



# European Network for Social and Emotional Competence

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## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING MATTERS

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

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### Welcome!

Welcome to the second newsletter. ENSEC continues to grow and thrive, as the various reports in here make clear and we would like to thank everyone who contributed to this newsletter. Do please send me copy for the next edition by the end of June. So far contributions have been great but are from a very few people, it would be lovely to hear more from the membership. And please stick to about 500 words max!

Katherine Weare,  
[skw@soton.ac.uk](mailto:skw@soton.ac.uk)

## CHAIRS' REPORTS

### Membership and website

ENSEC is growing, and today we can count about 200 members from 38 different countries of whom 148 are full members (from a European country) and 44 associated members (from a non-European country). The table below shows the distribution per country:

Country	Number of members
Austria	7
Australia	13
Barbados	1
Belgium	1
Canada	2
Cayman Islands	1
Cyprus	1
Croatia	11
Denmark	3
Egypt	1
Estonia	2
Finland	3
Georgia	2
Germany	3
Greece	1
Hong Kong	2
India	2
Ireland	4
Israel	1
Italy	6
Japan	2
Latvia	1
Lebanon	1
Malta	9
Netherlands, The	4
New Zealand	4
Norway	3
Portugal	6
Romania	1
Russia	1
Singapore	2
Spain	2
South Africa	1
Sweden	4
Switzerland	6
Turkey	8
UK	57
USA	11

These numbers are very encouraging. . Nevertheless, there are still “ENSEC-free-countries” and it is our task to make ENSEC more public and also attractive to join to these countries. We appreciate any recommendations and approaches on how to do so. Please do not hesitate to contact Carmen ([carmen\\_huser@web.de](mailto:carmen_huser@web.de) ) on this and any other matters concerning

improvements for membership. Please also contact Carmen if you have changed your email address and haven't informed us yet, so we can keep in touch and inform you on news about ENSEC: Thank you!

**Carmen Huser**

[carmen\\_huser@web.de](mailto:carmen_huser@web.de)

### **2013 ENSEC conference Update**

Work has been continuing on the Fourth International ENSEC Conference, "Social and Emotional Competence in a Changing World" which is being held in Zagreb in Croatia between the 3rd and 7th July 2013. The Local Organising Committee is in the process of finalising the themes and Key Note Speakers, and the accommodation and social programme promise to be excellent. Pre-conference workshops will be jointly facilitated by ENSEC and our Croatian colleagues which we hope will be the first of many international collaborations that arise out of the Conference. Facilities will be available during conference for Special Interest Groups and other research communities to meet and share ideas and projects so do let us know if you would like to take this opportunity for some international networking.

Kathy Evans

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Renata Miljevic-Ridicki,

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## ***INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EMOTIONAL EDUCATION***

### **Special Issue just published**

The April 2012 edition of the *International Journal of Emotional Education* has just been published. It is a special edition on Social-Emotional Factors Related to Substance Misuse in Adolescents and guest edited by Dr. Nathaniel R. Riggs from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA. It is available to all ENSEC members at [www.enseceurope.org/journal](http://www.enseceurope.org/journal)

### **Call for Papers: Special Issue on Positive Education in Schools, November 2013**

I invite you to contribute a manuscript for consideration in a special issue of the *International Journal of Emotional Education* that will focus on positive education in schools. We are especially interested in manuscripts describing empirical research on positive education using

strong research methods. The specific research area is open, but we are particularly interested in:

- 1) longitudinal research on predictors of positive development and well-being in children and adolescents;
- 2) research on school-based assessment of positive education constructs (e.g., strengths, positive emotions, meaning, etc.);
- 3) research on school-based positive education interventions;
- 4) research on teacher/school counselor training and professional development;
- 5) research on public policy related to promoting well-being in schools.

We hope to create an issue that represents a truly global perspective on positive education. Manuscripts are due September 15, 2012 and should be written in English and adhere to the Journal guidelines for authors. Manuscripts will be sent out for peer review shortly after this date. We anticipate that the special issue will be published November 2013.

I will be serving as one of the editors for this special issue. I hope that you will consider submitting a manuscript. Please also feel free to share this notice with colleagues who may be interested. We look forward to receiving manuscripts from researchers working in countries throughout the world. Manuscripts may be submitted directly to me by email.

Dr. Jane Gillham, Swarthmore College/University of Pennsylvania, USA  
[jgillha1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:jgillha1@swarthmore.edu)

## NEWS FROM ENSEC MEMBERS

### **Professionals need to be proactive if they are to prevent children's misuse of social media websites**

Children in care have always been vulnerable to bullying and it is something about which teachers, social workers, foster carers and residential care workers have learned to be particularly vigilant. However, with 65% of 11- to 16-year-olds now having a profile on a social networking site, cyber-bullying is presenting carers and professionals with its own unique challenges. Bullying is now no longer confined to the schools and the journey home but can take place through mobile phones, over the internet, by email and on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter. It can be a far more insidious and prolific form of bullying because of the anonymity it offers to perpetrators. It can take a variety of forms including threats of physical violence, name-calling (including homophobia), death threats, hate mail, sexual demands, threats to damage existing relationships, menacing chain messages and threats involving home and family. A survey of 23,420 children and young people aged nine to 16 across Europe found that 5% were being bullied more than once a week, 4% once or twice a month and 10% less often. However, like more traditional forms of bullying, the rates among looked-after children are likely to be much higher

Male cyber-bullies tend to extend existing threats of direct physical attack online. Female cyber-bullies extend existing social exclusion to ensure that targets remain unpopular.

Like all forms of bullying the emotional harm caused can be extreme, but when the target is a looked-after young person, it tends to exacerbate existing feelings of insecurity and anxiety caused by their experiences and family situation. Attachment difficulties resulting from disruptions in their family lives will also make it hard for this group of young people to trust adults enough to tell them about experiences of bullying, or even to believe that adults will care enough about them to take action. Often many will also have changed school or placement which means they have problems in making and keeping close friendships - a protective factor against the impact of bullying.

Children in care can also be cyber-bullies themselves either as a way of seeking revenge on other children for past hurts or as a way of expressing the emotional turmoil they are suffering because of their family situation.

While younger children, from seven years, generally access the internet in public areas, 49% of children and young people aged nine to 16 use the internet in places that are unsupervised by adults. This means adults need to be proactive if they are to supervise and monitor their children's activity online. It can be tempting to resort to punishment, such as taking away mobile phones or preventing access to the internet. However, this approach is rarely effective and can often only heighten secrecy and fear. It is more effective to sit down and talk through the issues with the young person making sure they are aware of the likely emotional impact it is having or could have. Best of all is to ask the young person to think of how they can prevent cyber-bullying or protect themselves against it. It is also important to provide children and young people with the skills to manage risk effectively, to know how to protect themselves and to support other vulnerable peers who are being mistreated online.

Don't inflame the situation or over-egg the dangers. Be calm and promote the need for young people to show respect online just as they would face-to-face. Also point out that anonymity brings its own risks. It is not absolute either as often online communications can be traced back to real people, even if they are using a pseudonym. This education needs to start early - both for young people and also carers and professionals who need to be swift to pick up signs that a child might be suffering cyber-bullying and aware of the harm it can cause - particularly for looked-after children who are already very emotionally vulnerable

*Professor Helen Cowie is director of the UK Observatory for the Promotion of Non-Violence at the University of Surrey in the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences. This article was published in the 3 November 2011 edition of Community Care under the headline "Reducing cyber-bullying risk in looked-after children".*

### **Manchester team to conduct major social and emotional learning trial**

A team of researchers at the University of Manchester led by ENSEC member Professor Neil Humphrey have secured funding to conduct a major cluster-randomised controlled trial of the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) curriculum in English primary schools. The £1.2 million study, which is being funded by the National Institute for Health Research, will take place from 2012-2017, involving 50 schools and nearly 4,000 children. It will seek to determine the impact of PATHS on pupils' social and emotional competence, academic attainment, health-related quality of life, exclusions and attendance. The study will examine

whether any effects are sustained at two-year post intervention follow-up, and also if PATHS impacts upon pupils' adjustment to secondary school. The research team will be examining the role of implementation variability (e.g. dosage, fidelity) in mediating the various outcomes, in addition to using the study data to conduct the first field test of the SEL logic model. Finally, the study will also incorporate an economic (cost-benefit) analysis.

For further information please email [neil.humphrey@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:neil.humphrey@manchester.ac.uk)

### **‘Achievement for All’ programme successful in promoting academic progress and wider outcomes among children with special educational needs and disabilities**

A government-funded pilot initiative designed to improve academic progress and wider outcomes for pupils with SEND has been successful, according to the findings of an independent national evaluation led by ENSEC members Professor Neil Humphrey and Dr. Garry Squires at the University of Manchester. Achievement for All, which was piloted from 2009-2011 in over 450 schools across England, focused on helping schools to:

- develop assessment, tracking and intervention procedures, including the use of data to track pupils' progress, setting curriculum targets and implementation of appropriate interventions to support children to make progress in their learning
- improve parental confidence and engagement, through the use of regular 'structured conversations' that enabled an open, ongoing dialogue with parents about their child's learning
- promote wider outcomes for pupils, by developing strategies and key actions to support children to make progress in their attendance, behaviour, bullying, relationships with teachers and peers, and/or wider participation (e.g. after-school clubs)

The programme received over £30 million funding over two years. The Manchester team was commissioned by the Department for Education to evaluate its effectiveness. They tracked a cohort of children in each of the participating schools, and compared their progress to children in similar schools that were not implementing the scheme, in addition to national datasets held by the Government. The team also conducted case studies in 20 schools, interviewing staff, pupils and parents, and observing lessons. The analyses conducted demonstrated that AfA boosted children's academic progress in English and Maths, improved their relationships with teachers and peers, and led to reductions in behavior problems and bullying. Achievement for All is to be rolled out nationally starting in 2011-12.

The evaluation report can be downloaded from here: <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-RR176>

Further information about Achievement for All can be found here: <http://www.afa3as.org.uk/>

*Neil Humphrey is Professor of Psychology of Education at the University of Manchester, and ENSEC 2011 conference organiser.*

## **New report presents findings of a longitudinal study on social, emotional and behavioural difficulties of Maltese children,**

*Building Resilience in School Children: Risk and promotive factors amongst Maltese primary school children* (Cefai, C and Camilleri, L., 2011, University of Malta) depicts windows of vulnerability and opportunity for young children in their social and emotional development. It presents the findings of a longitudinal study on social, emotional and behaviour difficulties in Maltese primary school, building on a previous national study on students with social, emotional and behaviour problems. The study charts the trajectory of a cohort of young children from the infant to the junior years in Maltese schools, examining how their social and emotional competence and mental health varied according to a host of individual, home, community, classroom and school factors. The researchers present the window of vulnerability which exposes young primary school children to social, emotional and behaviour difficulties as they move from the first to the fourth year of primary school, including such factors as bullying at school, poor communication skills, poor teacher-pupils relationship, lack of support from close friends, and poor parental academic expectations, amongst others. Risk factors tend to be cumulative, with one risk leading to other risks. Pupils exposed to five or more risk factors (3%) had 75% chance or more of developing social, emotional and behaviour difficulties in the early primary years. The poor are at risk of becoming poorer unless the risk chain is broken. One needs to take into account, however, the type or context of the risk/s present: the number of risks becomes more meaningful if we examine the nature or context of these factors and how they interact and 'add' together in impacting psychological wellbeing. The logistic regression analysis provided the estimated odds ratio that particular risk factors were likely to lead to social, emotional and behaviour difficulties.

The study also establishes the window of opportunity for young children's healthy development and prosocial behaviour, identifying such promotive factors as pupils' positive relationship with peers and with the classroom teacher, high self-esteem and high level of engagement in learning, and cohesive families with good income. Finally the report presents a portrait of healthy and resilient pupils, with decreasing difficulties and increasing prosocial behaviour as pupils move from the early to the junior primary school years. Such pupils have good self-esteem, self-efficacy and communication skills, have friends at school, are actively engaged in the learning process and making good progress, have good relationships with the teachers, peers, friends and family members, have parents who have high academic expectations for their children, come from families with good income, low conflict, good parenting strategies, and adequate family time and supervision. They attend classrooms with active pupil participation and collaboration in learning, and schools where pupils are well behaved and prosocial.

The report makes various recommendations how to close the window of vulnerability as early as possible in children's lives, while keeping the window of opportunity open at the same time, by equipping the young child with the requisite knowledge, beliefs and skills to help them overcome the odds, building supportive and prosocial peer cultures, and creating caring and responsive classrooms, schools and families which address children's social, emotional and cognitive needs. The study underlined the key role of proximal processes in

impacting the pupils' behaviour, particularly relational processes taking place in the family and the classroom.

*Dr. Carmel Cefai is the Director of the Euro Centre for Educational Resilience at the University of Malta, and Founding Co-chair ENSEC*

### **Research on sleep duration, sleep quality and educational engagement.**

#### **Please can you help?**

The 24/7 society is with us, there can be no doubt about that. Anyone who spends any time on public transport cannot help but notice the numbers of people who use the brief respite from the constant daily grind as an opportunity to catch up on missed sleep. This phenomenon is also visible in less obvious places, such as large public and professional meetings, and in libraries, classrooms and lecture halls. Teachers in Hong Kong, for example, often complain about this as a classroom management issue. And it doesn't only affect students. Teachers too describe difficulties in coping with increased workloads associated with educational reforms that always seem to result in additional work which has to be crammed into already overcrowded days. This begs the question: what are the consequences of increased sleep disturbance and deprivation, that seem to accompany social, economic and technological development throughout the world, for quality of life? In particular, what are the effects of these problems on educational the engagement and social-emotional functioning of young people?

With these questions in mind I have obtained a grant to carry out a study on this topic in Hong Kong and the UK. The field work will project begin in April and will address the following questions:

- What is the relationship between self-reported sleep quality and duration on assessed academic performance and social-emotional and behavioural status of secondary school students in Hong Kong and England?
- What are Hong Kong based and England based teachers' perceptions of the extent and impact of student sleepiness in relation to educational and social engagement?
- What are Hong Kong based and England based teachers' experience of sleep quality and duration and the impact of these on their professional and personal functioning?
- What are the habits and practices which impact on participants' sleep quality?

#### **Background**

There is widespread international concern about the effects of sleep deprivation and sleep disturbance among adolescents. Studies have found that Japanese and Korean adolescents are among the most severely sleep deprived teenagers in the world. Whilst evidence suggests that western adolescents are less sleep deprived than their Far Eastern counterparts, studies point to some 25.7% of western European students, aged 15 to 18, experiencing sleep problems (Ohayon et al, 2000). A recent study of Hong Kong adolescents found the prevalence of sleep disturbance among a sample of 12-19 year olds (n=1629) to be 19.1% (Chung et al, 2008).

The negative impact of sleep deprivation on cognitive performance has been demonstrated in a number of studies which have measured the effects on specific cognitive functions, (such as executive functions essential for problem solving and creative thinking (Killgore et al, 2008) and educational performance (Dewald et al, 2010). Other studies have found that sleep deprivation affects social-emotional functioning, such as aggression and bullying (O'Brien et al, 2011) the exercise of emotional intelligence (Killgore, et al, 2008), the prevalence of suicidal ideation and suicide (Fitzgerald et al, 2011; Liu & Buysse, 2006) and delinquency (Clinkinbeard, 2011).

Whilst some attention has been given to the educational impact of sleep deprivation of student performance in schools, relatively little attention has been given to the impact of the possible effects of sleep deprivation of teachers' functioning in the school and classroom, and the possible effects of this interacting with student sleep deprivation. This topic becomes significant when we consider recent concerns that have been aired concerning the heavy workload which teachers in many countries have experienced in the light of increasing pressure from government educational reforms which are focused on improving the competitiveness of national work forces. For example, the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union (2011) recently reported on a teacher survey they conducted with 300 secondary teachers who were engaged in the implementation of the New Secondary Curriculum and School Based Assessment system, stating that teachers were 'overwhelmed with workload'. Yeung and Liu (2007), on the other hand, point to the deleterious effects of increased workload flowing from reforms to the early years curriculum on teachers' psychological wellbeing. These concerns are also reflected in the perceptions of newly qualified teachers (Lam & Yan, 2011). There is a similar situation in the UK, with teaching being widely regarded as 'one of the most stressful occupations in the country' (Hill, 2008), and with sleep disturbance being cited consistently as one of the main accompaniments to teacher stress (Wilson, 2002).

### **How You can Help**

Please share with me any observations or information that you may have on these issues with me. Feel free to comment in any way you like, though you might like to consider the following questions:

- How important an issue is this?
- Do you have any personal experience of sleep disturbance and deprivation and its effects?
- Have you observed the effects of this in others?
- What do you consider to be some of the main influences on this situation?
- Are there any particular features of your local setting which may impact on this issue?
- What do you think can be done to address this issue?

Please send your responses to me at [cooper@ied.edu.hk](mailto:cooper@ied.edu.hk)

*Professor Paul Cooper is Chair Professor of Special Education, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Founding Co-Chair, ENSEC.*

*References for this paper are obtainable from Paul.*

## FORTHCOMING CONFERENCE

### **From individual to collective responsibility: the social determinants of mental health**

This conference is taking place from 14-16 June 2012 in Split, Croatia and its theme is "". It will cover the following areas:

- Meeting the basic needs of children and youth as an investment in the future
- Changing the attitude of employers towards people with mental health problems
- A framework for the establishment of strong and supportive networks
- The role of volunteering in establishing networks in rural and remote areas
- The human rights aspect of the access to quality community-based services
- Deinstitutionalisation and the UN
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- The role of the media in changing people's attitudes towards mental health issues
- Solidarity between generations in the mental health field - Round Table debate

Contact Yves Brand at Mental Health Europe at [yves.brand@mhe-sme.org](mailto:yves.brand@mhe-sme.org).

## NEW BOOKS

*Cowie, H. (2012) From Birth to Sixteen: Children's Health, Social, Emotional and Linguistic Development*, London: Routledge.

ISBN 13:978-0-415-60265-5(hbk)

ISBN 13:978-0-415-60266-2(pbk)

ISBN 13:978-0-203-12635-6(ebk)

<http://www.routledge.com/cw/cowie/> (companion website)

This book outlines children's physical, social, emotional and language development from infancy through to adolescence. In both its practical application of research and its contribution to the assessment of child development, this text is intended to be essential reading for those studying, or indeed practising, child development in the context of nursing, play work, youth work, play therapy, early years education, teaching, social work and occupational therapy. This innovative text is intended to be accessible and engaging, with case studies, tables, and references to relevant studies making links to professional practice throughout. Designed to fit with the requirements of the UK's Common Assessment Framework, it presents developmental models for the years from birth to sixteen under each of the following themes:

- children's rights and responsibilities
- relationships in the family
- relationships in day care, at school and with the peer group
- language and communication
- children and the media.

- health issues in childhood and adolescence
- emotional well-being and resilience

The text appreciates the diversity of ways in which children develop, taking into account gender, ethnicity, social background and disability, and values children's resilience in conditions of adversity. From the foundations of the subject through to its application in practice, it aims to support child development courses and beyond. A dedicated companion website offers additional teaching and learning resources for students and lecturers, including an interactive timeline, further case studies and extensive self-assessment material. <http://www.routledge.com/cw/cowie/>

Helen is co chair of ENSEC

**Shute, R.H., Slee, P.T. and Dix, K.L (2011) (editors) *Mental Health and Wellbeing: Educational Perspectives***

Flinders Centre for Student Wellbeing and Prevention of Violence

Adelaide: Shannon Research Press.

ISBN: 978-1-920736-43-9.

<http://www.shannonresearch.com.au/>

The 27 chapters in this book offer a range of perspectives about mental health and wellbeing from academics, practitioners and policy makers, with backgrounds as diverse as education, psychology, medicine, public health, Indigenous affairs and screen production. The book has an International scope, with contributors from Australia, Greece, Hong Kong, Japan, Lebanon, Malta, Spain and the United Kingdom. Although there is a strong focus on the social and emotional aspects of wellbeing, the links between cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual spheres of wellbeing are well acknowledged across the chapters of the book. Most contributors focus on school settings, although not exclusively. Each chapter is structured so that key issues, educational implications and issues for the future are clearly expounded. The chapters are organised into sections including, Promoting Social and Emotional Wellbeing; School Bullying – A threat to Wellbeing; A focus on Teachers; A Relationships Perspective; The role of Teaching and Learning; Crossing Boundaries; and Portraits of Practice. The book ends with an editorial chapter that highlights recurring themes and considers these in light of the research literature and recent world events. This book will be of interest to novice and experienced researchers, practitioners and policy makers concerned with mental health and wellbeing in educational settings.

A number of authors in this book are members of ENSEC