisively, for once and for all, still unresolved challenges such as illiteracy, school dropout rates, child labour, the low academic performance of pupils and the poor quality of public education. At the same time as tackling these challenges, it seeks to face up to the demands of the information and knowledge society: incorporation of ICT in teaching and learning, focusing in innovation and creativity, and the development of research and scientific progress. One needs to walk briskly and boldly if you want to catch the carriages at the front of the train of history of the 21st century.

> *"Faced with this awesome reality that must have seemed a mere utopia through all of human time, we, the inventors of tales, who will believe anything, feel entitled to believe that it is not yet too late to engage in the creation of the opposite utopia. A new and sweeping utopia of life, where no one will be able to decide for others how they die, where love will prove true and happiness be possible, and where the races condemned to one hundred years of solitude will have, at last and forever, a second opportunity on earth.*
> Gabriel García Márquez. The Solitude of Latin America. Nobel Prize acceptance speech delivered to the Nobel Academy

In Argentina the last few decades have been dominated by aspects of context, such as the economic situation, the political-institutional framework and the underlying social conditions (in terms of educational and financial capital and family income resources), which constitute a set of factors which have led to an unequal distribution of opportunities, life projects and possibilities of social movements to the new generations, making evident the

existence of growing inequalities in childhood. The opportunities children have to sustain their lives and to develop to their maximum potential are usually less in homes experiencing poverty. Many studies have shown that an impoverished environment (with a low educational atmosphere and precarious living conditions, among other things) endangers children's rights to fully develop. Socio-economic hardship, poor living conditions, inadequate diet, among so many other problems, affect the quality of parental bonds and the child's upbringing and socialization environment. In Argentina it was estimated in 2011 that 23.7% of children under the age of 6 lived in homes in which basic needs were not satisfied (EDSA, 2011).

The schooling proposal for an education including the social and emotional, needs to be accompanied by policies designed from an integral viewpoint so as to guarantee greater equality and effective opportunities for social inclusion. At the present time several different management approaches coexist in Argentina's educational system, a variety of forms, models and work routines are accepted, and there is, in addition, a fundamentally unequal and unfair distribution of teaching resources. This means that an extra effort must be made to unify objectives, methods and aims, as well as to guarantee the infrastructure and the human and didactic resources provided for education, and especially to raise the almost non-existent implementation of social and emotional education in the current curriculum to the priority of place it deserves. Furthermore, an all-embracing type of training, consciousness raising and awareness regarding advice on how to bring up children for parents and carers should accompany this effort; and teachers involved in children's education should be shown the importance of their role in teaching and caring for children The investment in the quality of life in childhood is closely

In Argentina it was estimated in 2011 that 23.7% of children under the age of 6 lived in homes in which basic needs were not satisfied (EDSA, 2011).

associated with future social development. Consequently, any advance in social and emotional educational programmes in childhood not only means improving the quality of life today but also advocates rewarding lives for the new generations. In countries like Argentina, in which social inequalities have proven to be persistent, it is essential to define the problems of human development at the start of life. The challenge is to promote Comprehensive Development in adherence to UNESCO's Early Childhood Care and Education proposal (ECCE). This refers to services and programmes that "support children's survival, growth, development and learning –including health, nutrition and hygiene, and cognitive, social, emotional and physical development– from birth to entry into primary school in formal, informal and non-formal settings".

In Argentina Social and Emotional Education needs to be included from early childhood to centre the learning individual and because the care provided by the emotional dimension, implies responding to "the need to guarantee the presence of an adult as a figure or reference of attachment with whom a bond may be built, and the necessary time to support and strengthen the child. Families and schools are privileged places where the child's subjectivity is built".

These principles are the backbone of the interventions designed for this age group. The way to organize them should be creatively thought out, they should cater to the needs of children and families and care should be taken to avoid mechanical repetition of traditional school formats or of models not adapted to the child's actual environment.

As a whole the case studies featured in this chapter reflect progress and promising horizons, yet they also demonstrate unjust social inequality because only a very few children are beneficiaries of inclusion in Social and Emotional Education programmes in Argentina. If we are to respond to the innovation and development challenges of new pedagogical strategies we must recognize the need for a new relationship with knowledge, one that rethinks teaching styles and the frameworks in which learning is possible. We are certain that Argentina as a country deserves this significant and necessary debate and we shall not abandon the hope that the debt owed to children to provide them with good quality social and emotional education will soon be paid in full.

Endnotes

¹ In Argentina a psycho-pedagogue is a person who is trained to work in educational settings with children and young people with learning and behavioural difficulties.

[1] In Argentina a psycho-pedagogue is a person who is trained to work in educational settings with children and young people with learning and behavioural difficulties.

[2] The CGE defines at risk children as follows: a) academic aspects: having to repeat a grade/s, no progress in reading or mathematics, low IQ, failing exams, incomplete daily homework, irregular performance, few or no study habits; b) personal behaviour: difficulties in accepting authority, incapable of solving problems, no change after disciplinary sanctions, not able to express emotions, no participation in school activities, not good at coping with stress, not able to make friends, not able to cope with new situations; c) family situation: those children who have been reported to the Juvenile Courts, adopted, with step-mother/father, father unemployed or without a stable job, recent losses, poor family use of language, immigrant or refugee, low educational level of the mother; d) relationship school-family: negligence, late arrivals at school, lack of support at home, being absent from school for more than twenty days and frequently playing truant.

[3] "Emergency settlements" is the name given in Argentina to informal settlements characterized by a dense multiplication of precarious houses. These settlements appeared in Argentina after the crisis of the thirties and were created by migrants moving from the provinces to the capitals where there were better employment opportunities.

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Appendix A

Psychological Assessment Instruments used in the Programme "You cannot learn or grow without affection. A programme designed to strengthen affective, cognitive and linguistic abilities"

Child Attachment Story Task (Manchester Child Attachment Story Task, Green, Stanley, Smith and Goldwyn, 2000) which identifies and classifies patterns of attachment in 5 to 8 year-old children through their playing activities.

Argentinean Inventory of the Perception 4 to 5 year-old children have of their relationship with their parents (Ciipme-Conicet) Objective: the child's perception of their relationship with their mother and father.

Argentinean Coping Questionnaire for Children (Ciipme-Conicet) Objective: evaluation of coping using the scales of: Logical analysis, Cognitive reframing, Cognitive avoidance, Support seeking, Acting on problems, Search for alternative gratification, Emotional control, Emotional paralysis and dyscontrol.

Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, KBIT (Kaufman, A.S. & Kaufman, N.L., 2000).Objective: it may be used as screening to evaluate skills related to school learning. It may be used to measure both verbal and non-verbal intelligence.

Word Writing Test (Borzone & Diuk, 2001). Objective: this word writing test consists of dictating three sets of words, which allows the attained level of phonological awareness to be measured.

Matching Familiar Figures Test 20 (MFFT20 Cairns & Cammock, 1978). Objective: reflexivity-impulsivity construct.

- Stroop Style Sun-Moon Task (Adapted version of Archibald & Kerns, 1999) Objective: to evaluate selective attention and inhibitory.

Social and Emotional Education in Austria

Martina Leibovici-Mühlberger and Christopher Greulich

Abstract

When we look back on our time at school, what do we remember? Most often it is the people, the relationships, the fun times and the challenges. Much of what we remember is based on how we felt, especially the particularly good or especially bad experiences. Given the amount of time we spend at school we come away with an overall impression of what our years of schooling were like. While it is clearly a matter of personal perception, there is a startling amount of anecdotal criticism, at times delivered with a sense of resignation, about what it was and is like to go to school in Austria. For the past ten years it has been easy to track an ongoing, and increasingly heated public and political debate about the need for comprehensive, educational reform. The growing sense of urgency has received additional momentum through critical interpretations of Austria's consistently weak performance in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study. Even more recently, despite 2011 being officially named "Jahr der Bildungsoffensive" (the Year of Education) in Austria, there was a major and very public initiative led by a former politician with support from diverse sectors of society, which successfully gained enough support for a petition with the motto, "Österreich darf nicht sitzenbleiben"[1] ("Austria cannot be allowed to fail" – a slogan playing on the idea of having to repeat a school year because one has failed). The petition demanded radical reform based on twelve core areas.[2] When the polling stations closed, at 20h00 on 10 November, 383.724 Austrians had signed the petition.[3]

There is a startling amount of anecdotal criticism … about what it was and is like to go to school in Austria.

This being said, the perceived weaknesses of the current education system are certainly receiving attention through initiatives of the government. Across the complete scope of education, these initiatives address a wide range of structural and organisational issues; the need for improved and monitored standards, educational leadership, improving pedagogical deficits through teacher selection and training, and increasing the reach of existing socio-emotional support services. It is against this contentious backdrop that the search for social and emotional education (SEE) in Austria is being carried out.

This chapter will first provide an insight into the history of education in Austria dating back to the educational reforms of Empress Maria Theresa in 1775. Then an overview of the current structure of the education system will be provided, including key statistics and features of schooling in Austria. This will highlight both the real need for general reform as well as the

difficulty of raising awareness and acceptance about the absolute necessity of providing students with evidenced based and well implemented social and emotional education programmes. Officially this task has been allocated to the Austrian Centre for Character Development and Social Learning (Österreichisches Zentrum für Persönlichkeitsbildung und soziales Lernen – ÖZEPS), which was established in 2005 by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture. An examination of ÖZEPS' overall priorities and initiatives will provide an understanding of the official direction being taken, and the extent to which social and emotional education has become a fundamental feature of the Austrian school system.

The perceived weaknesses of the current education system are certainly receiving attention through initiatives of the government.

Then three case studies will be presented as examples of school programmes which have had a positive impact on the social and emotional well-being of students. The first of these is a programme called *Schulfach Glück*, (Well-being), which was initially piloted in 2009 in six schools in Styria (a region of Austria) and has now grown to include ninety-six Styrian kindergarten, primary and secondary schools. The second case study is an officially registered programme and called *Kommunication und Sozialkompetenz*® (KoSo – Communication and Social Competence) which was originally developed by Dr. Renate Wustinger specifically for the Sir Karl Popper School in Vienna. KoSo is now being implemented in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. The third case study is about the *Schülerinnenschule (the Students' School)* in the Werkstätten- und Kulturhaus (WUK – Workshops and House of Culture), which uses one of the oldest, alternative teaching approaches in Austria. Here social and emotional education is more than a programme, it is part of the fundamental nature of the school itself.

Martina Leibovici-Mühlberger is the CEO of the ARGE Erziehungsberatung und Fortbildung GmbH, an educational institute which trains state certified counsellors and undertakes research projects in the core areas of family and youth. She is also the CEO of the ARGE Bildung and Management OG, a consulting company with the focus on work–family balance. Martina Leibovici-Mühlberger's professional background is in medicine – she is a general practitioner and has specialised as a gynaecologist and as a psychotherapist. In addition, she holds an MSc. degree in health management from the University of Budapest. She gives keynote lectures at conferences, universities and for industry internationally and holds seminars on educational matters, and different contemporary challenges and issues with regard to childhood, social and emotional education, neurobiology, social innovation, and the future development of society. She has published several books and writes articles on education and childhood on a weekly basis for one of Austria's most popular newspapers and for a monthly health magazine, is frequently invited to be interviewed on radio and television and works with policy makers. She has four children, between 22 and 7 years old.

Christopher Greulich, MA is an Australian educator with a passion for guiding, inspiring and believing in the potential of adolescents.   He has worked in Australian and International schools in Austria for over twenty years as a teacher, sports coach, creator and facilitator of pastoral programmes, and senior manager.   With degrees and training in the humanities, education, international relations and counselling Christopher Greulich is now the co-founder and CEO of The G Zone OG, a company based in Vienna, Austria. With the mission statement Be All You Can, The G Zone provides Personal Coaching for Teens and Young Adults, and guidance for those living and working with them. As the company is based in Vienna Christopher Greulich has an interest in the dynamic landscape of Austrian education, especially the extent to which the current developments will address the needs of adolescents beyond the realms of academics. He has two daughters aged 13 and 16.

The History of Education in Austria: Cultivating bureaucrats and maintaining the status quo

Austria is a central European country which, less than a hundred years ago, was an Empire under the rule of the Hapsburg family whose dynastic rule spanned approximately seven centuries. This empire stretched geographically from the current Austrian borders largely to the east, including Hungary and parts of Poland, Romania and the Ukraine. Through marriage their influence extended as far as the Netherlands, Spain and Sicily. At school Austrian children learn about this influential royal family, which provided quite a number of Holy Roman Emperors. Special attention is given to the reign of the Empress Maria Theresa (who lived from 1717 – 1780 and ruled from 1740 – 1780), who instituted a number of reforms, including those which planted the seeds of formal, compulsory education.

Considering her reforms and those of her son Joseph II, it could be said that their primary focus was to strengthen the position of the crown by undermining the influence of the

There was also to be a focus on the education of the general populace.

Empress Maria Theresa believed that for her people to be faithful Catholics and loyal subjects they needed to be at least minimally educated. There would be a new school system based on the Prussian model, which instituted compulsory attendance for students aged 5 to 13, beginning with kindergarten at age 5, specific training for teachers, national testing for all students (the test results were used to classify children for potential job training), a national curriculum set for each grade, and set text books. In 1869 complete state control of all aspects of education throughout the Empire was established through a new imperial education law (*Reichsvolksschulgesetz*). Amongst the reforms introduced through this law class sizes were reduced to a maximum of eighty on the basis of the conclusion that a recent military defeat was based on the high level of illiteracy in the Austrian army. Emperor Joseph II continued the reforms, introducing the German language as the language of instruction at university. In 1784 he decreed that at any loca-

Empress Maria Theresa believed that for her people to be faithful Catholics and loyal subjects they needed to be at least minimally educated.

regional nobility and the Church, centralising authority and strengthening the structures and efficiency of Austria's military and civil service. Regulating the high school and university education of the future administrators of the Empire was the main but not the only focus proposed by Gottfried Van Swieten, Head of the Education Commission (*Studienhofkommission*) which was founded in 1760.

tion where there was a parish church and where there were school-aged children[4], a school would be built. There were three levels of schools. The most extensive were the elementary schools, sometimes called *Trivialschulen,* which were founded to impart the classical skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. In the towns more exclusive middle schools (*Hauptschulen)* provided vocational

Rosa Schmidt-Vierthaler describes Austria's education system as a "historical corset". She quotes Stefan Hopmann as saying that approximately eighty percent of subject material still taught today has survived since the mid-nineteen century ...

instruction for the middle classes, generally forming the basis for better occupations and, for some students, a more advanced education. In addition to German, mathematics and perhaps other languages, courses provided basic skills and insights into the processes and technical knowledge of craft and service businesses. In order to provide a higher level of education for those likely to attend university, and to ensure the uniform training of teachers, the 'model' academic schools (*Normalschule)*, were also established by the Education Commission.[5] Model here refers to establishing and ensuring the 'norms' for what was considered effective teaching.

Peter Stachel in his essay entitled, "*The Austrian Education System between 1749 and 1918*"[6] pointed out that it was quite remarkable that the purposefully designed structures of the educational institutions established by the Hapsburg monarchy survived largely unchanged into most of the post-monarchial countries of the former Empire. Rosa Schmidt-Vierthaler, describes Austria's education system as a "historical corset"[7]. She refers to various features of the current school system as always having been part of the system. For example, the different types of schools, having to repeat a grade if you fail only one subject, the standard fifty-minute lesson, which may have both military and clerical origins, and the grading system of one to five. The latter was simply expanded from the original three levels of the Prussian model to now be 1 - Very Good; 2 – Good; 3 – Satisfactory; 4 – Sufficient; 5 – Not Sufficient. These grades are merely academic boundaries and are not accompanied by any written information about the individual student. Schmidt-Vierthaler also quotes the educational scientist Stefan Hopmann as saying that approximately eighty percent of subject material still taught today has survived since the mid-nineteen century; a period which focused on sustaining the economic framework of a country.

School teachers were initially drawn from the Church and the Army and they used approaches based on familiar values – loyalty to the state, a disciplined approach to learning and closing ranks in order to keep up appearances in the face of external scrutiny. Quoting a resolution from Joseph II, Stachel points out that the purpose of all educational reforms was to produce loyal servants of the state, no matter what their role or position in the social structure.[8] In addition, he comments that, rather than providing the opportunity for personal development and social advancement through education, there was a real fear about the possibility of creating permeable, social boundaries and that this was something to be guarded against. Hence the educational structures served as a means of controlling the social mobility of the general population through limiting accessibility to certain educational institutions. These elements of lack of mobility and accessibility

… the educational structures served as a means of controlling the social mobility of the general population through limiting accessibility to certain educational institutions.

are arguably still reflected in the feature of academic selection applied after only four years of primary schooling, and the training, official and even social status of teachers in the various educational institutions of Austria today.

Now a country of almost eight and a half million inhabitants, Austria became a member of the European Union (EU) in 1995. Since then it has experienced a more stringent, external examination of its policies, structures and progress. In addition, Austria's approach and progress are compared to that of its EU partners on a regular basis. This is a very positive scenario for Austrian education because, whether seeking to meet agreed standards or encouraging initiatives for improvement, education remains a central political theme. However, while accepting of its responsibilities, the process of change has

bring about meaningful reform while having to contend with constant negotiations with stakeholders involved on the frontlines of education, over arguably minor matters such as the current use of the title "Professor" for teachers in certain types of schools.

In 2011 there were 1,145,214 six to eighteen year olds in Austria.[9] The reform of education in Austria is clearly not an easy undertaking as it goes beyond the development and implementation of a few policies and initiatives. Instead it would seem that Austria is seeking to develop a new culture of education. This can only be achieved through a change in thinking amongst the general population about education, beginning with clarity about which outcomes are the most important, and a greater student focus. To bring about a change in culture there is no quick-fix and this is a difficult position for any government

Austria is seeking to develop a new culture of education.

posed many challenges to the Austrian Federal Government. The Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (BMUKK) is under constant public scrutiny and is criticized anew with the release of each new set of official findings by the Organisation for the Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), or the EU. The BMUKK is seeking to

to be in when elections are based on the short-term delivery of promises. In the meantime, the current student cohorts are having to contend with either the existing, 'old' culture of education, or are taking part in pilot programmes, some of which may lay the foundations for the new culture of education. During this time of educational reform

there needs to be clarity about the central focus of education. This should move beyond the merely academic to include a more wholistic view of the student and balanced development of their physical, emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual characteristics.

The Austrian school system

The structure below was published in June 2011.[10]

Officially every child needs to complete nine years of compulsory education. Even if a student has to repeat a school year, it is still possible to end their school education during the period of Lower Secondary Education, provided that nine years of attendance have been recorded. At this stage there is no official discussion about the extension of this compulsory period of education.
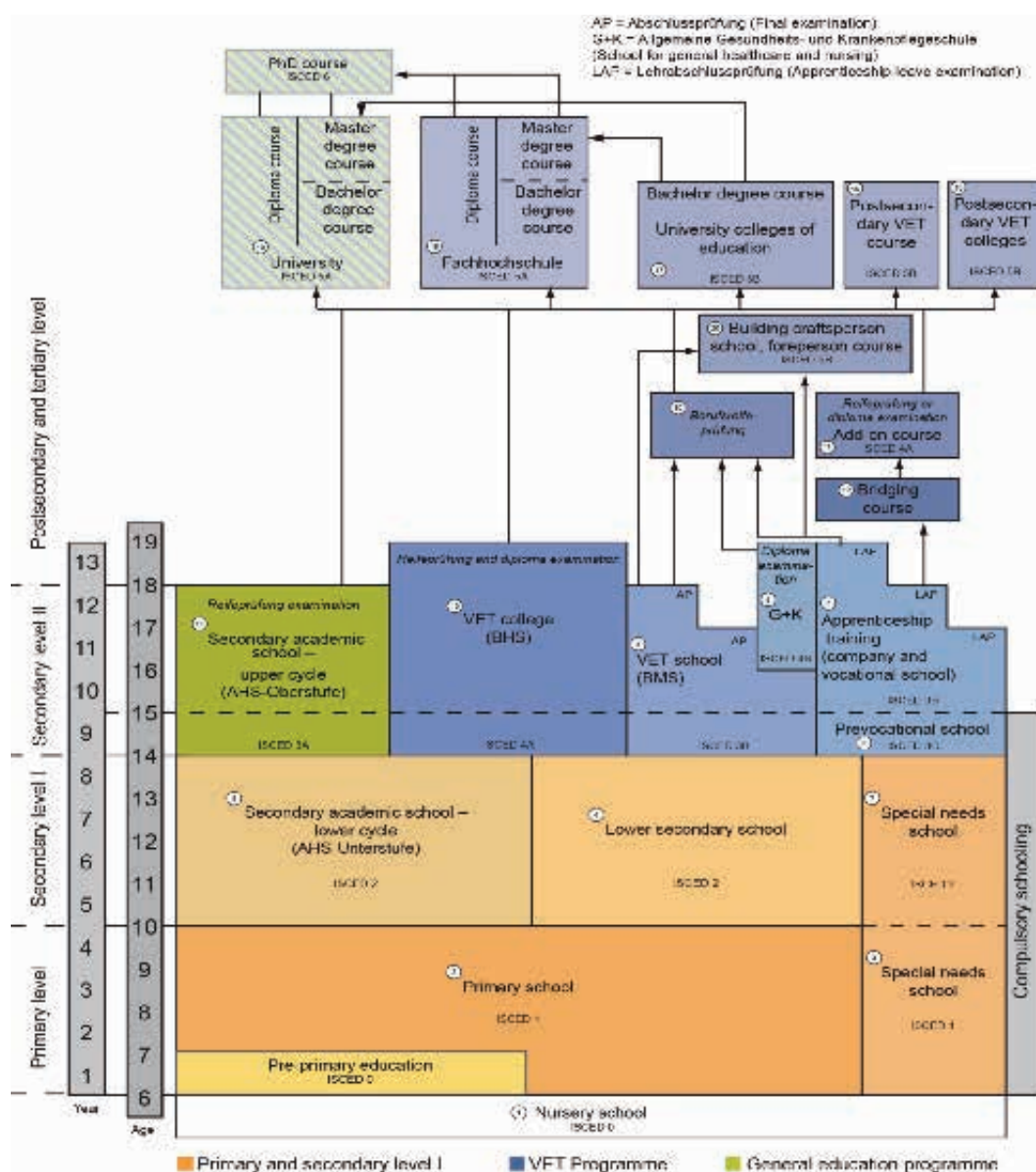
Kindergarten

Since September 2010 it is compulsory for every child from age five to attend kindergarten for at least a year, prior to entering Primary education.

Primary education (Volksschule) lasts for four years, from age 6 to 10.

Lower secondary education (age 11 to 14) lasts for four years and students may attend one of the following:

- *General secondary school (Hauptschule).* Many schools offer a combination of specialty areas such languages, information technology, art and design, music, sport, or home economics. In German, mathematics and foreign languages students are streamed and if a certain academic level is reached then students may transfer to the academic secondary school. In the third and fourth years, particular attention is paid to preparing pupils for working life. This is accomplished by means of compulsory "career orientation" classes, through job-sampling days, and through going on work-related excursions and field trips.
- *Secondary academic school – lower cycle (Allgemein bildende hohere Schulen)* These are divided into *General Academic (Gymnasium)*, *Science-based (Realgymnasium) and Economics-based (Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium)*. Beyond the basis suggested in the name, these schools may also offer a combination of the various specialty options mentioned above.

Since September 2012 a new school 'type' has officially appeared in the education system. This new type of secondary school is also referred to as the New Middle School (NMS).[11] Previously a pilot model, the NMS has now been formally established with a significant number of such schools now spread throughout the Austrian provinces. With a total of 946 middle schools in existence by the autumn of 2013, the aim is that by 2015/2016 all Lower secondary schools will be transformed into NMS and eventually only the NMS should exist as the main school for this age group.[12] The goal of the NMS is to provide a joint school for all 10 to 14 year olds who have completed the fourth grade in primary school. Apart from eliminating the separation of children into different educational avenues too early, a central feature of the NMS is a broad implementation of a new learning culture based on individualization and inner differentiation, catering to both individual learning needs and the students' own beliefs about learning in different subject areas. Instruction at the NMS follows the curriculum for the lower level (5th to 8th grade) of the academic secondary school and is designed by teachers from both types of lower secondary schools.[13]

In 2010/11 43.7% primary students transitioned into Lower secondary schools, 33% into Academic secondary schools – lower cycle, and 20.7% into the New secondary schools. The remaining students may have gone on to attend a school for children with special educational needs or to those designated as private schools with their own statutes, which may also have the official recognition to issue some type of official school report. An article in Der Standard (2013) references Statistik Austria in stating that approximately ten percent of students at various levels attend one of the 600 private schools.[14] The government supports the integration of students whose learning may be impeded in areas of reading, writing, mathematics, understanding or concentration into 'integration classes' within other school types. There are, however, also Special Needs Centres which operate as a base for mobile specialists and which have their own school for

students assessed as needing more support than can be provided in another school, for example, the significantly physically and mentally challenged or those with significant behavioural issues. Also of note here is that, while class sizes at this time were generally under 25 students, in all three types of schools some classes were larger than this and in Secondary academic schools - lower cycle 38.5% of classes had between 25 and 30 pupils, with 0.7% having more than 30 in a class.[15]

Upper secondary education (age 15 to 18/19) lasts for four to five years and includes the following options:

- *Secondary academic school – upper cycle (Allgemeinbildende hohere Schulen: Gymnasium, Realgymnasium, Wirtschaftskundliches Realgymnasium and Oberstufen-Realgymnasium)*. In these schools the programme started in the lower cycle is continued.
- *Pre-vocational polytechnic school (Polytechnische Schule - age 15-16)*. In the ninth, and a possible, voluntary tenth school year, students are prepared for a career with more general education classes, career orientation and basic vocational training. With career orientation as the basic goal of all courses numerous opportunities are created for students to become familiar with working life. A programme of company visits and work experience days at companies, non-school institutions and workshops is designed to help students select their vocation. Basic vocational training is offered in various trades (elective subjects). These correspond to a wide variety of careers in trade and industry, and enable students to acquire basic abilities, skills and knowledge (key qualifications). Depending on their vocational interests and inclinations, each student selects one of seven subject areas:

metal, electrical, wood, construction, commerce/clerical, services or tourism. Students who pass the final examination at a polytechnic school are also entitled to transfer to the second grade of a medium-level secondary vocational college of the same type. Essentially this school type provides a bridge for those needing to complete their ninth year of compulsory schooling, who are considering an apprenticeship or entering the world of employment. Provided they meet the requirements, they can also switch across to a vocational college and continue their education.

- *Vocational secondary education* (age 15 – 18/19), lasts for four or five years depending on the course chosen. For the last two decades secondary technical and vocational schools and colleges have been experiencing a steady rise in student numbers. They offer general education, further technical theory in fields such as business, engineering, agriculture, health care or tourism, as well as practical training in the form of compulsory work placements. Currently 40 per cent of Austrian teenagers choose to serve an apprenticeship and 14 per cent opt for further education at a secondary technical and vocational school.[16]

In 2010/2011 by the tenth grade or the second level of the upper secondary school (age 15/16), when the pre-vocational option has already been completed by students, 38% of school types were those specifically supporting apprentices, 35.2% were schools for intermediate or higher technical or vocational training, and only 20.1% were Academic secondary schools – upper cycle, 4.8% were for intermediate and higher level teacher training and the rest were either approved schools for general education or training. In terms of class sizes, 20% and 30% of classes in the different schools had

between 25 and 30 students, and especially in the technical or vocational schools 15% to 18% of classes had more than 30 students per class.[17]

All upper secondary streams lead to a qualification for tertiary education, either the **Reifeprufung or Matura,** which provides access to higher education. In 1997, the **Berufsreifeprufung** (Vocational Certificate) was introduced, which also gives access to university and programmes at universities of applied sciences (known as "Fachhochschulen"). Apprentices are now able to pass an examination to gain access to higher education. The new *Secondary Technical and Vocational Certificate* was designed for apprentices who have successfully passed their final apprenticeship examination and for those completing their trainings at vocational colleges, including Nursing Colleges and Technical Medical Colleges.

average of 71 percent poorer results than their Austrian born counterparts and were thus clearly disadvantaged in the system. One reason suggested for this statistic was that these students were in classes with a high percentage of other students with migrant backgrounds, and it can also be noted that there is a current lack of diversity in the cultural background of teachers.[19] A further observation was that *the Austrian education system was highly selective,* based purely on academic performance. This referred to the fact that children whose parents were not, relatively speaking well educated had less of a chance of receiving higher qualifications than in countries such as The Netherlands or Ireland. Direct reference was made to how early the selection process takes place. Around the age of 9 or 10, teachers make a decision about whether a student will attend a lower secondary school (Hauptschule) or the first level of the academic secondary school (Gymnasium) for the following year.

Direct reference was made to how early the selection process takes place (around the age of 9 or 10). (EU report, 2007).

The landscape of education in Austria

In the article "EU: Criticism about the Austrian School System"[18] released in 2007 it was reported that on a number of its educational indicators the EU was quite positive about the Austrian school system. One area however, was definitely in need of attention. Based on the findings of the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study results at the time, *students with a migrant background scored an*

The EU report was based on the findings of the OECD, which stated that countries with selective education systems generally rated poorly academically compared to countries with more inclusive systems. In Austria the level of education a student may attain was more closely linked to that of their parents than in other EU countries.

One area, which has long been the source of heated discussion, is based on the perceptions

of the work done by teachers in Austria. On the one hand their public image is that of civil servants who work half a day, have long holidays, fail to bring the students up to EU standards and are not held accountable. From the other side teachers talk of burnout symptoms, the pressure of doing the job of parents in addition to their own and of being made scapegoats. It was predictable that the role of teachers would be reviewed by the government and in February 2009 the press re-

conform more closely to other EU and OECD countries.

While under discussion the qualifications for a kindergarten teacher (which are not of university level) remain unchanged. Kindergarten teaching qualifications can be gained by completing a five-year programme, beginning after the lower secondary school level at an Institute for Kindergarten Teacher Education (*Bildungsanstalt für Kindergarten-*

(the) OECD … (has found) that countries with selective education systems generally rated poorly academically compared to countries with more inclusive systems.

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ported on an argument that broke out between government and teacher representatives about the plan for the teaching load to be increased by two contact hours a week within the teachers' contracted 40 hour week. The government based their measures on the hours worked and money earned by OECD colleagues in other countries, and the teacher union representatives interpreted this as a claim that Austrian teachers were "lazy dogs", saw the likelihood of lost jobs and threatened strike action.[20]

In Austria there is a discernable link between the low, societal recognition of the teaching profession and a hierarchy in the system of teacher training, most easily recognised at the level of income.[21] Until recently in Austria, teachers in the various schools and levels of education were not required to have the same qualifications. These qualifications varied from college diplomas to university degrees. The goal of very recent reforms to address this discrepancy is to

pädagogik - BAKIP). This provides a high school diploma and qualification for kindergarten teachers. Alternatively, students who have already gained their high school diploma can complete just two years at a college which is often attached to the BAKIP.

Before 2007 primary, lower secondary, special needs and pre-vocational school teachers were trained in three years, at post-secondary level, in *Teacher Training Colleges (Padagogische Akademien)*, each of which was attached to a school. These colleges have now been transformed into universities providing qualifications at degree level and also have the mandate to pursue occupational and application-oriented research. This move, while important in terms of training, has not yet really had an impact on the status of teaching as an occupation. Secondary academic and vocational school teachers have always been trained at university. The minimum duration of studies is nine semesters (approximately four and a half years) which includes a practical training

… the training of teachers is fundamental to improving education in Austria.

period. On completion, students sit an additional examination in their major teaching subject and are then awarded the degree of Magister/Magistra. They then have to complete one year of work experience as a probationary teacher before becoming qualified.[22]

Based on the statistic that by 2025 around half of the 120 000 teachers in Austria will be retiring it is clear that the training of teachers is fundamental to improving education in Austria.[23] Given this, the next challenge will be to move away from discussions such as whether all teachers, including primary and lower secondary teachers, have the right to call themselves by the title "Professor"[24], to focusing on discussions about the selection of potential teachers and professional performance standards in the classroom. The very practice of using titles in schools to signify status depersonalises the nature of a pupil–teacher relationship, which should contribute to a positive and safe environment where students can be supported and learn in areas other than just the academic. This fact has not been lost on many of those working directly with students.

In August 2009 in a national press article a teacher in one of the secondary academic schools is quoted as saying that Social (Competencies) Learning should become a compulsory subject in all schools.[25] The last statement in the article was that this would only work in the broadest possible context, and that to just do a non-compulsory activity under this heading would not be enough. The teacher pointed out that school was a great resource for learning social competencies. However, for this learning to take place, the inflexible structure of time and space allocation in schools would need to be addressed The article included comments about the need for a different school culture, based on respectful collaboration, where the student could learn the essential "soft skills", and how to cope with the existing pressures, fears, changes and challenges. The 2009 OECD report stated that "Austria does well in meeting their children's material needs…. but in areas of child health and safety and risk behaviours, their performance falls short of these heights". Behaviours in this report included experiences with smoking and alcohol, and also the suicide rate. While Austrian children reported liking school, "Bullying is a problem in Austria. With 16% of children reporting being bullied recently, higher than the OECD average of 11%.[26]

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Clearly the needs of students in Austria, as elsewhere in the world, stretch beyond the academic subjects. However, it can be difficult to change a culture when indicators repeatedly show that Austria is struggling to improve the academic results of students in schools. In December 2010 the Austrian authorities had to explain the PISA results, which ranked Austria thirty-one out of thirty-four places in the reading literacy average of 1660, the number of actual contact hours in the classroom is clearly below average.

On a more positive note,

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component.[27] In September 2011 Austria received a further OECD update about its progress and the title of the news article said it all: "Scolding from the OECD: Education has no Priority in Austria".[28]

The school-related statistics included the following:

- Austria belonged to those countries in which, between 1995 and 2008 the growth of expenditure on education was clearly behind the growth of the Gross National Product. In 2006 expenditure was 5.5 percent of the GDP while the OECD average was 5.7 percent.
- Students in Austria aged seven to eight, and nine to eleven, received fewer hours of instruction than students of the same age in other OECD countries, while those aged twelve to fourteen receive a little more than the OECD average.
- While the Austrian teacher has a legally contracted total teaching time of 1776 hours per year which is above the OECD

or upper vocational school or apprenticeship.
- Based on expenditure per student, Austria belonged to the countries, which have spent the most annually on educational institutions; on a combination of elements including facilities, staff and development.

In response to these statistics and the internally perceived, ongoing international humiliation due to the PISA results, it was no surprise that in the space of only a few months between the end of 2011 and early 2012 there was a polarising public petition called the "Education Initiative", (*Bildungsinitiative*).[29] This was followed by another round of very heated negotiations as the Federal Minister announced the intention to create a new contractual basis for the role and working conditions of teachers. With regards to the first it could be argued that each of the points raised in the petition can be found within the overall government plan for educational reform, and that it is the time being taken to make significant and visible progress which is the primary source of tension.

As can be seen through the eyes of the media, the process of reforming education in Austria over the past five years has been a serious struggle. It would appear that most of the public discussions have revolved around the nature of the structure, content, staffing and delivery of the academic curriculum. That the students have needs beyond the academic is clearly recognised and evidenced in discussions. However, it is difficult to find social and emotional initiatives in education at the forefront of reform. This is not to say that such initiatives do not exist.

The social and emotional landscape of education in Austria

According to the Austrian Federal Minister for Education, The Arts and Culture, Dr. Claudia Schmied, in the foreword of the official publication, *Educational Reform for Austria: The Implementation of the Complete Concept:* "The prosperity of our country is determined in the classroom".[30] With this unequivocal statement of what is at stake, further statements are made under the heading: *Why it is worth the effort. Modern educational policy.* They cover a range of key topics, but do not seem to be grouped to highlight more than general priorities. Depending on how one reads the list or how much one is to assume as a given, there is no stated commitment to the student as a whole person, beyond supporting their ability to achieve academic outcomes and contribute to the economic foundation of the country. An examination of the stated government goals, directly related to school and with an implementation timeline from 2007/2008 to 2016/2017, shows a strong focus on improving the framework for the delivery of a better education, but less of a focus on the wholistic needs of the student.

In the storm of reform teachers certainly have their hands full in terms of not losing sight of each individual student while providing all students with a strong basis of knowledge and skills. In conversations with students one very quickly hears about the culture of learning in each classroom and what priorities and expectations have been set either directly or indirectly. Together the teachers and support staff of a school establish the learning culture of the school. At the simplest level the culture of a school can be understood as 'the pattern of how we do things' in our school, and the 'we' includes students, staff and the role of parents. If we were to ask first-time visitors to a school to independently comment on as many features of the people and the place as they can and then to look for similarities in what they have said, and then do the same with the students, parents and staff, we will get a glimpse of the culture of the school. What is it then, which is spoken about as the culture of Austrian schools and student–staff relationships?

In preparing students for the demands of the modern world, the primary purpose of Austrian schools has been to deliver education to ensure the future of Austria's economic foundations. The students are products of a system, which is creating the necessary parts of the machinery at all levels. As such the role of teachers has always been to impart the required level of knowledge and to sort the students out into the appropriate channels for further training, something, which already happens at age ten in Austria. This role has also defined the fundamental nature of the relationships in schools from primary through to the end of secondary education. One quickly realises the serious nature of learning when formal assessment begins in grade one, the majority of assessments throughout a student's school life are content based tests/examinations, and the main skill required to graduate from school is the ability to memorise subject content. While there is a broad spectrum of subjects they are all essentially content based and assessed, and

the three main subjects, which are particularly heavily weighted in determining a student's progression through school are mathematics, German and English. Education in Austria is clearly content focused and not student centred, and the role of teachers is to impart knowledge and to test it. Positive relationships in Austrian schools are based on individual personalities rather than systemic values of mutual respect and collaboration, or the role a teacher may play in nurturing the personality of a child or adolescent. In fact the latter is seen as being the domain of the parent and the partnership of student, teacher and parent is played out on the level of academic performance or discipline.

In this time of reform how is the culture of schools in Austria being addressed, guided, and nurtured and to what end? It also raises the question about whether this is one of the roles that social and emotional education in

motivated and contrived and in its implementation more like an enforced initiative and lacking in fundamental acceptance.

It will certainly take time to change the values of the system and regardless of the perception of new policies, they do provide an opportunity for concerned and motivated stakeholders to show initiative and start programmes to address the needs of children and adolescents in schools.

One such example, clearer in its goal, and less intrusive than a compulsory initiative is the government programme, which began in 2007 called "Together for fairness and against violence – The white feather". This is a major, ongoing initiative, originally developed to raise awareness about juvenile violence and bullying. The objective of the programme is to actively demonstrate an ongoing commitment to ensuring that children and teenagers grow up and learn in a

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Austria can play? In the first instance, it is possible to find a menu heading on the BMUKK website called Social Learning (*Soziales Lernen*), where it is noted that schools are places built on a foundation of mutual respect, where social skills and competencies are transmitted, learned and used. As such, schools are required to consciously function in such a way so as to serve as an environment for social learning experiences.[31] Against the backdrop of existing school culture as outlined above, and the public outcry for immediate and effective reform, this concept may seem a little politically

safe environment. The White Feather programme consists of a set of resources to be used by students, teachers and parents for the prevention of or, where necessary, intervening in juvenile violence (See http://www.gemeinsam-gegen-gewalt.at). Regarding the previously mentioned OECD statistic of 16% of Austrian students in 2009 reporting recent experiences of bullying, this is a very important initiative.[32] Since 2010 the government's goal to increase the number of school psychologists and educational social workers was also implemented. Overall it would appear that the social and

emotional well-being of Austria's young in schools definitely has some priority. However, the combination of individual initiatives started by interested and motivated teachers and overall school programmes introduced in response to government policies still need leadership, guidance and drive; officially this is one of ÖZEPS' tasks.

The Austrian Centre for Personality Development and Social Learning (ÖZEPS - http://www.oezeps.at), part of the Austrian Department of Education, was established in 2005. The stated mandate of this centre is to provide momentum for the promotion and "anchoring" of the methods, models and opportunities for implementation of personal and societal competencies within all educational and training institutions. This includes teacher training, setting and monitoring professional standards, and organisational development. In addition, ÖZEPS' role is to co-operate with students, parents and guardians.[33] ÖZEPS describes itself as a 'learning' organisation which is building a bridge between educational research and the reality of school; so between theory and practice.[34]

Put simply it is redefining the scope of LEARNING. This is not necessarily a new approach in global terms, but for Austria this perspective supports the push for educational reform. ÖZEPS has taken the process of LEARNING, linked to RELATIONSHIP (*BEZIEHUNG*) and TEACHING AND LEARNING (*UNTERRICHT*) as the thematic framework for what it is promoting.

Learning is a social and active process, only possible with the participation of the learner, involving both motivation and interest, and taking place in specific contexts.

- *Learning and teaching* is the lynchpin for the successful development of every school

in areas such as the taught curriculum, assessment and reporting, and pastoral care programmes.
- *A good relationship* based on trust and respect between the student and the teacher is a prerequisite for successful learning and teaching.[35]

Therefore ÖZEPS sees its role as strengthening on all levels the personality of educators and those being educated, to support them in developing effective learning relationships, and in shaping the contexts of learning and teaching in order to make learning a fruitful experience.[36] Based on this foundation some of the areas being developed by ÖZEPS in terms of materials, programmes and training include: Individualised learning and differentiated teaching, positive assessment and achievement evaluation, prevention of violence (the previously mentioned White Feather initiative), peer mediation and co-working with stakeholders. They are also involved in initial teacher training, ongoing professional development, and the establishment and implementation of professional standards in education.

According to Mag. Brigitte Schröder, the first and current Head of ÖZEPS, the directive from the BMUKK to schools is unequivocally clear. Learning in its broadest context is to be made available to each individual student in such as way so that they can access it and participate fully to the best of their ability.[37] What the minimum requirements are and how the consistency of what is delivered is monitored is unclear and ÖZEPS is currently in the process of completing a report about Social Learning (SL) as it is being delivered in Austrian schools. This report will also serve as a collection of recommendations and tools for all schools. While the aim is to eventually integrate Social Learning (SL) into the learning and teaching of all subjects, it already exists as an individual subject area in many

schools. This subject is compulsory in all secondary schools except for the Secondary academic schools, which are in the process of curriculum review. According to guidelines, SL may be delivered during one or two timetabled hours per week or delivered in blocks in the form of projects or other initiatives.

'Personality Development and Social Learning' events are regularly organized for teachers by ÖZEPS to promote the learning of social competencies by teachers, and provide professional support and networking across schools. An example would be the conference held in March 2012 specifically on the theme of Peer Learning.

ÖZEPS clearly has a big job ahead of it and will have its work cut out to maintain a balance between the needs of the students and educators in the broad context of LEARNING, and the direction and expectations of its 'employer' – the BMUKK, in the midst of the battle for reform. While Personality Development and Social Learning have been made pillars of the new direction in education they have not been thrust into the spotlight. ÖZEPS faces a number of hurdles such as the still selective structure of schooling with all its biases, where academic performance is rated as a very high priority, and where there is a group of teachers for whom change, for whatever reason, may not be desirable. Perhaps it is politically unwise to promote the well-being of stakeholders in a public battle over standards, working conditions and comparative statistics. Instead it may be better to maintain a very strong focus on Learning in the broadest context of Learning and Teaching, and to let this guide any change. In this way ÖZEPS would remain a facilitator and this approach would allow for creative ideas to grow and initiatives to speak for themselves. One such initiative doing just that is in the Austrian state of Styria.
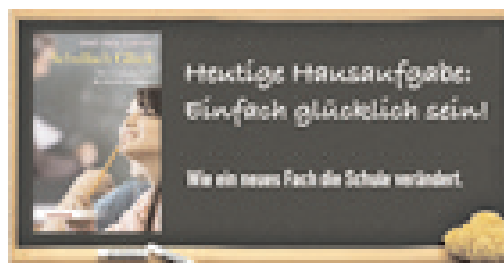
When school and happiness do not collide but coincide

"The homework for today – Simply be happy! – **How a new subject is changing school.**"[38] This idea was based on a perceived need from students and teachers and, with the development of a new model, was implemented in 2009/2010 with six pilot schools, twenty-one classes, almost 500 students, over 2000 hours of preparation and review, for the delivery of about 800 contact hours.[39] By 2010/2011 there were forty-nine schools[40] and a list for 2012/2013 indicates an additional 45 schools associated with the programme.[41] While the majority are primary schools, the programme is also in middle, secondary academic, and vocational schools. In German, the school subject is called "Glück", and this name is the cause of either consternation or amusement because the term used in German can mean both "luck" and "to be happy". The Glück programme was developed by Ernst Fritz-Schubert, the head teacher of the Willy-Hellpach-Schule in Heidelberg, Germany and was then adapted for the Austrian context by Dr. Chibici Revneanu. As such it is important to understand a little of the background to the subject from Ernst Fritz-Schubert's perspective.

a) "Glück" as developed by Ernst Fritz-Schubert

Fritz-Schubert wrote a book (2008)[42] about the process of introducing the subject "Glück" into his school and it should be remembered that the setting for much of what he wrote is Germany, although one can usually draw

parallels with the system in Austria, given the connected history of school development in the two countries. In the first six chapters he describes the reality for a student in a school system which starts to be selective when the child is ten; an age after which some of the most important processes and stages of maturation and brain/cognitive development take place. This is then placed in the wider global setting in terms of the impact of economic competition, which fuels the motivation of countries to ensure that their children and adolescents can keep up or be ahead of others. This is linked to the rise of stress-

are able experience even the most challenging of experiences from a mentally healthier position and perspective. From this point on Fritz-Schubert moves more in the direction of thinking about the 'how'. He introduces the concept of "Glück" as "to be happy" in the context of "moments of happiness" as well as an overall sense of positive wellbeing in one's life.[45] In the search for and consideration of various sources of happiness and well-being, the focus fell on what the Austrian therapist Viktor E. Frankl calls the "existential vacuum" or the lack of a sense of purpose; something Fritz-Schubert described as being com-

In systems where having to repeat a year or being relegated to 'lower' schools were options the (levels of school-related) fears were especially strong.

related illnesses in the young and statistics, which were beginning to show that school-related fears were now evident in an alarming number of children. The level of school-related fear increased through the grade levels. In systems where having to repeat a year or being relegated to 'lower' schools were options the fears were especially strong. Needless to say, the roles and expectations of parents and educators were also highlighted as having a significant impact.[43]

As an interesting perspective, Fritz-Schubert then refers to the words of psychologist, Alina Wilms, who coordinated the psychological response team for victims after a shooting rampage, when she stated that, "Children must be raised tougher to withstand disappointment, to think positively in difficult situations and to search for new perspectives".[44] This clearly refers to the personality of children which must be developed so that they

mon amongst students for whom school was merely a cognitive exercise.[46] Filling this existential vacuum with opportunities for self-development, self-discovery, selflessness and even challenge is a way of addressing the matter of purpose.

In discussing the need for children and adolescents to learn to trust themselves and others, four elements from research on resilience were identified. All of them refer to the nature of the relationships surrounding a student. These elements are: strong ties to a role model or mentor, the atmosphere of the school, the young person's social network, and the family. Within the school it is clear that members of staff must take on responsibility for more than just the academic context, as they clearly determine the nature of the environment. Teachers are there to give support and orientation to students. Fritz-Schubert states that educators essentially seek

to impart a sense of 'humanity' with the appropriate 'values' such as justice, honesty and freedom. Through experiences of demonstrated honesty, openness and tolerance and the personal values of respect, trust, independence and responsibility a sense of harmony should be established. While there is no question that standards and expectations can be high and challenging goals for personal achievement set, a focus on mistakes, unfair or irrelevant consequences, or a lack of choice, consideration and empathy would essentially shake the foundations of a student's trust in themselves and others.[47]

programme was made up of a wide cross-section of occupations all related to working with people.

b) The Austrian Chapter of "Glück"
While the philosophy, rationale and structural framework of "Glück" are basically the same in Germany and Austria, the exact content and methods do vary.

In the year 2000, the first primary school teachers in the province of Styria became "Glück" 'personality tutors'. In Austria the Pedagogical University in Styria is the base for

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So the challenge for a school is to focus on the student in a manner, which promotes personal growth on all levels while maintaining the integrity of being a formal institution of education. If this is achieved the students will feel valued, have or develop a sense of purpose about this time in their lives, while constantly developing their personality and the resources they need to feel confident about moving on beyond school.

To more concretely define the thematic areas of the programme Fritz-Schubert looked at the subject called "Well-Being" run at Wellington College, a private boarding school in England[48] and at the work of Lord Richard Layard who wrote the book, *Happiness: Lessons from a New Science.*[49] Fritz-Schubert also thought about how the latest knowledge of neuro-biology, neuro-psychology and sports science could be used in school and in the end his creative team that developed the

Glück macht Schule
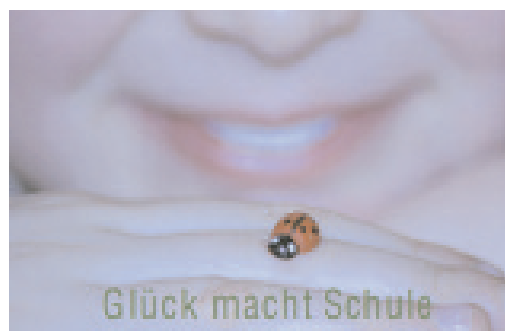
the introduction of "Glück" as a subject in schools, and, as was the case in Germany, the project was given a scientific research status, whereby data would be collected and evaluated over an initial period of four years. The "Glück" model is based on a specific curriculum, differentiated to cover all levels of schooling (ages 6 to 18) and is based on six modules; one more than in Germany. Overall the content of the five modules is the same and the additional module is 'The Self and Social Responsibility'.

The stated goals of the whole programme are to educate happy and self-assured students, impart life skills, and to maintain a focus on the psychological and physical health of the children and adolescents, thereby also establishing a foundation for the prevention of violence in Styrian schools.

The pedagogical delivery of the subject is activity and project-oriented, and to support teachers there is professional development conducted by the Pedagogical University of Styria, a handbook with useful models and examples of lessons, and an online platform for the exchange of information and ideas. For staff there is a weekend training workshop per module and an official certificate is awarded upon the completion of all six modules. It is not compulsory for a teacher to complete all six modules. However, the teacher responsible for a particular module in their school is required to have completed the training for that module. . Students are not graded but they are required to keep a personal journal to keep track of their thoughts and reflections about their experiences in each topic area. As opposed to Germany where students can also choose this subject for matriculation, in Styria it is considered a supportive subject for learning life skills. Once adopted by the school it is compulsory for the students to participate in the programme. The framework of delivery is based on one lesson per week during a thirty-six week school year. However, schools have autonomy in deciding how this time will be spent; for example, in individual project days, a project week or in a lesson once a week.[50]

The six modules are:

1 The Enjoyment of Life - Emotional Well-Being (Freude am Leben-Seelisches Wohlbefinden)
2 The Enjoyment of Personal Achievement (Freude an der eigenen Leistung)
3 Nutrition and Physical Well-Being (Ernährung und körperliches Wohlbefinden)
4 The Body in Motion (Der Körper in Bewegung)
5 The Body as the Medium of Expression (Der Körper als Ausdrucksmittel)
6 The Self and Social Responsibility (Das Ich und die soziale Verantwortung)

The first module, which has the motto, "to strengthen the strengths", is designed to highlight that optimism and a positive, self-image increases a sense of wellbeing, and respectful contact with others creates a good atmosphere. Students take a good look at themselves and others from various perspectives in the contexts of their 'identity' and what it means to 'be happy' or experience 'well-being'. In the second module the students are guided to recognise that effort and commitment bring about positive emotions and that happiness or wellbeing is actually a dynamic process in which they can be pro-active and initiate change. Challenge, potential and realisation of goals are normal parts of life to be encouraged. Here a topic of focus is the student's world of learning in a broad sense; exploring their own learning patterns and competencies and considering how these can be best used and developed. Often students lack adequate nutrition in their daily lives and this is addressed through Module Three which addresses nutrition, how it impacts on one's ability to perform, and the direct connection between eating habits and health. Students get the opportunity to explore the world of agricultural produce, spices, and herbs, by using all their senses. They experience the benefits of a shared meal in terms of preparation and consumption as sources of wellbeing and consider the cultural differences of table culture. In Module Four the main point is that movement contributes significantly to the promotion of an individual's general state of health and leads to an overall sense of wellbeing. Additionally it serves as a good

release valve for aggression. Schools are encouraged to consider activities beyond the realms of traditional sport and competition. The intention is to help the student discover what they enjoy in terms of movement, individually and in a group. The module also provides some cognitive background to physical improvement and achievement, and thereby helps students to learn about their body and to know how it feels with a balance between movement and relaxation.[51]

Taking into account the connection between body and mind, or the physical and the emotional, the fifth module, the Body as a Medium of Expression is aimed at providing students with different contexts through which to explore this. With an introduction to the dramatic arts, students individually and in groups experiment with and present or perform the elements of voice through speech and sound, and the body through expression and movement. This promotes a greater sense of awareness about the 'roles' played by people and the positive development of creativity and fantasy. Further to this, a connection to the rhythms of nature is sought. Last but not least is module six, based to some degree on Fritz-Schubert's discussion about a sense of purpose. Designed to bring forth a connection between the search for meaning and personal wellbeing through the experience of empathy and selflessness, this module is about taking action as an individual or as a group to serve the needs of the wider community.[52]

At the end of the 2009/2010 school year, the educational authority of Styria issued a press release in which the results of a survey of all 'Glück' pilot schools were made public. No information was provided about the nature of the survey. The press release included comments that:

- The trust between teachers and students had developed and deepened so that even

conflict situations from outside school could also be handled in class discussions.
- The students developed a sense of pleasure regarding their own school performance.
- There was a better climate in the classroom.
- The 'Glück' journal was a major anchor for the students.
- The working atmosphere with the students was often very enjoyable and most of the time they were very enthusiastic.
- "The work with the students in this hour also made us, the teachers, happy."
- 'Glück' is the new favourite subject for students![53]

Additional feedback from students and teachers provided by the Pedagogical University in Styria included:

- As in no other subject, we could meet the needs of the students and get to the bottom of diverse problems.
- Students identify with the subject of "Glück" (it is important to them).
- Students take responsibility for themselves – and develop a sense of social responsibility.
- It can only work with the commitment and conviction of the teachers.[54]

In the "Glück" programme it is not usually the students who decide what it is that they should be taught, and they might not even understand why they are learning something particular or doing a certain activity, but it is the students who reflect on what they are being taught and it is in the students' reflections that the teachers find the purpose of their teaching work. The subject 'Happiness' or 'Wellbeing' is being delivered by motivated and trained staff with the aim of achieving the goal of educating children to be happy and self-assured, and focusing on relevant life skills which will ultimately generate a positive cycle which will have its own momentum.

Teachers who have opted to be part of this new subject are clearly benefiting personally, as they explore the concepts of 'happiness' and 'well-being' themselves and then share this with their students. For example, teachers commented on the fact that it was a lovely experience to explore the ideas of nutrition with the students and then to purchase ingredients together, prepare meals as a group and to sit down to share them properly. Also that in the module about the body in motion they had the opportunity to try different kinds of physical activity beyond the sports programmes of their schools, such as kendo, kayaking or dance. With the growth of this programme there will be the familiar challenges faced by all new programmes such as meeting the demand for training or the consistency of delivery by a staff still fortunate enough to be able to choose to participate in the programme.

It may be an early indicator that of the 94 schools registered with the programme in 2012/13, 60 are primary schools and 20 are some form of the lower secondary school[55]. However, given the very positive start made in schools at all levels, the support by the authorities, the reported benefits for the students and staff, and the opportunity to influence the traditional culture of relationships within Austrian schools, this pilot programme is providing a social and emotional momentum.

From a programme which is riding a wave of growing popularity and public awareness to one which is perhaps less known in Austrian educational circles, but which is also making an impact and spreading within and beyond the borders of Austria.

The Way of KoSo⊚
(Communication and Social Competence)

"I see myself seeing myself"
Paul Valéry

"I see myself seeing us"
KoSo

"We are reflection"
Roman Braun[56]

Information about this programme is not widely distributed and as such it was sought directly from the founder of **Ko**mmunication and **So**cialkompetenz (KoSo), Dr. Renate Wustinger. The English translation of this programme is Communication and Social Competence and in this case study it will be referred to by its original acronym, KoSo. Until recently Dr. Wustinger was a teacher and the coordinator for KoSo at the Sir Karl Popper School (SKPS), which is part of the Wiedner Secondary Academic School in Vienna. This semi-independent school was established in 1998 as a pilot school for the support and advancement of gifted students and Dr. Wustinger joined the faculty as a teacher of French. She pursued ongoing personal and professional development in the areas of didactics, mediation, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), and occupational supervision amongst others, and at some point the idea of a subject teaching students content and skills from these and similar areas was considered. In 2000/2001 the programme was born. Given that the school itself was a pilot school, it was possible to develop KoSo as a pilot project, approved by the Vienna School Authorities. While there may be some variety in the delivery of KoSo in different schools it should be noted that the consistency and quality of the programme is maintained by way of the fact that it is a registered product ⊚, and an organisation must receive the approval of Dr. Wustinger to offer it. The primary sources of information regarding the programme are the website (www.koso.at), the book outlining the methodology[57], the teacher work book[58], and interviews with Dr. Wustinger and students in the programme.

While attending a KoSo lesson for Grade 6 students (aged 15 – 16) of a Secondary Academic School a comment made by the teacher before they began a teamwork activity was, "This should be interesting because there are a lot of Alphas in this class." Also, "This group's main theme is 'dominance'"[59] This was a reference to the fact that the same group had completed a number of such activities and in the reflections and discussions about the application of group dynamics theory which followed the above themes had emerged. The students were given a task to complete, which required coordinated movement and communication. Each of the students, standing in a circle had a string connected in the centre to a ring. Below the ring was a small, wire loop like a trapeze. Standing around on the floor were small, wooden cuboid blocks, each with a slit cut into it at particular angle. The task for the group was to manoeuvre the trapeze to the slit of an agreed block, pick it up and place it in the centre of the circle. Each block was to be

placed on the previous one to construct a tower. In round one they were allowed to speak and in the second round the task was to be completed in silence.

It was clear from the practiced manner in which the group engaged with the task, that they had done quite a few such activities. This, however, did not mean that that they were 'pretending' in the presence of a guest and that personality traits were not evident in members of the group. They just got on with the task at hand and according to the teacher each member of the group was authentic. For anyone who has participated in or facilitated such group activities, it would be clear that this was not an unusual task, but it was also not an easy one.

What was remarkable was the nature of the discussions at the point of task evaluation and reflection. The students were examining all elements of the task and the behaviour of the participants, including themselves, in a

"When the human being observes themselves in their own 'looking at the world', and shares with others what has been perceived, then they are particularly close to their own being (human)." (Wurm, 2012).

very intellectual manner, referring to the terminology of group dynamics theory and models of communication. A look at the written material produced about and for the programme, would lead to the observation that the programme is based on a very strong theoretical foundation and essentially delivered on a cognitive level. So where is the social and emotional learning?

The pedagogical goal of KoSo is an ontological one – the study of the nature of existence and being.

> "When the human being observes themselves in their own 'looking at the world', and shares with others what has been perceived, then they are particularly close to their own being (human). That the abilities, commonly quoted and valued in the working world as 'soft skills', can also be acquired is a side-

dividual interpretations and reactions. KoSo is considered both a subject and a "methodology or even a 'meta-methodology' for interpersonal communication, whereby in a particular setting the students experience the complexities of communication, observe and include themselves in the observation, which…. allows for a very special form of learning."[61] This systemic-constructivist approach is emphasized throughout the programme material and the introduction of the teaching workbook states that KoSo is not called SoKo because it is communication which is seen as the primary element and the foundation for social competency. As such the existing constructs of knowledge and perceived realities are dealt with as the result of communication. Through various activities the students gain an insight into systemic connections at various levels – the individual, the group, organisations, and society.[62] The subject material for this programme is very

… simulations, group challenges, role-plays and theatre improvisation are important methods of teaching.

effect: It is about embracing without fear, and living with, the competency of personal liberty or freedom and the responsibility resulting from this."[60]

This is certainly a lofty philosophy, however this vision also makes clear the high expectations of the programme and the belief that these are achievable. As with ÖZEPS, which works with the concept of 'learning' and the Pedagogical University of Styria which works with 'happiness or wellbeing', for the Sir Karl Popper School (SKPS) and KoSo the focus is 'communication' in its widest theoretical and practical contexts, intricately linked with the social condition of cultural, situational and in-

extensive and theories, models and tools range from areas such as streams of constructivism, transactional analysis, and elements of neuro-linguistic programming and family systems sculpting to conversation techniques, managing intra- and interpersonal conflict, leadership styles and social and organisational networks.

Essential to the teaching and learning process of KoSo is the connection to one's actions or behaviour in concrete situations. As such it would be appropriate to see KoSo as an activity-based subject. This means that activities such as simulations, group challenges, role-plays and theatre improvisation are important

methods of teaching. When asked, students completing their fourth and final year of KoSo indicated that generally speaking, during the first two years it was approximately a 50 – 50 split in time between theory and practice, and during the final two years when they had chosen to do KoSo as a graduation subject the split was about 70 – 30 in favour of theory.[63] The process of reflection is considered at the heart of KoSo and in the reflection process nothing is considered to be irrelevant. The teachers and students are part of the context and provide for themselves and each other the material and forum for the processes of KoSo.

"What happens if nothing happens? Something always happens! Even if nothing happens, there is the question, "Why did nothing happen?"[64]

The typical KoSo progression of communication sees a change in the focus of the reflection. This means that students would reflect upon the nature and role of each of the elements in the order listed below:

1.Perception
2. Emotion
3. Language
4. Methods
5. Theories[65]

In the midst of this activity, communication, reflection and social interaction, we then see how the social and emotional needs of the students are also being met on a variety of levels – understanding is the key. They begin to recognize and understand the components of social settings and interactions, and experience in a very focused manner the various elements which play a role in constructing each context. An example of this would be dealing with a conflict, which may have occurred in school. If the students involved had already had KoSo training it is likely that through activities and/or role-playing, they may have

examined the nature of conflict in depth and in a variety of settings. As such, in addressing a conflict in school, through their level of understanding, the students involved would be able to more quickly arrive at a point of resolution, either by themselves or with the support of other students or staff. Reflection is a shared process and the perspectives and interpretations of others confront each learner. Differences are a central and inevitable feature of each KoSo experience and then in a process called 'Re-Entry', the learners decide how much and in what capacity they might take the results of their reflections into account with regards to their own, future actions.[66]

The handbook states that in KoSo there is opportunity for growth in three areas:

- The dimension of '**Personality**' – to improve readiness/preparedness for change.
- The dimension of '**Knowledge**' – to improve the ability to make choices.
- The dimension of '**Social Interaction**' – to improve the ability to communicate.[67]

So how does KoSo look from the perspective of the student? As a subject it has its place in the upper grades of the school (the final four years of school), and in the SKPS this is delivered in two compulsory lessons a week for grades five to eight (approximately ages 15 to 18), and from 2003/2004 onwards KoSo could be chosen by students as a subject for examination and graduation. Additionally the SKPS has a coaching programme for the students which, according to Dr Wustinger, allows the students to address other personal and school-based needs or concerns, and does not therefore affect KoSo as a subject.[68] This means that KoSo is first and foremost a subject taught within the timetable and not a programme or tool for handling the challenges of daily school life faced by the students. KoSo is not a method designed for deliberate application to school situations. However, by

providing an increased understanding and awareness of human contexts KoSo contributes to a smoother running of the system to the benefit of those in it.

On both the official website and in the methodology book one can find the reflections of Magdalena Steinrück after she completed four years of KoSo. She begins with the comment that KoSo has the peculiar feature that it can be connected to everything, a sort of "universal versatility". Magdalena's first phase of experiences with KoSo was shared with twenty three other students who did not know each other. This changed rapidly as the first lessons were filled with communication

point in time for each individual student that they 'realised' what was going on. The "oh now I get it" moment. This might have come unexpectedly, however, as it was usually at a moment when they, as individuals, were particularly engaged in trying to find an answer or understand 'why' something was the case; and frequently this realisation came about during the process of reflection at the end of an activity.

Magdalena stated that the second phase of KoSo began two years later for her when she chose it as one of her subjects for graduation. A number of students who also did so gave reasons such as enjoying the

"KoSo gave me self-confidence when I expressed an observation which led to a new direction of thought and a turn in the process of the group." (Magdalena Steinrück).

activities and the flow of or integration of the subject into their school life was helped by its regularity. There was no real sense of working on personal development as the students enjoyed both interaction and the discovery of new things together. There was a discovery of discovering taking place and she felt that intuitively she knew the foundations were being laid for important realisations. The significance of reflection was learned as a familiar pattern of questions became obvious, and understood better when this pattern was applied to the emotional states in activities where various levels of communication were identified.[69] The students in the KoSo classes explained that at first they did not really understand why they were doing things such as reflecting in a specific way and repeating the process with each activity. It was usually at a

experiences of the previous two years or wanting what they perceived as the 'final picture' of the programme.[70] During this phase it was felt that the skills that had been practiced could now be applied effectively and students described enjoying moments when they experienced the recognition of something familiar or important in another context, or experiencing moments of discomfort in real life and applying a model from class to then take action or resolve situations.[71] In the programme there was then a move towards bringing in the larger contexts of organisational and societal structures, but also towards an even greater intra-personal focus. Magdalena described this phase as like an oval running track when one would pass the same spot over and over again, but still move forward overall, because while it is in

principle the same spot, the next time round it is of course different in some way.[72] The final year of KoSo is more philosophical in nature and connected to theory. However, by this stage students are able to connect theory and their everyday experiences. At this point Magdalena described that they were then given the same experience as when KoSo had first started for them – their teacher confronted them with material which directly challenged their assumption that they now had a strong basis or construct for dealing with the world. This was a reminder that just because you can "see seeing", "discover discovering", and that you think you can now observe yourself in the act of observing, it does not mean that some sort of end has been reached – after all this was never the point of KoSo.[73]

> "KoSo is what you make of it. KoSo gave me self-confidence when I expressed an observation which led to a new direction of thought and a turn in the process of the group. Every contribution counts and through this KoSo can become everything, just not nothing. After all even nothing is something."[74]

As one could well imagine, the degree to which a student might access what is offered through KoSo, on cognitive, social and emotional levels may depend on a number of factors such as personal engagement, level of academic ability or the type of school. The fourth year students who were interviewed agreed that the course is VERY teacher determined. They were of the opinion that it is not only the knowledge of the teacher but very much the experience and personality of the teacher which determines the 'success or effectiveness' of the course. It is a way of thinking and harder to teach or share than content.[75] While it is no guarantee for effective teaching, since 2003/2004 various Pedagogical Universities and individual schools

provide training for teachers who will teach or want to learn about KoSo. To understand the extent and framework of what teachers need to learn about KoSo to start teaching the subject, a school in Kilchberg, Zurich announced that prior to starting the course teachers would undergo six days of training with Dr. Wustinger. They would cover, amongst other topics:

- the essence and fundamental approach of KoSo, the distinctions between this subject and other social learning programmes, and connecting KoSo to the rest of the curriculum.
- the didactic principles for teaching KoSo, models of communication, activities for perception and interpretation, feedback structures.
- the relevance and significance of constructivism for pedagogy and communication.
- activities using improvisation theatre, basics of group and team dynamics, models of conflict transformation, and conflict free communication in school.[76]

As one might imagine, such training is likely to be very intense, especially if this direction of content and skills is completely new to a person. This introductory training is no guarantee of a quality level of delivery and schools would certainly have to consider how to ensure ongoing support for staff and students as they build the basis of this subject. The effectiveness of the programme would be helped if teachers already have some background in these areas, and if not, team teaching or rotating students through units taught by an 'expert' teacher could be an option. There is likely to be some discussion about whether KoSo is timetabled as a formal subject in a school, for which class levels it is compulsory, and whether students will be awarded marks and an overall grade in their end of year school report. The cognitive level

is really aimed at the older students (ages 15 to 18/19) in a school system and even they will need time to personally experience and understand their own realisations, if the programme is to be delivered according to its original vision. While an exciting option with non-academic benefits, with regards the topic of this paper, in the end KoSo is not a tool designed to provide an immediate measure of support and learning directly in the context of social and emotional education. Schools will require other programmes to address the needs of all students.

The SchülerInnenschule in the Werkstätten- und Kulturhaus (WUK) (The Students' School in the Workshops and House of Culture)

The final case study is different from the first two in that it goes beyond being an additional programme or subject. In this case the nature and structure of this more flexible school model is based on the social and emotional needs of the students.

This is an initiative developed by a small private school. The so-called Schülerinnenschule in the Werk- und Kulturhaus, (the Students'

Hofmühlgasse (Freie Schule Hofmühlgasse) and the School Collective (Schulkollektive), the Schülerinnenschule in the WUK is one of the oldest, private and alternative school projects centred around social and emotional education in Austria. The Schülerinnenschule is based on democratic principles, which underpin all decision making processes and engage pupils, teachers and parents in a constantly moderated communication process about the nature of daily school life, structural questions, school governance and the range of projects offered by the school. This means that the school seeks to operate on the principle of shared solution building and decision

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School in the Workshops and House of Culture) was founded in 1979 and since 1982 has been situated in Vienna`s ninth district. It is a school for students aged 9 to 18 and currently has approximately 50 students. Other than the so called Free School

making in as many areas as possible while adhering to the requirements of the Vienna School Board.

There is an agreed set of values and principles that all members of the school community

must respect as a basis of contributing to the community. These include non-violent, respectful behaviour, a certain mindfulness towards each other and respect for the uniqueness of each individual and their talents. Through these values and principles a certain attitude and school atmosphere is created, fostering understanding of each person. This way the school achieves a very strong sense of belonging and fairness among all pupils. The Schülerinnenschule has become a beacon in the landscape of alternative learning and a role model for many other initiatives, which wish to change course from the traditional academic learning approach towards a mindset focused on social and emotional education. Particularly during the last few years

first to ninth class (ages 9 to 18) of the Austrian school system, i.e. for the whole period of compulsory schooling.
- Students can be awarded a certificate of achievement on completing their studies at the school, which enables them to continue on to further education at other schools.
- The school is following the academic guidelines of the "Glocksee-Curriculum" which allows for a more individualized approach to each pupil and develops their social, emotional and creative skills and level of self esteem.
- Personal experience is an integrated and important aspect of the learning process.
- Classes are not based on the age of the pupils but according to the individual

Classes are not based on the age of the pupils but according to the individual levels of achievement in subject areas.

the school has begun to change its structures and procedures in terms of modern principles of organizational development, thereby addressing the area of quality assurance in the education provided.

The basic school structure and the educational aims of the Schülerinnenschule in the WUK are:
- The school runs on a five day, whole day routine, from 08:00 to 17:00.
- The school is a private school but has the official status required to issue school reports.
- The school provides places for 50 students which makes for relatively small classes across the age groups.
- The school has a staff of eight teachers.
- The school provides education from the

levels of achievement in subject areas.
- The teachers function as facilitators for the personal learning processes of each student.
- The assessment of student learning includes self-evaluation and portfolio work, and tests may be given but are not essential if the meeting of the learning objectives can be assessed through other means; personal academic targets are discussed with each student individually and a personal work plan is created every academic year. Students therefore follow their own timetable.
- Parents are involved in the school for a minimum of ten hours per month, providing help with projects such as theatre productions, maintenance or participation in other areas of school life such as

chaperoning trips when additional help is required.

- Besides the normal individual timetable there are three blocks of time in the year which are reserved for larger projects to foster cooperative leadership skills, self esteem, team building, developing flexibility in dealing with a wide range of life situations and finding creative ways to solve contemporary problems on various levels. Projects might include work experience or extended trips. Some examples of projects can be found at the end of this case study.

An example of daily school life in the Schülerinnenschule in the WUK:

School starts for all students at 9:00 a.m. in the morning. In the period between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. students can already arrive and share breakfast together and with the staff. Then three times a week the school day starts with a Plenum of all students, where school life, new things, pressing personal matters and important school issues are openly discussed among all the students

After the Plenum the regular school day directed towards academic content begins, based on each student's personal timetable of classes. Before the midday break there is a set of three longer class periods. During the midday break students have lunch together, taking turns at helping to coordinate the meal. After lunch classes resume, with a focus on sport, crafts or other creative activities. Various group dynamic activities also allow students to develop their soft skills.

Some examples of projects at the Schülerinnenschule in the WUK:

Three times a year this daily school routine is suspended to free up larger blocks of time for projects. Projects are part of the wholistic approach to learning through an integrated process of direct experiences involving all the senses, the development of new competences, the integration of prior and new knowledge, collaboration and finding solutions. The team as a social body with its interpersonal relationships and the specific relationship between teacher/facilitator and student is held in high regard. Encouraging

Coming to decisions through consensus rather than by voting is the aim, regardless of the matter raised.

together with the teaching staff. The most important aims of the Plenum are to give students the opportunity to actively participate in decision making concerning all school-related matters, to foster a culture of negotiation and respect, and to provide the experience that their own ideas and opinions, however critical or strange they might initially seem, may be of importance to the whole community. Coming to decisions through consensus rather than by voting is the aim, regardless of the matter raised.

social responsibility, teamwork, personal initiative and creativity are often the main objectives of the projects. The projects are a few days to one to two weeks in length and sometimes the locations are international; and have included trips to California, Great Britain or Morocco. The projects are usually compulsory, however, this does not always apply to the international trips.

The project topics vary, but are mainly connected with the daily life or life contexts of the

Encouraging social responsibility, teamwork, personal initiative and creativity are often the main objectives of the projects.

students. Projects can be proposed by the students and are discussed in the Plenum. Everyone from the school body can contribute to and participate in the projects. All ideas are considered. The slogan is: the sky's the limit!

The Girls-/Boys Project
The Girls-/Boys Project is run though the whole school year, providing girls and boys with the possibility to critically reflect on their roles as females and males in everyday society. Self-awareness and self-reflection, my place in my peer group, the increase of self-esteem and understanding one another are the targets of the activities in this project.

The project uses the methods of group dynamic activities, group discussions and a wide range of forms of creative expression such as dance, role-play and theatre workshops, painting and sculpture.

Animated cartoon project
The animated cartoon project has been run for many years. The Schülerinnenschule has become famous for this project and has won many prizes for its animations. Examples of the animated cartoons made include:

· 2002/2003 Cartoon "Children Rights";
· 2004/2005 Cartoon "Wir sind alle anders und doch gleich" ("We are all different and similar at the same time");
· 2005/2006 Cartoon "Sie – Es – Er " ("She – It – He ");
· 2007/2008 Cartoon "FAIR" ("Fair", - Fair Trade, Fair Play, being fair in the workplace, being fair with one another in politics and in daily life)

During the animated cartoon week the students work with artists, finding a topic and transforming the idea into an animated cartoon. Storyboards are worked out, the script

The Schülerinnenschule has become famous for…(the animated cartoon) project and has won many prizes for its animations.

is transformed into visual sequences, the scenes are pinned down, the film sequences are shot and the sound files are produced. All these steps involve intense engagement and growing together as a production team. At the end there is the presentation of the animated cartoon and an analysis. The animated cartoons are sent to specific festivals and contests.

Personal quotes from the students might give the best idea about what it is like being a student at the Schülerinnenschule in the WUK.

Nicki, 15 years
I think that in our school learning is very easy. I like it very much, that we children can say our opinion and have a vote about what we are doing e.g. to which places we travel.

Luise, 12 years
I like this school because we are a democratic school. Everybody counts. I like it very much that we can study in our rhythm and personal way. Three days per week we have Plenum. The Plenum is very convenient because we get all the information for the whole week and speak about all matters of the school. We also have great projects and trips.

Felix, 14 years
I love this school, because we can organize and decide nearly everything on our own. We even decide our own rules as a community.

Charley, 14 years
I like to go to this school, because I have the feeling that I can develop my personal talents and skills. In my former school I hated that I was not seen as an individual but only as one among many others. In our school here it is the complete opposite. I can organize my time according to my work rhythm and I feel much more self responsibility. I also like to be here because I feel that I can participate in the decision making process. I know that
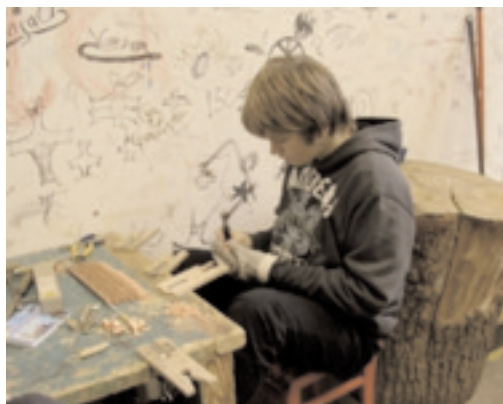
my opinion has an equal weight to all the other students' opinions and even to that of the teachers.

Indiana, 16 years
I am a heavily dyslexic person. So I have big difficulties in writing and reading. I never fitted into traditional school systems. It is the first time that I feel that I belong to a school environment. It feels like the school saved my life….

Private schools like the Schülerinnenschule in the WUK have come to fill a very real need in the Austrian educational landscape. The traditional school path is not able to deal with the social and emotional needs of students who do not fit the mould, and it is a rigid mould at that. It is not always easy for such schools to exist and without them a number of students would be lost. In the end, official

The traditional school path is not able to deal with the social and emotional needs of students who do not fit the mould, and it is a rigid mould at that.

recognition is not the same as receiving government subsidies and therefore financial viability is always a key factor.

Conclusion

The story of social and emotional education in Austria at this point in time is unfortunately about the very real struggle the country is facing to confront the notion of changing a culturally distinct and historically fortified pillar of the society – its system of education. Despite a general sense of doubt about real change, over time the grumblings of the population about its own system became louder as year after year the same questions are still raised about features of the school system, which do not make sense, about the way students suffer and how parents always have to find ways to help their children to survive. Over a very long time the system has been politically sustained and administratively run by those who also went through it. Based on its organisational stagnation the whole structure could not help but show signs of strain and it was only a matter of time before pressure impacted in such a way which could no longer be ignored. No doubt there were always individual educators and schools which provided an environment and learning experiences which students will remember fondly, however, systems of school education are about addressing the contemporary needs of all students.

The pressure began to increase when Austria's borders were opened to the wider context of Europe and it had to establish baselines for progress in various areas, including

education. Authorities enthusiastically shared knowledge and initiatives and Austria actively sought to gain valuable insights into various other models of education, which included elements addressing competencies and needs beyond the academic. The problem was not a lack of research, or the good intentions; somehow the problem was in transferring theory to practice. There has always been a lot of head shaking and public finger pointing whenever this issue has been raised, as no one wanted to take responsibility for the lack of progress. The spark, which caused an explosion to match the historical build up of pressure, was the release of OECD and EU reports and statistical results. From this point on the topic of education has regularly been on the front page of newspapers and almost every element of the historical structure and system has come under intense scrutiny.

It would seem that for many people the academic priorities of education are still the top indicators and the changes being made to the selective nature of the structure with the New Middle School and the standardisation of teacher qualifications will serve to strengthen the delivery and learning of the core literacies. However, these changes are also addressing social and emotional factors and introducing fundamental change to the culture of education. While these changes are not being accepted without some resistance, with the current media focus being on the difficult negotiations about teacher working conditions, the changes will automatically bring fresh perspectives about the interconnectedness of elements which meet the wider needs

of a school community. The creation and work of ÖZEPS in 2005 to guide Social Learning in Austrian schools has shown that the government recognises the need to address social and emotional education. While schools are required to offer programmes in ten previously labelled as alternative, which many years ago saw the need to provide students with an alternative to the rigid nature of 'normal' Austrian schools. In many ways this type of school has always been preparing students with a greater array of competencies

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(Schools) will need to continue moving in a direction which reflects SEE as a pillar of education, reflected in more than just single programmes and projects.

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this direction there is still a need for growth, guidance and consistency to ensure the acceptance and effectiveness of such initiatives. They will need to continue moving in a direction which reflects SEE as a pillar of education, reflected in more than just single programmes and projects. There is still some way to go before SEE is seen in the culture of the schools, evidenced by the relationships, in the delivery of the curriculum and reflected in the positive recollection of how time at school has been spent.

This time of reform provides an opportunity for schools to adopt initiatives, models and programmes, which suit their student and school needs, and which have already experienced some measure of success.

It is good to know that schools like the Schülerinnenschule in the WUK exist; schools of-

to manage their lives. Given the nature of the New Middle School, the Schülerinnenschule and other 'alternative' schools may now provide valuable examples of how better to cater to the wholistic needs of a broader student body.

Programmes or subjects like KoSo are amazing to experience if delivered by very competent teachers and the wealth of cognitive and personal challenge should not be limited to a few schools. In fact something like KoSo may be perfect for the Academic secondary schools which are currently going through a process of curriculum review, and which may also be required to deliver programmes aimed at social learning. Given the nature of these schools, it would be an opportunity for them to develop a strong, yet different social and emotional culture by developing a deeper, cognitive basis for SEE and growing

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(The Schulfach Glück) programme has arrived at a time when there is a deep desire for an educational environment which cares for the people who spend much of their time there.

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from there. It should be noted again that KoSo is not the sole catchment area for various social and emotional factors in the Sir Karl Popper School. The school also has a coaching programme, which has been designed to provide students with additional support on a more personal level.

It is no surprise that the programme Schulfach Glück is meeting with such overwhelming resonance. This programme has arrived at a time when there is a deep desire for an educational environment which cares for the people who spend much of their time there. In offering students and staff the opportunity to explore the realms of 'happiness' and 'well-being' together using six realistic modules it is building relationships based on shared experiences. Even indirectly carrying this approach across into subject areas already introduces a better dimension to the learning and teaching which takes place. Going from six pilot schools to ninety-six participating schools in the space of four years, this programme allows for an optimistic view of SEE in Austria.

Social and emotional education is yet to experience a real boom throughout Austria and for this to happen some fundamental attitudes and perceptions need to change. Education as a whole is a difficult topic in Austria at the moment, and often the vision for the future has been blurred by a narrow focus on academic indicators. It is however, with determination and conviction that change must be made to happen to avoid the stagnation of the past. Social and emotional education addresses the need for students to be allowed to grow, and growth means change. The process of growth has begun in Austria and the future is positive.

Endnotes

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A modern, unbureaucratic and more autonomous school system involving all stakeholders and not subject to political influence.
That kindergartens are considered equal to school and Kindergarten teachers equal to school teachers.
A comprehensive range of pre-primary centres such as day-care centres and kindergartens as well as 'whole-day' child care options across the whole of Austria.
An education system in which the talents and abilities of all children and adolescents are recognised and continuously furthered throughout their schooling.
An end to the system of repeating a year of schooling for failing certain subjects as is currently the case, and an end to the need for such extensive tutoring of students outside school.
A range of 'whole-day' schools.
A socially fair and inclusive education system in which the division of students according to interests and ability only takes place after the stage of compulsory education.
An improvement of the recognition or status of the teaching profession and a financial plan to support this.
A commitment to the extension of and financial support for tertiary institutions and universities.
That the goal of 40% of school graduates being qualified for tertiary studies is reached by 2020.

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Israel

Social and Emotional Education in Israel

Eliezer Yariv

Abstract

Israel is a nation of 8 million people located in the Middle East. Long before its establishment in 1948, the Jews who used to live there and who were exiled 2000 years ago never stopped dreaming of returning to their homeland. The emergence of the Zionist movement in Europe in the late 19th century set the agenda and the political platform to establish a Jewish and democratic state, which is the world's only Jewish-majority state. Although Israel is a young country, the Jewish people have experienced over 4000 years of troubled history in the Holy Land and elsewhere in the Diaspora. Jews have suffered persecutions, wars, threats and catastrophes, such as the Holocaust. Rulers such as Pharaoh (identified as Horemheb (1319-1292 BC), Ramesses I (c.1292-1290 BC), and probably some others) and Hitler, to name but a few, have continuously tried to exterminate the Jewish people. With such painful collective memories, it is no wonder that one scholar has recently portrayed the Israeli psyche as suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (Yair, 2011). These haunting shadows are just one among a number of other sources of stress (Israelashvili, 1993):

… one scholar has recently portrayed the Israeli psyche as suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (Yair, 2011).

A   Israel is a nation of immigrants, established as a home for Jews throughout the world. Almost every family has at least one member who has experienced immigration. Uprooting one's life and settling in a geographically and culturally remote environment is certainly a challenge that leaves emotional scars;

B   Israel is surrounded by hostile countries and terrorist organizations that aim to destroy it. The state of war is a very real aspect of life for all Israeli citizens. For example, every young man and woman must serve in the army, a source of concern for every parent. I served for three years in the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) intelligence service and fought in two bitter wars. My three sons also carried out various duties in the IDF. One of them was engaged in combat missions in Lebanon for two years;

C   The security problem is not confined to war-like situations. The constant terrorist threats and attacks cause Israelis to take such dangers into account in their daily routines. Of special focus are the populations who live near the borders and suffer recurring attacks;

D   The constant historical and current threats increase own-group cohesion and suspicion of others, the 'outsiders'. But who is not an 'outsider' in a nation of immigrants? The historical, political and demographic developments have divided the Israeli society along

The constant historical and current threats increase own-group cohesion and suspicion of others, the 'outsiders'. But who is not an 'outsider' in a nation of immigrants?

nationalistic (Jews vs. Arabs), religious (secular, non-observant Jews vs. orthodox and ultra-orthodox), political (pro democratic and liberal vs. right wing and nationalistic), societal (Israeli-born and veteran citizens vs. new immigrants), and territorial lines (mainstream Israelis who live in the pre 1967 war area vs. settlers who live in territories occupied in that war). Each of these divisions tends to come to the fore from time to time, threatening to tear apart the delicate fabric of Israeli society.

The first section of this chapter briefly describes the long Jewish and Israeli history, from the Biblical times of the three founding fathers, to the Romans who conquered Jerusalem, destroyed the temple and sent the Jewish people into exile; until the rise of the Zionist movement that established the ideological foundations and the organisational infrastructure that enabled Jewish pioneers to leave their European countries and immigrate to Palestine. The chapter ends with a short discussion on the reasons for the painful relations among Jews and Arabs in Israel. The second section describes the structure and operation of the Israeli education system. Special emphasis is given to the ultra-orthodox and Arab sectors which have unique demographic and cultural characteristics. These sectors are expected to comprise half of the Israeli school population within one generation due to rapid population growth. The third section is devoted to the national campaign led by the Ministry of Education to foster students' social and emotional well-being, and to improve the social climate and sense of safety in schools. This national initiative (known as the violence prevention programme) is currently being implemented in 1200 schools and has managed to reduce school violence by 30 percent over the last two years. This government funded programme adopts, among other aspects, the long-established 'Life Skills' curriculum. This core-curriculum programme which is taught to all children and young people from kindergarten (5-6 years old) to twelfth grade (17 years old) is also described. I then argue, according to my eco-systemic theoretical framework (Yariv, 1999, 2010) that (a) the social and emotional educational taught curriculum should be augmented by (b) system wide school organizational measures, as well as (c) effective intervention strategies aimed at dealing with misbehaviour once it occurs.

The last section of this chapter provides four detailed case studies and examples which illustrate the eco-systemic theoretical framework. These case studies are based on careful and systematic observations and interviews, which helped portray schools' staff and pupils and their programmes as accurately as possible. Due to ethical and legal stipulations the names of the schools, the staff members and the pupils have been changed. The first case study describes "The Giraffe Language", a taught programme that promotes non-violent communication skills among kindergarten and children with special needs. The children learn how to avoid saying certain provocative and judgmental phrases, and inherit conflict-free modes of discourse. The

(A) national initiative (known as the violence prevention programme) is currently being implemented in 1200 schools and has managed to reduce school violence by 30 percent over the last two years.

second programme describes 'Discipline and Dialogue' – a brief psycho-educational intervention (Yariv, 1996). This tool enables the teacher to lead a constructive discussion within a stressful setting, after the child or young person has misbehaved. The third case study describes an educational initiative run by the Abraham Fund aimed at bridging the divide between Jewish and Arab children. In the 'Mirkam' programme pairs of fifth and sixth grade pupils from neighbouring Jewish and Arab schools meet together. The last case study describes the case of a public inner-city elementary school where the principal and teachers have developed impressive social and environmental initiatives. The principal's vision is to improve the pupils' academic achievements without neglecting their individual needs. This vision of caring and determination is translated into many varied actions that lead to effective educational outcomes.

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Introduction

If you ask me to summarize what social and emotional education is all about, I would skip the vast amount of psycho-educational scholarly literature and quote a phrase uttered some 2000 years ago in Jerusalem by Rabbi Hillel the Elder. Hillel, a famous Jewish religious leader was once challenged by a heathen who wished to become a Jew. He asked Hillel to summarize the essence of the Jewish religion in one short sentence, while standing on one foot. Hillel chided him for his behaviour, but in a constructive way: "**What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow: this is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn**" (Shab. 31a). Hillel certainly recognized that brotherly love was a fundamental principle of Jewish moral law, but instead of the idealistic commandment 'love your neighbour as yourself' (Lev. xix. 18), he adopted a realistic and humble approach that teaches us several lessons: Firstly, as in the Latin phrase *Primum non nocere* Hillel asked "**First, do no harm**". Hillel was aware that hatred and aggression reside in every human being, and once these inner drives erupt they endanger both attackers and victims. Unlike the peaceful and comforting nature of love, aggression manifests in dramatic, powerful, destructive acts that leave wounds and create suffering. It is essential, therefore, to stop war before forging strong relationships, and prevent future irreversible damage before it is too late. Secondly, Hillel knew that emotions, more than thoughts, drove human behaviour and shaped people's relationships with one another. The first commandment, therefore, calls for self-awareness and empathetic skills that help us to understand others' point of view and decrease the tendency to respond aggressively in conflict situations (Goleman, 1996). Thirdly, Hillel was convinced that (as told in the old fable) a good fence made good neighbours. Barriers keep individuals and nations from infringing on each other's space or meddling in each other's affairs. Such boundaries provide each 'neighbour' with the freedom to run his or her own life autonomously. Setting boundaries ('do not') and stating clear norms are effective means to encourage people to respect others. Fourth, Hillel's imperative sets us a modest and realistic educational goal. As stated in five out of the Ten Commandments, Hillel's negatively phrased imperative ('do not') is probably easier to fulfill than an active commandment (such as 'respect your parents'), but nevertheless requires strong will power. Such self control, he believed, could be learned and developed.

This story about Hillel is just one example of the rich Jewish scholarly literature on relationships and feelings. In order to understand the Jewish psyche and the nature of social and emotional education (SEE) in Israel we must first ask the client to lie on a historical-psychoanalytic couch and tell us how it all began.

Section 1: the history and society of Israel

The rise and fall and rise: A concise Jewish history

According to the Bible (although not supported by archeological findings), Jews are descended from the ancient people of Israel who settled in the land of Canaan, located between the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River (1451 BCE). The Children of Israel included the 'three fathers': Abraham, his son Isaac and grandson Jacob. Jacob's family left for Egypt, where they were enslaved by the Pharaoh. The identity of that ruler mentioned in the book of Genesis is unknown After 400 years of slavery, the Israelites, who were led by Moses, escaped from Egypt. Historians agree that at least two pharaohs are involved in the book of Exodus, the "pharaoh of the oppression", probably Horemheb (1319-1292 BC), and the "pharaoh of the exodus", probably Ramesses

I (c.1292-1290 BC). After 40 years of wandering in the Sinai desert and receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, they returned to their ancestral homeland in Canaan. This event marks the formation of Israel as a political nation in Canaan, in 1400 BCE.

After entering Canaan, the land of Israel was organized into a confederation of twelve tribes ruled by a series of Judges. In 1000 BCE, an Israelite monarchy was established under Saul, and continued under King David and his son, Solomon, who built the First Temple. Upon his death a civil war erupted between the ten northern Israelite tribes, and the tribe of Judah, which led the nation to be split into two kingdoms, that of Israel in the north, and the Kingdom of Judah in the south. Later, Israel was conquered by the Assyrians in the 8th century BCE. The kingdom of Judah suffered a similar destiny, being conquered by the Babylonians in 587 BCE. The elite of the kingdom and many of their people were exiled to Babylon. After a few generations, some adherents led by the prophets Ezra and Nehemiah, returned to their homeland and constructed the Second Temple. Later, the Hasmoneans established an independent Jewish kingdom but the Romans conquered it in 63 BCE. After the Bar-Kochva revolt (132-136 CE) the Romans decided to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem, razed all the Judean villages, killed many of Judah's inhabitants and sold the rest of the population into slavery.

After a period of 1500 years of nationhood the Jews were sent into exile. For nearly the next 2000 years they were dispersed across many continents and countries, dwelling in territories belonging to others. As tribes that were used to living in small cohesive communities, keeping persistently to their unique faith, language, clothing and rituals, the Jews aroused much interest and suspicion among their neighbours. They became known for being a highly talented and educated group of people (for example, about one quarter of the Nobel Prize laureates are Jews); they were often more affluent than others due to their talent and expertise in commerce, and thus it is no wonder that they aroused the bi-polar sentiments of admiration and hatred. Monarchs were sensitive to changing public opinion towards the Jews: at times providing them with safe shelter and harnessing their commercial and scholarly talents for the benefit of the kingdom; at other times they adopted (and sometimes intensified) the public hatred towards the Jews and acted to oppress and victimize them.

It is impossible to depict this long period of Jewish history in only a few sentences. Instead, for our Spanish readers here are a few short historical examples to illustrate the above-mentioned trends. As citizens of the Roman Empire the Jews of Spain engaged in a variety of occupations, including agriculture and commerce. Until the adoption of Christianity by the Spanish (about the 8th century), Jews had formed close relationships with Muslim and other non-Jewish populations, and played an active role in the social and economic life of the Spanish provinces in which they resided. The first period of exceptional prosperity took place under the reign of Abd ar-Rahman, the first Caliph of Cordoba and his Jewish councillor Hasdai Ibn Shaprut from 882 to 942. During this period of time Córdoba became the "Mecca of Jewish scholars', Jewish intellectuals who received there a hospitable welcome from Jewish 'men of means'. The intellectual achievements of those scholars influenced the lives of non-Jews as well. But despite their scientific and cultural contribution, Christian communities were bothered by the Jewish "problem". For example, the Eighth Council of Toledo (which took place in the 7th century) issued orders that forbade all

Jewish rites (including the observation of the Sabbath and circumcision). Those who were found to have aided Jews were punished by

movement was founded in 1884 and waves of immigrants from Europe and beyond established the first settlements in Palestine.

The Zionist movement was founded in 1884 and waves of immigrants from Europe and beyond established the first settlements in Palestine.

seizure of one quarter of their property. A turning-point in the history of the Jews of Spain was reached under Ferdinand III when the clergy ordered the Jews to distinguish themselves from Christians by wearing a yellow badge on their clothing. And later, in 1492, under the rule of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella they were forced to convert to Catholicism or expelled from Spain. About 200,000 Jews left Spain, many of whom went to Turkey; 50,000 were baptized, and 20,000 died en route to Turkey and elsewhere in Europe. These tragic events, both

At the same time many other Jewish families immigrated to the USA, South Africa and Australia, establishing vibrant and prosperous communities there.

In 1933, with the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party, the situation of the Jewish community in Germany became more severe. Economic crises, racist anti-Semitic laws, intensive levels of intimidation and a fear of an imminent war drove many Jews to flee from Europe. As World War II broke out and following the invasion of the Soviet Union by

The Jewish Arab conflict, both with the Arab minority inside Israel and with the neighbouring countries is certainly central to Israel's the existence.

for Spain and the Jews, occurred within a well established trend from the 13th to the 16th century, when many European countries expelled the Jews from their territories.

In the 19th century many European Jews abandoned their orthodox faith, became "modernized" and integrated into the mainstream of European society. The Zionist

Germany, the 'final solution' began. This was an extensive organized operation on an unprecedented scale which aimed to exterminate all the European Jews. Six million Jews were murdered in ghettos, concentration camps and gas chambers. This genocide, known as the Holocaust, heavily affected world public opinion, and intensified the efforts to establish a Jewish state in Palestine.

Three years after the end of World War II the United Nations decided to end the British mandate in Palestine and divide the land between the Jewish state and the Hashemite kingdom (Jordan). In May 1948 David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the establishment of the Jewish state of Israel, which immediately led to a bitter war with the surrounding Arab states who refused to accept the UN resolution. In 1949 the war ended and the state began to absorb massive waves of Jewish immigrants from all over the world. Since 1948, Israel has been involved in a series of major military conflicts as well as an almost constant series of ongoing minor conflicts. Since the Six Day War in 1967 Israel has occupied the Palestinian territories, and the various efforts to reach a long lasting peace agreement between Israel and Palestine has so far failed. The Jewish Arab conflict, both with the Arab minority inside Israel and with the neighbouring countries is certainly central to Israel's existence.

Jews and Arabs

Each country has its own minority groups; some of which are more welcomed by the majority than others. The Arabs in Israel represent a unique case, where the Jewish

villages' farmers, who were concerned by the 'invasion', initiated ongoing military attacks. The Jewish settlers, in response, established militia forces to defend their villages and cities. The conflict escalated after the UN resolution of 1947 to divide the land between the two peoples. In May 1948 when David Ben Gurion declared the establishment of the state of Israel, all the neighbouring Arab countries declared war, which ended with the victory of the Jewish side and the flight of the local Arab populations to refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria and other countries. The remaining Arabs within the new borders of the state of Israel had to live under military rule (this stricture was lifted in 1966) and severe limitations of their civil rights.

The suspicion and alienation of the Arab population is still evident not only in people's attitudes and individual relationships, but also in formal and legal aspects. Arabs in Israel comprise about 20 percent (1.5 million) of the entire population. Most Arabs are Muslim (83%) while others are Christians (12%), Druze (5%) and Bedouins. In a nation that grants immediate full citizenship to any Jew in the world who immigrates to Israel, Arab citizens are in various senses second class

The quality of education in Arab schools certainly falls short when compared to that in the Jewish sector.

majority identifies them as a group affiliated with the enemy in neighbouring countries. The seeds of the conflict were planted at the beginning of the 20th century, with the arrival of the first waves of Zionist settlers in Palestine. The newcomers purchased lands from Arab landlords and soon established *kibbutzim* (rural collective settlements) and cities. The veteran neighbouring Arab

citizens who have a split identity: they identify themselves by their nationality as Israelis citizens, but as Arabs or Palestinians according to their ethnic affiliation. Many citizens have family ties with Palestinians in the occupied territories and in the surrounding Arab countries. Despite making up approximately one fifth of the Israeli population they are certainly discriminated against: their

share of the budgets and services provided by the government is significantly smaller in proportion to the resources allocated to the Jewish population; their political power, and to a certain extent even their legal rights, are somewhat restricted (e.g. Arab parliament members are not allowed to sit on committees that deal with security issues); according to the CBS, average monthly income for an Arab household is about 60 percent of that of an average Jewish household; many new Jewish settlements and cities have been established since the declaration of independence, but only one new Arab city (Rahat) and a few villages have been founded during this time. The quality of education in Arab schools certainly falls short when compared to that in the Jewish sector. School facilities are less well developed and equipped, especially in the periphery (for example, schools for the Bedouins in the Negev desert); budgets are limited; classes are more crowded. It is no wonder then that the academic achievements of Arabic students in national and international examinations are significantly lower in Israel than their Jewish counterparts, whose schools are sometimes located just a few miles away from each other.

Today (2013), Israel is a parliamentary democracy with a population of over 7.8 million people, of which 75 percent are Jewish and 20 percent are Arabs. The rest are not identified as either Jewish or Arab and make up the remaining 4.1% of the population. Israel is now a diverse, multicultural society, and its population is considered young compared to other Western countries. In 2012, 28% of Israel's population was aged between 0-14, compared to 17% in other Western countries, and about 10% were aged above 65%, compared to 15% in Western countries. The size of an average family is 3.03 children per household compared with fewer than 2 in European countries. The majority of the Jewish population (70%) is made up of Israeli-born citizens and most are the second generation, compared to 1948, during Israel's first year, when only one third of people were born in the country.

Section 2: The Israeli educational system

Education is compulsory in Israel from age 5 through to age 18. The state also encourages the enrollment of children in preschools from age 3 to age 5 and has secured a budget to build thousands of new classrooms to accommodate this population of children. About half a million children were enrolled in public kindergartens and nurseries in 2012 (CBS, 2012), over 800 thousand pupils were enrolled in primary schools and 642 thousand studied at middle schools and high schools. In every school level, slightly less than 80 percent of the pupils and teachers are affiliated with the Jewish sectors and the rest study and work in Arab settlements (CBS, 2012).

The primary education system serves children aged 6 to 12 years who study from first to sixth grade. They then move to the secondary education system, which is divided into junior and senior high schools. Nearly half (47%) of these schools are operated by not-for-profit organizations, while the other half are run by local authorities (38%) or the Israeli government (15%) (Volansky, 2010).

Kindergartens and elementary schools are dispersed across neighbourhoods, while high schools serve the city-wide youth population. From an organizational standpoint, kindergarten teachers are considered as the 'principals' of their classes. Each school is led by a principal who is responsible for the daily ongoing operation of the organisation, including supervising and developing the professional performance of staff, sometimes in collaboration with the school inspector. Elementary schools tend to be smaller (having,

on average, 350 pupils) than junior and senior high schools, many of which have one thousand or more, and an average of 25 students in each class.

On the local and national level, the government's duties include hiring teachers, paying their salaries, setting the curriculum and supervising its implementation and the quality of teaching. The local municipality is responsible for pupils' registration; the maintenance of the buildings and hiring teaching assistants (who mostly work in preschools). In secondary schools the organizational framework, including the budget and the supervision of teaching, is more complicated. For example, not-for-profit organizations and local municipalities may replace the government with regards to managerial and inspection roles.

The Israeli educational system certainly reflects the national mentality of solidarity, familiarity and warm relationships. But it also reflects the social and ethnic divisions, which are manifested in the relatively large number of educational streams and sectors. Most of the schools in Israel are "state-run" institutions, namely they are funded and inspected by the government, but there is a vibrant and steadily growing private sector. Arab pupils study in state-run ethnically segregated schools, even in Jewish-Arab mixed cities like Jaffa and Acre. Most of the Jewish schools are either secular or religious, but of special interest is the ultra-orthodox sector ('Haredi'). The ultra-orthodox communities tend to be confined to segregated urban vicinities, mainly located in the cities of Jerusalem and Bnei-Brak (near Tel Aviv). Due to the high birth rate, this is the most rapidly growing demographic group in the educational system. Its schools are affiliated with the "independent" educational stream, namely, funded by the government but autonomously-run and seldom inspected by the Ministry of Education. The ultra-orthodox

sector runs separate schools for boys and girls, refrains from teaching the national curriculum in elementary schools and focuses solely on religious studies. Boys hardly study secular education topics (e.g. mathematics, science and foreign languages) after eighth grade, when they are sent to "yeshiva", unique religious high schools. With such minimal general education it is no wonder that ultra-orthodox pupils who finish their studies have grave difficulties in joining the work force and becoming fully-productive citizens of the State of Israel. Ultra orthodox girls continue with a general education and many go on to study at mainstream high schools, then attend teacher training colleges, and become teachers. Another unique ethnic group is the Arab sector, which is more fully described in the chapter about the Abraham Fund initiative. The continuous governmental efforts to integrate the various streams in education have borne no fruit. At the moment, no ultra-orthodox pupils would study in a school with secular students; Jewish schools would not accept Arab pupils, and poor families could not afford to send their children to a private school.

Section 3: Social and Emotional Education (SEE) in Israel

Social and Emotional Education (SEE) is included in the national curriculum, and SEE programmes, such as 'Magic Circles' (Nadler, 1973), Duso (Dinkmeyer, 1989), and 'Life Skills', are practiced in many kindergartens and schools in Israel (except in ultra-orthodox institutions). These programmes were developed and are promoted by the Department of Counselling and Psychological Services at the Ministry of Education. This department provides guidance, counselling and therapeutic services to almost every formal educational institution in Israel. These services are mainly provided by school counsellors and school psychologists. (I have been a school psychologist for over 30 years). Due to

a shortage of mental health professionals, the current standard for one full time job counsellor is about 500 pupils and 2000 school children for a psychologist (Rabinowitz, 2010).A school psychologist and a counsellor work in almost every school in Israel, and these professionals carry the lion's share of responsibility for students' welfare and mental health. The school counsellors are trained teachers who studied educational psychology and counselling at BA and MA level. They are stationed in every kindergarten and school and two of their key roles is either to teach the 'Life Skills' lessons themselves or to train 'educators' (an all embracing Israeli term for a teaching role, where the educator is responsible for all their pupils' personal and academic needs) to run 'Life Skills' lessons. These lessons deal with a variety of themes such as the prevention of violence and drug use, "saying no" to sexual harassment, , identifying child abuse, providing lessons on sexual education and the like (Shechtman & Abu Yaman, 2012).

The 'Life Skills' programme

The Israeli Ministry of Education's flagship SEE programme is called *'Life-skills'* (Kishurei Chai'im), which has been implemented since 1996. It was revised in 2007,

improves the quality of life during childhood and adolescence; the school environment can serve as a training ground for developing life skills; and that the school climate should enable students to make use of their newly-acquired life skills (Ministry of Education (2011). The programme also helps to create a supportive climate for learning.

The programme includes 30 structured lessons for each year, in first grade (age 6) up to end of middle school (age14). An additional 15 sessions are recommended for junior high school (ages 15 to 18). The 45 minute lessons take place weekly and usually include a hands-on activity to open the lesson (e.g. reading a relevant text, holding a discussion in pairs) and a follow-up group discussion. To facilitate an open atmosphere, large classes are divided into two groups of 15 – 20 pupils each, which are facilitated by the school counsellor and the class 'educator' respectively. Each meeting is devoted to specific aspect of Life Skills such as interpersonal interactions, maintaining friendships, teamwork, conflict resolution, leadership, and taking social responsibility. Such aspects require acquiring skills of cooperation, giving and seeking help, respecting others, negotiating and personal qualities like empathy,

… life skills can be taught; such learning improves the quality of life during childhood and adolescence; the school environment can serve as a training ground for developing life skills …

and ever since it has been a mandatory part of the national core curriculum. The programme is based on the following assumptions: life skills can be taught; such learning

flexibility and the like. The programme also includes aspects of coping with stress in life-endangering situations (how to avoid dangerous situations, how to cope with personal

threats and the like), inter-personal crises or inner-personal crises (such as failures). Such situations require resilience skills such as positive self-talk, methods of self-relaxation, and value clarification. The programme is adjusted to the developmental level of the students. For example, a discussion about a typical life event in the first grade (age 6) deals with coping with changes and transitions. For fifth graders (aged 11) a typical life event is social integration and leisure activities. Lessons at junior high (ages 12 to 14) and during adolescence refer to interaction with the peer group and the first steps in establishing a romantic relationship. The main clusters of skills which are taught are:

· Self identity (body image, feelings, thoughts and behaviour), finding meaning in life, gender identity and cultural identity.
· Self regulation of expressing feelings and, self guidance of planning, executing and monitoring own activities.
· Interpersonal interaction
· Learning, leisure and playing skills
· Coping with danger, stress and crisis

Longitudinal follow-up studies revealed that 'Life Skills' increased pupils' self-awareness; enhanced their own sense of self-efficacy

favourably and experienced higher levels of self-efficacy, compared with a control group who did not receive such training (Shechtman, Levy & Leichtentritt, 2005).

SEE is everywhere
Social and emotional learning may take place everywhere in a child's life: at home and at school; with parents and while playing with peers; when they cooperate and when they quarrel. This chapter focuses on structured **educational programmes** that encourage SEE and elicit self-awareness and pro-social behaviour. Many studies and meta-analyses that were carried-out in the last decades have clearly shown that SEE programmes help children develop social skills, reduce or prevent problematic behaviour and promote pro-social behaviour. However, as Diekstra (2008) points out these programmes' results remain unclear with regard to certain individuals and particular groups of youngsters in need (for example, minorities, young people who live in poverty, youth delinquents). Actually, no 'one-size-fits-all' programme can assist every pupil and other measures must be taken to enhance the well-being of children. According to my **eco-systemic theoretical model** (Yariv, 1999), in addition to the structured programmes, there are two other sources:

'Life Skills' increased pupils' self-awareness; enhanced their own sense of self-efficacy and helped reduce the level of violence in schools. (Shechtman, Levy & Leichtentritt, 2005).

and helped reduce the level of violence in schools. Teachers who attended a two-year training in facilitating the programme perceived their work environment more

namely, A) system-wide organizational measures and, B) individual interventions in response to pupils' misbehaviour.

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┌──────────────────┐                              ┌──────────────────┐
│   System-wide    │                              │ SEE taught lessons│
│  organisational  │──────────────────────────────│                  │
│     measures     │                              └──────────────────┘
└──────────────────┘                                       
          │              ┌──────────────────┐              
          │              │ Coping strategies│              
          │              └──────────────────┘              
          │                                                
          │              ┌──────────────────┐              
          └──────────────│     Effective    │──────────────
                         │ intervention after│              
                         │  the incident has │              
                         │     occurred     │              
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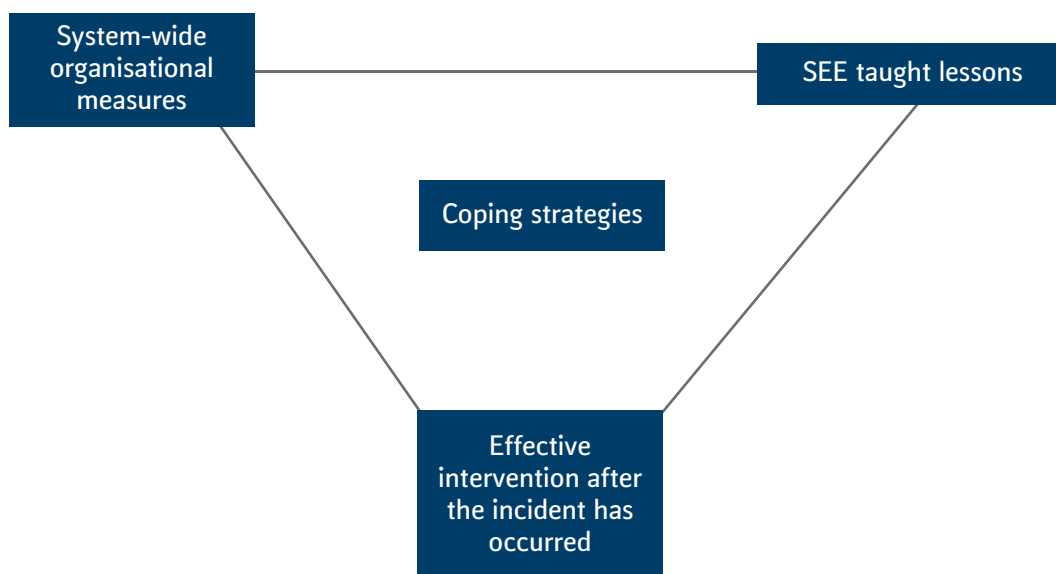
A. Organizational measures

The ways in which schools are organized have an impact on their social climate and pupils' well-being and academic success. Clean, painted and decorated halls and corridors, a well organized timetable, highly trained staff and even small measures such as a principal who stands at the school gate every morning and greets everyone, provide (especially for elementary school children) a secure and warm atmosphere. Such system-wide organization may take place in a structured and planned manner, as it is done, for example, in the School-Wide Positive Behavior Support programmes run in thousands of schools in the USA (Simonen et al, 2008). An impressive national initiative is currently being implemented in 1200 Israeli schools. The 'Systematic Program to Promote Safe Climate and Reduce Violence' encourages all the schools' stakeholders to join forces in order to foster a warm and open climate in the school. More specifically, four years ago the Ministry of Education set eight qualitative standards that each school is expected to attain:

a safety and order;
b good relationships between everyone in the school community (school staff and pupils);
c social and emotional learning;
d an environment that facilitates learning;
e differentiated responses to children with special needs;
f maintaining quality relationships between staff and parents, combined with holding community-wide activities;
g taking care of the schools' physical environment;
h meeting students' needs, feelings and difficulties

In sum, teachers are expected to maintain close relationships with their students. These goals are attained by several consecutive steps: first, an annual survey is completed to measure the school's social and academic climate; then within three weeks the results are sent to the principal who then sets up a committee comprised of the school counsellor, psychologist, educators and the Ministry of Education's facilitator. Based on the specific

strengths and weaknesses identified in the survey, the committee plans school-wide initiatives and sets targets; teachers are asked to maintain an active presence and intervene immediately when conflicts between students occur; the plans also aim to strengthen teachers' authority, student-teacher relationships, improve students' sense of well-being and increase the school counsellor's and psychologist's involvement in educational activities and decision making. These plans include the use of 'Life Skills' workshops at each class

and aggressive during recess times. The boys used to rush along the corridors, shouting and pushing others who walked by. The growing number of students who got hurt and parents' complaints forced the school's management to intervene. We decided, as a first step, to monitor the social climate of the school. To do this we used a questionnaire which I developed and is based on my eco-systemic theoretical model (Yariv, 1999). The survey's findings confirmed our concerns: many students expressed how stressed

The ways in which schools are organized have an impact on their social climate and pupils' well-being and academic success.

level. Recent follow-up surveys conducted by the Ministry of Education have found that the level of school violence has dropped dramatically, by 30 percent over a two year period. Such a large-scale initiative would never have gained prominence without public support and governmental funding. The Israeli people and political leaders are aware of how stressful life in Israel is and how much encouragement and support children and young people need.

A.1. "Circled chairs": System-wide response to emerging problems
Not every school enjoys a warm and open climate and teachers sometimes face unfavourable conditions that force them to take creative and courageous measures. Such an outstandingly example is provided by Dahlin (2008) who described the Rinkeby School in Stockholm. I wish to provide a small example from my own experience as a psychologist in a middle school. For several months we noticed that students had become restless

they felt at school, how their personal belongings were frequently stolen from their bags, how the staff were not perceived as a solid source of support and defense.

We decided to adopt unique system-wide intervention which had been implemented at a school for children with special needs, where the staff had managed to overcome similar challenges. Originally the school was based in a deprived neighbourhood in Tel Aviv. Several years earlier, due to demographic developments, the mayor of Tel Aviv decided to move the school to a remote prestigious suburb. Since there was a need to erect a new building, the mayor offered the staff the opportunity to collaborate with an architect and work together to design the new campus, according to their educational vision. While working on the design, the staff considered what the arrangements during recess should be: would the teachers sit in the teachers' room, separate from their pupils, or would the teachers spend the breaks with the pupils

in a shared public space? They decided to get rid of the teachers' room and have teachers spend the breaks sitting in comfortable armchairs arranged in circles that would be scattered through all the open spaces in the school. And so, teachers who had finished their lessons used to take their cups of coffee and sit together during the breaks. The effect of the presence of the seated teachers on the pupils who passed by was dramatic. The pupils began to walk quietly, behaved politely and helped to keep the environment calm.

While discussing this example, we knew that our teachers would not be happy about the change, especially about losing the privacy they used to enjoy, but nevertheless the principal of our middle school courageously decided to close the teachers' room for several

B. Effective individual intervention

Despite the organizational measures taken by schools in order to maintain a warm and learning-oriented climate, and the social and emotional education curriculum being taught, teachers worldwide face classroom disruptions and aggressive behaviour that hinder their efforts to lead "smooth" lessons and to help their students to learn. Typically, such disruptions are unexpected, chaotic, context-related and relatively short-lived (Yariv, 2010). They often involve intense negative emotions on all sides, distract teachers and pupils from doing their work, consume a lot of time and may damage the effectiveness and the reputation of the school. In my view, misbehaviour can serve as excellent 'raw material' to foster pro-social behaviour and SEE. Due to the unexpected nature of disruptions, it is not easy to conceptualize these

…teachers worldwide face classroom disruptions and aggressive behaviour that hinder their efforts to lead "smooth" lessons and to help their students to learn.

weeks. She arranged circles of chairs and tables in the corridors, provided coffee and refreshments and asked staff members to spend their recess times there. The results were immediate and remarkable: the level of violence decreased sharply; the boys stopped rushing about; the teachers' presence helped to monitor and control the incidents in the school's open spaces; and teachers and pupils enjoyed the informal opportunities to chat together. Never in my professional life had I seen any educational intervention that had produced such immediate and effective results.

situations and to train teachers in how to cope with them when they arise. However, if properly handled, a teacher's intervention with an individual can create a unique social and emotional experience that cannot be addressed in any well-planned and carefully led lessons. The real situation, with its intensive personal and emotional involvement, and possible future consequences (e.g. punishment) sets the stage for an encounter that is tailored to each individual student and which will not easily be forgotten by either the teacher or the pupil. Any effective intervention, in my view, must include not only structured taught programmes, such as

Table 1: *SEE Strategies: the pros and cons* (Yariv, 1996)

Strategy	Advantages	Disadvantages
System-wide organizational measures	Change organizational system-wide aspects that apply to all school-goers Cost-effective Preventative	General and impersonal in nature Does not tackle individual difficulties
Structured SEE taught curriculum	Covers essential aspects of SEE Uses effective didactic practices Teaches modes of behaviour, communication and self-awareness Preventative	Being perceived as 'material' and 'a taught lesson' 'Theoretical'. Is seldom practiced outside the classroom in real life situations Not designed to address specific situations faced by individuals
Individual interventions	Tailored to individual situations Solves specific cases effectively Meets the students' needs such as affiliation and acceptance May strengthen student – teacher relationships	Often involves resistance and limited cooperation from the student Time consuming

learning how to express negative feelings verbally instead of acting out aggressively, but also involve system-wide measures, such as writing school's bylaws and asking teachers to supervise the courtyards during recess time. In addition, teachers and principals must take effective measures whenever misbehaviour and violence occurs.

The three strategies which have been briefly described (see Table 1) and the next four case studies provide detailed examples which illustrate the eco-systemic theoretical framework.

1 "The Giraffe Language" is a taught programme that promotes non-violent communication skills among children at kindergarten and children with special needs.

Table 2: *The SEE Strategies used in the case studies in this chapter*

Programme	System-wide organizational measures	Structured SEE taught curriculum	Post-event individual interventions
'Life Skills'		+	
The national system-wide programme	+	+	
'Circled chairs'	+		
'Giraffe language'		+	+
'Discipline and Dialogue'			+
Abraham Fund Initiative		+	
Mount Carmel school	+	+	

2 "Discipline and Dialogue" is a brief psycho-educational intervention that enables teachers to work through pupils' misbehaviour with them.

3 The third programme is an educational initiative aimed at bridging the divide between Jewish and Arab children.

4 The last section depicts the case of a public inner-city elementary school where the principal and staff members have developed several impressive social and environmental initiatives.

Case Study 1: Giraffe Language

The language we use carries within it much more than words and meaning. The words we use shape our relationships and social connections. Nonviolent Communication is an educational platform developed by Marshall Rosenberg, which helps to connect people and allows everyone's needs to be equally valued. The process of Nonviolent Communication (NVC) helps to connect us with what is alive in ourselves and heightens our awareness of what gets in the way of natural giving and receiving. Nonviolent Communication is aimed at strengthening the ability to inspire compassion from others and to respond compassionately to others and to ourselves. It enables us to reframe how we express ourselves, how we hear others, and how we resolve conflicts (The Center for NVC, 2012). A letter sent to the

(Nonviolent Communication) enables us to reframe how we express ourselves, how we hear others, and how we resolve conflicts (The Center for NVC, 2012).

parents of one Israeli kindergarten explains the programme's rationale:

We teach and learn in our kindergarten a new language - 'The magic keys to good communication'. The programme was developed by Dr. Marshal Rosenberg, an American clinical psychologist and it is meant to educate children and adults in how to relate to each other nonviolently. Dr. Rosenberg, who teaches these principles in many countries, uses the metaphors of two animals to describe the old and new languages: giraffe and jackal. He explains that day to day language includes many expressions of judgment, generalizations and accusations (the jackal language). Such communication sets up barriers between people and creates a climate of alienation and suspicion. The Giraffe Language involves compassion by enables us to observe and learn and get to know the others with whom we communicate. All three keys create the place for the fourth key – the heart key. The Giraffe eats leaves (she is not a predator) and her long neck enables her to stick out, to see a balanced picture from above which makes her the perfect mascot for compassionate communication. When we meet with someone and connect with his or her inner light, we allow the most wonderful communication to happen, be it with words, gestures, with a smile or even in silence.

The letter also explains that the programme teaches children how to develop their emotional intelligence, improve their social skills, broaden their discourse abilities; and learn how to solve problems. The new language also teaches them to broaden their emotional vocabulary, express emotions, and comprehend

"There are no "violent" children, … but only children who have been made emotionally numb …" (Lior Idan Aburman).

speaking from the heart. Because the giraffe has the biggest heart of all the animals, it enables her to contain many feelings, both good and bad. In our kindergarten we use the book Didi's Magic Keys, written by Lior Idan Aburman (1999), which tells us that the big heart contains four 'magic keys': The key of the mouth' that helps us to open our hearts and express ourselves; the 'key of the ears' helps us to listen openly, without judgment and rushing to respond; and the 'key of the eyes' that

the names of different everyday feelings. Children learn gradually how to relate to their feelings, to say when they are happy or sad, yell and stamp their feet when they are angry. Being aware of one's own feelings, naming and expressing them make up the first stage of acquiring the language of giraffe. Then the teacher establishes a centre in the classroom called 'we speak the 'giraffe language'' where children are encouraged to share their feelings and solve disputes. At the end of each day they are encouraged to share with their friends how they felt that day.

The programme

The 'Giraffe Language' is a widespread (though not mandatory) SEE programme used in Israeli preschool classes. The written programme was created by Lior Idan Aburman (1999) who translated Marshall Rosenberg's ideas into the Israeli context. The book "Didi's Magic Keys" was created after she attended a symposium in Jerusalem led by Dr. Marshal Rosenberg 15 years ago. Lior who experienced childhood violence swore that her children would grow up in a different climate. *"There are no "violent" children",* she explains, *"but only children who have been made emotionally numb, children who carry their pain silently inside themselves but no one can hear and care for them."*

'Didi's Magic Keys' (Idan Aburman, 1999) is the story of a young boy who wants his mothers' attention and gets very angry when she is too busy to play with him. The impatient Didi embarks on an exciting journey to Magic Land with his friends, Giraffe and Jackal. On the journey he meets a variety of colourful characters who pile obstacles in his way. With the help of his friends Didi learns the language of the heart. The books and songs are currently widely used in Israeli kindergartens and special education institutions. The principles espoused in the books are relevant for every age and educational institution. Although the programme is not included in the core national SEE curriculum, the Ministry of Education provides partial training and some guidance on how to teach the programme, and many teachers use its tenets in their classes.

The programme is practiced both in a structured manner and informally during the school day, both in scheduled activities and as a tool to solve unexpected conflicts (Mamelia, 2004). Observing a morning session in a municipal kindergarten I gained several insights into how the programme works. Each morning session takes about 30 minutes and the session begins with several routine activities: counting the children who came to school that morning; naming what day it is today; raising the national flag and singing the national anthem, etc. For every segment of the session the teacher assigns a child to lead it. That morning it turned out that the teacher intentionally assigned the same child to lead a segment several times. Other children who noticed the discrimination began to complain loudly.

> Teacher: *yes, you are right. I made a mistake when I asked (her) several times. But I ask you to look at yourself: are you a jackal or giraffe? Do you envy other children who get things more than you do?*

Some children admitted to being selfish while others expressed 'giraffe' sentiments. As they reflected upon their own feelings the teacher encourages the girl to continue with her assignment. The fact that the teacher admitted making a mistake and that she explained her considerations decreased the children's criticism while the reflecting helped them to become aware of their inner motives.

Before ending the morning session the teacher asked the children to divide into pairs, sit face to face, and tell their partner how they felt that morning. She reminded them to look one another in the eye and to listen carefully while the other child spoke. In the first round the children followed her instructions and listened carefully, but as the teacher rang the bell to signal that they should change roles, the quality of listening declined. Some children turned their heads and spoke to other children. The next activity was meant to end the morning session. The teacher asked the children to get into pairs and imitate a 'wheelbarrow walk', in which one child

holds the legs of the other child who 'walks' on his hands. She reminded them that selecting the roles, who 'walks' and who 'carries', must be agreed upon through discussion and not by coercion. When someone forgot the rule and ordered his counterpart: 'you walk!' the teacher stopped the activity and speaks loudly (to the boy): 'you are now speaking the jackal's language (turns to the group) could you tell me kids how he could speak the giraffe language?' Several children suggested that he ask her if she would agree to him 'carrying' her. The child turned to his partner and asked her what role she would like to perform.

A few minutes later, as the children were playing freely, the teacher heard a loud cry from a nearby room. She hurried and found David and Saul quarrelling over a superman doll. David, a shy boy, starting playing with the doll first and Saul then chased him and tried to grab the doll from his hands. The teacher asked the boys to join her in the 'peacemaking centre' where she put two chairs in the middle of the room, one designated for the 'speaker' and one for the 'listener'. After they sat face to face she reminded them of the conversation's rules, where the 'listener' is asked to remain silent, calm down and listen carefully to his rival (a challenging demand for a five year old child who has just been involved in a fierce argument).

Teacher: *I understand that David played with the doll for a long time* (Saul, who cannot overcome his nervousness, weeps and rushes to explain, but the teacher signals to him not to interrupt her). *David, what do you say? How do you feel?*

David: *He could have taken another doll to play with.* (After the teacher verifies that he has nothing else to add she asks them to exchange seats and now Saul

has the right to speak).
Saul: *I had already been playing with (that) superman doll.*

The teacher, who had kept a rather low profile while managing the conversation, enabled each child to fully express his thoughts and feelings. When each speaker seemed to be finished, the teacher suggested they would exchange roles and seats, and after several turns she encouraged the boys to reach an agreement. The dispute was resolved within few minutes and both children agreed that David would continue to play with the superman doll for a few more minutes and then hand it to Saul. At the end the teacher reminded them to enact the 'peace gesture' – one of bending thumbs.

The principles of the Giraffe Language are rather simple to learn and use. They can be included in many daily planned activities as well as in unexpected situations, but in order to embed the language into the daily routine the principles must be implemented consistently. The teacher whom I visited that morning confided that at the beginning she had found it difficult to adopt the strict communication rules, and to insist that the children did what she was modelling. Despite discouraging messages from colleagues, she continued to invest the time and effort to lead the children to adopt the language of the Giraffe whole-heartedly. Some of them even took the language home. One girl, for example, 'taught' her parents how to use the 'peacemaking centre' procedure to solve their own disputes. The teacher also explained that the guidelines for successful implementation are as follows: Firstly, fruitful cooperation with the parents is essential. For example, at the entrance to the classroom she hung a box labelled 'The Giraffe-letters' for the letters describing the good deeds which the children had done at home. Parents were encouraged to post such letters into the box every week.

Once a week she reads the letters and the children receive a 'Giraffe certificate'. One of the goals is to encourage the children to behave well at home. Another is to help the parents acquire the Giraffe language to refer to their child's conduct, describe their feelings and to explain how the child's behaviour contributed to the family's wellbeing. The more that parents are familiar with the four-stage language, the more they phrase their letters and discussions with their children accordingly. She also recommends that staff should have proper training in the programme's rationale, curriculum, language and activities. Implementing the language should be consistent with the stages of the programme and its rationale. Secondly, the kindergarten team needs to help the children to phrase their day to day problems in the correct language. Since the children observe what their educators do, the discourse and relationships among children and adults should follow the proper language (e.g. a calm tone of voice, expressing an interest in others' needs, and so on).

Outcomes

The programme certainly teaches and encourages children to use nonviolent communication, but only one study to date has ex-

that the 'Giraffe Language' increased cooperation and mutual listening, and reduced the level of violence among children. Parental cooperation increased the use of the programme's principles in the classroom and at home. She also observed that girls solved conflicts better than boys and needed less assistance from their teachers. Ezer found a significant positive correlation between the use of emotional intelligence and the use of Giraffe language. At the end of the report she refers to the connection between the children's experience and the national context:

> The Israeli government begins its military indoctrination at preschool age with messages that support the use of military power as a legitimate and reasonable line of action. The regime glorifies Jewish statehood, belittles the Arab peoples' right to exist, reinforces admiration of the nation's strength, and intensifies fears of a second Holocaust. As a counsellor I believe this thesis on nonviolent communication is the first step towards introducing a change in the educational climate. Counsellors must be aware of the existing realities in Israeli society and adapt SEL programs to the context and needs

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… 'Giraffe Language' increased cooperation and mutual listening, and reduced the level of violence among children. (Ezer, 2011).

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amined the programme's outcomes in Israel. For one year Ezer (2011) observed how the programme was being implemented in a kindergarten in Tel Aviv. She also surveyed 28 parents and 83 preschool teachers about the programme's effectiveness. She found

Case Study 2: Discipline and Dialogue

When pupils break the rules teachers are called upon to intervene. Holding short discussions after the incident has occurred enables both parties to explore what happened,

what the underlying reasons for the misbehaviour were and how to solve the problem. For the teacher to engage in a dialogue with the student is probably the best way to solve the problems and it provides an opportunity for experiential social and emotional learning. When both parties take part in such an open discussion and reach an agreement together, it paves the way for future cooperation and reduces the chances of the events recurring. Unfortunately, underlying obstacles discourage both partners to set up an encounter and reach an effective solution:

Firstly, arranging an encounter during a busy school day is extremely difficult, especially when the school's facilities do not include somewhere comfortable and quiet; when both parties are stressed and annoyed; and when the teacher intends to interrogate or reprimand the student. In such a situation the pupils are concerned that the teacher will discover what they have done and punish them, and the teachers also prefer to avoid such unpleasant encounters.

Secondly, time constraints and a heavy workload drive teachers to use fire-fighting strategies to calm down disruptions. They prefer to ignore, reprimand, punish or use other short-term bureaucratic measures such as a letter to the parents and suspension from school. These interventions are often ineffective since they fail to address the child's inner social and emotional needs and motives.

Thirdly, misbehaviour and violence are complicated phenomena. In many cases the student is often solely blamed for the interruptions to the lesson, but in addition to his or her deeds, other 'ecological' (e.g. crowded corridors and playgrounds) and social factors (e.g. bystanders who silently support those who are misbehaving) fan the flames. Any diagnosis and intervention must take the hidden contributing factors into account.

Teachers hold many kinds of discussions each day, and some of these discussions are held to solve difficulties:

A An '**open door**' discussion - when a distressed student asks to meet with the teacher and the discussion they have is warm and empathetic;

B A '**cheer up**' discussion when the teacher notices that the child is struggling and invites him/her to talk and encourages him/her;

C An '**interrogation**' encounter, initiated by the teacher to collect details about a case of aggression;

D *'Discipline and dialogue'*: the teacher invites the student to discuss his/her misbehaviour and to solve the problem together. The climate is often unpleasant during the intervention;

E A '**reprimand**' discussion, that the teacher initiates (very unpleasant).

'*Discipline and Dialogue'* is a tool that I developed to assist teachers and students to overcome these emotional barriers (Yariv, 1996). This brief psycho-educational intervention aims to collect details about the incident, to encourage the student to take responsibility for the situation, to solve the problem and (if possible) to prevent such incidents reoccurring in the future. From a SEE standpoint, such encounters can help children to understand their own motives, learn how to solve conflicts, better understand social norms, and learn to how deal in a more constructive manner with their own needs and drives. Since both partners are annoyed and stressed, especially in the initial phase, the three stage intervention is structured to address their annoyance and hesitations.

• At first, the teacher listens empathetically and non-judgementally to the pupil's report. It alleviates the tension, increases the

pupil's cooperation and paves the way for the second phase.

- Secondly, the teacher explores the details of the case and the pupil's motives. Such questioning slightly increases the pupil's tension and gradually builds up his/her willingness to take responsibility.
- Finally, both participants search for a solution. Reaching agreement reduces uncertainties, transmits a sense of hope and clarifies how the student needs to behave in the future.

Such an encounter is rather short, taking from 10-20 minutes. It should be held in a calm place, preferably with both partners sitting face to face. The teacher is asked to stick to four communication rules:

1 '**Sharing the time fifty/fifty**'– the accumulated time spent speaking by each person during the meeting represents the amount of responsibility each party takes. When students wait patiently and say nothing, it reflects their minimal involvement. In order to prevent the tendency of teachers to dominate the discussion and speak continuously, they are asked to monitor this and ensure that the student spends no less than one half the entire meeting speaking and that the time that the teacher spends speaking does not exceed the other half of the time.
2 '**One step at a time**'. As in a dance, after each verbal statement the teacher makes (a question, a remark), he/she is asked to let the student respond.
3 '**Lead a calm conversation**', in order to have a fruitful encounter in a tense situation any external (and internal) noise should be kept to a minimum. Speaking softly and calmly imbues the conversation with a sense of openness and confidence, enables sensitive issues to be touched on, and helps to solve complicated matters.
4 '**The more severe the case, the longer the meeting should be postponed**'. As

with the third rule, intensive negative emotions, while both parties are still distressed, diminish the chances of reaching a solution and reduces the likelihood that the student will change his or her behaviour in the future. Timing is an important factor and teachers are encouraged to let the student calm down before they meet that day or the next.

During the last ten years I have taught about 1000 teacher training students how to lead such discussions. I first model the approach in the classroom through role-play. I then ask them to practice the tool in their classrooms and provide a written report of their experience. Enclosed is a typical example:

The green pencil
Cedar is an elementary school with 470 pupils located in a medium-sized town in northern Israel. Many of the town's residents immigrated from the former Soviet Union and the socio-economic status is below the average. Ofek (this is a pseudonym, the name means 'Horizon' in Hebrew) is an impulsive, low-achieving second grade student (aged 7). He finds it difficult to get along with his peers, and to postpone gratification. On a Monday, the teacher gave the class crayons and pencils and asked them to draw their family. Alex (not his real name) is a clever and polite child whose parents immigrated from the Ukraine. When Ofek noticed that Alex had received a green pencil he decided to take it from him. Both children began to quarrel over the pencil until Ofek grabbed the pencil and hit Alex in the eye. Avital, the student teacher who was teaching the class, met with Ofek two hours later.

The beginning of the discussion is the most sensitive and vulnerable stage, when both parties are concerned and suspicious. Many children, like Ofek, feel uneasy when asked to face what they have done wrong. The

Table 3: *An example of the four communication rules*

Stages	Dialogue
LISTENING	
The teacher greets the student	Avital: *good morning Ofek* Ofek: *Good morning Avital*
The teacher defines the subject in a non-judgmental manner	Avital: *I want to talk with you about the conflict with Alex* (Ofek bends his head, tears in his eyes) Avital: *Can you tell me what happened?*
The child describes the case freely The teacher listens empathetically	Ofek: (unwillingly answers my question) *I wanted to draw with the green pencil.*
GOING INTO THE DETAILS	
The teacher questions the pupil	Avital: *What happened when you tried to take the pencil from Alex?* Ofek: *Alex didn't want to give it to me, so he held onto the pencil and when I tried to pull it out of his hand, he got hit in the eye.* Avital: *what happened later?* Ofek: *then he hit me and I began to cry and so you heard me and came to see what had happened.*
The teacher explores motives and emotions	Avital: *There is something I don't understand: why was the green pencil so important to you?* Ofek: *It shines.*
Summarizes the sequence of events	Avital: *Well, you wanted the green pencil but it was already in Alex's hands. You got angry and could not wait. Ofek, you have difficulty in waiting for your turn and probably other children do not like it when you grab everything from their hands, Isn't this the case?* Ofek: *yes.*

teacher's short, non-judgmental questions encourage Ofek to respond.

The teacher helps the child understand his motives and behaviour, and connect his behaviour to the reasons for his poor relationships with others. Ofek already knows that grabbing is forbidden, but the need to own objects and his poor self control derail again and again his relationships with his classmates. The teacher is quite pessimistic about the likelihood of him changing this behaviour in the long term, but she is determined to stop it, at least in the short term.

SOLVING THE PROBLEM TOGETHER

The teachers offers Ofek the chance to make a suggestion of his own, but he fails to do so	Avital: *could you behave in another way?* Ofek: *I do not know* Avital: *So, let's think together. Could you ask Alex to give you the pencil?* Ofek (frustrated): *He would not let me* Avital: *Have you tried?* Ofek: *no*
The teacher is forced to suggest several ideas until she reaches an agreement with Ofek	Avital: *well, every problem has a solution and it is for us to choose one. You decided to grab the pencil from Alex and it is due to this that he got hurt. This is not the first time you have become angry, refused to share things and have had conflicts with your classmates* Ofek: *true*
The teacher ensures that she plays an active role in any solution	Avital (assertively): *we will not tolerate these frequent quarrels. It is time for you to stop quarrelling and I want to help you. If you do not get along with others please call me. By the way, would you like me to change the group you are studying with?* Ofek: *no* Avital: *okay. I understand that you would prefer to sit by yourself to do the assignment individually. In the next lesson I will move you to a table by the window, and when you have finished preparing your assignment you can go back to your group.* Ofek (smiles): *Well, okay, that's best.* Avital: *and I beg you: count to ten. If you want something, ask the others or come to ask me. Do not harm others.*

The solution they have reached has not solved the underlying psychological reasons for Ofek's behaviour, but the teacher is optimistic that as Ofek grows up he will learn to control his impulses. In the meantime it is for her to help him to minimize his conflicts with others.

From a general standpoint, my student-teachers and experienced teachers who are taught how to lead such encounters often find that the pupils, who are so accustomed to the conventional reprimand discussions, are taken by surprise at being given the opportunity to share information, uncover their inner motives and express their own feelings. Solving the problem takes place in an egalitarian and supportive climate, in a non-punitive manner, where both parties share equal responsibility for the outcomes of the encounter. Based on two evaluation studies, one explored the quality of my instruction how to acquire and use the tool (Yariv, 2008), while the other examined the use and effectiveness of the tool being used in the field by my courses' graduates (Yariv, 2009) I found that

Discipline and Dialogue is a practical, useful and quite effective means to solve incidents of misbehaviour at schools and in preschool classes. The facilitative climate; addressing the pupil's inner conflicts; solving the problem from a non-judgmental perspective; encouraging the pupil to empathize with others, are all powerful psychological means.

Case Study 3- Remote cousins: The 'Abraham Fund' project

Despite the tense relationships between the Jewish and the Arab sectors, several initiatives have been developed to bring members of both groups together. Probably the most comprehensive and courageous one is the cooperative village *Neve Shalom/ Wahat*

The Abraham Fund Initiatives has been working since 1989 to promote coexistence and equality among Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens. Named after the common ancestor of both Jews and Arabs, the Abraham Fund supports a cohesive, secure and just Israeli society. For that sake the fund uses advocacy and political lobbying that promote policies of cooperation; and also initiates innovative large-scale educational and social projects in cooperation with the government. The Abraham Fund believes that constructing a shared society of inclusion and equality among Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens is a moral and pragmatic imperative for the State of Israel; a society in which the individual's rights as well as the political, cultural and

Jewish school children speak hardly any Arabic and are not familiar with Arabic culture. The Abraham Fund's educational initiative aims to change this situation.

al-Salam (literally 'Oasis of Peace'). The binational community of 52 families demonstrates the possibility of coexistence between Jews and Palestinians, by developing a community based on mutual acceptance, respect and cooperation. The village was established in 1977 and is located on the pre six-day war (1967) Jordanian - Israeli border. The village runs several communal educational enterprises such as a bi-lingual elementary school, a guest house and 'The School for Peace' which provides educational programmes for local and international groups. Needless to say, such co-existence is neither simple nor tranquil and the continuous need to negotiate every aspect of day to day life brings with it ongoing tension. Neve Shalom is one of several similar educational initiatives, such as the 'Abraham Fund' project.

religious character of each community should be clearly and unambiguously recognized and respected.

The current Israeli educational system is divided into various ethnic and religious streams. Jewish school children speak hardly any Arabic and are not familiar with Arabic culture. The Abraham Fund's educational initiative aims to change this situation. The fund's main project is called *Ya Salam*, which includes three programmes: firstly, the 'Language as a Cultural Bridge' initiative, in which students in more than 200 Jewish schools study the spoken Arabic language and culture, taught by Arab teachers. In addition to twice-weekly Arabic language lessons, each student enjoys Arabic cultural activities featuring traditional Arab storytellers,

Arabic music workshops and bilingual the-atre productions produced especially for the programme by leading Arabic artists and theatres. The programme has been adopted by the Ministry of Education and has been made mandatory in the northern part of Is-rael. Secondly, Hebrew language and cultural enrichment activities are held in Arab schools. Thirdly, 30 pairs of Jewish and Arab schools in northern Israel and in Haifa (the largest mixed city) participate in a series of guided encounters designed to promote shared society values and facilitate commu-nication and understanding. The programme aims to bring together Arab and Jewish chil-dren, as well as their teachers, to get to know each other and share activities together.

The programme was developed by The Abraham Fund together with *Ma'arag*, an ed-ucational think-tank. It runs at each school for three consecutive years, and is funded (and managed) by the Abraham Fund with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education and the relevant municipalities. The extensive budget covers the development of the pro-gramme, the hiring of facilitators and super-visors, staff training and the transport and equipment costs. The programme for the children consists of five meetings: initially, at their own school the children learn about the neighbouring village and its culture. They are also briefed about the upcoming meeting. The second, third and fourth bi-national meetings are carried out interchangeably at each school. The fifth and final meeting is de-voted to summing up the project. The organ-izers hope that after gaining the necessary knowledge and experience, each school will adopt the programme and continue to main-tain the meetings with the neighbouring school without additional funding.

The programme combines two main princi-ples with regard to how to enable members of two rival groups to meet one another

(Allport, 1954). The first approach assumes that merely being together and enjoying com-mon activities is enough to reduce suspicion and increase the forming of bonds. The second line of thought assumes that until both groups have negotiated the issues in the conflict the relationships will remain shallow and super-ficial. These principles are translated into in-tensive three-hour staff preparation meetings. The first meeting is a preparation session fo-cused on their own culture led by a facilitator of the same culture. The teachers are asked to express their own attitudes and concerns. Later, after each meeting, a joint follow-up feedback meeting is held by the teachers of both cultures. The developers have found that unspoken thoughts interfere with the teachers' cooperation. Resistance is also evident in the discussions about which language to speak in the meetings; Some Jewish principals object to the use of Arabic. The Jewish and Arab teach-ers take part in a total of five sessions, all fa-cilitated by professional Jewish and Arab fa-cilitators. The sessions are held in parallel with the children's encounters.

'Isaac-West' is a Jewish village close to the Arab village 'Abraham-East' (all names have been changed for ethical reasons). Despite the close geographical location and being governed by the same regional authority, the informal relationships between the citizens in both communities tend to be alienated and are sometimes tense. Within this climate, the principals of the two elementary schools, Ruth and Muhammad, work closely together, and their joint collaboration in the *'Ya Salam'* Encounters programme enables them dissi-pate the tension and allows their pupils to get to know each other. On the morning of the first meeting, after intensive preparatory work by the participating teachers and pupils, 20 fifth grade children (age 11) from 'Abraham-East' arrived at the Jewish school. The reason for focusing on this age group is to bring change to the current situation in

which Israeli adolescents who have already developed already strong political and ethnocentric attitudes tend to object to studying a second foreign language (Arabic/Hebrew) in middle school. The developers of the programme hope that after two years of exposure to the pupils of the other culture they will be more receptive to studying these languages in middle schools.

The programme: Travelling to the "star of coexistence"

Any good educational programme needs a rationale, a narrative that translates its principles into an appealing storyline, and enjoyable social and academic experiences. The Ma'arag think-tank has developed the theme of an adventurous space-craft that flies to a remote star and discovers there the conditions which are needed to live peacefully together. Preparing such an imaginative mission entails the 'pioneers', i.e. the children from both villages, to plan the mission to-

bours' culture, and the forthcoming mission they will be carrying out.

The meeting I observed was the second in the programme of five sessions. As I watched the teenagers arriving by bus from the Arabic village nearby, I noticed their concern about this first visit to a Jewish settlement. But their fears were quickly forgotten when the teachers (three from each school) welcomed them and divided them into three smaller groups. After a short explanation by Yasmin, the 'Ya Salam' facilitator, the teachers began with fast-paced warm-up games. Each facilitator translated what her colleague had just said into her own language: 'now, each one of you will say what your name is'. Then they brought out stickers and asked the children to write their names on the stickers in both languages. In order to do this each pupil had to ask a child from the other school for help. After the warm-up session the children enjoyed a lunch prepared by the host school and

While sitting on the floor, working with crayons and large paper sheets, the children forgot all about the personal, cultural and language barriers ... and worked enthusiastically together for the next two hours.

gether, what they need to take with them, how they could get to know each other better, what conditions would enable them to live together there. The programme is based on 'zoom-in' and 'zoom-out' experiences that enable the children to become acquainted with their neighbours' culture.

The first meeting is held separately at each school and the pupils are briefed about the programme, their Arabic or Jewish neigh-

then spent a joint recess together. Playing together is known to be a very effective icebreaker, but in one of the groups two girls had a bitter quarrel, which strained the developing relationships.

After returning from recess, the groups received a colourful bi-lingual 'invitation' to the next activity, which was to design a spacecraft that would take them to the Planet of Coexistence. Based on the notion of 'Seeing

things from another angle' the story is told about a small team (in this case three from each school) who develop an agenda to lead a peaceful life in a small shared living situation. Each team planned what equipment to take; how to create a comfortable and peaceful way of living with regard to religious and cultural aspects; and how to get to know each other. While sitting on the floor, working with crayons and large paper sheets, the children forgot all about the personal, cultural and language barriers (the children from the Abraham East school who already knew some Hebrew switched to speaking that language) and worked enthusiastically together for the next two hours. Their teachers remained in the classroom to watch and kept chatting with their colleagues. By the end of the session, the children returned to the circle of chairs. Each team presented the poster that they had created and explained what their considerations were and how the process had gone. The pupils then reflected upon their initial concerns how they would be welcomed and current positive feelings. Finally they stood up, held hands and said farewell.

The third meeting would be taking place a month later in the 'Beit Ha'Geffen' Arab-Jewish museum in Haifa. The children would continue to learn about the 'star of co-existence' and the actual coexistence of Jews and Arabs in Israel. They will watch a short video about the museum, and then will continue to work in mixed teams on the conditions needed to live together. Through the use of interactive games they would be enabled to write a covenant together. In the fourth session the children would be taking part in a quiz about the two cultures and then each team would prepare a poster depicting their space craft which would be hung on the wall. After all the participants have attended the poster exhibition and have listened to the explanations from the other teams they all

summarize their experiences in the teams and are given a certificate. The fifth and last session is held separately at each school. The children are shown the photos and watch the videos that were taken during the sessions and share their experiences, memories and insights.

Ruth, the principal, arrived at the 'Isaac-West' school seven years ago. She was born in a nearby town to Jewish-Iraqi parents. She recalls how her father used to invite local Arab friends to their home. She speaks some Arabic and believes wholeheartedly in principles of co-existence. It is due to this that she initiated Arabic studies in her school for fifth and sixth graders (ages 11-12) and hired an Arabic born teacher (through the Abraham Fund's "Ya Salam" programme for Arabic language and culture). She regularly meets with her colleague from Abraham East, and two years ago she participated in a Jordanian-Israeli women's task force. But even in a region where the population is made up almost equally of Jewish and Muslim citizens, with a political climate that favours cooperation, there were other voices of parents who spoke out against the programme and tried to cancel it.

The Arabic-Jewish joint encounters programme has now been expanded to include 60 schools, representing a total population of 200,000. The positive outcomes and the growing number of city mayors and school principals who ask to join the project reflect its success. But the initial warm welcome from staff is sometimes replaced later with practical as well as hidden objections as educators are actually asked to roll up their sleeves and begin the collaboration with other schools and communities. Much lobbying is still needed to convince mayors, supervisors from the Ministry of Education and school principals. The organizers know that the programme's success depends not only on the

support of high ranking officials, but also on the gradual and continuing implementation in the field; and careful and immediate guidance when tensions arise. To sum up, the Abraham Fund is rowing their boat against a very negative historical and political stream. Trying to change this is certainly a big challenge.

Case Study 4: A supportive environment: The 'Mount Carmel' elementary school

The 'Mount Carmel' elementary school (all names have been changed) is located in one of the less affluent sections of a medium sized city near Tel Aviv. The population of this quiet neighbourhood is comprised of long-term residents who immigrated to Israel from North Africa during the 1950s and young Israeli-born families who cannot afford to purchase a flat in the more well-to-do cities in the centre of Israel. The school was established in the early 60s. About 450 pupils who make up the sixteen first to sixth grade classes (age 6 to 12) are taught by 37 teachers. The single storey school building has two main wings and three additional buildings (including a petting zoo), and a large courtyard with trees and a playground that can be observed from the large windows of the main ground level building. In the vicinity of the school grounds are a municipal library, a sports hall and a cultural and sports centre. The old and quite worn-out looking school (scheduled for major renovations in 2013) seems just another typical inner-city school, but in this case there is nothing more misleading than the first impression.

Ruth, the principal, accepted her current post five years ago. After completing a BA in economics and a Masters degree in Business Administration she began her career as an economist, but she soon found the job too boring and decided to switch to teaching. She first taught economics and computer pro-

gramming and then served for eight years as a middle school principal. Then, looking for a more challenging position, she applied to the Ministry of Education for a post and after an in-depth discussion with the city's mayor, Ruth was asked to take on the leadership of an elementary school that was facing severe difficulties. It took her two years to gain the support of the staff and the parents before she pushed forward with bringing her educational vision into reality. 'The challenge we face is how to improve our pupils' academic achievements without neglecting their individual needs', she explained. Ruth tends to visit and observe classes and then confer with the observed teacher to discuss various aspects. These short meetings help solve problems and encourage staff members to improve their teaching. Her educational vision is comprised of three principles, and the first on the list is sensitivity to children's needs.

A. Caring for the children

From when children begin school, the first grade 'educators' (an all embracing teaching role) collect detailed information about them and their families. The data is collected continuously and is used throughout their six years in elementary school. Every 4-6 weeks the counselling staff review and assess the child's situation and tailor, where necessary, a wholistic personal therapeutic and educational programme to meet the child's needs. Such an individual programme may include therapeutic and counselling sessions, remedial academic assistance in subjects which the child is struggling with; referring the child to the school's boarding house (which provides lunch and assistance with homework during the afternoons); or referring the child's case to a social worker. Recognizing names and personal details and maintaining intensive follow-up is essential for educators and certainly a challenging task for principals. Every morning Ruth stands at the school gate

and says a warm 'good morning' to every child ('It helps me to get to know their names, to notice whether a child has arrived with torn clothes and a sad face, and I can compliment children on their new shoes and neat appearance').

Another aspect of the principal's vision is that many students' personal and academic difficulties are not properly addressed by schools, and therefore she has invited several experts to enrich the regular core curriculum with SEE. These unique programmes, especially applied in the first to third grades (ages 6 to 8), are aimed at developing some basic abilities. For example, twice a week first grade students (age 6) enjoy a lesson that takes place inside and outside the classroom, where unique didactic toys are placed on tables, and several large plastic plates, about

Approach (NDFA), which stimulates specific neural pathways and strengthens various groups of muscles (e.g. in the shoulders and arms). Such activities and outdoor games which were common in the past are not as common today (e.g. skipping with a rope, marbles) and the didactic games help to improve the children's motor, sensory and social development. The NDFA was developed by Rami Katz, an Israeli developmental psychologist who has helped the school develop these activities and whose trainers continuously guide the members of staff.

In a nearby classroom the children have a weekly yoga lesson. The coach opens the lesson with a Japanese fable, followed by an interesting discussion with the children about its meaning. Then they rehearse drills that imitate animals' postures (e.g. cats and dogs)

... the 'Magic classroom' aims to provide recognition and reward to pupils who have shown significant improvement and have worked hard ...

one meter in diameter, built to improve vestibular (balance) competences, are scattered along the corridors. The children are thrilled to have the opportunity to roll on the plates while carrying out academic tasks such as reading or sorting flash cards with words on them. Other children put their hands into large opaque glass bottles, covered with heavy pieces of cloth, which contain dried peas and chickpeas to improve their tactile abilities. They are asked to pull out and arrange into words small discs each with a letter written on them which are hidden in the jars. On a nearby table children are sculpting letters out of plasticine. These activities are based on the Neuro Developmental Functional

and actually massage (as if 'kneading dough') their peers' bodily organs. Finally he shows them how to give a shiatsu facial massage to their cheeks and eyebrows and asks them to offer similar massages to their parents. Such activities that are taught at school and are practiced at home (e.g. how to take deep breaths to reduce stress) were found in the school's follow-up survey to foster openness and strengthen familial ties.

Many schools suffer from insufficient resources to assist children with special needs. 'Mount Carmel' makes use of several programmes that broaden the therapeutic and educational assistance provided to individual

children. For example, the '**Magic class-room**' aims to provide recognition and reward to pupils who have shown significant improvement and have worked hard, or to those children who live in poverty, experience academic difficulties and failure and

B. Caring for nature and the environment
Another aspect of the principal's vision relates to the importance of the environment and its preservation. The school has developed a unique environmental preservation programme that provides the students with

The animals are cared for by several children … who volunteer to arrive every morning to feed the animals and clean the cages.

need a place to relax. 'I realized that repriمanding and punishing children is not as effective as rewarding them', the principal explains. The Magic classroom is mostly used during noon hours, when children are tired and agitated. In order to provide a containing and relaxing atmosphere, the floor of the room is covered with wall-to-wall carpet, several sofas, and a large box containing toys. Twice a week each class selects and sends 3-4 children who meet specific criteria (efforts are made to send more frequently children who face difficulties). In the room they meet a special education teacher who talks with them about the reasons they were selected. She accompanies them in their play and creative activities. At the end of the session this teacher attaches a round big sticker to their shirts that says 'I am a magic child', and they proudly show this sign to their (envious) friends and to their parents at home. As in many other educational institutions in Israel, the school runs SEE programmes such as 'Life Skills' and 'the Key of the Heart' (Ministry of Education, 2013). These weekly session programmes are taught at each grade level by two teachers. The programmes promote social skills and help improve the learning climate in the classroom.

knowledge and shapes their attitudes about the meaning and the nature of a higher quality of living. For example, every Friday (except on rainy days) the children use the 'green bus', which means that they walk to and from school. In order to help the younger children, their parents wait for them at bus stops along the road. This year the school is focusing on ways to save electricity and on preserving the water quality in Israel.

The petting zoo - The garden consists of two sites: one is a small zoo which has a small inner yard and cages and tanks that hold ducks, rabbits, parrots, birds, fish and other small animals. The second site is located in a classroom where several cages contain various species of parrots, rats, hamsters and chinchillas. Both sites have been developed and expanded over the last three years, and the substantial funds needed to purchase cages, animals and food come from private benefactors and from the municipality. These sites serve two functions: for leisure activities, families and pupils from other schools can come to watch the animals, and for supporting taught zoology lessons. In one such lesson for second grade pupils (age 7) the teacher explained how birds and mammals prepare for the chilly winter nights. To back up his

explanations he gave them a parrot and a small mouse to handle. The animals are cared for by several children (known as 'trustees') who volunteer to arrive every morning to feed the animals and clean the cages. The trustees, who are guided by a teacher, also arrive during the recess time to watch and play with the animals. The trustees are selected by the counselling staff's recommendations according to the expected beneficial role. The children love to volunteer and spend much of their free time with the animals, as one 3rd grade pupil (aged 8) explained: 'Animals are like humans. We need to take care of them and it fills me with joy'. The counselling staff views caring for animals as a therapeutic activity that is especially beneficial to children who either need to develop empathetic skills or those whose families are not caring enough for them. To support this work, the school also provides animal-assisted therapy given by an expert to several children each year.

The ecological garden - In the courtyard there is a unique 'inviting garden' where vegetation that attracts birds and insects has been planted. During their lessons there, the young pupils (1st to 3rd grade, ages 6 to 8) plant seeds, cultivate the garden, water the vegetation and observe the animals and flowers. The school has won the Ministry of Education's 'green school' award for the last four consecutive years and has also won similar local municipality awards. The principal expressed her vision:

"I wish our pupils to be more sensitive to the environment and recognize their important role in protecting it. It is for us to ensure that we wake up every morning to a more healthy, clean and safe world".

C. Caring for the community.
The school initiates activities that promote co-operation with community-wide organizations,

such as the local sports and cultural centre, local elderly citizens, and the municipal authorities. For example, the principal invites pupils from a nearby special education school to visit the petting zoo to watch the animals; she frequently meets with neighbours to discuss common issues; the pupils are encouraged to contribute and collect goods for poor families and the like. On the morning of my visit, all the children and their teachers gathered in the large sports hall to participate in a ceremony devoted to the rights of disabled people. A day earlier, all the parents and their children attended a monthly evening that was devoted to the 'value of the month' – social involvement. Another way that the school connects with the community is called the 'educators' alignment' – where teachers and parents meet to discuss the school's educational policy.

Mount Carmel elementary school places special emphasis on its pupils being active and involved. The pupils run 'the children's society' that consists of committees elected by the pupils themselves. The children take photos and film short video reports of school events, which are included on the school's website. Members of the society are called upon to express their views on a host of issues, such as developing the 'magic room' and their expectations for the future renovation of the school. The principal invites children to her office to discuss ongoing issues. Children are asked (and feel privileged and honored) to serve one full day once a year as the 'school's trustee', namely to support the secretary and help to keep the school clean. Whenever guests visit the school, the principal asks some fifth and sixth graders (age 11 to 12) to accompany and guide the visitors. The structured social organization is augmented by taught lessons on democratic thought, led by professional facilitators affiliated with the 'Adam Institute for Democracy and Peace'. Democracy is not only taught but also actively practiced in the school. In addition, the school

... providing guidance and training children in how to understand and respect others is a long process that requires intensive efforts and continuous involvement.

has participated in a municipal campaign against violence that was launched nine years ago. All the parents and their children who participated in that initiative signed a municipal treaty that bans violence. In addition, a bylaw was developed to guide the children with regard to social norms in the school. The posters hanging on the walls reflect the school, city and country's history. They also reflect the communal values, such as the one that is devoted to pupils who are scouts and another declares 'we are one human fabric'.

Visiting the school reveals a simple 'secret': holding a clear vision of caring and having the determination to translate it into many varied actions bears effective educational outcomes.

Conclusion

As we come to the end of this chapter, we may return to the imperative '**What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow'.** Hillel knows that any short statement, no matter how elegantly and succinctly phrased, is just the first step along a long road, so he asks the heathen to go and learn the whole Torah. Such is also the lesson with regard to social and emotional education; providing guidance and training children in how to understand and respect others is a long process that requires intensive efforts and continuous involvement. It also requires the use of various methods, not only running structured lessons, but also shaping the organizational and physical environment (including a petting zoo and even the teachers' seating arrangements during recess time). Teachers and

principals also need to develop effective ways of coping with recurrent disruptions and misbehaviour. The brief psycho-educational intervention I introduced is one measure aimed at replacing the conventional punitive talk educators tend to use so frequently. And last but not least, despite being challenged by the heathen, Hillel responds with presence of mind. Such is the patient and caring example teachers need to provide to their students in how they cope with emotionally loaded situations.

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Norway

Social competence in Norwegian schools

Johannes Finne

Abstract

Norway is the country of the fjords situated in a northern corner of the world, slightly separated from the EU. The five million inhabitants of Norway have embraced the idea of equality and a social democratic organization of the welfare state. Norway has a well-established tradition of decentralization and school autonomy. This is especially marked in the case of primary and lower secondary schools, with a strong sense of individual schools being "owned" by their local communities and accountable to them rather than the national authorities. Many of these communities, especially in rural areas, are very small and responsible for just a few schools each. As an oil-producing country Norway's wealth has grown and in the wake of this the level of equality seems to have decreased. However a robust economy secures a situation which is different to that experienced by many other countries and makes it possible to allocate a large share of financial resources to schools. For instance, the teacher density according to number of students per teacher is 28 % higher in Norway than the OECD average.

Norway has a well-established tradition of decentralization and school autonomy … with a strong sense of individual schools being "owned" by their local communities …

Nevertheless it is strange that these economic resources do not produce better results in education. Different surveys have placed Norway in a position whereby it stands out by ataining lower student achievement levels than other countries which invest similar amounts in education. These tests also indicate that there is a lot of noise and disturbance in the average Norwegian classroom. Academic results are weak and students seem to lack learning strategies, and their problem solving abilities and mathematics skills are much lower than in other comparable countries. Classroom management seems to be weak which might explain why the schools struggle with poor discipline and achieve poor academic outcomes. In a new study, only 70% of teachers reported that they perceive their authority and control in the classroom as good, meaning that a high number of teachers find themselves unable to lead their classes appropriately.

(Surveys) indicate that there is a lot of noise and disturbance in the average Norwegian classroom.

Knowledge about certain strategies with which to meet current challenges in the school can make the teacher feel safer and more secure. Such strategies are included in different programmes which are all designed to facilitate and develop social and emotional competence. Findings show that schools with a contextual perspective on behavioural problems have both a lower occurrence of such behaviour as well as less of a need for external support, compared with other schools. Effective programmes promote the school's ability to be a social equalizer, in terms of behavioural problems, learning difficulties and different cultural backgrounds.

Effective programmes promote the school's ability to be a social equalizer, in terms of behavioural problems, learning difficulties and different cultural backgrounds.

A national report describes the social and emotional learning programmes which have been approved by the Norwegian government for use in Norwegian schools, and there are nine evidence based programmes (mostly Norwegian) which have been put forward as the most effective. In this chapter examples of programmes will be given which specifically address the learning of social competencies by students, as well as examples of programmes focused on improving the social learning environment. Successful schools are characterized by dynamic leaders who promote change.

Social competence is a superior competence, which involves cognitive, communicative and emotional aspects in the development of individuals. This is also reflected and emphasized in most social competence training programmes. Interventions with a broad approach to social competence show as positive an effect for students seen as being of high risk of problem behaviour as for students with no such risk.

It is easy to take social and emotional competence for granted, since most people are led through the learning process through positive interactions with competent adults and peers. From a pedagogical point of view social skills and social and emotional competence are seen as learned behaviours that can be developed further. Positive peer relationships create opportunities to learn through imitation and through vicarious reinforcement, when observed

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Social competence is both a prerequisite for playing and a consequence of it. Likewise, social competence is both a result of and a prerequisite for language development.

children are successful in their social actions. A socially competent child can adapt, be aware of others and assert his/her own needs, being both pro-social and self-assertive. By observing many varied ways of using a skill in different situations, a reflexive competence will develop over time.

A systemic pedagogical approach might help children enter into a positive cycle together with other children, where the acquiring of skills and the reinforcement of such skills can take place. Social competence is both a prerequisite for playing and a consequence of it. Likewise, social competence is both a result of and a prerequisite for language development.

When we choose to see a situation through spectacles which are positively coloured by social competence we will be conscious of situations between children that we not would otherwise be aware of. And we need to wear the right glasses, given the essential mandate that we have been given to teach social and emotional competence to children and young people.

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Social competence in Norwegian schools

Norway is a country of fjords, a thin strip reaching towards the top of the world. As the name indicates it is the way to the North. The landscape as seen from above or on maps, furrowed and weather-beaten, is poetically described in the Norwegian national anthem. Countless fjords, surrounded by steep mountains, actually make the Norwegian coastline as long as that of Australia. This proximity to the ocean has always been important to the Norwegian people. Fishing and shipping have been at the core of Norwegian society since the Viking era, more than 1000 years ago. And the ongoing willingness to keep every little village along the coast and in the deep inaccessible valleys alive is astounding. The Norwegian population of five million people confirm their origins through common leisure activities, which to a great extent include the quiet enjoyment of nature.

In many ways Norwegians are proud of their history as Vikings even though many of the stories about the rebellions are not very flattering. However, the era was characterized by expansion, trade and exploration, even though it is the fighting and looting that tend to spring to mind when we think of the Vikings. And it was during these times that Norway was established as a kingdom, 9000 years after it was first settled. The diplomatic talent of the Norwegian nation became visible already at this time and both literature and the economy flourished until the Black Death hit Norway like a hammer. Half of the inhabitants died during this catastrophe and the plague was the starting point of centuries of decline. For more than 500 years Norway was either a part of Sweden or Denmark. Due to the fact that Norway had very few nobles it was almost impossible to establish an alternative to being ruled by the country's neighbours.

So when nationalism flourished in Europe in the nineteenth century, this trend also affected Norway and stimulated the Norwegian people to develop and to establish their own sense of national identity. The Norwegian constitution was ratified in 1814 and the parliamentary system of government was introduced in 1884. This then led to the dissolution of the union with Sweden in 1905. Norway definitely wanted to be a kingdom, but still did not have a nobility. It was because of this that the Norwegians decided to offer the crown to a Danish prince who became the first king of Norway for centuries. His ability to embrace his people was expressed early in May 1945, when he and his family returned to Norway from exile in London. The position of the royal family was again confirmed after the terrible events of 22nd July 2011. They managed to promote the strengthening of existing positive values in their people, instead of revenge and hate at a time when anger and hate had excellent growing conditions.

Since Norway won independence one hundred years ago, a strong state has been supported by its people. This desire for independence might be the reason why Norway is not part of the European Union. This desire for independence is also important in the local municipalities, which have a high level of local authority. Norway has a well-established tradition of decentralization and autonomy. This is especially marked in the case of primary and lower secondary schools, with a strong sense of individual schools being "owned" by their local communities and accountable to them rather than to the national authorities. Many of these communities, especially in rural areas, are very small and responsible for just a few schools each. Norwegians place a lot of trust in the state, which over the last century has been a welfare state based on social democratic principles. This has been important for the economic development of the country, and has also influenced how

Norwegians have looked upon government ownership of industry and business. At the end of the 1960s Norway entered a new era. Oil was found in the North Sea. This has had a great impact on the life of Norwegians as Norway gained wealth beyond all expectations.. From the very beginning of this era it was clear that the development of the petroleum enterprises should be controlled by the state.

which is the biggest Norwegian resource. From this perspective more distinct and proactive educational policies are required.

The Norwegian school system

In Norway children and young people from age 6 to 16 attend 10 years of compulsory schooling which is free of charge. In recent decades young people are increasingly expected to go on to upper secondary school

This focus on rights and equality between the people and its leaders might also explain why many teachers in Norway struggle with students' persistently challenging their authority.

The workers' legal right to influence the organization of their workplace is a typical feature of Norwegian industry and business. This focus on rights and equality between the people and its leaders might also explain why many teachers in Norway struggle with students' persistently challenging their authority. However, in recent years it seems that the level of equality in Norway has been decreasing. An increasing percentage of people seem to be part of the underprivileged sector of society and the differences between rich and poor are becoming more and more significant, as well as the gap between those with higher education and those without.

Today Norway's economy is robust and has secured a decent standard of living for future generations. How to use the country's financial resources is a hot topic and the opinion of many people in Norway is that more should be invested in education and in the development of children and youth. It is claimed that it is not oil but human capital

(age 16-19), which is still free of charge but not compulsory. The Norwegian unitary school, which the majority of children and young people attend, provides equal education to all students regardless of their academic skills, geography or parents' financial situation. The idea of the unitary school is based upon the value of an equal and adapted approach to teaching for everyone, in a co-ordinated school system. Teaching is based on curricula for the comprehensive school that includes, among other things, the purpose of and goals for developing social and emotional competences. The schools have a quite considerable local autonomy in how they teach as long as they cover the core elements of the curricula.

In the 1950s and 60s a comprehensive change took place in the Norwegian school system. Seven years of education was provided to all children, and in cities students could attend additional years at school to qualify for further and higher education.

... schools have quite a considerable local autonomy in how they teach as long as they cover the core elements of the curricula.

However, this was an alternative for just a minority of students. In the 1950s the idea of the unitary school grew and in 1959 a new school law gave communities the opportunity to provide 9 years of schooling to their children. This happened concurrently with other changes in the rest of society. The new world demanded more education, society became more modernized, fewer workers were needed on the farms and young people became less important as labour. Nine years of comprehensive schooling was legally established in 1969 as a result of these changes. In 1997 compulsory school attendance was extended to 10 years.

The Norwegian school system has gone through many reforms over the last 50 years, which has caused difficulties in developing teaching systems and teaching skills over

ary schools. It introduces certain changes in substance, structure and organization from the first grade in the 10-year compulsory school and up to the last grade in upper secondary education and training. For example, this reform strengthens the basic subjects such as Norwegian and mathematics, describes key skills in all subjects, describes new goals for academic competence and requires a new timetable structure. However, the schools are given the responsibility of choosing their pedagogical approaches and materials.

There are approximately 3000 primary and secondary schools in Norway with an average of 200 students attending each school. Approximately 7% of the schools are private. Most private schools are established as local initiatives in rural areas and small villages

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Incessant changes in government demands and expectations have adversely affected the overall teaching quality in our schools.

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time. Incessant changes in government demands and expectations have adversely affected the overall teaching quality in our schools. 'Knowledge Promotion' was introduced in 2006 and is the latest reform to be introduced into the 10-year compulsory schooling system and into the upper second-

where the public school has been closed down by the authorities, due to low numbers of students.

The school plays an important role as a social equalizer. The threshold to exclude students from ordinary schools is high and only 0.5%

of students receive full time lessons in special schools (the average for Europe is 2%). The maximum primary school class size is 28 students and the average density of teachers is 11.9 students per teacher in primary schools and 10.5 in secondary schools. This teacher to student ratio is 28% higher than corresponding numbers for OECD countries. The amount of money invested in the Norwegian school system is formidable. Many times I have been asked: in Norway why can't you, with such wealth, achieve better results in your schools?

Observations indicate that productivity in Norwegian primary and secondary schools is low in the sense that student achievement is low in proportion to the amount of money which is invested in schools. However, Norway is not the only country which invests heavily in education but it stands out by scoring badly in international tests such as PIRLS, PISA and TIMSS compared to other countries which also invest heavily in education.

Norway has had a social democratic society for the last hundred years. The unitary school has provided a framework in which development has taken place. This means, in terms of the objectives of the unitary school, that everybody is supposed to have equal possibilities to progress, whether you are poor or rich, live in a city or in rural areas. It also seems as if this is the reality. The level of urbanization or the number of students in a class does not seem to affect the learning outcomes or student behaviour. Nevertheless, studies indicate (Wiborg et al 2011) that parents' level of education has a greater impact on student academic results than demographic factors, ethnic background or any other factor. Differences in achievement, taking into account parents' levels of education, will increase over time, and it does not seem as if school will help this tendency, either in terms of academic achievements or in terms

of the number of years spent in education. This is critical when you consider that the main goal for compulsory schooling is to offer the same possibilities to all students, whatever their background. Results for private schools are just slightly better.

Many different explanations have been suggested as ways of understanding this cost-benefit gap. Some claim that Norwegian students achieve good results in subjects not measured in these tests. As an example, the PISA studies of 2000 and 2003 indicate that there is more noise and disturbance during teaching in Norwegian schools than in most of the other countries in these studies. The academic results are weak and show that our students lack learning strategies and do not find the outcome of the school years as valuable as students in other countries do. Further indications show that problem solving abilities and mathematical skills are much lower than in other countries, even when compared with the other Nordic countries. PISA raises a fundamental question about to what extent the Norwegian school has succeeded in promoting the fundamental competencies, such as problem solving and learning strategies, that will contribute to lifelong learning for children and youth, about which there is broad international agreement (Kjærnsli & Lie, 2005).

Kjærnsli and colleagues (2007) draw attention to the issue of classroom management and a weakening of the teacher's leadership role, in an attempt to explain why Norwegian schools seem to struggle with poor discipline and poor academic outcomes. A recent study by Vaaland and Ertesvåg (2013) investigated how teachers perceive their own authority, in particular in relation to classroom control. In a representative sample, about 70% of teachers reported that they had good authority and control, meaning that a high number of teachers (i.e. 30%) find themselves unable to

lead their classes appropriately. In addition to the trouble that disruptive and negative pupil behaviour causes for teachers, it also has undesirable consequences for pupils' learning.

The school system seems not to be meeting the needs of boys, who, at an increasing rate are becoming a minority in the upper secondary schools and at the universities which

not changed at the same rate and in a similar direction to those of children and young people, which has led to teachers feeling insecure and being unclear about their role and level of authority. Within this context of greater equality between students and teachers it is hard to be an authoritative adult, as we have traditionally understood this role. Many models, programmes and approaches

It seems as if the tendency is for students to focus more on rights than on duties. This has concealed the teacher's right to set limits, to demand and to expect effort from students.

demand a high level of effort and good results. One third of boys drop out of upper secondary school before they have finished their education, and it seems that this trend is increasing. This is a particular problem at schools where boys are in the majority and which are perceived as easy to get into.

The school system has been through many changes in the last decade, and student behaviour, has been particularly focused upon. These changes have included an increase in the students' level of influence through increased involvement. A wave of democracy in the school includes for example more student engagement, project work and self-evaluation. This corresponds with the trends in adults' working lives. This new student role has caused the teacher's role to be put under pressure (Kjærnsli & Lie, 2005). It seems as if the tendency is for students to focus more on rights than on duties. This has concealed the teacher's right to set limits, to demand and to expect effort from students. It is claimed that in schools the adults' roles have

in school seem to be oriented towards strengthening the teacher's ability to be authoritative. From the student perspective, rules, guidelines and systems seem to strengthen the teacher's role and strengthen the school as an authoritative collective.

We have today collected a lot of knowledge about the connection between behaviour problems and academic success (Nordahl, 2005). We know also that social competence correlates positively with high academic achievement. This means that developing social competencies is not just a goal in itself, but also has the purpose of strengthening students' learning abilities. In recent years the term "early intervention" has received much attention both in professional and political debates. It is much easier to build positive behaviour at an early age than to change behaviour when children or young people are older. Many students could benefit from a greater focus on social competence in the early school years instead of later which requires more extensive intervention in the

... social competence correlates positively with high academic achievement.

higher grades. Nevertheless, the reality is that twice as many students require special education in secondary schools compared to primary schools. Despite all the good will and concrete actions which have been taken the schools have only to a limited extent succeeded in helping students to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and values needed to create a good life for themselves.

Social competence in Norwegian schools

It is easy to take social and emotional competence for granted, since most people are led through the learning process and have positive interactions with competent adults and peers. However, as our knowledge about such competencies and social interactions increases, we also realize that well-adapted children possess a great number of skills and well developed abilities to reflect on and adapt to different situations (Ogden, 2006). Social competencies are not given as innate abilities, nor do they develop through maturation or

competence can be understood as social skills together with the knowledge of when to use different skills, and how to use skills differently in different situations. Being socially competent is often a question of balancing different goals simultaneously. It is expected that children can take into account both individual and collective goals, meaning that they are able to be both pro-social and self-assertive at the same time. This can create a clash of interests that needs to be solved by what we can call a reflective competence. For example, a student may choose to sit down and talk to a friend in trouble and will therefore be late for class. He/she will have to choose between being a good friend and a good student.

When a pupil has problems with friendship or is worried about what will happen in the break, this will result in a lack of concentration in the learning situation. It has been estimated that about 75% of children with

Social competence can be understood as social skills together with the knowledge of when to use different skills and how to use skills differently in different situations.

through incidental learning. From a pedagogical perspective social skills and social and emotional competence are seen as learned behaviour that can be developed further (Gundersen, 2010). Nobody is totally without skills and nobody is fully trained. Social

learning difficulties also lack social skills (Kavale and Forness 1995). It is important to stress that social competence correlates positively with academic achievements (Nordahl et al., 2006; Caprara et al., 2000; Wentzel, 1991)

Social competence is a superior competence, which involves cognitive, communicative, emotional and proprioceptive aspects in human beings (Vedeler, 2000). Traditionally, social competence and social skills have been described in medical terms. The reason for a lack of social skills was seen as psychological

and cooperative. It seems as if teachers and parents have different expectations in this area, where parents' expectations go more in the direction of self-assertion and teachers seem to prefer cooperation. To be a good friend requires skills such as the regulation and recognition of emotions, sharing, listen-

Children with behavioural problems are likely to be isolated or to form friendships with others who also lack social competence.

"damage", requiring diagnosis and treatment. Probably this is the reason why social competence and social skills have only in recent years been integrated into teaching curricula (Hargie and Hargie, 1995). In recent years there has been a greater focus on the interaction between contextual conditions and individuals and their environment in order to explain why individuals behave as they do.

It is claimed that accumulation of social capital, such as social resources and social competencies, is more complex than it used to be. A more knowledge-based acquisition of social competencies demands more from the parents. This strengthening of the family's position might increase the differences between children, because parents have different levels of ability to invest in the development of their children (Frønes, 2010). This will strengthen the purpose of the school as an equalizer and/or increase differences in society.

A Norwegian study of students aged 10-13 (Ogden 1995) and their social competence indicates that they are simultaneously expected to be self-assertive, self-controlled

ing, waiting one's turn and showing consideration to others. Children who possess such skills are in a positive cycle, where they are likely to establish positive and lasting friendships with others with similar skills. Because of mutual reinforcement of pro-social behaviour, the initially positive competence is further strengthened. In the other direction, aggressive and self-centred behaviour is negatively correlated with the acceptance of others. Children with behavioural problems are likely to be isolated or to form friendships with others who also lack social competence. This will set up a negative cycle, where rule-breaking behaviour is reinforced while the individual develops an identity as a "behaviourally difficult" child (Dodge, 2006). For this reason the ability to establish friendships is the key to social competence. It seems as if young people with behaviour problems feel best when acting out problem behaviour, and pro-social young people feel best when they are being pro-social.

Students who experience a positive relationship with their teachers also have good relationships with their peers (Nordahl, 2005). Both at age 10 and 13, there is a positive

correlation between social competence and high motivation for school and high academic achievement. Students with high social competence also appear to be the most preferred members of a collaborative group during teaching or to be together with in the breaks (Ogden, 1995). Social competence is an underlying prerequisite for children and youth to behave in social situations. For a student to thrive as a competent member of the school community he/she has to have the self-belief that he or she has acquired the skills to meet his/her obligations towards other students and teachers and is able to promote individual and collective well-being. In fact, Bandura (1997) thought that self-efficacy is more important for problem solving than actually mastering the social skills required to resolve the problem. This belief is further reinforced when skills are successfully applied to real life situations.

Building social and emotional competence in Norwegian schools

Today a large number of resources are put towards preventing and reducing problems among children and young people, such as bullying, discipline problems and behaviour problems. The efforts which are made and the number of different programmes in use are, in many cases, weakly anchored in theory and empirical data. Mostly such programmes are implemented after discipline, behaviour or other such problems have occurred. At the same time many interventions are not appropriately evaluated. The result of this is that a lot of both pro-active and reactive pedagogical practice in Norwegian schools is based on the wrong prerequisites. Interventions do not or only partly address the problems they are meant to solve.

There is no general, nationwide strategy for social and emotional education in Norway. However, the authorities have set some clear guidelines in which they delegate the re-

sponsibility for choosing and implementing such programmes to the leaders of each community and each school. A number of programmes in use are to a greater or lesser degree evidence based and to a greater and lesser extent well implemented in Norwegian schools and kindergartens (Nordahl et al. 2006).

Even if training in social and emotional competence in Norwegian schools is strongly recommended by the government, it is left up to each community and each school to choose the level of implementation (for example, will a certain group, a certain grade or the whole school take part in a programme?) and which programme to implement. In 2006 a committee established by the government completed a report (Nordahl et al.) that describes good practice in social and emotional learning programmes to be used in schools, and indicates which programme is suitable for which group. A high number of programmes were taken into consideration, but only nine programmes scored highly enough to be rated as "a programme with documented effects". These nine programmes are divided into two groups. The first group consists of programmes which specifically address students' learning of social competence. All of the programmes are manual based and consist of pedagogical activities to increase students' cognitive and behavioural capacities. The following four programmes fall into this group: Aggression Replacement Training (ART), The Incredible Years, You and I and Us Two, and Zippi's Friends.

The second group consists of programmes which focus on the learning environment of the school. They provide tools to prevent bullying and to establish, for example, a matrix of problem solving approaches, systematic reinforcement of positive behaviour and common rules for the school. These kind of programmes include students through

Table 1. Programmes with documented effects which specifically address the learning of social competencies (Nordahl et al., 2006)

Programmes which specifically address the learning of social competencies

Programme	Description
*ART (Aggression Replacement Training), American, Norwegian adaptation. Diakonhjemmet University College	Group based training for students from 1st-10th grade (6 -16 years old) using role play, a fixed training structure, games and positive reinforcement. Consisting of three equal components; social skills, anger management and moral reasoning. Used for the prevention and treatment of behavioural problems for young and older students.
The Incredible Years American C. Webster-Stratton	Used for prevention and treatment of behavioural problems of young students, 1st-3rd grade (3-8 years old). Group-based treatment programme involving both parents and children. Prevention programme for classes and teachers.
*"You and I and us two!" Norwegian Kari Lamer	Programme for systematic promotion of social competence among children and developing competence among staff. Kindergarten and primary school (3-9 years old).
Zippy's Friends UK Partnership for Children	Conversation and dialogue-based programme promoting the solving of everyday situations. Early intervention in primary school (6-8 years old). Focuses on strengthening of power of resistance in addition to mastering coping and social skills.

*Programmes marked with * are presented in the case study section of this chapter.*

pedagogical activities which establish a positive learning environment. The following five programmes have qualified to be a part of this group: Respect, LP-Model (Learning Environment and Pedagogical Analysis), Olweus Anti-Bullying Programme, PALS (Positive Behaviour, Supporting Learning Environment and Interaction) and Zero Anti-Bullying Programme.

Knowledge about certain strategies to meet the current challenges at the school can make the teacher feel safer and more secure (Visser, 2000). Such strategies are developed through different programmes which have the goal to facilitate and develop social and emotional competence.

From a contextual perspective one looks upon behaviour as a result of the social environment and the quality of the relationships between staff, between staff and students and among students. Nordahl and colleagues (2009) found that schools where staff had a contextual perspective on behaviour problems had both a lower occurrence of such behaviour as well as less of a need for external support, compared with other schools.

Table 2. Programmes with documented effects which focus on the school's learning environment (Nordahl et al., 2006)

Programmes which focus on the school's social learning environment

Programme	Description
Respect Norwegian University of Stavanger	Emphasizes a whole school approach where all students, staff and parents get involved. Focuses on discipline, concentration and the prevention of bullying. Principle-based programme for 1st –10th grade (6 – 16 year olds).
LP-Model (Learning Environment and Pedagogical Analysis) University of Stavanger	Promotes social and academic learning conditions in grades 1-10 (6 – 16 year olds). An analysis method targeting teachers' understanding of the factors which arouse and maintain problem behaviour.
Olweus, Anti-bullying programme Norwegian University of Bergen	Reducing and preventing bullying and anti-social behaviour in 1st –10th grades (6 – 16 year olds). Establishes understanding and rules and promotes peer support and problem solving with regard to bullying.
PALS (Positive Behaviour, Supporting Learning Environment and Interaction), Norwegian University of Oslo	Whole school approach for grades 1-7 (6-12 year olds) for the prevention of problem behaviour. Consisting of an intervention programme targeted at all students, a training programme for staff and implementation strategies.
*Zero Norwegian University of Stavanger	The main focus is to reduce and prevent bullying in grades 1-10 (6-16 years old) and emphasizes the authoritative leadership of classes. Organizational implementation works within the existing structure and organization of the school.

Programmes marked with * are presented in the case study section of this chapter.

From a contextual perspective one looks upon behaviour as a result of the social environment and the quality of the relationships between staff, between staff and students and among students.

In the following section examples from three different Norwegian schools using programmes for social and emotional competence in different ways will be described.

These are just ordinary schools, which do not have a dramatic back-story nor a desperate need for a SEE programme. However, the school staff realized that they needed

more structure and a more systematic approach to promoting social and emotional competence in their students. In addition, a programme for use in kindergartens will briefly be presented.

The programmes which will be described represent interventions with different target groups and the breadth of programmes currently being implemented in Norwegian schools and kindergartens. The first is an anti-bullying programme named Zero which addresses the school's learning environment and the prevention of bullying. Secondly ART (Aggression Replacement Training) is presented as a group-based programme for students. Thirdly Whole-ART is described as an effective way of combining programmes for student training and improvement of the learning environment. Finally "You and I and us two" is briefly described as the most used

it in terms of actual numbers of students and not as a percentage; more than 50 000 students are bullied every month. The fact that the number of students affected decreases with increasing age, means that the percentage of bullied students who are younger is even greater. Despite more than a decade of anti-bullying initiatives in schools many children still feel unsafe at school. Bullying is a safety issue, and the fact that these issues are generated by their peer group and often in private contexts makes it difficult for adults to control. The recent upsurge of cyber bullying is a case in point (Cowie, 2011).

How to understand bullying as a mechanism

Two types of aggression are described in the literature. The first, *reactive aggression*, is understood as a tendency to react with anger when one is becoming frustrated or has been

Studies (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2011) show that 8.5% of the students in Norwegian schools are bullied several times a month ...

programme in kindergartens in Norway to promote social competence among children, and pedagogical competence among staff.

Case Study 1: Zero-Programme to Reduce and Prevent Bullying Vaagen school

Introduction
Studies (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2011) show that 8.5% of the students in Norwegian schools are bullied several times a month, and this percentage has remained steady for a number of years. As a percentage this might not seem too bad until we understand

provoked. This is not important as a variable in bullying behaviour. The second, *proactive aggression*, is a stable tendency to act aggressively to achieve social goals without any provocation. There is a strong positive correlation between proactive aggression and bullying, especially in the higher grades.

Bullying creates a feeling of power over the victim and a sense of belonging with the other bullies, since this tends to be a group activity. The relationship between the bullies is strengthened through committing acts of bullying as a group and the fact that the victim is outside the bullying circle makes this

feeling of fellowship even greater. Despite their actions, most bullies say that bullying is wrong, and theoretically they are against such behaviour. Because of the group, each individual's sense of responsibility is pulverized. For this reason it is important, as a part of the problem solving process, to speak individually with each of those involved. Another mechanism that makes bullying possible is the construction of false facts about the victim that places the responsibility for the actions of the bullies onto the victim. The bullies feel that their actions are no longer wrong, because the victim deserved to be harmed by them. Such explanations will typically be given when bullies are confronted about their actions. It is important that adults working with bullies understand the function of such arguments and do not allow any discussion about whose fault it was.

Bystanders are described as having an important role in bullying. They do not participate in tormenting the victim, but they are present as a silent majority. Bystanders seem to believe that other bystanders support the tormenting, but in most cases they are wrong. If peers step in and support the victim in many cases it will effectively stop the bullying.

Classes in which behaviour problems and bullying are experienced are characterized by a number of students feeling insecure about their place in the class, groups of students exhibiting destructive behaviours and isolated students. The insecurity leads to a real struggle for position with bullying being used as a tool. Authoritative teachers are in position to stop the ability of potentially aggressive students to play out their behaviour. In other words much effective prevention lies in the style of management used by the teacher and in the school as a whole (Martinussen & Eng 2010; Roland & Vaaland, 2006).

The Vaagen School

Driving from the west coast into the countryside towards the mountains, which run from north to south through the middle of Norway, you will come across a village called Ølen. There you might see several oil-platforms anchored for repairs in the shipyards along the sea shore in the fjord which will lead you to understand that the oil industry is a key part of this society. The small school of Vaagen is based in this little village. Vaagen School has approximately 90 students in the 1st - 7th grade (aged six to twelve) and a staff of 16 people. Everybody knows each other, and for villages like Ølen, the families have been here for generations, with their traditions, histories and relationships.

During lessons it is quiet in the hallways. In the breaks one can hear the sound of children's play as one would expect in a school with just one class in each grade. As a symbol the Zero poster hangs intact and clean on the outside wall leading to the soccer field. Maybe the students feel more ownership of common property in a small school? The headteacher Liv Ingunn Heie Medhaug has her office behind the first door in the hallway just beside the main entrance. Immediately one can see that everyone is welcome to visit her in her office – pupils, staff and parents. Tools for communication and problem solving are readily available and well used. She spoke to me about her school and why they decided to implement a programme to improve the learning environment.

Prior to the implementation of the programme there was no significant problem with bullying or problem behaviour at the school. However, there was a shared belief that a systematic approach to preventing unpleasantness among students and building pro-social behaviour would positively contribute to the learning environment of the

school. Liv explains why she felt that this was the right programme for the school:

"We wanted a programme that was not too extensive and a programme that we could implement and use at a level suited to our needs. Zero has a lot of positive qualities and is research based. It contributes to the institutional authority of the school to anchor a process and implementation in evidence and in the expertise of a university, it gives us more confidence and authority when communicating with parents."

Zero – anti-bullying programme

Zero is a universal preventive bullying programme for primary and secondary schools developed by The Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioural Research in Education at the University of Stavanger. Since its introduction in 2003 the programme has been implemented by 370

"People around us interpret signals differently. Sometimes a disagreement between the school and parents occurs about whether an incident is a bullying incident or not. If there is a culture characterized by respect and everybody knows that even a minor incident will be dealt with, then it is easier to report incidents to the teachers. The other side of a safe and friendly environment is that fewer incidents are likely to be interpreted as bullying. You are less afraid from the beginning onwards."

The programme consists of three key elements. Firstly; *Authoritative management* of the class is a key element in preventing bullying. Teachers are supposed to lead the class in a firm and caring way. The teacher should be both the formal and informal leader of the class, having authority, control over what happens in the classroom and the trust of the students. Individual feedback is emphasized

Authoritative management of the class is a key element in preventing bullying.

schools. The main goal of the programme is to reduce and prevent bullying, increase student well-being at school and reduce worry about bullying. This is not a manual based programme but it is built upon principles that offer guidelines for the work. It is up to each school to choose the activities and the Zero principles they will include in their programme, based on their own needs and resources. *Zero tolerance* is one of the main principles, which means that no unpleasantness against others is allowed, and this includes minor episodes. Students, parents and staff must all be clear that bullying is not acceptable. The headteacher told us.

and students know that the teacher will pay attention to what is happening in the classroom and will intervene when needed. The second key element *consistency* refers to the fact that this work should be integrated into the school's existing activities. Good leadership of a class is described as preventative in itself. And finally *continuity* is needed if such a programme is to produce any positive outcomes. Attention needs to be paid to the standard of the intervention and the quality needs to be sustained over time. The implementation of a Zero programme lasts for a year.

Plan of action

The structured plan of action runs as a thread through the whole implementation process, which last for approximately a year. The implementation process takes place in the spring with preparation of the new school year as the first step. Early on in the process a resource group consisting of key people from the school community is established. The core of this group is supposed to be composed of the leadership group of the school, supplemented by representatives from the student council and from the parents' committee. The main task of this group is to ensure the implementation of the Zero programme, involving the staff, the parents and the student council.

Involving parents is essential. *"A programme like Zero is almost without value if you don't collaborate with the parents,"* the headteacher claims.

Also in this first phase a student survey takes place. The school carries out an anonymous student survey in the spring to reveal bullying among students at the school. This same student survey is repeated a year later. Based on the results from the survey a local plan of action is created. This plan is highly valuable as a guideline for implementing the Zero programme in the school, and the process of creating the plan is of value in itself. The resource group and groups of students, staff and parents take part in the process of developing rules for the school, a matrix for problem solving, information materials and pedagogical activities.

> *"For us the process has been most important. Sub-processes like writing our own documents, deciding what we want to focus on and so on, these are the things that give content to such a programme."*

The structured plan of action consists of four parts. The first is to reveal bullying. Both the annual survey and daily communication between adults and students play an important role in this work.

Secondly, the school develops a common strategy to ensure that teachers, students and parents who report bullying know that the school will intervene as described in the Zero programme guidelines. The third part of the initiative is prevention. The best way to prevent bad behaviour is to build good behaviour. The teacher's relationship with each student, with his/her class and with the parents, and the students' peer relationships, are all important. Focusing on positive behaviour and reinforcing positive behaviour has a great impact on how each student behaves, but the social environment of the school also plays a crucial role. The composition of new classes in first grade (when children move from kindergarten to school at the age of six) and the eighth grade (when the children move from primary to secondary school at the age of thirteen) has a great impact on the extent of bullying.

Fourth and last is continuity. To solve a problem at the lowest possible level is an important principle and the staff know what to do when incidents occur. Numerous studies emphasize how important it is that the leader keeps a firm grip on the implementation process and continues to keep it alive.

> *"If we think a process will just continue by itself, it will fall apart. We need to discuss the initiative and have it on the agenda at all times. New colleagues will definitely solve problems in their own way if we don't include them in our culture and verbalize what we believe in and how we live out our principles in the organization. As a headteacher I need to be alert all the time."*

Collaboration between school and home is critical

Teachers and parents are often powerless to intervene in the private world that children and young people create for themselves (Cowie, 2011). Sometimes it is not necessarily a question of bullying, rather it is more about inclusion and exclusion. Inviting others to a birthday party is a typical example. This issue has been put on the agenda by the students, the headteacher told me. *"A common approach is established concerning how to deal with this question. When parents allow their children to exclude classmates from, for example, birthday parties they might legitimate and strengthen the exclusion."*

Example of common approaches for the whole school, decided on by the parents' committee:

1 You invite all your fellow students of your own sex to your birthday party, movie nights and other kinds of events until the 7th grade (age 12 years old). You are allowed to invite everyone, of both sexes.

2 The parents' representative has the responsibility to ensure that every class has at least one positive social happening each year, either for a group of friends or for all students. The school can be helpful in establishing friend groups if required (to ensure that no students are left out). You can ask the headteacher if you can borrow the school premises for such events.

3 At our school we respect the limit of 13 years of age before using Facebook. When children of 13 years of age are allowed by their parents to use Facebook, the child's parents will also be friends with their children on Facebook.

4 If parents are worried about the safety or well-being of their children at school or when they are on their way to school, please let the teacher know. It is important to look into and stop negative behaviour as soon as possible. Parents are also allowed to contact the headteacher, the health vis-

itor or the PPT (pedagogical psychological services). These professionals are all bound by confidentiality.

Now and the future

After implementing the Zero programme the parents are more conscious about how to solve bullying incidents and they have more procedural tools than before.. They want the school to play an active part and to be the meeting point when problems occur. However, they are clear that what is happening outside school is supposed to be solved outside school. A teacher might offer to parents to be present as an observer, for example, when families want to solve a problem or an incident. The headteacher explains:

"The fact that parents want to involve the school says something about our authority and the trust parents have in us. We experience that parents can openly discuss difficult questions, because we as a school have established clarity and guidelines with regards to our attitudes and how we lead processes when problems occur." Zero has contributed to us setting a high standard, Liv describes. The students express a higher level of verbalizing what is acceptable and what is not – they have greater clarity about what and cannot be done. In this spirit the programme slogan has changed. It used to be "Zero, a programme to prevent bullying". Now it is "Zero, a programme for a healthy psycho-social learning environment". It had a considerable focus on bullying, which is not that surprising since it is an anti-bullying programme. However, now the whole focus is more on building something positive than about preventing something negative. In many ways this is a total turnaround, maybe not in terms of actions or organizational structure, nor in the matter of consciousness, but in the ability that students now have to express what they see, who they are and what they want.

"This year we have children and media on the agenda. It's all about building attitude and values and setting limits for oneself. Social media exists and we have to deal with it. But it can't be the school alone which owns the responsibility for this. Discussions and group work together with parents and students make it possible to create common limits and attitudes."
(Headteacher Liv Ingunn Heie Medhaug)

Children's right to feel safe at school is indisputable. Knowing that one is surrounded by adults and peers who will positively contribute to making the school an inclusive and good place to be is priceless. The school of Vaagen has cultivated what they had, by adding consciousness and structured tools to reduce the likelihood of bullying incidents occurring in the future. Zero has been translated into English and Spanish and has been implemented in several parts of the world, including Latin America.

Case Study 2: Aggression Replacement Training (Art) When self-assertiveness is a goal for the school - Smeaheia School

ART – a description
Aggression Replacement Training (ART) (Goldstein, Glick & Gibbs, 1998) is a multimodal programme for the training of social competencies. Originally the programme was designed for young people with major behavioural problems. The programme has been found to be very effective in prisons or as an alternative to imprisonment (Hollin, 1999; Barnoski & Aos, 2004). More recently ART has, especially in Norway, been adapted and used in kindergartens, schools, residential homes for children and young people and also in working with people with Asperger's syndrome and autism. Both in terms of prevention and in terms of intervention ART has been the most used programme for training in social competence in schools and residential homes

in Norway. Three Norwegian effectiveness studies of ART confirm a general increase in measures of social competence and a reduction in problem behaviour (Gundersen & Svartdal, 2006; Gundersen et al., 2010; Langeveld, Gundersen & Svartdal, 2011). Because of its good results ART has been recommended for use in youth institutions for treatment of behaviour problems (Andreassen, 2003) and schools (Nordahl et al., 2006).

The programme consists of three components; Social skills training, Anger management training and training in Moral reasoning. The programme has a fixed structure and makes considerable use of role play, exercises and games. Usually there are 4-8 participants and two trainers in a group which is made up of young people with different levels of behavioural problems and social competencies. There is a particular focus on student involvement, both to make the sessions more exciting but also to increase learning through observation. Various strategies for reinforcement, generalization (i.e. the transfer and maintenance of learning) and implementation have been developed.

Social skills training
The goal of the social skills training is to teach students relevant and pro-social behavioural options for use in everyday situations. Fifty different skills are described and built up in three to six steps, which are like a recipe for pro-social behaviour. For example, a skill, such as giving a compliment, consists of thinking steps, verbal steps and behavioural steps.

Example of a skill: Giving a compliment
Step 1. Decide what you want to compliment the other person about
Step 2. Decide how to give the compliment
Step 3. Choose the right time and place
Step 4. Give the compliment

The first three steps are thinking steps. They contain a number of different thinking skills, such as empathic thinking, reflection about what will best suit this actual situation, and timing. Many children and young people are not successful at using skills because they have developed few alternatives and have poor timing in terms of when and where it is acceptable to offer compliments to others or to ask for help. The actual communication requires many micro skills such as body language, facial expression, tone of voice and so on. When giving a compliment face to face,

in a fixed structure which includes defining the skill, the trainer's demonstration of the skill, the student's role play and the student receiving positive feedback from other students and trainers.

Anger management is the second component, and it concerns the student's ability to regulate his/her anger and to solve potentially difficult situations in a way that is acceptable to everyone involved. The programme focuses on physiological responses, cognitive processes and behavioural re-

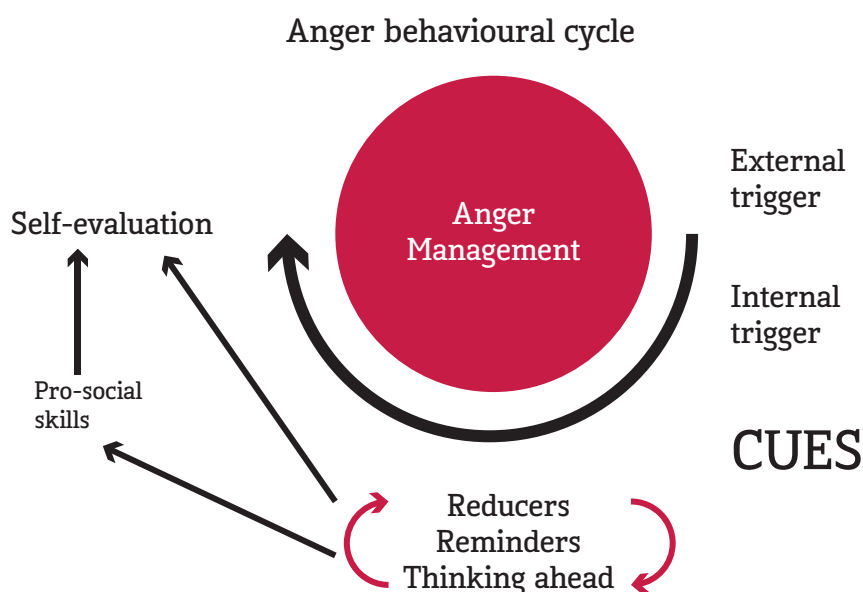# To communicate in a positive manner is actually quite complicated.

for example, you should have open and inviting body language, look the other person in the eye and have a friendly tone of voice. If you can also smile when saying the words, you will probably reduce the risk of misinterpretation and ensure that you will be understood in the way that you want. To communicate in a positive manner is actually quite complicated.

ART emphasizes the need to think before you act, for example, interpreting the situation, others' body language and intentions, and being aware of contextual rules and expectations that might affect the consequences of your choice of actions or words. We can say that there are at least three goals for the training; Preventing misinterpretation of difficult situations, increasing one's behavioural repertoire and reducing the chance of aggression being used as a solution, since other alternatives have been added. We want the students to be reflective about their behavioural choices and to use good alternatives suited to the situation. The skills are learned

sponses. The physiological responses involve the student's ability to identify external and internal triggers and their own anger cues, and to use techniques to curb their anger (such as deep breathing, counting backwards, and so on). Cognitive processes make visible the typical thought patterns used by people who tend to be aggressive and impulsive. Through cognitive restructuring strategies students are helped to identify irrational thought patterns and to replace them with a more rational analysis of the situation. The behavioural component involves rehearsal of new pro-social alternatives which can replace previous inappropriate performance patterns, where verbal or physical aggression or withdrawal from the situation are the most common behaviours.

Moral reasoning is the third component in ART. Various studies show a correlation between behavioural problems and immature or delayed moral judgments. The goal of training in moral reasoning is to help students to identify dilemmas and expand their

Anger behavioural cycle

Anger Management

External trigger

Internal trigger

Self-evaluation

Pro-social skills

CUES

Reducers
Reminders
Thinking ahead

understanding and perspectives when reflecting on possible solutions.

The Theoretical Foundations

ART is founded on Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977). The method is also based upon significant contributions from cognitive behavioural approaches and behavioural analysis. It is presupposed that aggression, like every other type of behaviour, is learned.

Observational learning forms the most important learning basis in ART. Bandura (1977) described how learning can take place through observation: The method that has given us the most significant results consists of three parts. The first part is that alternative skills are modelled (demonstrated) many times, preferably by different people who demonstrate how the skill can be used in many different situations. Secondly, students

By observing many different ways of using a skill in different situations, a reflexive competence will develop over time.

This approach posits that it is also possible to change such behaviour. Cognitive restructuring is an important part of the method. Essentially, it is a process by which individuals are directed to assess their own thoughts, feelings, beliefs and attitudes in order to identify new ways of thinking that reduce risky behaviour (Glick and Gibbs, 2011).

need to rehearse these skills in safe settings. However, these new skills are probably not going to be used if the students do not connect these rehearsals with positive reinforcement. The training should contain arranged success, as the third part. This is especially important when a new skill is introduced and rehearsed. If a method includes

modelling, and the student receives help when rehearsing the skill in safe settings and experiences positive results, it will almost always lead to good results.

By observing many different ways of using a skill in different situations, a reflexive competence will develop over time. When a person has a significant repertoire of alternatives, there is a good chance that he/she will manage to achieve an adequate level of social interaction in everyday situations. An increased repertoire will also lead to a less frequent use of aggression as a side-effect, since in many situations other behavioural alternatives are more appropriate.

A number of skills are required to function well as a student at school, and everywhere else for that matter. Skills such as receiving instructions, asking questions, collecting information and listening are needed every day just to manage adequately well as a participant in the classroom. Other skills, such as giving compliments, expressing one's own feelings, helping others, dealing with group pressure and so on are important in order to be well-liked as a student.

ART – a supplementary intervention at the school of Smeaheia

In many schools ART is a programme used to replace inadvisable and aggressive behaviour, to prevent negative behaviour or to build pro-social behaviour. To a greater or lesser degree every school experiences problems with students who cannot behave as expected, or rather as required. The reality at Smeaheia was that some incidents of fighting, negative interaction among some groups at school and foreign students revealed a need for an intervention. The need was not for an intensive programme to tackle aggression, but for a programme to be used both in the lower grades (for children aged 6-9 years old) and in the seventh grade (for children aged 12 years old) to build social competence and prevent negative behaviour. The programme is used as described above, but the goal of the intervention is quite unusual. In most schools teachers want the students to adapt and to focus in class as a collective. In this case increased individual self-assertiveness was an important purpose of the training.

Stig Hølland is the deputy headteacher and also ART-trainer at the school of Smeaheia. In several other schools he has experienced different programmes for social and emotional competence.

The school of Smeaheia is located in an area characterized by high levels of education and high levels of income, in a city with a population of 70 000 called Sandnes. The modern and colourful school buildings are to be found on the outskirts of a residential area close to a small forest and green areas. A characteristic of the people who live in this area is that they tend to have quite set expectations about outer image and behaviour, and the students' parents have high expectations about both the academic and sporting achievements of their offspring. National test results are above average compared to both the region and the rest of the country. In terms of student well-being and bullying the school receives average scores. The school had already implemented a programme known as Respect (Norwegian Centre for Learning Environments and Behavioural Research in Education, see also Table 2) in order to systematically support the social learning environment. Still they wanted, in addition, a more specific programme which addressed the needs of individuals with problem behaviour and who had other developmental needs. *"We needed ART because the existing programme didn't meet students who had the greatest need for such training. It became a programme for those who were already socially competent."*

To a certain extent the school staff and the parents hold different views with regard to children's behaviour. This can be a subject of great frustration for many children. However this provides an opportunity for children to develop the important ability to reflect on different perspectives on a situation, considering both what is their interest and what will be preferred by those around them. A class group takes shape through students trying to establish relationships and earn the acceptance of others. Over a period of time the class's sense of "We" and a certain conformity will be established. In every group, roles are distributed and a structure of popularity and influence is established. In smaller groups like groups of friends or family members there is more room for individuality and behaviour based on emotions and impulsivity. This fact is important to Stig Hølland who is both a school inspector and an ART trainer.

"An important purpose of a social competence programme at our school is to build self-assertiveness. To fit in our students need to get inside quite a tight framework of expectations and demands. Parents are well aware of incidents which occur outside of what is expected and there is in general a low level of acceptance of behaviour which occurs outside this framework. It's an important task for the school to create acceptance for each individual to develop as they are, so they dare to feel okay about being themselves, with their own body and their own mind."

Listening to others' reflections and gaining access to one another's thinking during discussions about everyday situations are appreciated by most participants. To observe the example of other peers and to get reinforcement after one's own attempts contributes to a certain self-efficacy, making it easier to try

out new reflections and new behaviours in real life situations. Nevertheless, all changes have to be anchored in the individual's desire to change. A change will not take place if the person does not want it to.

"It's an important task for the school to create acceptance for each individual to develop as they are, so they dare to feel okay about being themselves, with their own body and their own mind."
(Stig Hølland)

Including parents
It is essential that both children and parents are co-participants in the training. If such learning is not based on the free will of all participants, it is not likely to achieve positive outcomes of any significance. If parents do not want their child to participate in such a training they will not be supportive of the behavioural changes that their child tries to make.

On the whole the collaboration with parents at the Smeaheia School appears to be good. However, parents became increasingly sceptical about the fact that their children, as they got older, would benefit from training in, for example, ART. It is easier to accept that your child needs help with his/her development when he/she is young. It is as if parents feel that they have failed in raising their child if he/she chooses to participate in a SEE programme when he/she is in a higher grade.

The main goal for social skills training is for participants to acquire new skills to be used in different situations and in different arenas. If teachers and parents are aware of small changes and reinforce them when they occur, it is likely that the child's ability and willingness to use the new skill will increase. If children expect new skills to work well, they also are likely to try them in new arenas and

in different situations. Such transferring of skills requires a high level of consciousness among teachers (and parents). If a student who often shouts out his need for help in class, raises his hand, waits for his teacher to respond and asks for help in a pro-social way, his teachers should reinforce his behaviour. The student will then probably ask for help in a pro-social way the next time, especially in this teacher's class. A lot of the skills are classroom skills such as listening, asking a question, following instructions, concentrating on a task and so on. When teachers and parents know which skill the students are practicing each week, they are more able to respond properly. The more success a student has in using a skill the more likely it is that this skill will be repeated and in the long

even better results than those in the seventh grade (aged 12 years old). "In second grade we can still build competence, but in seventh grade it's more like repairing what's not good enough", Stig Hølland points out. This corresponds with findings from our own studies (Langeveld, Gundersen & Svartdal, 2012), which show that the younger the participants the better results they are likely to achieve. Teachers and parents report that children are more able to be students with pro-social classroom skills once they have completed the training.

What does this training mean to us?
The deputy head at Smeaheia School, Stig Hølland, states that programmes enhancing social competences have a huge impact on the

At school there are many possibilities to practice skills in different situations. To be able to transfer skills from school to home requires parents' collaboration.

term become a lasting part of his / her behavioural repertoire.

At school there are many possibilities to practice skills in different situations. To be able to transfer skills from school to home requires parents' collaboration. Information about the content of the training and a reminder of how to reinforce good efforts and positive behaviour at home, will promote transfer and maintenance (described as generalization) of skills.

ART has been proved to be effective for use with teenagers, but studies also show that younger children benefit from participating in the training. *Researchers report that pupils in the second grade (aged 7 years old) achieve*

learning environment and on each individual participant. He underlines that the correlation between social competence and academic achievement is significant (Wentzel 1991; Caprara et al., 2000)

"This is a school which achieves a high score on most measures and studies. It's certain that our focus on training in social competence is important. We can't focus on academics if the pupils are struggling with surviving in the classroom. The relationships with and between peers are of the highest importance. I have never seen any programme that fulfills this purpose, and I am familiar with a lot of programmes. For use with troubled students ART is the best we

have. This programme gives us both a useful fixed structure and necessary content!"

Students whose mother tongue is not Norwegian often have a limited vocabulary in Norwegian and probably understand less than we think. When we use words

help in understanding and describing situations and emotions that will occur.

Semantics are important. When everybody understands the same meaning of a word it becomes concrete and useful. It makes it possible to both understand and describe what we feel and think. In this way new words can

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"We can't focus on academics if the pupils are struggling with surviving in the classroom." (Stig Hølland).

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other than those that are the most common, it can be hard for them to understand what we are saying. A lot of frustration and anger is connected with this lack of understanding and with a lack of ability to express oneself in Norwegian. ART puts words and terms into context and gives them meaning. When learning new words during role plays and communication in the ART training, the participants are provided with verbal tools to be used in different situations. This training also has to continue outside the ART training room, Stig Hølland says. *"It's when we verbalize what we see during the training, in the*

create new understanding and a more precise conception of what happens inside us. The ability of constructive reflection, or what we can call an inner dialogue, correlates negatively with aggression (Meichenbaum, 1977).

Social competence means the ability to choose behaviour and social strategies from situation to situation, meaning that different social contexts demand different skills or different uses of skills (Nordahl, 2000). This implies that there is a need for children and youth to learn what rules apply where and how they should behave in one setting without destroying the possibilities in another sit-

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The ability of constructive reflection, or what we can call an inner dialogue, correlates negatively with aggression (Meichenbaum, 1977).

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breaks and in classroom that we promote learning the most." Using specific terms and focusing on the subject of social competence whenever possible enables students to become fluent in new words which

uation or in another relationship. For example, if a child wants to play soccer and his friend does not want to play, he needs to take into consideration how to express this wish to his friend without disturbing their

friendship. He has to be aware of both situations and his own wishes together with the wishes of his friend. A socially competent child can adapt, be aware of others and assert his/her own needs, being both pro-social and self-assertive. Social competence demands that one reflects on one's actions before acting. This means that problem behaviour might be rational behaviour from the student's point of view, and that such actions can be understood as part of the student's behavioural repertoire. A student might, for example, choose to behave rudely in front of a teacher in order to build up his status as a leader among his friends. He knows that this is wrong, but is willing to pay the price for a higher purpose.

"This programme helps students to be confident. They can be sure it's okay to be who they are and think as they do. And it gives them security to act reflectively in different situations. I think security underlies everything. For that reason the structure is important; they have to role play and to be a part of the structured positive feedback, both to themselves and others. A group of students can be in a negative spiral during training when they figure out that it's possible to say nice things to each other. When they have transferred the skill of giving compliments as a useful response to peers and they say nice things every time they meet, it has an invaluable effect," Stig Hølland says.

Closing words

Implementing a programme is no quick fix. Rather, it demands a great deal of effort over a certain period of time, normally at least two to four years when implementing adequately. The way a programme is implemented seems to be as important as the programme itself (Andrews, 1995). Stig Hølland, knows this. "*It's a tradition in Norway to change to something new when you have been doing something for a few years. But it's important that*

we adhere to ART as the programme for social competence training."

I find it interesting that this school combines different kinds of programmes, i.e. the Respect programme as an overall programme to ensure a good learning environment and ART. The staff have a clear view and knowledge about how to make complementary programmes fit together. It is an art to make two components more valuable than their mere sum.

Case Study 3: Whole School Art
The School of Sandes –
a whole school approach

The Sandnes School is located in Arendal, a small city with a population of approximately 43,000 located in the south of Norway. When you leave the highway and drive towards Arendal, you can feel the "tastes" of summer and vacation as you drive along the seaside and pass by several harbours with small boats and you get some glimpses of the sea beyond. The school is placed in a beautiful environment bordering on to a forest with big areas for children's play, football and other activities. The Sandnes school has approximately 200 students in grades 1 – 7 (aged six to twelve). The school used to be well-known for its ability to take care of students in need of special tuition. This reputation was the reason that parents applied to send their kids to this school.

Some years ago there were many conflicts between pupils during the breaks and it took up a lot of staff time to solve the problems and to resolve the conflicts during the breaks and in lesson time. Both teachers and assistants asked for tools, common rules and consequences that would provide them all with a common approach. The students tried and succeeded in setting the staff up against each other, and it was a challenging time for

students and staff alike. Due to the lack of a common approach, the fact that staff interpreted the rules differently and the fact that there were no guidelines for dealing with different kinds of behaviour, many unnecessary discussions took place among the staff.

At the same time as the ongoing and never ending discussions among the staff were taking place, two former students committed suicide within a short period of time. These tragedies made a formidable impression on the staff and it became clear that something had to be done. As the principal, Synnøve Solheim Pedersen, said: "You can't wait until they are teenagers to help develop their self-esteem and their ability to deal with their own lives. You have to start earlier and not wait until it's too late."

The Headteacher
Synnøve Solheim Pedersen was brand new as a headteacher when she started the process of turning the school around, developing unified rules and systems for the reinforcement of positive behaviour and problem solving. She had been the deputy headteacher for some years and when the principal announced that he wanted to resign, she was afraid that he would be replaced by someone less competent. She applied for the position herself, while thinking that this would be a good chance to do something about the current situation at the school. She wanted to do something systemic, stimulating and lasting; she wanted to help bring about a change that could influence everyday life at the school and in all grades and not just do something that would happen now and again. The search for a good programme had begun.

The Arendal local authority contacted the University of Agder (UiA) in the spring of 2008, to discuss a common research and development project. The background was a desire to make the school a better place to be. But

it also represented a great wish to establish a better learning environment at the school, through reducing problem behaviour and increasing academic achievement. The request for a systemic and competence building programme was answered by the partners being referred to the city of Larvik 130 km away, where about twenty schools and twenty kindergartens had implemented this programme. A large group of leaders visited the community of Larvik to be introduced to how they had recently anchored and implemented the Whole School ART programme. Then the programme leaders of Larvik were invited to Arendal and a large number of teachers were introduced to this approach, became enthusiastic and from the beginning were ready to give the Whole School ART programme a try.

A. Understanding why the Sandnes School was more successful than other similar schools at implementing the programme is easy and complex at the same time. The easy answer is that it was due to the headteacher and her energetic and fearless leadership of the process. The complex answer is how the school went about it. She asked the local authorities for three years in which to turn the school around. After three years, in 2011, the University of Agder completed their report which consisted of an evaluation of the implementation of the Whole School ART at Sandnes, and recommendations about how to go further. Some of the results are quite astonishing and well worth reading. See also page 40 for further descriptions of the findings. Time spent teaching, on average, increased by 4 minutes per hour.
B. The number of disturbances in the classroom has, on average, decreased significantly.
C. Less time is taken in dealing with misbehaviour.
D. Concentration lasts for a longer period of time in class.

ART - The Whole School Approach –
"Tell me and I will forget, show me and I may remember, let me do it and I will learn!" (Confucius)

The Whole School ART (H-ART) is a school-wide preventive approach that provides a comprehensive framework that can be used by any school to form their own way of creating a positive environment, in which positive behaviour can develop and grow. One of the foremost advances in school-wide discipline is the emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviours to create positive school environments. Instead of using the piecemeal approach of issuing individual behavioural management plans, a continuum of positive behaviour support for all students within a school is implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, the school grounds and the toilets).

Along with the school-wide focus some groups of students have the opportunity to be trained in ART each year, as ART is a group-based programme for approximately six to
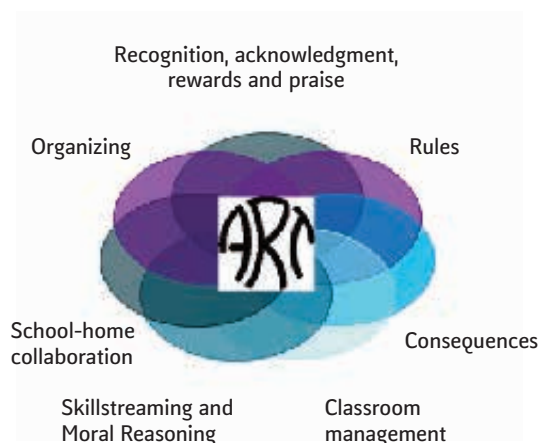

Fig. 2. The Whole School ART (H-ART)

Training in social skills, moral reasoning and empathy

Through the work with Whole School ART a set of universal expectations for pro-social behaviour were established for all students attending the Sandnes school. These expectations generally promote character traits such as respect, responsibility and cooperation. Once a month the teachers introduce to all grades in the school a new character trait and the corresponding social skills. Each week there is a lesson where the skills are discussed, the students receive training in

Once a month the teachers introduce to all grades in the school a new character trait and the corresponding social skills.

eight participants. A group can consist of some students from a certain grade, some students from a class with some challenges or a group of students that is in need of more intensive intervention. The ART programme consists of 30 lessons, normally delivered over the course of 10 weeks.

the use of the skill and the connection between the character trait and the skills is discussed. A character trait can be "Caring" (defined as showing concern for others through words and actions). A corresponding skill might be "Helping others"

Steps:
1 *Decide if the other person might need and want your help.*
2 *Think of the ways you could be helpful.*
3 *Ask the other person if he/she needs and wants your help.*
4 *Help the other person.*

At Sandnes School they have at least one ART-group running each semester (in Norway a school semester is approximately 20 weeks long in the autumn and approxi-

what is acceptable behaviour, and this knowledge will contribute to their understanding and repertoire of behaviours, which contributes to the goal of students achieving better social adaptation and behavioural regulation. It is far more effective to reinforce pro-social behaviour and to acknowledge what we want more of than to correct what is wrong. Students will, when receiving reinforcement in front of other students, be valuable role models for each other.

The rules and expectations of a school have to be explicitly expressed.

mately 25 weeks long in the spring). Each grade is invited to apply for ART training. When a grade has their application granted, each student can apply to be a part of the group, putting forward arguments as to why they will benefit from the training. The head-

A system of positive reinforcement is implemented with all students, for example by using "pogs". A pog is a piece of paper or a card given to a student when he/she uses a pro-social skill or sets a good example in terms of the displaying behaviour connected to the

Students need to know that their actions make a difference, that what they do or do not do is significant for others.

teacher and the grade teacher put together a group of students with different levels of social competencies. Students who are role models should also be part of the group.

Acknowledgment, reinforcement and motivation
The rules and expectations of a school have to be explicitly expressed. Students will then more easily apply their knowledge about

desired character traits. This offers the possibility to teachers to verbalize what students are doing, emphasizing both reinforcement for this student and vicarious reinforcement for those observing the interchange. Students need to know that their actions make a difference, that what they do or do not do is significant for others. Verbalizing pro-social behaviour communicates to the student in question why and how his/her action was

noticeable, and it expands the repertoire of, for example, how to care, show respect, and give a compliment of all students present.

A relationship describes a preferred communication pattern, which will lead to the repetition of certain communication actions, which means that the pattern reproduces and confirms itself. A relationship confirms itself through communication (Øvreeide 2002). Through observation, modelling and rehearsal, students learn how to build relationships. Immediate positive feedback about competent behaviour or attempts to produce such behaviour reinforces peer relationships and student–teacher relationships. Students showing low levels of social competence might actually have a high level of social competence but might not use these skills according to others' expectations. Social skills will be used only when asked for and appreciated.

Teaching behavioural expectations and rewarding students for meeting them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehaviour to occur before responding. The

A process to agree the rules and expectations adapted for use in the classroom, with the staff and with parents is expected to lead to a few clear and effective main rules (between 3 and 7 rules is an appropriate number). These rules should be visible and teachers are supposed to verbalize when students follow the rules well. Rules are supposed to be internalized and followed independently of external control, simply because the students find them important and not because of the fear of the consequences of not following the rules.

At Sandnes they have three main rules:

1 At Sandnes we arrive on time and are prepared.
2 At Sandnes we take care of our own and others' possessions.
3 At Sandnes we show respect to one another.

The consequences of disobeying the rules need to be known by the students, parents and staff. A consequence matrix should be used by the staff as a tool to become more

The teacher is the most important single factor when it comes to learning achievement and student behaviour (Roland, 1998).

purpose of the Whole School Approach (H-ART) is to establish a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm.

Rules and consequences. It is essential to have a common understanding of an agreement about the school's rules and expectations. Staff, students and parents should be involved in the preparation of these. In this way everybody takes ownership of the rules.

clear and unified. When rules and consequences are kept to consistently by both students and teachers, this creates a more predictable environment in which the teachers have the mandate to solve problems and conflicts as they occur.

Classroom management has to be emphasized. The teacher is the most important single factor when it comes to learning

achievement and student behaviour (Roland, 1998). Authoritative classroom management includes clear rules and routines. Together these create security and predictability about what is going to happen and what is expected. For example, will mathematics teaching that starts and ends with a summary in plenum result in a good level of learning for the students (Nordenbo et al, 2008)? At Sandnes every lesson starts and ends in the same structured way, no matter whether the subject is mathematics, history or art. This makes it easier for the teachers to substitute for each other, and it creates a secure and predictable framework for each and every lesson. Procedures at the beginning and at the end of each lesson only take a few minutes. Learning social skills is more about awareness than the mechanical learning of certain skills. Observing others receiving positive reinforcement when they have helped others is likely to give students good examples to follow. When a teacher has the ability to promote good behaviour in a firm and kind way to a much greater degree than she corrects bad behaviour, it is likely that students will pay attention.

School-Parents Collaboration can be promoted, for example, by inviting the parents to outline the values, rules and expectations on which they would like the school to focus. Collaboration with parents starts with establishing a Parent Committee. This committee needs to support the school in implementing the Whole School ART. If implementing a social learning curriculum is only anchored in and accepted by a certain section of the parents, implementation of the programme will be against some parents' wishes and the lack of support from these parents will probably obstruct a successful implementation.

The Gardener group[1] consists of some resource persons (headteacher and a representative from each team at the school)

whose task is to make the ongoing use of the programme flourish. The group is responsible for the progress of H-ART by making sure that staff members are doing as expected, supervising when needed, and have the task to sustain the enthusiasm and belief in the programme among the staff. Many studies confirm that one or more enthusiastic programme leaders are critical to successful implementation.

The QuARTer is a 15 minute meeting each week dedicated to discussions with the whole staff about what is working, what needs to be changed, adjusted or receive greater attention. This is perhaps the most important single element, to enable the staff to continue to run the programme appropriately.

The implementation – a fighting headteacher

A lot of research has been done and many articles and reports have been written about the critical factors promoting the adequate implementation of programmes for social and emotional competence in schools and other organizations. Both our studies and studies of other programmes point to the same conclusions; the leader is the key factor in any successful programme implementation. The significance of the headteacher is indisputable, but leadership includes more than formal positions (Larsen 2005).

Torill is a teacher at the Sandnes school. She states *"We have a leader who is so enthusiastic. She has pushed this process and used a lot of resources and money. Synnøve has spent a lot of money over several years, and she has got a lot of criticism from the government. But they have forgiven her for three years now. The Gardener group has got time, training and support when needed to keep the programme on track."*

Despite a hard struggle it seems to be worth

it, according to the headteacher. *"You are supposed to stick to the budget as a leader. But it's exciting to get positive feedback from all over. Sports coaches say that students from this school are better team players and better at encouraging each other than students from other schools."*

Findings and observations – does H-ART work?

What is the outcome of this hard work over several years? The answer might be difficult to divide into meaningful parts. Interviews with teachers, the principal and numerous classroom observations by researchers give us some indications.

opposite direction, the level of loneliness is growing. This is a counterflow that appears to lead to better results and better well-being."

The everyday life for a headteacher consists of dealing with many conflicts between students or between students and teachers. *"Earlier, much of my time as principal was dedicated to conflicts. With our new tools conflicts are solved at a lower level and before they escalate. Students still come to my office, but it's more often students who want to show me something or just want to talk with me. I have more time I can use for other purposes. It's all about giving the staff a clear mandate to solve problems at a low level. And it's much better that they solve the prob-*

> ## "It's all about giving the staff a clear mandate to solve problems at a low level. And it's much better that they solve the problems themselves instead of using the principal as a threat."(Synnøve Solheim Pedersen).

Sandnes has the highest number of students with special needs in the region and this trend is continuing. However, even though the number of students is increasing, due to the fact that the school has a reputation as a good place to be for students with special needs, the number of students at the school requiring remedial education is decreasing. Most student get their needs covered by the Whole School ART programme. The school has had a huge financial deficit for the last three years and it has been a quite high price for the principal to pay in terms of thought and attention. But as she says: *"I believe in this and can't give in. If they don't allow me (to do this), I can't be a headteacher. We need to work towards a friendlier society. It is so much pointing in the*

lems themselves instead of using the principal as a threat."

Some statistics indicate that H-ART is an approach that might be useful. A short summary (Nærbø, 2011):

A Time spent on teaching, on average, increased by 4 minutes per hour. This is despite the introduction of the use of the various H-ART procedures at the start and at the end of each lesson. (4 minutes per hour is 20 minutes per day or more than 2 hours more time for tuition each week.)

B The number of disturbances in the classroom has, on average, decreased by approximately 20%.

C Less time is taken up in dealing with mis-behaviour.

D The number of disturbances per hour has, on average, fallen by 30% when students work independently on their schoolwork during class.

E Students concentration lasts, on average, for a longer period of time in each class and their ability to work efficiently has increased. Pre-observations suggest that in 2009 students' level of concentration decreased earlier in each hour. Two years later disturbances are occuring to a lesser degree in each lesson.

F National test results from before the implementation of the programme were below national average. Last year the school scored above average on every measure.

The headteacher underlined further that the teaching is more efficient and the learning tempo has increased. Of course the politicians have noticed this too. *"I think just our changed expectations have been important for the improved results"*, the headteacher reflects.

"Nevertheless, expectations should be expressed often enough and if we lose our focus it is easy to forget tell the students what they are mastering," she continues. *"If we lose the focus, our results go down as well. Sometimes the students say "We almost never get positive reinforcement anymore!" And then we can see that this is the same class that we have been struggling with lately. After a while, by focusing on positive behaviour, we are on track again with the class behaving well. This also means that we have to be aware of the power we have to shape students' behaviour."*

Many of the skills include self-assertiveness as well as caring-related skills. Training in social skills is wide-ranging and useful for all students even if they are already pro-social. This is not only important for the regulation of behaviour. It is at least as important in, for example, language learning. Children's language develops in interaction with others, and the outcome of the interaction depends on language skills (Løge & Thorsen, 2005). It means that social competence is both a result and a prerequisite for social and language development. The headteacher agrees with this. *"We can see that children already in first grade have a vocabulary which differs from other students (in other schools). They are better at naming their feelings, expressing what they mean, at negotiating and so on. They use more precise terms. They verbalize, and use words instead of their fists. Social skills training affects your way of thinking."*

Closing thoughts

Two statements from the headteacher summarizes this section very well: *"I like the ethical principles of this approach. I remember 22nd of July last year (2011) after the terrorist attacks when our Prime Minister Stoltenberg said we not should react with hate but continue working with positive values. Then I thought; "We are already working with this and that makes me happy!" We don't rest on our laurels. We know we can always improve and develop this further. We have to, because it is a great mandate we have to teach social and emotional competence to students."*

"After a while, by focusing on positive behaviour, we are on track again with the class behaving well." (Synnøve Solheim Pedersen).

"We want the students to look back at their school years, and what they were learning here; Yes, we had Whole School ART and that was about life. I think that will be the summary."

Case Study 4: "You And I And Us Two" Kindergarten – the best place to learn social and emotional competence

In Norway there is a legal right for children between one and six years old (they start school at 6 years old) to go to kindergarten. Because the cost to parents is limited, about 90% of children of pre-school age spend on average 35 hours a week at kindergarten (The Norwegian Statistical Central Bureau, 2010). Groups are organized by age. The activities and pedagogical focus might differ a lot from one kindergarten to another. However, most kindergartens are characterized by certain types of activities following the seasons and the holidays through the year. Children's free play is an important part of the programme all through the year, and normally at least one day a week is dedicated to a trip. Different themes are focused on during the year such as nature and the environment, electricity, children in other cultures and so on. Most of the kindergartens have implemented a programme for social and emotional

The development of social competence is supposed to happen in the area where games, upbringing and care overlap. The Nordic kindergarten tradition focuses a large share of the day on free non-organized play and informal interaction. This represents relevant and varied social challenges and learning possibilities. The opportunity to learn basic social skills in the meeting with other children and adults happens just here (Lamer, 2010). Those missing this competence might find it hard to access interactions where social training, fellowship, joy and language practice occur.

Being together with other children offers opportunities for learning through imitation and through vicarious reinforcement, when other children are successful in their social actions. Peer relationships are based on equality, unlike relationships with parents or other adults, and promote valuable experiences. An equal peer relationship has to be renegotiated over and over again whenever peers are together. In this process children need to develop a number of skills which are necessary in order to participate in and contribute to social interactions with other children. However, simply bringing children together does not

The Nordic kindergarten tradition focuses a large share of the day on free non-organized play and informal interaction. This represents relevant and varied social challenges and learning possibilities.

competence. Nevertheless, free play is an important part of the day to day life for Norwegian children in day-care institutions, unlike most other countries in Europe.

guarantee social development. Children organize themselves just as other groups do, including excluding and positioning (ibid). A systemic pedagogical approach might help

children to enter into a positive cycle together with other children, where the acquiring of skills and the reinforcement of such skills takes place. Social competence is both a prerequisite for playing and a consequence of it.

"You and I and us two!"

"You and I and us two!" is a programme for SEE in the kindergarten which focuses on children, staff and the organization. Reports indicate that the level of diffusion of this programme in Norwegian kindergartens is as high as 60-70%. A more limited diffusion in primary schools is also reported (Nordahl et al., 2006).

The programme "You and I and us two!" was developed by Kari Lamer. Three books have been published describing the framework programme; The Theory book, the Handbook and the Children's book (Lamer, 1997 a, b, c). The programme framework has been developed through research-based testing and evaluation in collaboration with 55 kindergartens over a period of 15 years.

The programme consists of both a structured and an unstructured part. In structured gatherings stories about different aspects of social competence are read from the story book that is about two children and their life in a kindergarten (Lamer, 1997c). Conversations about the stories lead to reflections and new ideas about subjects such as friendship, responsibility and morality. I have been amazed many times by the ability of little children to reflect and to be empathic with others. A pre-school teacher said to me once that "I think we need to reconsider our understanding of the empathy of small children. When we stimulate them and help them to express such reflections their ability to understand different perspectives is overwhelming."

The structured aspects, described as the programme's five key elements, are procedural guidelines to promote a common focus, level of knowledge and organizational conditions, promoting this way of thinking through the whole organization. These elements are:

1 The consistent understanding and use of the term social competence;
2 The understanding and use of the term learning – meaning the synthesis of caring, development and learning;
3 Personal behaviour and interventions considering different ways of learning and actual discourses;
4 Learning, competence development and the willingness of the staff to change;
5 Clear leadership at all levels.

The unstructured part embraces the total everyday life in the kindergarten and emphasizes the role of the staff. Through reflections and discussion it is possible to balance loyalty to the programme and pedagogical freedom. To create individual and common reflections about key elements of the programme is important, as a kindergarten leader said:

> "*Social competence starts with the adults, with me (the leader), with the pre-school teachers and then the children. Which set of values do I have and which set of values am I supposed to have? We worked hard to agree a common set of values for our organization. From that point on we were ready to start the implementation of the five key elements." (Lamer, 2008, p 113)*

During the day-to-day life in the kindergarten planned training and spontaneous situations occur where the staff can reinforce and verbalize what they observe. By verbalizing positive behaviour children receive re-

inforcement and input for further thinking and behaviour and staff will increase their consciousness of different behavioural perspectives. To help the staff be aware of different kinds of behaviour, the skills are divided into five groups. In the first group are empathy and role taking. The second group contains pro-social behaviour, the third self-control. The next is self-assertion and finally we have play, joy and humour (Lamer, 1997a). "*This project has changed our way of thinking. We have learned to verbalize what we observe,*" a teacher said.

Specific behaviours are more easily recognized when described clearly using simple words. Different kinds of behaviour might be seen as competent by some and not competent by others. Sometimes they also might conflict, like, for example, self-assertion and empathy. In most situations a little dose of both might help achieve a preferred outcome for both parties. Reflecting and new terms enable the staff to notice and describe qualities in the interactions between children that earlier might not have been acknowledged. As a leader of a kindergarten said: "*As adults we can choose to see or not to see, for example, an empathic dimension in a situation. When we choose to see a situation with glasses coloured by social competence we will be conscious of situations between children that we would not be aware of with other glasses*" (Lamer, 2008).

In the matter of interpreting the intent and content of another's action adults have a great responsibility. If you look for something good, you might find it. And if you are looking for something bad you might find that as well. It is all up to the adult to be aware, observe and create an understanding of the observation.

We can easily imagine how chaotic it might be when twenty children and a few adults are getting dressed to go outside to play in the winter time. How do you as an adult reflect and respond when a little boy helps an even smaller girl with the zip on her jacket? Different staff members might reflect differently about this situation. For example; "*I saw what he did but I didn't have time and energy to remark on it in the situation*", "*I saw what he did but I don't feel it's right to reinforce children all the time*", "*I believe in reinforcing children as a matter of course*", "*I looked at them and smiled*". Somebody might say; "*How nice that you are helping each other*" or "*When you help each other you also are helping me when so many children need me at the same time*" (Lamer, 2008).

Learning processes should include systematic procedures where reflections and discussions take place, such as in frequent meetings. Positive outcomes of such meetings demand an overall willingness to receive and give constructive feedback to each other. A staff member said: *We have been more open and dare to ask each other when we are pondering on something somebody said or did. "What did you think when you said or did that…?" We give each other ideas and suggestions about how to act differently* (Lamer, 2008).

Such processes will often lead to more motivation and a feeling of being more professional, even if some staff members find this more demanding. A leader in a kindergarten said:

> *We have experienced a great change for the better in the staff. They have developed very useful competences and are now more conscious about their professional approach to the children than before. It also has resulted in the fact that everybody pictures themselves as preschool teachers (Lamer, 2008).*

Through discussion and participation in the implementation process staff members are

To help children avoid accumulating poor behaviour strategies from the start, and instead provide them with the opportunity to enter a positive cycle of interaction patterns we will protect them against a lot of negative experiences both in the present and future.

able to take part in important reflections and decisions concerning their professional approach. The ability to try out and adapt a programme to a certain group of children might have a great impact on the feeling of ownership about the new approach. The feeling of ownership might in turn affect one's level of professional consciousness. A teacher was very clear about this:

When we are talking about children and social competence it is impossible to get around the fact that it all starts with the adults. We are models, rule makers and suppliers of terms when it comes to what children are supposed to do or not do. Implementing a programme like "You and I and us two!" will affect teachers' reflections about their professional approach to the children and the behaviour of the staff. It is important to look upon such a project as something more than an intervention for the children. As teachers we have developed and changed in how we express our social competence and in turn it is forwarded to the children and their parents (Lamer, 2008).

A better working environment is a common by-product that in turn will promote better behaviour among children. The daily work with children, and the culture in the group of children should be characterized by relationships of good quality. In this context it is important to emphasize that environments are,

first of all, created by adults and it is their responsibility to ensure that the children receive experienced-based learning that is in line with the goals for acquiring social competencies.

It is documented that children in kindergartens using "You and I and us two!" reduced their levels of both extrovert and introvert problem behaviour, compared with other kindergartens (Lamer and Hauge, 2006). It is particularly interesting that reduced problems were also measured among children who were aged 1.5 and 2 years old when the programme evaluation began. This confirms the hypothesis that early intervention is efficient at preventing problem behaviour.

To help children avoid accumulating poor behaviour strategies from the start, and instead provide them with the opportunity to enter a positive cycle of interaction patterns we will protect them against a lot of negative experiences both in the present and future. An environment characterized by positive behaviour and relationships provides a foundation on which young heroes are able to acquire new skills and valuable perspectives about themselves, others and relationships.

Conclusion

To enable a social competence programme to succeed the headteacher has a significant task to ensure that the programme guidelines

are carefully followed and developed in the school. At the same time studies show that the teacher's ability to appear as a firm authority, intervening when negative situations occur and to care for and support students, correlates with the students' feeling of freedom (Thuen and Bru, 2005). In our culture it is more common to think that the opposite is true, that the more children are left free to decide, the more that they feel free.

To ensure that programmes such as those I have presented are effective, the school culture is probably more important than the programme (Berg, 1999). However, the programmes which I have described contain effective tools to promote the ability to be an authoritative teacher in a positive school culture. The work with SEE programmes needs to be systematic and must last for a number of years (at least two to four years according to Fixsen et al., 2005) to produce the expected results. Interventions with a broad approach to social competence show as positive effects for students with a high risk of problem behaviour as students with no such risk (Nordahl et al., 2005). Successful schools are characterized by a dynamic form of leadership which promotes change (the ability to involve and give responsibility to the staff), and a professional attitude among the staff (Hajnal et al., 1998).

Results from these kinds of studies seem to show that where SEE programmes are implemented teachers and leaders are more enthusiastic about their work. It is then necessary to ask if you become more enthusiastic when you are working with a programme in which you believe, or if you are achieving success because the teachers are more enthusiastic (Zins et al., 2004)?

Endnotes

[1] The group is called this because in Norwegian the word for gardener is gartner, which includes the acronym ART (gARTner). The subtext is that this group will take responsibility for enabling ART to flourish in the school.

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South Africa

Social and Emotional Education in South Africa: Challenges of the Rainbow Nation

Peter Van Alphen

Abstract

South Africa has a unique history, in that democracy only came to the country in 1994. After the 18 years that followed, the challenges facing the country are enormous, due to 60% of children living in poverty, large scale social disintegration, the high rate of crime, and the backlog in teacher development.

The new government of 1994 was faced with the task of providing equal access to education for all children as well as designing a new curriculum worthy of Nelson Mandela's vision of a "Rainbow Nation". The government's response to these challenges in South African society, was to develop a comprehensive *Life Orientation* (a Life Skills) programme, which was launched in 1997. The main thrust of the *Life Orientation* programme is to care for the social and emotional education of children.

This chapter gives examples from the *Life Orientation* curriculum, which covers Grade R (children aged 5-6 years) through Grade 1 to Grade 12 (7-19 years), showing a sincere attempt to overcome the developmental risks children are exposed to. The curriculum gives details of the *content* that needs to be covered, but not *how* it can be effectively taught and learned by the students.

The teaching modes recommended by the South African government are based on the constructivist theories of Piaget and Vygotsky. However, due to the fact that many teachers went through their training during the *apartheid* time, they tend to fall back onto using 19th century, colonial style teaching approaches, which is mainly a teacher-centred, direct transmission style of teaching.

The chapter suggests that children learn best in *experiential* ways, and the constructivist approach could be enhanced through the use of imaginative learning, recommended by Kieran Egan and Rudolf Steiner (van Alphen, 2001). They advocate that storytelling, for example, engages the children far more readily than traditional modes of teaching. Three sources of stories that promote social and emotional wellbeing are described (Murris, 2009; Perrow, 2008; Perrow 2012; Donald, 2012).

Three case studies are included in this chapter. Case study 1 is of a government school, in which fairly traditional approaches are used, but the sincerity of the teachers does engage the children in the learning of *life skills* content.

Case study 2 describes a project in a rural area that works in local government schools. One part of the project uses storytelling and a variety of creative activities, and another part uses visualisation for the release of past emotions. The former can be done by teachers themselves, the latter requires a professional psychologist or similarly qualified person.

… surrounding young people with human values, beautiful surroundings and creative education lays down an all-important basis for social sensitivity and emotional wellbeing.

Case study 3 describes two different situations, both basing their work on Steiner/Waldorf educational approaches: an early childhood centre for children from 6 months to 5 years in a poor suburban community, and an arts-based life skills programme in a well-established Steiner/Waldorf primary school. Both situations work on the premise that surrounding young children with human values, beautiful surroundings and creative education, lays down an all-important basis for social sensitivity and emotional wellbeing.

The paper then moves on to teacher education, and asks the question, "What kind of teachers are needed to bring healing and resilience to children, given the current state of affairs in South Africa, and even internationally?" A major shift in teaching needs to be made to make social and emotional education far more *effective* and *meaningful*.

A major shift in teaching needs to be made to make social and emotional education far more effective and meaningful.

To achieve this, it is suggested that pre-service teacher education, and in-service teacher development, need to include creative ways of *experiential* learning: both imaginative ways of teaching and learning such as story-telling, story-making, metaphoric thinking, eco-thinking (van Alphen, 2011); as well as a broad development of artistic skills: singing, music, speech and drama, movement, drawing, painting and clay modelling (CCE, 2013), so that every teacher can use these to integrate cognitive learning with a more affective, emotion-rich component in learning the curriculum.

Finally, the paper suggests the action that needs to be undertaken in South Africa in order to educate and heal the upcoming generations of children in their social and emotional lives: the development of *human values*-driven and *quality care* of infants and toddlers through parent and baby-care education; caring and enriched early childhood education; *experiential* and *creative* learning approaches for children in primary schools. All these have the potential to improve social and emotional wellbeing *from its roots*: through children growing up surrounded by love, and having *quality* experiences in learning, a deep-seated appreciation and sensitivity in their social contacts and building up their own emotional lives. This will go a long way to ensure healthy and well-balanced citizens, the basis of a nation that facilitates freedom and empowerment in every aspect of its citizens' lives.

Peter van Alphen started his career as a music teacher, but was soon drawn to the creative approaches taken to teaching all subjects in Steiner/Waldorf schools. Then followed 16 years of teaching at Michael Oak Waldorf School in Cape Town, South Africa, as a primary school teacher. During the transition from the apartheid regime to a democratic South Africa, Peter pioneered a teacher enrichment program in the disadvantaged 'township' communities around Cape Town. This lead to the establishment of the Centre for Creative Education in 1993, one year before the new democratic government came into being. The aims of the Centre are: to support the development of pre-school carers and teachers in holistic and healing approaches to working with children from 6 months to 5 or 6 years of age to provide teacher education in holistic and creative ways for primary school children between the ages of 6 or 7 to 13 years of age. As co-founder of the Centre, Peter was its managing director for 9 years and was responsible for the development of teacher education programmes. The early childhood work was developed by Ann Sharfman, an expert in this field. From 1997, Peter and Ann began part-time teacher education programmes in East Africa. These programmes have provided Waldorf schools and Waldorf-inspired schools in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania with local teachers trained in Waldorf education. Peter specialises in the development of teacher education programmes, adult learning and teacher development in African settings. He was honoured for his work in the African communities near Cape Town by being given the African name of 'Sipho,' meaning 'Gift' in the Xhosa language. Still continuing his work at the Centre for Creative Education in Cape Town and in the teacher development programme in East Africa, Peter is also involved in educational research. He is passionate about introducing imaginative teaching to all schools, as a way of bringing human values into learning at schools.

Historical Background to South Africa

The earliest people known to have lived in the southernmost part of Africa were the San (in small groups, as hunter-gatherers) and the Khoi (pastoralists, moving from place to place to find grazing for their cattle). Various tribes of 'Bantu' origin are said to have settled in Southern Africa many centuries before Europeans rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1487/8. They settled in the east and north-ern areas of South Africa, living as agro-pastoralists.

In 1652 the first European settlers – of Dutch origin – landed in the Cape and gradually be-gan to claim more and more land that had been common land to the San and Khoi peo-ple. They brought in slaves from the East, es-pecially from Indonesia/Malaysia, and other parts of Africa, and gradually employed ever increasing numbers of Khoi-San to work for them. Due to intermarriage amongst these people and with the growing white population, a new racial mix, called "Coloureds" emerged.

As the colonists moved eastward, they en-countered the Xhosa tribes, and cattle raids and warfare ensued due to the threat of the presence of the colonists. The Cape was an-nexed by the British, and in 1820 large num-bers of British settlers were positioned on the borders of the Xhosa nation to 'defend' the Cape Colony. Due to the British takeover of the Cape, widespread discontent was felt among the Dutch settlers, who formed their own 'nation' known as 'Boers' or 'Afrikaners'. Large groups of Boers left the Cape Colony and occupied 'vacant' stretches of land to the north and east of what was to become South Africa in later years.

Wars ensued between the Boers and the Zulu, and eventually between the British and the Boers, who had formed their own states in the areas they had occupied. Finally the British had the upper hand and created the Union of South Africa in 1910, as a colony under the British crown. In 1918, the birth of the African National Congress (ANC) marked the beginning of resistance to white domination, seeing itself as part of the anti-colonialism movement in Africa. In 1948, the Afrikaners won the limited franchise elec-tions of the Union and came into power, marking the beginning of the "apartheid" ("separate development") era in which peo-ple classified as Asian, Coloured or Black were excluded from voting, and treated as second, third and lowest class citizens.

During the 45 years of *apartheid*, education was split into different departments according to racial groupings. People classified as white received the best education, those classified as Asian and coloured a lesser, yet relatively good education, whereas people classified as Black, the great majority of the population (around 96%), received very poor education. In the late 1980s and early 1990s *apartheid* was grad-ually dismantled, making way for a relatively peaceful transition to the first democratically elected government under Nelson Mandela in 1994. (SouthAfrica.info, information accessed on 16/01/2013).

The roots of the past play a very important role in the make-up of and current trends in the South African nation. There was great hope for harmonious working together to form, what Nelson Mandela called the "Rainbow Nation," a nation with equal possi-bilities and rights for all. Although the advent of democracy brought hope for a New South Africa to emerge, many citizens are disap-pointed that the Rainbow Nation has not ma-terialised. Political and industrial wrangling, persistent wide-spread poverty and rising crime are the main causes of disappointment.

According to the population census of 2011, there are 51.8 million people living in South Africa, of whom:

South African society still lives in largely separate communities, mainly due to the policies of 45 years of the apartheid government up to 1994, during which communities were forcibly kept apart.

- 79.2% are classified as African
- 8.9% are classified as Coloured
- 2.5% are classified Indian and
- 8.9% are classified as White
  (South African Government Information, 2013).

South African society still lives in largely separate communities, mainly due to the policies of 45 years of the *apartheid* government up to 1994, during which communities were forcibly kept apart. Integration has been slow, and a relative economic equality has not emerged. As most of the 79.2 % of the population have been the most disadvantaged both economically and in other ways, the new democratic government has attempted to bring about change through a Black Economic Empowerment policy:

South Africa's policy of black economic empowerment (BEE) is not simply a moral initiative to redress the wrongs of the past. It is a pragmatic growth strategy that aims to realise the country's full economic potential while helping to bring the black majority into the economic mainstream.

Despite the many economic gains made in the country since 1994, the racial divide between rich and poor remains. As the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry) points out, such inequalities can have a profound effect on political stability:

"Societies characterised by entrenched gender inequality or racially or ethnically defined wealth disparities are not likely to be socially and politically stable, particularly as economic growth can easily exacerbate these inequalities."

"(BEE does not) aim to take wealth from white people and give it to blacks. It is essentially a growth strategy, targeting the South African economy's weakest point: inequality."

(SouthAfrica.info, 2013)

Despite the many economic gains made in the country since 1994, the racial divide between rich and poor remains. (SouthAfrica.Info, 2013).

"South Africa's economic growth (is) 'well below full potential'." (Business Day Live, 2013).

However, although the policy has benefitted the rising black middle-class, and a number of entrepreneurs in upper management, Ntsakisi Maswanganyi in Business Day Live (27 Feb, 2013) states that "South Africa's economic growth (is) 'well below full potential'". This sentiment is echoed widely, as in the following analyst, Marian Tupy's assessment of the situation:

South Africa today is economically freer than it was under apartheid, but its economic growth continues to be slow … It is important to know rapid economic growth is possible. South Africa has the best infrastructure and banking system in Africa. It also has a stable and democratic government. (Tupy, 2004)

It is important to realise that economic development constitutes the largest challenge in South African society, either entrenching the enormous inequalities of rich and poor, therefore threatening the education, health, safety and well-being of the poor (through lack of economic development), or reversing the situation.

The white population mostly still lead privileged lives, and have access to good education for their children. There has been a growing middle class from the previously disadvantaged communities, and a small but powerful upper class, also able to afford better education for their children. However, the majority of families struggle to make ends meet, and poverty (as will be explained below) remains an enormous challenge.

The Educational Challenges in South Africa

South Africa is in a unique situation, in that the transition from an oppressive *apartheid* regime, in which educational privilege was based on racial differences, happened relatively recently. In the 18 years that have passed since 1994, the struggle for democracy has turned into a struggle for good education for all South Africans.

This struggle has to be seen in terms of the country's past, in which the great majority of the population was subjected to a very poor, old colonial-style education which did not allow learners to think for themselves, to have access to any knowledge beyond that which served the needs of the dominant 'white' minority, nor to become emancipated, self-confident adults in society.

Education in South Africa faces three major challenges:

1 The high rate of poverty
2 The social situation and high crime rate
3 Teacher development

… the majority of families struggle to make ends meet, and poverty … remains an enormous challenge.
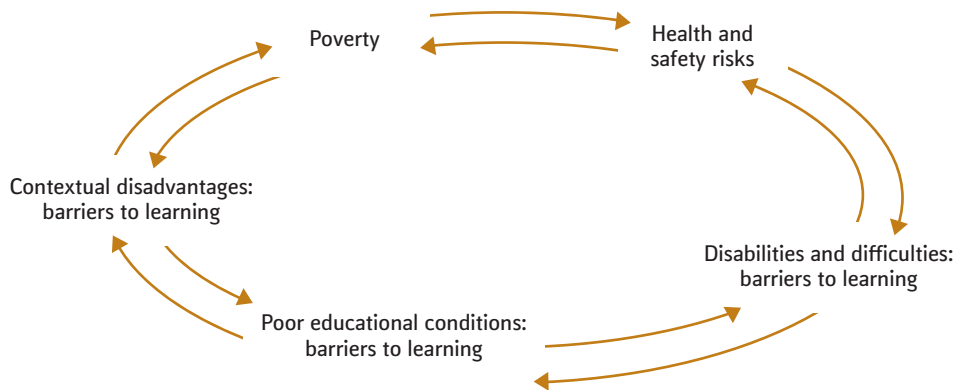
Figure 1: A typical negative cycle of poverty and barriers to learning

1. Poverty

Official reports maintain that approximately 48 % (24.2 million) of a population of 50.5 million, live in poverty. (SouthAfrica.com, 2008,2012) However, a newspaper report (Cape Times, 18 October 2012) quotes research done by the Children's Institute at the University of Cape Town, revealing that 60% of South African *children* live in poverty, in households that earn less than ZAR 575 (approximately 58 euro) per month. Half of these children live with their mothers only, and a further 28% live with neither parent. In South Africa, 26% of children experience hunger. (Hall, 2012)

Children living in poverty are highly susceptible to health risks (e.g. infection and malnutrition) and safety risks (e.g. neglect, violence and abuse). These risks are considered the main environmental factors that cause learning barriers and learning delays. David Donald (2010:156), a leading educational psychologist in South Africa and now Professor Emeritus of the University of Cape Town, describes how poverty tends to keep on "recycling" itself, in that children brought up in poverty will almost inevitably, when they are adults, bring up their children in the same way in which they were brought up, often under the same conditions.

Donald (2010:156) shows the effects of poverty on education as a vicious circle that continually feeds itself as follows:

The diagram above emphasises that learning difficulties can be caused or made worse by malnutrition (insufficient brain development), disease (HIV/AIDS or infections due to living in unhygienic surroundings), poor or unstable home conditions (the family may

… children brought up in poverty will almost inevitably, when they are adults, bring up their children in the same way in which they were brought up, often under the same conditions. (Donald, 2010).

move from place to place, or there may be domestic violence), bullying at schools, physical and/or sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy, drugs, etc. The diagram also makes the point that in South Africa poor areas generally also have poor education, both in terms of a lack of skilled teachers and in terms of a lack of educational facilities such as equipment, textbooks, libraries, laboratories, etc.

The building of social and emotional development in state schools therefore needs to be seen in the light of the tremendous backlog of poor schooling infrastructure, provision of resources and teacher development.

dom find safety and security (including emotional security) in modern family life. Single parent households, families ridden by violence, and orphaned children without the support of the extended family or any kind of caregiver, are the order of the day …. The percentage of children in South Africa whose basic needs are not met is growing by the day. (Prinsloo 2005:33)

These factors have contributed to generally disrupted living and high crime rates. All sectors of society live in fear of attack, theft, the rape of women and children, and the threat of murder. The most affected by crime are

The most affected by crime are those living in poor communities.

2. The Social Situation and Crime

In addition to the high rate of poverty, which brings with it so many deficits, South African society is in transition. There are displaced communities, forcibly moved (and often dispersed) by the *apartheid* government's policies of 'separate development', causing the social structures that held communities together to be destroyed. Migrant labour, in which men had to leave their families in order to work in the mines and factories, was a major cause of breaking up family lives. The ever-continuing move to the cities, to find work and better education for the children, leads to the creation of huge informal settlements with challenges in respect of sanitation, clean water supply and overcrowding.

The vulnerability of the nuclear family in today's society has led to the general disintegration of family life. Children sel-

those living in poor communities. The statistics generated in recent years have brought huge concerns for the well-being of the population. Here are a few indicators of the extent of crime in South Africa:

The statistics below have to do with *reported* crime, and therefore are unlikely to reflect the real extent of criminal incidences. Interestingly, the neglect and ill-treatment of children has been drastically reduced. This is due to new legislation, restructuring and the services provided by the Department of Social Services (for further information, see Department of Social Services, 2003 and 2009).

In recent months violent incidents of rape, often ending in the murder of the victim, have brought about renewed outrage in the country:

Table 1: *Extracts from Crime Statistics in South Africa 2004 - 2012*: from website

Crime Statistics up to 2012 - South Africa

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	TOTAL
Neglect and ill-treatment of children									
6,504	5,568	4,828	4,258	4,106	4,034	4,014	3,473	3,011	**39,796**
Total Sexual Crimes									
66,048	69,088	68,045	65,176	63,788	70,514	68,332	66,196	64,419	**601,606**
Drug-related crime									
62,689	84,001	95,690	104,689	109,134	117,172	134,840	150,673	175,823	**1,034,711**
Shoplifting									
71,888	66,525	64,491	65,489	66,992	80,773	88,634	78,383	71,844	**655,019**

(source: http://crimestatssa.com/national.php)

South Africa is one of the rape capitals of the world. Here are the scary stats: between a quarter and a third of men admitted to rape and in 2010, over 56,000 rapes were recorded at an average of 154 a day. And these are just the few women that report attacks to police — with the conviction rate for perpetrators so low and the emotional toll so high, most survivors stay silent. The Medical Research Council estimates that up to 3,600 rapes happen daily. A culture of abuse means that for many, rape is not seen as a crime but a daily occurrence. (Avaaz report 14.2.2013)

Most South Africans feel helpless about the extent of crime in the country, and their own and their children's vulnerability in daily life. "The statistics are stark. Around 18,000 murders were also reported in the same period (2010). This brutal violence disproportionately affects those who are not rich or middle class." (de Vos, 15.2.2013)

Unemployment, which again is worst in the poorest communities due to the lack of quality education and training available to them, is another factor that leads to situations of crime and violence. Unemployment currently stands at 25.5%. (StatsSA, 2013)

The inequalities in South African society from *apartheid* times continue to exist. These express themselves in industrial action against government and business, recently (2012) erupting in bloody confrontations in the mines, in which striking miners were demanding a more liveable wage; 34 miners were killed in the incident. (For further details, see report by Democracy New!, 21 August, 2012). The anger that rises, also in the demonstrations in 2013 by farm workers to be paid a liveable wage (see Cameron Jacobs, 2012), is indicative of inequalities that are not being resolved. Clearly, major change is needed in South Africa if it is to fulfil its vision of becoming a rainbow nation.

At present, South Africa seems unable to solve these issues. Perhaps it is due to a lack of understanding of what is needed to turn this situation around: the needs for restoration of human values, for development of quality education, for employment through post-school training. A good place to begin - in fact the most urgent place to begin - is the

well-being of children. In the words of Erna Prinsloo (2005:33):

The following actions serve as preconditions for self-fulfilment: a child must be actively involved in forming relationships with himself, his peers, parents, teachers and the community, as well as with ob-

Most teachers were educated in an old, colonial-style manner, based on 19th century education as practised in Europe. This form of education was brought to South Africa by missionaries and, later, by teachers imported from Europe. The changes in education that began in developed countries during the second half of the 20th century bypassed South Africa due to the

The great majority of teachers in South Africa … have had little training in their profession, thereby recycling what they termed 'gutter education'.

jects and ideas. He must experience joy and success in most of these relationships in order to attribute meaning to his world. Only through dynamic involvement, positive experience and sufficient attribution of meaning to the life-world will the child be capable of forming a positive self-image which in turn leads to adequate self-actualisation.

3. Teacher Development

The great majority of teachers in South Africa –those who had their teacher education before the transition to democracy in 1994– have had little training in their profession, thereby recycling what they termed 'gutter education'. Today, eighteen years later, this legacy still haunts the efforts to provide quality education for all in South Africa:

Most currently serving educators received their professional education and entered teaching when education was an integral part of the apartheid *project and organised in racially and ethnically divided sub-systems.* (OECD, 2008:84)

trade and cultural embargoes against the *apartheid* government, and so the great majority of teachers generally only use one mode of teaching: that of direct transmission of knowledge, commonly known as "chalk and talk."

This old, colonial style of teaching operates on repetitive, content-driven, teacher-centred, direct transmission of knowledge. The Department of Education has attempted to change this approach, as well as to further educate teachers by means of a programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Teachers are expected to fulfil 150 points of professional development over a three-year period (SACE, 2012:30) by attending accredited training units. The purpose of CPD is to ensure that educators:

· improve their knowledge
· improve their skills
· keep up to date with new research
· learn from colleagues

These purposes are easier to place on paper than to put into practice. University of South Africa and University of the Free State

researchers Matseliso Mokhele and Loyiso Jita (2012) in a study entitled *When Professional Development Works: South African Teachers' Perspectives*, have found that:

> *Despite the general acceptance of continuing professional development (CPD) programmes as essential to the improvement of education, reviews of professional development research constantly point to the ineffectiveness of most of these programmes. Furthermore, many teachers express dissatisfaction with the professional development opportunities made available to them in schools and insist that the most effective development programmes they have experienced have been self-initiated.*

> *The researchers argue that CPD, however well-intentioned and executed, is received differently by each teacher as a result of their personal circumstances and investment in the programme. The researchers then conclude that the greater the unity between the personal circumstances and motivations of the teachers and those of the CPD intervention, the more likely the outcome will be meaningful for the participating teachers* (Mokhele and Jita, 2012)

Other University of South Africa researchers Pitsoe and Maila conclude in their study that to improve CPD

> *It, inter alia, also calls for a dramatic shift in professional development focus, away from the transmission model of teaching towards one that is much more complex, situational/contextual and interactive.* (Pitsoe and Maila, 2012:324)

Change, unfortunately, does not come easily, as will be seen below.

Addressing the challenges in South African Education

As soon as the new democratically elected government was elected, the first and most important task facing the Minister of Education at the time was to provide equal education for all South African citizens. Since *apartheid* times, a great deal of progress has been achieved in terms of universal access to education (OECD 2008:20), though provision of schools, facilities and well-educated teachers is still an on-going process at present. At the same time, a new South African curriculum needed to be formed that would answer the needs of the entire population, based on a far more holistic approach to educating children. Inevitably, the focus had to be on restructuring the entire education system.

The New National Curriculum

From 1994, the now democratic South African government turned to the developed nations for guidance in restructuring education. This resulted in the publication of the National Curriculum Statement in 1997 (RNCS 2002:2) modelled on Outcomes-Based Education, allowing teachers the freedom to design their own lessons towards fulfilling the *outcomes* stipulated for each year of education. Clearly the majority of teachers, due to their lack of training, were not in a position to use this complicated system, linked with large amounts of record-keeping, nor were they ready to design their own lessons creatively in accordance with the needs of the children in their care:

> *…the adoption of outcome-based education (OBE) was seen as an example of international "policy borrowing", with its roots in competency debates in New Zealand, Australia, Scotland, Canada and – in limited circles – in the United States (Chisholm, 2005a, p. 86), but not suitable for the conditions faced by South*

Africa's education system …. implementation was hampered by inadequate resourcing and insufficient regard for local realities. (OECD, 2008:170)

The NCS was revised three times (2000, 2009 and CAPS 2011) to make it more user-friendly and, in the words of the current Minister of Basic Education, Angelina Motshekga, to "provide clear guidelines to teachers on what to teach and assess on a term-by-term basis … the simplification of the curriculum will go a long way in assisting with other barriers to quality education." (Department of Basic Education, CAPS R-3, 2011).

In my view, CAPS 2011 is not generally helpful, as in practice children disadvantaged due to language and home backgrounds are asked to learn at a pace that does not allow sufficient time to consolidate basic concepts. Teachers need to keep up with the termly programme, irrespective of learner progression. Whilst CAPS 2011 provides a simplified framework to cover the content of the na-

own education and their teaching skills. This had to take place in addition to their teaching duties, in the form of in-service training. Currently, every teacher is required to attend 50 hours of in-service training per year (CPD, as described above) in order to upgrade their teaching skills, and salary scales reward teachers who are awarded higher teacher qualifications. In spite of all these efforts, there remains a challenge:

Quality education remains elusive. The schools are deprived of resources, facilities and qualified teachers. It is extremely unimaginable to have efficiency, effectiveness and quality in education under these circumstances … the report points towards a schooling with high enrolment but poor quality education. (Department of Basic Education, 2010:74)

Clearly, the past is not easily dissolved and new approaches are not easily transferable by means of in-service training. Some good signs are emerging though, as in the 'matriculation' (final examinations for school leav-

Quality education remains elusive. The schools are deprived of resources, facilities and qualified teachers. (Department of Basic Education, 2010).

tional curriculum, the crucial issue is the *manner* in which the content is presented and subsequently consolidated (see section on Teaching Modes below).

Quality Education in Schools

There was a clear recognition from the beginning of the democratic era that the great majority of teachers needed to upgrade their

ing and university entrance) results of 2012, which an all-time high of 73.9% of matriculants passed (Mail and Guardian, 4-10 January, 2013:5).

However, what is hidden in these results? The *Mail and Guardian* (4-10 January, 2013:5) quotes Ruksana Osman, head of the School of Education at the University of the

Witwatersrand, as highlighting the need to analyse these results more closely to "assess where the weaknesses are." An analyst from an NGO called Equal Education, quoted in the same Mail and Guardian article, referring to the fact that the poorest schools are in rural and township settlements, says that, "Because they remain under-resourced, they perform

pre-school education. The Reception Year (for children aged 5 to 6 years) is intended to be compulsory by 2025. The research reports that:

As schooling is compulsory until the age of 15 or the end of grade 9, the attendance rate decreases more steeply from age 16 on-

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Cost of education is the main reason for non-attendance in the high school age group, followed by a perception that "education is useless". Other reasons for drop-out are illness and exam failure. Pregnancy accounts for between 11% and 20% of drop-out amongst teenage girls not attending school." (De Lannoy & Hall 2010).

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more poorly than the wealthier schools …. It is unfair that the government doesn't do enough to distribute enough resources to these schools."

The article goes on to say that, "The published results show that 429 poor schools across the country achieved pass rates of 40% or less." Equal Education points out that that of these, "95 schools … achieved pass rates of less than 20%."

Schools in South Africa

According to research carried out by Arianne De Lannoy & Katharine Hall of the Children's Institute at the University of Cape Town (2010), 96.4% of children in South Africa (11,173,000), aged 7 – 17 years, attend primary and secondary schooling. Another 42% of children (just over 1.3 million) in the 3 – 5-year-old age group attend some form of

wards, with 92% of 16-year-olds, 87% of 17-year-olds, and 73% of 18-year-olds reported to be attending school. Cost of education is the main reason for non-attendance in the high school age group, followed by a perception that "education is useless". Other reasons for drop-out are illness and exam failure. Pregnancy accounts for between 11% and 20% of drop-out amongst teenage girls not attending school." (De Lannoy & Hall 2010)

The new structure of schooling introduced by the National Curriculum (1997) is as follows:

There are 26,000 schools (primary and secondary) for 12,2 million children. Two categories of schools exist in South Africa, 'Public Schools' (i.e. schools belonging to the state) educating 96% of children in school, and

Table 2. New Structure of Education and Training Framework in South Africa since 1997

Foundation Phase

Reception Year (Grade R)	Children aged 5 turning 6	
Grade 1	Children aged 6 turning 7	
Grade 2	Children aged 7 turning 8	
Grade 3	Children aged 8 turning 9	

Intermediate Phase

Grade 4	Children aged 9 turning 10	**Compulsory Education** Grades 1 – 9 Grade R compulsory for all children from 2025
Grade 5	Children aged 10 turning 11	
Grade 6	Children aged 11 turning 12	

Senior Phase

Grade 7	Children aged 12 turning 13
Grade 8	Children aged 13 turning 14
Grade 9	Children aged 14 turning 15

Further Education and Training

Grade 10	Children aged 15 turning 16
Grade 11	Children aged 16 turning 17
Grade 12	Children aged 17 turning 18

The average learner-to-teacher ratio in state schools is given as 32:1. (OECD 2008:20). However, this ratio varies from school to school. In rural areas especially, this ratio can be considerably higher.

'Independent Schools' (religious, private and alternative schools), educating the remaining 4%. (OECD 2008:20). The state subsidises independent schools that provide education for poor communities and weights its subsidies according to those that charge the lowest fees. The remaining independent schools are self-funding.

Each category of schools is sub-divided into different types:

Public Schools:
- Government Schools: the majority of children in South Africa attend government schools. These schools are fully funded by the state, though parents are asked to pay fees for additional needs (for example, sports equipment).
- Model C Schools: these are government schools, but are administered and partly funded by parents who enrol their children in these schools. These are non-racial schools for parents who can afford to

contribute financially to enrol their children into these schools. Model C schools have superior facilities and better qualified teachers; additional teachers are employed by the governing bodies of these schools, as students generally come from more affluent, fee-paying families. (Roodt 2011))

The average learner-to-teacher ratio in state schools is given as 32:1. (OECD 2008:20). However, this ratio varies from school to school. In rural areas especially, this ratio can be considerably higher.

Independent Schools:
Independent schools, forming 4% of schools in South Africa, and regulated under South African law, fall into three broad categories:

- Religious Schools: Missionary and Church schools have existed from early colonial times. At present a wide variety of Christian denominations have schools, ranging from elite and wealthy to poor community schools. Islamic schools exist in areas where large numbers of Muslims live.
- Private Schools: generally high fee-paying schools for children from middle and upper class families
- Alternative Schools: Schools that use more creative approaches to teaching and learning, include Steiner/Waldorf schools and Montessori schools.

Independent schools have the freedom to establish their own class sizes and learner: educator ratios.

Social and Emotional Education
In 1997, the Department of Education sought to respond to the critical situation in respect of developmental risks which so many children in South Africa face, by introducing *Life Orientation* education into its National Curriculum Statement (NCS), in order to protect children and youth.

One of the major contributions of the first appearance of the NCS in 1997 was the redesigning of the curriculum inherited from *apartheid* education into Learning Areas that would serve the needs for an all-round education for all. The entire curriculum was drawn up through a process of public consultation and formalised by the Department of Education. Here, for the first time in South African education, *Life Orientation* as a learning area was introduced, the main component of which is the learning of *Life Skills*. The Life Skills component was very much influenced by the high crime rates in South Africa, with especial concern for the safety and health of children. South African society was horrified at the publishing of national crime statistics (see Table 1 above) and in general at the disintegration of discipline, large class sizes and poor parental participation in schools. (OECD, 2008:61) Accordingly, there is enormous concern that children need to be protected against sexual and other forms of abuse and from situations of violence and neglect. The Life Skills programme seeks to educate children in how to keep themselves safe at all times and in all places, and what to do in cases of emergency.

A few extracts, as typical examples of topics that the Life Skills curriculum addresses, follow (all classes, from Grade R to Grade 10 – ages 6 – 17 – receive life skills lessons):

The Life Orientation curriculum is a sincere attempt to facilitate the personal development of children and adolescents, as well as providing them with an awareness of how to keep themselves safe from the dangers that exist in society. It provides *what* is needed to be covered in order to achieve this, leaving it up to educators to decide *how* they will bring the learning material into their lessons. This is where the major problem lies: most educators have not been trained in modes of teaching that can effectively bring about

Table 3. Excerpts from Curriculum on Life Orientation: Life Skills component

Grade R/Age 6 years (CAPS R-3, 2011:15-18)

Topic: my body - 2 hours.
- Identify and name body parts - include how many of each
- Functions of different body parts
- Who may or may not touch my body
- What my body needs to keep healthy

Topic: safety - 2 hours
- how to be safe at home
- Safe places to play
- Unsafe places to play
- Being safe on the road

Grade 3/Age 9 years (CAPS R-3, 2011:54)

Topic: Feelings - 6 hours
- Things that make me happy and things that make me sad
- Recognising feelings - such as anger, fear, worry, loneliness
- Good ways to express what we feel
- Apologies - how to say sorry

Note: Use pictures, stories, rhymes, puppets and masks

Topic: Keeping my body safe - 6 hours.
- We are not safe with everyone
- Rules to keep my body safe
- Trusting 'Yes' and 'No' feelings
- How to say 'No' to any form of abuse
- How to report abuse

Note: This topic should focus on the prevention of physical and sexual abuse

Grade 4/Age 10 years (CAPS 4-6, 2011:16)

Topic: Development of the self – 4 ½ hours

Emotions
- Understanding a wide range of emotions: love, happiness, grief, fear and jealousy
- Understanding one's own emotions: appropriate ways to express one's own emotions
- How to understand and consider others' emotions
- Weekly reading by learners: reading for enjoyment
- Reading about how people express different emotions

Topic: Development of the self – 3 hours.

- **Bullying**: How to protect oneself from acts of bullying
  - Examples of bullying
  - Appropriate responses to bullying: where to find help
- Weekly reading by learners: reading for enjoyment
  - Reading about appropriate responses to bullying

Grade 5 / Age 11 years (CAPS 4-6, 2011:19-20)

Topic: Development of the self – 4 ½ hours. Recommended resources: Textbook, books on coping with emotions
- **Coping with emotions**: empathy, compassion, anger, disappointment and sadness
    - Skills to manage emotions in a positive way
    - Significance of friends in times of sadness, tragedy and change
- Reading skills: reading with understanding and using a dictionary
    - Reading about friendships that are caring and supportive: recall and relate

Topic: Social Responsibility – 4 ½ hours. Recommended resources: Textbook, newspaper articles, posters on the forms of abuse, books on abuse
- Child abuse:
    - Different forms of child abuse: physical and emotional
    - Effects of abuse on personal health
    - Strategies to deal with abuse
    - Where to get help and report abuse
- Reading skills: reading with understanding and using a dictionary
    - Reading about ways to protect self and others from abuse: recall and relate

Topic: Social Responsibility – 3 hours. Recommended resources: Textbook, posters on violent situations, books on violent situations
- Dealing with violent situations: Identify potential violent situations at home, school and in the community
    - Responding effectively to violent situations
    - Ways to avoid and protect oneself from violent situations and where to find help
- Reading skills: reading with understanding and using a dictionary
    - Reading about protection agencies and places of safety for children: recall and relate

Grade 10 / Age 17 years (CAPS 10-12, 2011:12 & 15)

Topic: Development of the self in society – 3 hours. Recommended resources: textbook
- Strategies to enhance self-awareness, self-esteem and self-development: factors influencing self-awareness and self-esteem including media
    - Strategies to build confidence in self and others: communication, successful completion of tasks or projects, participation in community organisation or life, making good decisions and affirmation of others
    - Acknowledge and respect the uniqueness of self and others and respect differences (race, gender and ability)
- Definition of concepts: power, power relations, masculinity, femininity and gender
    - Differences between a man and a woman: reproduction and roles in the community, stereotypical views of gender roles and responsibilities, gender differences in participation in physical activities
    - Influence of gender inequality on relationships and general well-being: sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy, violence, STIs including HIV and AIDS
- Value of participation in exercise programmes that promote fitness: cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, endurance and flexibility
- Relationship between physical and mental health

> ... most educators have not been trained in modes of teaching that can effectively bring about changes in behaviour, understanding of social and emotional issues and instil the do's and don'ts of keeping oneself safe and healthy.

changes in behaviour, understanding of social and emotional issues and instil the *do's and don'ts* of keeping oneself safe and healthy.

Universities, now the major providers of teacher education, include training in life skills as part of their Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programmes, so that new generations of teachers have more effective tools in making social and emotional education become an *experiential, process-based* learning experience for their pupils. However, the vast majority of teachers in the system are not undergoing a similar transformative re-training, and all too often continue to use old, traditional methods in conveying the content of the Life Orientation curriculum.

Teaching Modes

Concepts around the ways in which children learn best are gradually changing in South Africa. In designing the new National Curriculum, different modes of learning were strongly recommended, particularly based on the work of Jean Piaget (1896-1980), in terms of the need for learners to construct their own understanding of curriculum content, and Lev Vygotsky (1896 - 1934), concerning socially mediated learning, most importantly the use of interactive group work and a rich development of language to enhance thinking. (WCED, 2006: 4-15)

The promotion of constructivist approaches to teaching is an important step forward towards student involvement in learning. Teachers in South Africa are required to 'build up' new knowledge together with their learners, ask thinking questions and engage them in social learning. Class discussions and group work allow children and youth time to explore a particular topic, rather than listening at length to a teacher's delivery of content. This stimulates enquiry and provides learning with far greater meaning, because of the sharing of personal views in a social setting.

However, despite the recommendations made by the NCS, modes of teaching in schools have generally remained stuck in the past: most teachers tend to rely on direct instruction, and at best, ask their students questions about things they already know in order to build up their lessons. The application of different modes of teaching and learning in classrooms is still limited to exceptional teachers who embrace change in education.

Experiential learning is gaining conceptual ground in South Africa. However, Donald (2012) comments that university research has had little effect on teaching practice in schools, stating that, "... the topic of Life Skills, and its *meaningful* teaching ... is, unfortunately, generally rare ..." (italics in original).

Teaching from textbooks is regarded as the main form of instruction, guiding teachers and providing students with texts from which to learn. In 2010, the Minister of Basic Education, emphasised again the importance of textbooks in teaching and learning. (Department of Basic Education 2010: 57)

Further Development of Experiential Teaching and Learning

There are many different forms of experiential learning, best illustrated by a forthcoming international conference organised by the University of Cape Town for August/September 2013. It aims to "examine the theory and practice of teaching critical thinking, enquiry-based learning and philosophy with children for all phases of schooling as well as informal educational contexts." (ICPIC, 2012) Included in the content of the conference is the use of storytelling and literature, and the visual arts, music and drama as ways of promoting critical thinking and enquiry-based learning. Sara Stanley (2013) states this in the following way:

> *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS), the latest version (2011) of the NCS, suggests that Thinking and Reasoning needs to be taught in an integrated way when teaching literacy, numeracy and life-skills. This ….can be done in an engaging, imaginative and kinaesthetic manner.*

Important in this respect is the view that is held on child development and how children and youth learn best at each stage of development. In contrast to Piaget's theory that children are *concrete* thinkers[i] up to the age of about 12 years, Kieran Egan, Professor of Education at Simon Fraser University, Canada, makes a case for children up to about age fifteen needing to be taught in imaginative ways:

> *Enormous emphasis has been placed on those intellectual skills that young children manage least well and develop only slowly - computational, logico-mathematical skills – with an equivalent neglect of what children do best - metaphoric, imaginative thinking.* (Egan 1997, p. 52-53)

This view was held by Rudolf Steiner (1862-1925), founder of the Waldorf schools. He regarded imaginative teaching as a vital necessity for educating children. Imagination, the prime tool at work in storytelling and enriched teaching, is *experiential*:

> *Both Egan and Steiner argue that imagination is a heightened form of cognition, capable of transforming the knowledge and skills to be learned into enhanced experiences. These experiences stimulate creativity in thinking and involve the emotions of the learners, through which a more meaningful relationship is established with the learning material.* (Van Alphen, 2011:1)[ii]

The Power of Storytelling

In ancient times the education of children and adults in the moral and cultural ways of leading their lives happened around the fire through the telling of stories. These stories were the rich treasures of the clans, tribes and early nations in pre-literate times, which sustained and continued their civilisation. The moral and cultural underpinnings of their lives were conveyed in symbolic form in the story, and never told *directly* as our 'modern' way of educating tends to do. Everyone, whether child or adult, understood the truths that shone through the happenings in a story, at a level that accorded with their age.

There is a growing recognition that social and emotional education can best engage children and youth in recognising moral,

interpersonal values and skills by means of storytelling and the reading of story books and novels (Karin Murris, 2009)

Stories can also be used in dealing with the challenging behaviour of individual children as well as of classes in schools. The work of Susan Perrow, an Australian storyteller, is based on the Waldorf tradition of finding just the right story for a child whose behaviour or situation indicates the need for help in some or other way. Perrow has published over 100 of her own therapeutic stories, and more than 100 written by others, in her two books *Healing Stories for Challenging Behaviour* (Perrow, 2008) and *Therapeutic Storytelling: 101 Healing stories for Children (Perrow, 2012)*. She provides guidelines for parents and teachers to create their own stories according to the needs of a particular child.

David Donald (2012a, 2012b) writes stories for adolescents, arising out of real-life South African situations, to provide an engaging way of learning life skills: In *I am Thabeka*, a 20-year-old young woman who has lost all her loved ones due to illness leading to death, shows resilience, courage, determination and helps others; In *Gogo's Song*, a brave orphan who loses her mother to AIDS lives with her grandmother ("gogo" means grandmother in Zulu), and despite severe challenges finally graduates as a nurse.

Three case studies now follow, showing different approaches to the teaching of life skills. Firstly, a description of life skills lessons in an urban government school, in which teachers use some broader modes of teaching rather than traditional direct instruction. The second case study describes

In a classroom all the children benefit from a story told for a particular child, learning about social and emotional situations in an imaginative, absorbing way.

The child (or class concerned) must not know that the story is told for him or her in particular, and no explanation or questioning must be entered into, because "stories know the way" (Perrow 2012: xvi) and should be left for the children to absorb and learn from by themselves. In a classroom all the children benefit from a story told for a particular child, learning about social and emotional situations in an imaginative, absorbing way. These stories can be used in pre-school and also for primary school children up to about age 11. Stories of this nature can be used in a more conscious way with teenagers and adults in individual counselling, with good effect.

a non-governmental project providing innovative life skills lessons in a rural school. These lessons are based on experiential learning, using storytelling and visualisation modes to bring about healing and to provide the students with new insights. The third case study describes two situations where the principles of Steiner/Waldorf education are being applied: a "township" pre-school centre in a poor urban area, and a primary class in an affluent school. Both these situations base their work on values-education through the arts and storytelling.

Case Study 1: Life Skills Lessons at a Government Primary School

The school I visited is situated in a relatively poorly resourced area on the outskirts of Cape Town, and is attended by students of the surrounding Coloured and Muslim community. The school buildings are typical of Department of Education schools: rather bleak, grey school buildings, in long barrack-style rows of classrooms. Yet the teachers are happy in and dedicated to their work, and a pleasant atmosphere exists within the relatively strictly disciplined school (for example, the children greet a teacher who visits the classroom; they line up in an orderly manner; they speak respectfully to their teachers).

The Life Skills lessons in the younger classes (6 to 9 year-olds) take place daily for about 15 minutes, working on particular themes each week. The lessons I attended were on 'Self-Esteem'. In one of the Grade 1 classes (6 turning 7 year-olds) the teacher started with the reciting of a poem, relating to the theme of the lesson, which began with the words, "I am special …" The children lit up, and enjoyed speaking the poem vigorously, with some actions. This was a wonderful activity with which to start the Life Skills lesson, energising the children, as it was already the second half of the morning.

This was followed by considering each other's names, and the meaning of these names, which most of the children were not aware of. The teacher then moved to the idea that we are all different in the features of our face, by asking, "What is special about you?" Some examples of children's responses: "I have beautiful brown eyes," "I have beautiful lips," "I have lovely round cheeks." Just when the class as a whole was starting to show signs of losing concentration, , the teacher asked the class to say, "Wow! I am so special!" Moving on to a drawing lesson, the teacher then asked the children to each draw his or her own face on a sheet of paper.

The Grade 6 teacher, working with 11 turning 12-year-olds, also started with speaking a poem:

> I am a promise
> I am a possibility
> I am a promise
> With a capital 'P'

After reciting this poem a number of times, adding actions expressing determination, the teacher spoke about reaching one's full potential, as a choice which each one has. The lesson then focussed on how every human being is the same in the way we all begin as a single cell and in that we all are given the same body structure. She said that this is what makes us equal as human beings, despite the differences in the way we grow and look.

Then a poster of the human skeleton and the muscles that cover it is pinned onto the board. The teacher asked the students questions regarding the poster, moving on to doing some movements to become aware of muscles and bones. She wanted to bring in feelings of gratitude and wonder about the human body, telling me "so that the children do not take things for granted."

The lesson concluded with groups of students looking at projects done by a previous Grade 7 class, in which they had followed the stages of development from being a single cell, to further development in the womb, birth, growth, adulthood, to finally old age and death, making a collage of words, drawings, photographs and pictures from magazines or the internet. The students were very impressed by these projects, reading and discussing them avidly.

I was struck, in the teachers' lessons I was privileged to attend, by their sincere wish to convey the social and moral aspects of life.

Regrettably, to date, there have not been any research projects to evaluate the effectiveness of Life Orientation/Life Skills lessons in schools, whether it has made a difference to students' lives, their social and emotional wellbeing, or whether it has improved the behavioural and learning climate in the schools.

Case Study 2: Living Healthy and Happy Lives - A Rural Development Project

Carmen Clews, a former business entrepreneur, living in the 'Garden Route' on the southern coast of South Africa, runs a proj-

noons, which more children than she can accommodate have asked to attend.

Carmen's approach is eclectic, using ideas from diverse approaches. In particular, her work is inspired by Marshall Rosenberg's *Non-violent Communication – a Language for Life* (Rosenberg, 2009) and Brandon Bays' *The Journey – A Practical Guide to Healing Your Life and Setting Yourself Free.* (Bays, 2003).

Non-violent Communication

Carmen found that the way children were communicating with each other, particularly at two of the schools in the area, was extremely reactive and violent. In seeking ways

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As there is not enough time for intensive/fuller Life Skills sessions in the school timetables, Carmen has run voluntary groups … in the afternoons, which more children than she can accommodate have asked to attend.

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ect called 'Living Healthy and Happy Lives' that concerns itself with the wellbeing of children in the area. In this beautiful rural coastland Coloured and White families live in their separate communities.

Carmen offers 'Tree of Life' lessons (Clews 2011) to state schools in the area, in the local Coloured communities. In addition, she has been involved in training and assisting Life Skills teachers in these schools to run more *engaging* and *meaningful* Life Skills lessons. As there is not enough time for intensive/fuller Life Skills sessions in the school timetables, Carmen has run voluntary groups (once a week, in one school, for a period of 8 months in 2012) in the after-

of dealing with this challenging situation, she engaged in research, finding and studying Non-Violent Communication (NVC). Crucial to Carmen's work is the NVC principle that children learn to express themselves more mindfully by connecting to and expressing their feelings. This also has the effect of encouraging the other person to be more accommodating.

Carmen has been teaching NVC in four classes through role playing of relevant situations, which allows children to experience for themselves how non-violent ways of handling conflicts work and how effectively NVC can defuse potentially harmful situations.

'Tree of Life' Lessons

Carmen (Clews 2012) has created a long series of lessons (25 x 50 minute lesson plans spread over a school year) for covering the variety of life skills themes in the National Curriculum. These lessons use experiential approaches to exploring life skill topics, using storytelling, visualisation, and the arts to balance cognitive input and discussion with more emotion-based and creative activities. The aim is to involve the whole of the child, both in the thinking mind and in the emotions and feelings, to enable them to regularly express themselves emotionally in a safe and nurturing environment.

Specifically designed for 12- to 14-year-olds, each session consists of a selection of the following activities, depending on the topic:

- 'Energy activating' exercises which activate the vital 'chi energy' (found in acupuncture, martial arts, yoga, etc.) to flow through the body – this allows for better concentration and learning in class
- An input by the facilitator and/or discussion on a particular topic
- A visualisation of about 5 - 10 minutes to enter into a relaxed, restoring, quiet space and creatively imagine certain qualities on the session's topic (such as the importance of 'being brave' of 'being grateful', of 'being able to forgive'), developing a state of 'mindfulness' in the children.
- The telling of a story from a series commissioned by Carmen, all about the Tree of Life, in which the lesson's topic is woven into the story (available from carmen@1010creative.com)
- A creative activity e.g. collage, songs, role playing, so as to integrate the message with an activity that brings the concept into the students' own personal lives and situations
- Time for personal or group sharing
- Reflection on what was learnt in the

previous week's lesson. For example, if last week was about forgiveness – the students can give any examples of how they brought that into their day-to-day lives. Each week this brings about a development in conscious awareness to watch out for ways they can use what they have learnt in their day-to-day life.

Some feedback from teaching the 'Tree of Life' lesson plans comes from the principal of one of the primary schools, who said, "The children have definitely learned something from your classes. There have been far fewer incidences of petty crime and children have not been sent to the office as frequently for reprimanding." (26 October, 2012)

The Journey – The Conscious Classroom

Carmen assists a child psychologist, Carol Surya (2012), in running a 'Journey – Conscious Classroom' programme, based on the work of Brandon Bays (Bays, 2003) in the schools in which she works. Carol has been trained via Brandon Bays and 'Journey South Africa' (2010) as a Journey Practitioner and Conscious Classroom facilitator, to run the 'Kids Classroom Journey' programme in schools   As with all Journey process work, the approach uses a guided visualisation method. The Kids Classroom process allows one to work with groups of up to twenty students at a time, so that many more young people can be supported in their emotional growth, as every student is processing his or her emotions at the same time in a safe and 'held' space. The process includes uncovering and releasing past painful emotions, and internalizing positive, helpful resources, thus strengthening the students emotionally.

Given the huge need for healing of children in South Africa, and life skills development in schools, this approach could be a useful way to go. It is intended that life skills teachers and teacher psychologists attached to schools

could undergo a short and intensive training in this approach, and make use of it in their schools.

It is not possible to describe an entire session, due to its length. Here are some of its salient parts, from my observations:

I attended two Journey process sessions of the Conscious Classroom programme led by Carol. A class of 12-year-olds was brought onto the stage of the empty school hall, the only quiet and available space in the school. They are all Afrikaans-speaking students, and were sitting quietly and expectantly for the session to start. Clearly they knew that this was going to be something very different from their normal school day.

Carol started by introducing herself as a 'doctor of feelings' and doing a feelings elicitation activity. One student wisely told the rest of the class that she is a 'psychologist'. In introducing the subject of feelings, Carol drew four circles on the board. Taking one circle at a time, she drew the eyes and mouth of the "face", asking which emotion it portrayed. The first was happiness, followed by sadness, anger and fear. The children were right there with her, naming the feelings portrayed and on being asked, "have you had these feelings in your life?" answered with a very positive "yes".

Carol explained that we store our feelings, even if we have forgotten about them, somewhere in our body. This seemed to be a new idea to the students. Carol drew a human figure on the board, and asking them about sadness, anger, and fear in turn, "where do you feel this emotion?" Interesting responses came from the students, "in the heart, in the entire body, in the stomach" and so on.

These were then drawn as dark areas into the human figure on the board. Interesting responses arose from asking what students were afraid of: one child said "ghosts," another "dogs" and yet another referred to "snakes."

Finally, after telling the students that we need to cleanse our body of these old, 'bad' feelings, Carol explained that they will go on an inner journey into their bodies to find, using imaginary torches, such a feeling that has been hidden there from sometime from the past. As the group was too large, one half would do the Journey first, the others going back to the classroom till it would be their turn. The half group (of about twelve students) were asked to spread themselves in the space available, away from each other. Carol asked them to whisper when asked to speak, so that their neighbours could not hear what they were saying. She explained to them that when they speak something, it can be let go of.

The stage curtains were drawn to create a mood of privacy and enclosure. The visualisation began as follows: "Well, this is a different kind of adventure …. a journey in which you will be making a journey right into your own body." They were asked to close their eyes throughout the journey, and to prepare themselves by taking a deep breath, in and out. This was repeated three times so that they could relax.

The visualisation led them to go into their bodies, feeling a light-filled warmth wherever they went. They are told they will meet a 'superhero' or angel of their own choice, arising out of their own imagination, who is waiting behind a door they need to open. Interestingly, a

few boys actually move their hands in opening their imaginative doors. Several children are completely relaxed, but a few are tensed up. Girl 1 is leaning back on her chair, with arms outstretched on her legs, her hands in fists. Boy 1 is sitting rather stiffly, with his arms folded against his body. Girl 2 is sitting hunched forward, and boy 2 is a little restless, rubbing his face from time to time.

They are accompanied by their superhero to find, somewhere in their bodies, a "bad feeling" and related hurtful memory from the past. The processing of this hurt is made easier by giving the 'younger' them (who experienced the pain) imaginary balloons which serve as internal resources which would have helped them cope better with the painful experience at the time, in order to strengthen them:

"Your superhero or angel presents you with a beautiful bunch of balloons, and each balloon is filled with a special gift of inner strength that would have helped you at that time. Let us see what each balloon holds … what about love? Now (imaginatively) untie the knot of the balloon and breathe in deeply the love that is contained in it." The students all take a deep breath, drawing in the love, and let it out again. Then follow balloons with courage, the ability to speak, to be kind.

The students are relaxing now. Even those who were tense, relax to some extent. Girl 1 relaxes her arms, and her face looks less stressed than before. As the process proceeds, she tenses again, returning to her clenching position, but less tightly than originally. Clearly, things are moving inside her. In boy 1 the only visible change is one hand has moved to

his heart (everyone was asked to do this at a certain point) and has stayed there. Girl 2 is less hunched, and boy 2 is calmer.

Throughout the process the students are asked to "empty out" the feelings they experienced at the time by whispering. Carol keeps a check to see that this continues, as according to Brandon Bays' Journeywork approach, only when speaking it out can painful feelings of the past be released from the deepest level. If a student is no longer moving his or her lips, Carol whispers in the student's ear to keep on speaking it out, so that the body may be cleansed of this feeling. Only a few students need this reminder or encouragement to continue.

The process continues with the 'younger self' (who experienced the hurtful incident) re-experiencing the memory, this time with access to the internal resources they were given, by visualizing the event as if on a television screen. The students, accompanied by their superhero or angel, then allow their younger selves to meet with and empty out verbally their experience with the person that hurt them, around a campfire. They are guided to speak out the hurt that was done, and to realise that the person tried to do his or her best whilst in pain him or herself.

Through dialogue the younger self can come to forgiveness (or at least a level of forgiveness). Finally, they visualise the younger self merging with their present self and returning the way they had come. They hug their superhero and greet him or her, knowing his or her continued presence. They are then guided out of the visualisation and come back to normal life by opening their eyes.

Figure 2: Drawing of herself by a student in the class at the end of the visualisation process. First face: 'Voor; Ongelukkig' (Before, Unhappy); Second face: 'Na, Gelukkig' (After, Happy)

Clearly the students gained a lot from the visualisation. When asked if they would want to do it on a weekly basis, they enthusiastically said "yes!" Girl 1 looked particularly relieved and happy. Girl 2 seemed to be serene and Boy 2 is chatting happily with his friends. Now they were invited to draw 'before and after' visualisation pictures, in which each student showed a positive response to the session.

Carol walked over to Boy 1 to have a long conversation while the others were drawing. In cases where a student showed further need of counselling, this would be provided by Carol. She has offered counselling to students in more severely damaged communities in other parts of South Africa. A warm interchange happened between Carol and each student as they hand her their drawings, a little discussion taking place in each case.

It strikes me that there is an important place in schools for a professional like Carol, to whom the students are able to warm to so readily, and who has no previous history with any of the children, to provide them with this or a similar kind of self-exploration work. The students learn, from their own experience, that entering into one's own inner space and meeting feelings such as hurt, fear or anxiety is a healthy process and that by a process of 'meeting' these feelings, they can be released, bringing relief and healing. The students also become used to having access to their emotional lives, something that is mostly not learned at home or at school.

The Journey – Conscious Classroom Programme began in 2004. A formal evaluation was carried out by Dr N.D.Gopal, University of KwaZulu-Natal, during its pilot programme in 2004. Learners, educators, principals of schools and parents/caregivers were asked to answer questionnaires regarding their experiences of the programme.

The table below represents learner responses in percentages of their perceptions of themselves with reference to the Journey Programme. Sample of 376 learners, from Grade 4 - 7 (ages approximately 10 – 13 years) in KwaZulu-Natal Province. (Gopal, 2004)

Overall, educators rated the Journey Programme highly. One hundred percent of the educators had intensive training and the majority of the respondents are confident in teaching the programme and have a pedagogic understanding of the programme. The ma-

Table 4: Learner Responses In Percentages Of Their Perceptions Of Themselves With Reference To The Journey Programme (Gopal, 2004:13)

	No	Little	Some	Much	Big
To what Extent have your Academic Results Improved as a Result of the Journey Programme?	1	7	17	37	38
Relationship With Friends	3	3	10	32	52
Relationship With Family	2	3	7	17	71
Relationship With Educators	2	4	10	34	50
Per Learning Area					
English	1	8	20	41	30
Afrikaans/Isizulu	2	5	5	31	57
Mathematics	2	6	17	34	41
Natural Science 4 10 24 45 19	4	10	24	45	19
Economic Management Sciences	1	9	22	40	28
Human And Social Sciences	3	9	18	37	33
Life Orientation	2	7	17	32	42
Arts And Culture	5	9	17	33	36
Technology	4	6	23	35	32

The evaluation report draws the following conclusions:

> Overall the Journey Programme impacted the learners positively. The majority of learners indicated that their academic results and social skills had improved tremendously. This augurs well for the Journey Programme as we are able to see the benefits on the learners, which far outweighs the disadvantages. (Gopal, 2004:13)

jority also found the manuals useful and the language accessible. All respondents believed that the Journey Programme should be included in the national school curriculum and the majority agreed that the Department of Education should take on the responsibility of training educators. (Gopal, 2004:9)

A further pilot project took place in 2007, involving 16,152 learners in schools, aged 6 to 18 years, across four provinces. The report

outlines the circumstances of children in the areas visited as follows:

> *At present South Africa has inadequate access to the healing process. A wide range of issues had been experienced by participants such as rape, murder, death of parents, HIV, abandonment, loneliness, etc. Some towns have approximately 60 deaths per week and as a result of this many children are left unable to support themselves adequately, attending school hungry, with feelings of not belonging and without choice in their lives.* (Journey Outreach – Africa, 2007:6)

integrating intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual (i.e. that which brings about lasting values and meaningfulness in life) education from early childhood to adulthood.

In early childhood up to about 9 years of age, social and emotional education is not regarded as a separate development of skills to be taught and learned, but is intrinsically part of every aspect of the daily programme. All teaching is to be imbued with moral values, to be *lived* and *felt* by teachers and children alike, but not *explained* or *taught*. As Bo Dahlin (2008:20-22) states in relation to the case studies in his report:

In early childhood up to about 9 years of age, social and emotional education is not regarded as a separate development of skills to be taught and learned, but is intrinsically part of every aspect of the daily programme.

Schools in which the programme had taken place were asked to provide the results of students' improvements or lack of improvements in their exams after the Journey work they had been through. In Primary schools, the average percentage pass rate increased by 19.4% after the Journey Process (based on a sample of 2,668 learners). In Secondary schools the average percentage pass rate increased by 34.2% after the Journey Process (sample of 2,027 learners). (Journey Outreach – Africa, 2007:14)

Case Study 3: Social and Emotional Education in Steiner/Waldorf Schools in South Africa
In Steiner/Waldorf schools, great importance is laid on the holistic development of children,

> *… the Steiner Waldorf approach to social and emotional education would be classified as mainly indirect, emphasising values rather than particular skills.*

The entire curriculum from playgroup (children of 2 and 3 years of age), kindergarten (4 to 6 years of age) to primary and secondary school (up to age 18 or 19) aims to develop *human values* and *human feeling* towards all that exists, as a basis for social and emotional sensitivity and wellbeing.

Steiner's theory of child development maintains that only from about 12 years of age, when a new developmental stage of intellectual awakening starts to happen of its own accord, are children ready to understand and

discuss issues in a more conscious way. Before this time, children are best left to learn about social and emotional learning in *indirect* ways, as mentioned above. (Steiner, 1996b:99-111)

This does not mean that *direct* interventions are not needed in the educational process. In South African society children need to be continually alerted to avoid getting themselves into unsafe situations such as molestation, rape, child trafficking and drugs from a very early age. Children may be subject to disruptions at home or in the community, breakdown in marriages, displacement, no regular home and lack of adequate parenting, etc., as explained earlier in the introduction.

Steiner (1996a, 1996b) emphasises that children between about 7 to 14 years need to be taught through "feeling" and "imagination", recommending that teachers present

learning (van Alphen, 2011). The use of storytelling, metaphors, humour, artistic and hands-on craft activities have the potential to transform every aspect of the curriculum into positive, developmental ways through which children grow and learn.

This indirect approach to developing social and emotional growth is supported in every part of the educational process, engendering *habits* in children of always integrating positive emotion with their intentions and actions. Sensitivity towards self and others, flexibility and acceptance become a natural way of being.

Waldorf Pre-school Education
The Centre for Creative Education (CCE) was established in Cape Town in 1993, one of its main activities being to bring holistic and creative education to educare centres (i.e. centres that *care* for babies and toddlers as well as the *education* of three- to five-year-

Educare centres are mostly opened by concerned township women with no training in childcare and pre-school education, in order to care for young children whose parents are working during the day.

everything they teach to be full of feeling and presented in creative, imaginative ways. This is to avoid children learning with the *head* only, and ensuring that they learn with *head, heart and hands* in an integrated way. (van Alphen, 2011:24)

The work of Kieran Egan (1997, 2005) echoes that of Steiner, requiring the teacher to transform mere factual or mechanical learning into imaginative and heart-felt

olds) in *township* communities (both informal slum and built-up settlements) around the city. (Centre for Creative Education, 2013)

Educare centres are mostly opened by concerned township women with no training in childcare and pre-school education, in order to care for young children whose parents are working during the day. They cater for babies of six months to school-ready children. To date 305 women have qualified as early
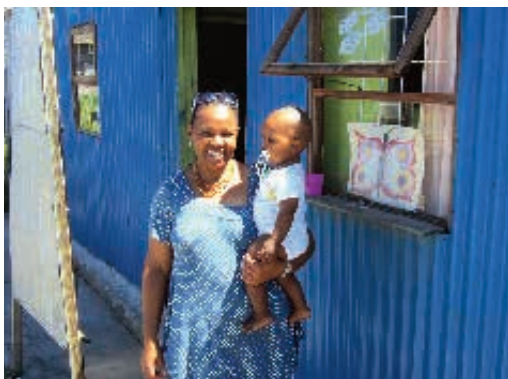
childhood education carers and teachers, using Waldorf approaches. These qualifications are government approved, according to its Further Education and Training Standards. (Centre for Creative Education, 2012)

Ikwezi Lokusa Educare Centre

One such person who attended these training programmes is Zoleka Khutshwa, a dynamic person of her community living in one of the "townships" around Cape Town. She founded her own Educare centre in the year 2000, caring for and educating children from 6 months to 5 or 6 years, in four groups:

- 6 months – 2 years: babies and toddlers group (16 children, 2 carers)
- 2 – 3 ½ years: play group (36 children, 2 teachers, 1 volunteer)
- 3 ½ – 5 or 6 years: kindergarten (32 children, 2 teachers, 1 volunteer)

The volunteers are young students from Germany who work one year in an educare centre as assistants.

Zoleka (2013) describes the area in which she lives as follows:

The children need more security, they need love, they need a good environment, which they don't have at home. We are in a risky area. Crime is too much, gangsters are there, we find out they are shooting out of nowhere, the children are very afraid. Every day they need to feel they are safe here, have that love, because parents only are with them for a short time. We are here from 7 in the morning till 5 or 6 o'clock. We are trying to fill those gaps which the children don't have. The children are very much restricted at home. If they live in a shack area, they have to stay indoors for safety reasons. We want them to feel free here, to do whatever they want to do.

Most children come from shack areas, in some places every time there are fires, fighting (even if not in shack area) especially around the taverns, a lot of swearing. This is not a good way of living. If we raise our voice to a particular child, they are really scared. Some children see a lot of violence, also at home.

Against this backdrop, Zoleka and her fellow teachers provide an enriching programme in a safe, gentle environment.

In Zoleka's pre-school, indirect social and emotional education happens through:

"The children are very much restricted at home. If they live in a shack area, they have to stay indoors for safety reasons." (Zoleka Khutshwa, 2013).

- **Providing beautiful, cared-for surroundings.** Zoleka's two classrooms are painted a beautiful orange colour, providing a warm and welcoming indoor environment for the children. A lot more is needed in the classroom, which will be added as and when finances allow (the centre is partly financed per child by the Department of Social Services, but for the rest by parent contributions and fundraising).
- **Children are guided and encouraged by the teacher to take part in caring for and beautifying their surroundings**. In Zoleka's educare centre, the children are involved in a gardening project. As their grounds are very small, the vegetable garden is small, and the soil is sandy and dry, but the fact is that the children experience the cycle of planting, caring for and finally harvesting vegetables. At present, spinach is growing, which the children themselves will be eating.

- **Continuous examples of positive human behaviour in the actions and attitudes by those who take care of children**, with the emphasis on respect for others, acceptance of differences between people and awareness of gratitude and wonder for all creation. Zoleka has been fully trained at CCE, and is partially employed to carry out mentoring of its trainees in other educare centres. The other teachers at Ikwezi Lokusa are currently in training. All are caring human beings, inspired by the ideals of positive human behaviour. The children seem happy and well, living without fear of being hit or shouted at. I saw loving attention given to them, allowing them to blossom and have faith in the goodness of their world.

I witnessed **story-time** at the end of the morning, before lunch was served. There was quiet anticipation as the oldest group

of children (3 ½ – –5/6 year-olds) lined up to go into the classroom. At the educare centre they live in a secure, daily rhythm of activities, so they know that story-time is a special moment of the day. The room has been prepared for the children before they enter, the chairs placed in a circle. The children are quiet and calm as they hear the story and watch the puppets being moved accordingly. At the end of the story, they remain sitting enraptured … until the teacher starts to lead them outside.

- Later in the day, **arts and craft activities take place**. The emphasis is on creating *beautiful* items, having a soothing and healing effect on all children, and giving them a sense of achievement.

The working together of teachers and parents to create the best possible environment for their upbringing, given their circumstances, is crucial and community-building is at the heart of pre-school education, to try as far as possible to provide a continuous approach between home and school. Zoleka says:

It is not really difficult to work with children, the worst part is to work with their parents. They don't understand child development, what it is all about. I have to workshop them every time, they have to understand … it is not just because they have to go to work, and their children

need looking after …Sometimes we find that their child is having a really abusive time at home, and the parent does not understand that. They don't want us to visit their homes, you just have to go.

Some children come from reasonably good homes. Their parents are really supportive of the school. They also talk to the other parents. At the first parents meeting, these parents each sit next to a new parent. They help to explain how this educare is different from others. Some parents just send their children to school, but a few are really interested and very committed.

Zoleka involves the parents of the educare children as much as possible. She holds workshops in which parents are taught various crafts; when something needs to be fixed or when a building project is undertaken, parents not working offer to help; the fundraising group and board members are parents who volunteer their time and efforts to sustain the school.

Zoleka organises parent education by giving workshops on parenting and child development; clinic workers are invited to speak at these workshops about child health; there is a parliamentary worker, who ensures that the educare centre gains first priority in new parliamentary projects. Huge efforts are made to try to involve parents in the centre and get them to understand in which ways this educare facility is different from others.

The educare leaders and teachers live in dire circumstances, in poverty and in generally unhygienic areas. Yet, they are women with a purpose and a pride, and, using whatever meagre resources they can gather, take on the children in their communities to bring about change in their lives. They receive some financial support from government

The educare leaders and teachers live in dire circumstances, in poverty and in generally unhygienic areas. Yet, they are women with a purpose and a pride, and, using whatever meagre resources they can gather, take on the children in their communities to bring about change in their lives.

sources, so that they are able to feed these children one substantial meal per day. For the rest, the community has to support them financially, so that they can continue caring for and educating the young children.

The four-year part-time training at the Centre for Creative Education that these township women have gone through was designed by Ann Sharfman, early childhood expert and teacher educator, who created *experiential activities* for understanding the developmental stages of childhood. Through the arts and a philosophical exploration of what it is to be human, and what is needed by children to grow into moral, empowered adults, the women found their own self-worth and dignity as human beings. This ignited their passion to provide a healing and empowering education for the children in their own communities, overcoming the odds they have to face to do so.

A Waldorf Primary School
For this part of the case study I visited a school that caters for mostly advantaged, upper-middle class families, with plentiful parent interest and involvement in their children's education. It is a well-developed school, has been in existence for more than 50 years, and continues to hold an inten-

sive artistic tradition according to Steiner/Waldorf principles.

One teacher in this school, David Garb (2012), through his interest in social and emotional development of youth, began in the early 1990's to run workshops for adolescent students in the school. His concern for the emotional well-being of these students was dramatically intensified through an accident on a class camp, in which a 13-year-old girl in his class suffered severe head injuries and died shortly afterwards. David had to do extensive loss and grief counselling with the students of this class, the parents of the young girl and the parents of the students.

David's work arises from an understanding of adolescent needs,

> in which a new awareness and an urge to explore is born in young people from age 13 onwards. They learn to deal with different events and pressures through hit-or-miss situations … Many of the problems that arise during adolescence can be alleviated through providing communication and relationship skills learning for young people. Current research finds that workshop learning experiences are the most effective means

Many of the problems that arise during adolescence can be alleviated through providing communication and relationship skills learning for young people. (Garb, 2012).

of providing relevant social skills learning for adolescents.

The aim of these social skills workshops is to equip young people with skills that will enable them to effectively deal with relationships – with others, and with themselves – and to encourage them to show responsibility and independence in dealing with the social issues that arise throughout life. (Garb, 2012)

The students themselves, and their respective parents, find a great deal of value in these workshops, which take place as short, intensive one-week events once a year. His work was taken up by another innovative teacher, Leigh Whitesman, at a sister school, out of a recognition that all children, already before adolescence, need to develop awareness of their emotions and social interactions, and that they need to develop an extensive language to express these. Accordingly, children from about age 10 can participate in creative ways of exploring, discussing, drawing, dramatizing emotions and social relations.

This approach helps to prepare children for the turbulent times that pre-adolescence (12-14 years) and adolescence itself (especially 15-17 years) can bring, laying a foundation for emotional and social awareness. In view of the enormous impact of modern life, with the attraction of media, drugs and sexuality, it is felt that the Waldorf curriculum, though designed to support the process of individuation and a healthy emotional life through extensive use of the imagination and the arts in learning, needs to be supplemented with facilitating students to have a more conscious awareness of their emotional and social lives.

Yvonne Herring (2013), a parenting trainer, in collaboration with Leigh Whitesman, is the life skills teacher in the first school mentioned above, providing a one-lesson-a-week programme in Grades 4 to 7 (10 to 13 year-olds). Her work with this age-group culminates in Grade 7 with an intensive week's early morning programme in conflict resolution.

Yvonne walks into the Grade 4 class (10-year-olds) towards the end of a morning of learning. They are a little noisy and scattered, and she

… all children, already before adolescence, need to develop awareness of their emotions and social interactions, and … they need to develop an extensive language to express these.

Figure 3. Two samples of posters displaying the drawings made by Grade 4 children

needs to somehow gather their attention. Surprisingly, her voice just reaching over the noise of the class, the children become quiet, wondering what will happen in this lesson.

Yvonne starts by showing the class the results of the two previous week's sessions, during which these children were introduced to social and emotional education for the first time. Yvonne seems to have the knack of doing things very simply, but effectively. In the first session she started by simply asking the class, "What are feeling words?" A class discussion followed about expressing feelings, and two examples of feelings, angry and sad, had been thoroughly talked about.

After the discussion, each child was given two paper squares to draw his or her idea of the two feelings they had explored: they were not allowed to draw any kind of person, but only choose a colour that expresses the emotion and shape it the way they feel it. In the session that followed the discussion went into further emotions, and the children now drew the feelings of happy, afraid and kind.

Yvonne had stuck all the children's squares onto large sheets of cardboard, as posters for displaying in their classroom. The children looked at their own squares and those of others. There was a lot of bubbly, excited talking, but soon they knew something different was about to happen.

Yvonne said that they would now mime "feeling words" and that each child would get a feeling word written on a piece of paper. The children were allowed to each choose a partner, and could only share their word with their partner, nobody else! Partners then were to discuss with each other how they could mime their word in front of the class. They could either mime a little scene together, or each do their own scene, and then the rest of the class had to guess the feeling word.

One child made moves to exchange her word for someone else's, to which Yvonne said a very definite, "no!" Soon hands were going up of those who were ready to start, the usual eager beavers. But Yvonne decides she will give quieter pairs a chance first, starting at the back of the class.

"So here we go! Shh …..!" The children have all decided to mime in their pairs, and although their miming skills are generally poor, with quite a number of children being unable to stop from being self-conscious and smiling, the class often got to the word quite quickly: they were good at guessing!

Words such as peaceful, sad, brave, selfish, being upset, irritated, bored, afraid, kept everyone on their toes for a long time. Gradually some children 'switch off' and start playing with their crayons, or talking to their

neighbour, and then as soon as a tough word is mimed, they suddenly look up. For example, their guesses:

annoying
angry
horrible

and finally the correct guess:

spiteful!

Yvonne managed to get through the presentations of the whole class of 26 children, which was a feat considering the short attention span younger children often have at the end of a morning's work. The lesson then ended. In the next sessions, Yvonne will be working on self-affirmation, starting by asking the children to draw self-portraits of themselves.

Teacher Development: The Way Forward
In the South African scenario, and the case studies described, the vital question is, "What kind of teachers are needed to bring healing development are needed to empower all teachers to use *experiential ways* of facilitating the learning of life skills.

The largest difficulty in achieving this is the development of the needed skills in existing teachers, whose training in the past has been in the delivery of content rather than facilitating *learning experiences* in their work with children. Students in classrooms can best learn *from their own experience*: this means that teachers need to understand how to create these learning experiences. *Instructing* their students in social and emotional issues, is likely to cause both teacher and children to see these as a subject to be learnt (and subsequently forgotten!), like other subjects in the school curriculum.

In many cases, especially with adolescent students, whole class discussions with a teacher and group discussions with peers, help to make social and emotional issues discussible and therefore more effective. Experience shows, however, that sexuality, drug and alcohol abuse, and social behaviour do not nec-

What kind of teachers are needed to bring healing and resilience to children, given the current state of affairs in South Africa?

and resilience to children, given the current state of affairs in South Africa?"

Clearly, schools have a vast role to play in the social and emotional education of the country's children, and yet only a few teachers, mostly in privileged schools, have the skills and insights that will enable them to do this *effectively* and *meaningfully*. Broader and more innovative approaches to teacher essarily change, as students do not have a firm foundation of values from their families, peers and community, and so the cycle of the same issues often continues.

Teacher education for younger children - pre-school and primary school up to about 11 or 12 years of age - needs to include both imaginative ways of teaching and learning (story-telling, story-making, metaphoric

thinking, eco-thinking) as well as a broad development of artistic skills (singing, music, speech and drama, movement, drawing, painting and clay modelling) so that every teacher can use these to integrate cognitive learning with a more affective component in learning the curriculum. Teachers do not have to be experts in these artistic fields, but need to have enough experience themselves to be able to include artistic activities in their daily lesson plans.

Professor Karin Murris (2009) of the University of Cape Town is spearheading a multi-dimensional approach in teaching and learning for children: a new programme for educating teachers for the Foundation Phase (children from 6 to 9 years) is due to begin in 2014, focussing on the heightening and enhancing of cognitive learning through stories, imagination and the arts; the use of philosophy with children; and evidence-based learning and development of critical thinking.

An existing model of arts and imagination based teacher education for class teaching (all subjects, for 7 to 12 year-olds) has been running for 20 years at the Centre for Creative Education (2013), offering a government approved B.Ed. degree since 2004. Co-operation with Professor Murris's programme is in the pipeline.

Improved, more broadly skilled teacher education, as described above, will have a profound effect on the teaching of social and emotional education. Its contents and skills can then be learnt in experiential and truly transformative ways, aiding the progress towards a more emotionally sensitive and morally strong nation.

Conclusion

In South Africa, a greater vision in the field of social and emotional education is needed, starting from the earliest ages. Parent educa-

tion for the needs of babies to feel secure and fully loved, followed by caring and enriched early childhood education needs to become universal throughout the country.

The *experiential* learning of social and emotional education, as described above, is essential for bringing about the transformation that our society most urgently needs. From Case Study 1, we can see how the involvement in carrying out of *projects*, in which students can creatively describe and illustrate a particular life skills topic, inspires a younger class of students who were allowed to see these projects. One can assume that, given the great interest generated, these younger students will be looking forward to doing similar projects when they are in Grade 7.

In Case Study 2 we see the use of *storytelling* as a basis for conveying social and emotional topics, and the use of short, guided visualizations to adopt positive qualities such as 'being brave', 'being grateful' or 'being able to forgive.' A recognition of the need for skilled professionals, as seen above in the Journey – Conscious Classroom project, is very urgent, to bring healing to the upcoming generation while they are still open to change and transformation.

Case Study 3 illustrates the importance of creating a beautiful environment and an enriching curriculum full of stories and imaginative play, as a basis for the holistic development of children in early childhood (6 months to 6 years of age), particularly for children living in disadvantaged situations. For primary school children, the use of the arts as a means of learning about emotions in a more *experiential* way shows an engaging, child-friendly way of teaching life skills.

There *is* innovation and development happening in South Africa, but it needs to be recognised and promoted. Continuous

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for teachers needs to focus on experiential modes of learning for children to become active learners, constructing their own knowledge of healthy and appropriate ways of leading their lives.

Professional Development (CPD) for teachers needs to focus on experiential modes of learning for children to become active learners, constructing their own knowledge of healthy and appropriate ways of leading their lives. This would require CPD programmes to be offered *experientially* and not through direct transmission. Initial teacher education would likewise need to move from excessively theory-based learning to arts-based and imaginative learning, so that the educators of the future may adopt these modes of teaching in educating children holistically.

Investment in teacher development, as suggested above, could bring both healing and strengthening of children's emotional and social development, as well as promote more effective learning in our schools. The benefits of such investment can bring savings to the country in reduced violence, mental and physical illnesses, a reduction in unemployment and a new level of resolving the issues that are of such concern to all.

Peter van Alphen started his career as a music teacher, but was soon drawn to the creative approaches taken to teaching all subjects in Steiner/Waldorf schools. Then followed 16 years of teaching at Michael Oak Waldorf School in Cape Town, South Africa, as a primary school teacher. During the transition from the *apartheid* regime to a democratic South Africa, Peter pioneered a teacher en-

richment program in the disadvantaged 'township' communities around Cape Town. This led to the establishment of the Centre for Creative Education in 1993, one year before the new democratic government came into being. The aims of the Centre are: to support the development of pre-school carers and teachers in holistic and healing approaches to working with children from 6 months to 5 or 6 years of age to provide teacher education in holistic and creative ways for primary school children between the ages of 6 or 7 to 13 years of age. As co-founder of the Centre, Peter was its managing director for 9 years and was responsible for the development of teacher education programmes. The early childhood work was developed by Ann Sharfman, an expert in this field. From 1997, Peter and Ann began part-time teacher education programmes in East Africa. These programmes have provided Waldorf schools and Waldorf-inspired schools in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania with local teachers trained in Waldorf education. Peter specialises in the development of teacher education programmes, adult learning and teacher development in African settings. He was honoured for his work in the African communities near Cape Town by being given the African name of 'Sipho,' meaning 'Gift' in the Xhosa language. Still continuing his work at the Centre for Creative Education in Cape Town and in the teacher development programme in East Africa, Peter is also involved in educational

research. He is passionate about introducing imaginative teaching to all schools, as a way of bringing human values into learning at schools.

Endnotes

[1]   Piaget maintained that children up to about age twelve are not yet able to think abstractly, and therefore have to be taught in literal, reality-based ways. This idea is opposed by Kieran Egan, who maintains that children have "metaphorical competence" and that the use of the imagination involves "powerful abstractions". The emphasis on Piaget's development of logico-mathematical thinking before the age of about twelve "has made the typical elementary classroom less intellectually rich than it should be." (Egan, 1997:50)

[2]   The reader is referred to van Alphen (2011), an article that compares the work of Kieran Egan, Professor of Education at Simon Fraser University, Canada with that of Rudolf Steiner, founder of the Steiner/Waldorf schools

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