



# European Network for Social and Emotional Competence

## Newsletter

Newsletter Issue 34, June 2026



## 10th ENSEC Conference

ENSEC invites you at the 10<sup>th</sup> ENSEC, 9-11 September 2026, Porto, Portugal

Social and Emotional Learning in a fast-changing world

10<sup>th</sup> ENSEC Conference • PORTO • 9-11 Sep. • 2026

Join us in Porto, Portugal!

Save the date!

## **10th ENSEC Conference – Call for Proposals**

The 10th ENSEC Conference invites researchers, educators, practitioners, policymakers, and professionals from across the world to share innovative research, inspiring practices, and transformative ideas in the field of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).

Join us in Porto, Portugal, from 9–11 September 2026 for an international meeting dedicated to advancing social and emotional competence, resilience, inclusion, well-being, and educational innovation.

### **We welcome proposals in the following thematic areas:**

- SEL and educational policy development and consultation
- SEL, well-being, and mental health in schools
- SEL and inclusion
- SEL, interculturality, and sustainable development
- SEL and technology
- Resilience and trauma
- Teacher training in SEL
- Assessment in SEL

### **Proposal formats include:**

- Oral Presentations
- Poster Presentations
- Symposia
- Workshops

### **Important Dates**

Proposal Submission Deadline: 30 April 2026

Proposal Evaluation Results: 15 May 2026

Early Registration Deadline: 31 May 2026

We warmly encourage ENSEC members and colleagues worldwide to contribute to this vibrant exchange of ideas, experiences, and collaborative opportunities. Together, we can continue strengthening the global impact of SEL research, policy, and practice.



## Message from the members

### **ThrivingSchools: A Systemic, Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Well-being**

Thriving Schools is a European project (Topic: ERASMUS-EDU-2024-POL-EXP-SCHOOL) that promotes mental health and well-being in schools through a systemic approach. Grounded in Positive Psychology, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and the Whole School Approach, the project aims to enhance teachers' well-being and self-efficacy, improve school climate, and support students' social-emotional development. Implemented across four European countries (Greece, Cyprus, Italy, and Romania), the project combines training, coaching, and school-wide action planning with a rigorous mixed-methods research design to evaluate its impact on teachers, students, and school communities. Thriving Schools is a collaboration between the International Hellenic University, the Institute of Development, CARDET (Center for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology), the National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest – Pitesti University Center, IȘJ Argeș (Inspectoratul Școlar Județean Argeș, Romania), the University of Milano-Bicocca (Department of Human Sciences for Education), and the Directorate of Primary Education of Western Thessaloniki. For more information, please check on our website: <https://thrivingschools.eu/>. For the Italian team you can contact: [guido.veronese@unimib.it](mailto:guido.veronese@unimib.it); [chiara.fiscione@unimib.it](mailto:chiara.fiscione@unimib.it); [ilaria.grazzani@unimib.it](mailto:ilaria.grazzani@unimib.it).

PAPERS (the authors belong to ENSEC)

- A narrative review regarding innovative studies aimed at testing the effectiveness of programs to promote social and emotional competence of young children attending nursery and preschool settings:

Schapira, R. & Grazzani, I. (2025). Shared book reading and promoting social and emotional competences in educational settings: A narrative review. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 16:1622536.

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1622536>

-The first paper showing - through direct measures - the effectiveness of the PROMEHS Program on improving preschoolers' emotion comprehension: Grazzani I., Cavioni V. (2026).

The impact of the PROMEHS program on preschoolers social and emotional competencies: Evidence from direct measures. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*. 41:6.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-025-01050-5>

## **Empowering Practitioners, Transforming Lives: The HappyLIFE Emotional Wellbeing Toolkit in Action**

What if the most powerful thing you could offer the people you work with is not advice, not a programme, not a curriculum, but a safe place? A place where they feel truly seen, where real conversations become possible, and where the conditions for genuine change can take root. That is what the HappyLIFE Emotional Wellbeing Toolkit offers. Once you experience it, you will understand why practitioners who have used it describe it as transformative.

Whether you work with children, young people, adults, families, or communities, the challenges are often the same. People struggle to name what they feel. Conflict goes unresolved. Relationships break down. And the capacity for empathy, critical thinking, resilience, and a growth mindset, the very foundations of a fulfilling life, remains underdeveloped, not because people do not want to grow, but because no one has given them the tools or the space to do so. At the HappyLIFE Foundation, we have spent over 25 years developing practical, evidence-informed tools to address this need.

For Joanna and Julian, a married couple and the founders of HappyLIFE (Voluntary Foundation), it felt like a calling. A calling to bridge the gap between where people are and where they could be. A calling to create connection where there is isolation, to build understanding where there is confusion, and to offer hope where there is helplessness. Around that calling, they brought together a dedicated team of professionals from all walks of life, people who wanted to use their talents, experience, and hearts to create something that truly makes a difference.

Our resources build emotional wellbeing from the inside out. They open conversations that might otherwise never take place. They foster empathy, strengthen critical thinking, nurture resilience, and cultivate a growth mindset, not through lectures or theory alone, but through lived experience. In this case, the process itself becomes the teacher. Participants do not just learn about emotional wellbeing; they experience it first hand, reflect on it deeply, and carry those insights into their own lives and the lives of those they serve.

The HappyLIFE Emotional Wellbeing Toolkit has been translated into 25 languages and is used across Europe and beyond. We have delivered this work in Malta and internationally, including projects in Holland, Poland, Switzerland, Albania, and Slovenia, as well as through an Erasmus project involving educators from six countries.

We cannot always measure every ripple of change, but we know this: if these tools help even one person live a happier, more connected life, the work has meaning and value. That belief guides everything we do. It is worth it.

In September, we are bringing this work to Porto. Join us on the morning of 9 September for our pre-conference workshop. Come ready to take part in a hands-on, experiential process that invites reflection, participation, and genuine connection. Come curious. Come open. The workshop is firmly grounded in evidence-based practice, and we promise you will leave with practical tools you can apply immediately and an experience that will stay with you long after the session ends.

We thank the ENSEC 2026 Organising Committee for their support and the opportunity. We look forward to meeting you in Porto.

**Joanna and Julian Sant Fournier**

Founders of Relationships Are Forever Foundation (HappyLIFE), Malta

Voluntary Organisation VO/0794

[www.happylife.org.mt](http://www.happylife.org.mt)



## Open Call for the next ENSEC conference

Where will the ENSEC community meet in 2029?

ENSEC invites expressions of interest from institutions and colleagues willing to organize the 11th ENSEC Conference in 2029. Hosting an ENSEC conference is an opportunity to showcase your institution, strengthen international collaboration, and contribute actively to the development of the SEL community worldwide.

If you are interested in organizing the next ENSEC conference, please contact the ENSEC Chairs by 20 August 2026.



*The newsletter is intended to be published quarterly (September, December, March, June). Members' news for the next issue should be sent by the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2026.*

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