

METHODOLOGICAL
MATERIAL

PS.smile GUIDE TO
Socio-emotional Capacity Building
in Primary Education





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METHODOLOGICAL MATERIAL

PS.SMILE GUIDE TO SOCIO-EMOTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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Preliminary Abbreviations' List

CASEL	Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
CULPEER	Cultural peer-to-peer learning project
EAP_SEL	European Assessment protocol for Children's SEL Skills
EBE-EUSMOSI	Evidence-based education: European strategic model for school inclusion
EU	European Union
GPS	Global Positioning System
HOF	How one Feel
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PYD	Positive Youth Development
RESCUR	Resilience Curriculum Project
SECs	Social and Emotional Competencies
SEL	Social and emotional learning
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHO	World Health Organization
WISE	Web-based Inquiry Science Environment

Introduction

The methodological guide proposed here is the main result from the intellectual output 1 of the Erasmus+ project PSsmile.

The inspiring sources and drivers in its development are numerous and of different origin. It is based on the national and transnational reports delivered in the intellectual outputs O1 where the analysis of current situation in partners' countries highlighted the experience, needs and challenges in the different countries. It is also based on main results from recent programs developed in the European countries on Social and Emotional Learning. But it also considers recent theoretical developments and directions, both in research studies and international guidelines

The project then aims to develop teachers' knowledge and ability to understand and incorporate the socio-emotional education in their school curricula, to develop children skills they need to integrate into society and be successful in any area of their future life.

In this methodological guide the readers find three main part. The first part addresses the theoretical foundations from both positive psychology, social-emotional intelligence and development as well as on inclusive community-based education and in recent goals proposed by the 2030 Agenda.

In the second part drivers guiding the actions are described both as standards and strategies supporting development of social and emotional competences choices, but also as teaching and learning strategies, with suggestions for an effective practice. Drivers guiding innovation and use of technology in educational context are also provided.

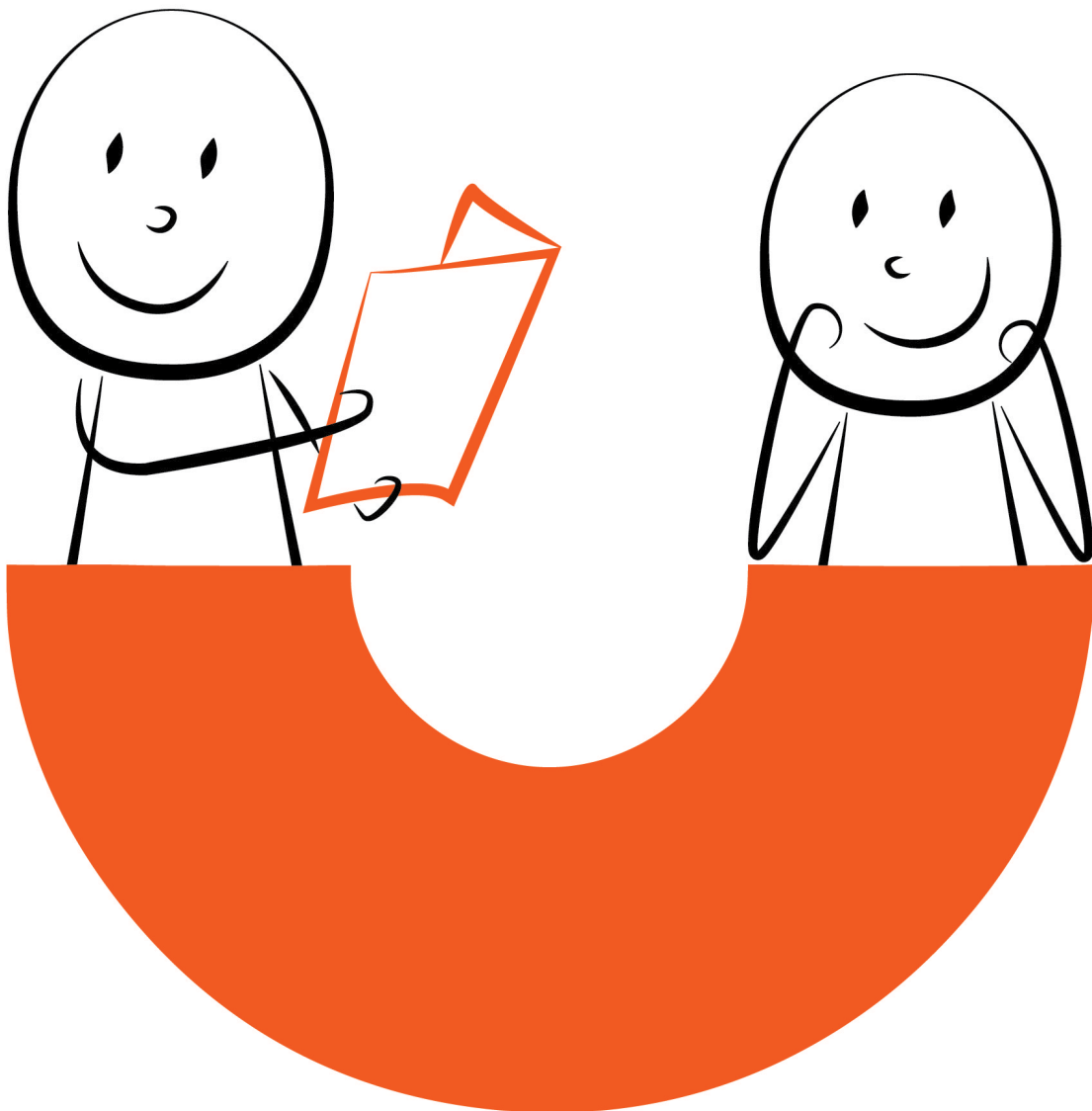
In all the topics addressed a specific references is made to "Our lenses" that is to the way we declined the principles, the recommendations and the suggestions from valuable sources in our project. And in this action, we had in mind the final main users of our guide, that is teachers and educators.

The third part of the guide describes how the knowledge and the principles described in part 1 and 2, inform the development of the curriculum framework, the goals of the activities, the tools developed to support teachers, and the learning assessment. To support and encourage teachers in deeply understanding the proposal and implementing the curriculum, full examples of activities are provided for the four domains in the framework proposed.

Finally, a space is given to tips suggested from pilots implemented in the partners countries.

PART I

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND



1.1 POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT:

a process of competence growth for building a bright future

Traditionally approaches to development and related research have focused for years on problems that children and young people may encounter while growing up, such as learning difficulties, antisocial conducts, affective disorders. The interest for positive resources and strengths is more recent. Known as Positive Youth Development (PYD), this perspective introduces a more affirmative and welcome vision of young people (Damon, 2004) and of their development. Accordingly, while acknowledging the existence of adversities and developmental challenges that may affect children in various ways, it resists conceiving of the developmental process mainly as an effort to overcome deficits and risk. In adopting this perspective, we begin with a vision of a fully able child eager to explore the world, gain competence, and acquire the capacity to contribute importantly to the world.

THE ROOTS

The emergence of what has come to be generally termed as PYD has many roots: the documented potential for systematic change, for plasticity, in the course of development shown by research in comparative psychology and evolutionary biology (e.g., Gottlieb, 1997); the possibility of optimizing individual and group change by altering bidirectional relations between individuals and their ecologies to capitalize on this plasticity from research in life-span developmental psychology (Baltes, Lindenberger, & Staudinger, 1998), bioecological developmental psychology (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), and life course sociology (Elder, 1998); the focus on primary prevention (i.e., developing strengths and building competencies) rather than treating later stages of pathology suggested by community psychology (Trickett, Barone, & Buchanan, 1996).

The foundations of the approach rely on three basic changes: the nature of the child; the interaction between the child and the community, and the moral growth (Damon, 2004).

The nature of the child

Every child has talents, strengths, and interests that offer the child potentials for a bright future.

A positive perspective of development recognizes that all children have strengths and that they will develop in positive ways when these strengths are aligned with resources for healthy development. It emphasizes the manifest potentialities rather than the supposed incapacities of young people including those with vulnerability, the most disadvantaged backgrounds, and troubled histories. It aims at understanding, educating, and engaging children in productive activities rather than at correcting, curing, or treating them for maladaptive tendencies or so-called disabilities.

The interaction with the community

The child is a full partner in the community-child relation, bearing a full share of rights and responsibilities.

This perspective is consciously holistic, considering the whole community in relation to the whole child rather than privileging any interaction or capacity.

For all children to bring themselves to the academic task of acquiring intellectual competencies, children need encouragement from parents, from other adults, from peers, indeed from all the important people in their lives. Multiple positive social influences are required for an optimal learning environment.

The moral growth

The PYD perspective sees the child as a full partner in the community-child relation, bearing a full share of rights and responsibilities.

The vision portrayed is that of a child able to explore the world, gain competence, and acquire the capacity to contribute importantly to the world. Acquiring a positive, responsible identity is seen as an essential part of their positive development as future citizens.

In summarising the main message of this perspective, PYD is an approach with strong defining assumptions about what is important to look at if we are to accurately capture the full potential of all young people to learn and thrive in the diverse settings where they live.

A GUIDING MODEL: THE PRACTICE OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

There is a general agreement that the model of PYD with the most extensive empirical support is the Five Cs Model (Figure 1).

Based on the Developmental System's Theory (Lerner, 2004; Overton, 2013), this model identifies in the competence, confidence, connection, caring/compassion, and character, the five core founding elements of a positive development (Heck & Subramaniam, 2009; Lerner et al., 2013).



Figure 1. Components of a positive development (Lerner, 2007)

Despite operational definitions of PYD's key constructs vary (Lerner et al., 2009), they share a common focus on building young people's positive personal competencies, social skills, and attitudes (i.e., asset development) through increased positive relationships, social supports, and opportunities that strengthen assets and help youth flourish within their environments.

According to the PYD perspective, when there is alignment between individual strengths and ecological assets that promote healthy development, the Five Cs positively evolve across the course of an individual's development. Additionally, when these 5C are expressed in synergy, individuals are more likely to develop trajectories to contribute to the growth of family, community, and civil society.

The positive trajectories over the life are the result of mutual relations between the person and the context features which support and promote the growth, and all this comprises benefits for both the person and social system.

RESEARCH STUDIES AND ACTIONS

Studies on PYD conducted by Lerner, Phelps and colleagues provide supporting evidence to this model (Lerner et al., 2005; Phelps et al., 2007, 2009): Preadolescents who showed high levels of PYD over time also showed poor outsourcing and insourcing behaviours; those who showed a decrease in the PYD levels were more likely to manifest more negative behaviours.

In addition, longitudinal data have shown that those who increased their PYD levels were more likely to manifest initially high internalization behaviours that decreased over time and maintained a low externalizing behaviour level. Additionally, Schmid and colleagues' work (2011) suggest that attitudes toward the future are important in the

development of positive outcomes. Hopeful future, for instance, seems to be a strong predictor of higher PYD scores and membership in the most favourable trajectories.

These results suggest that promoting PYD requires to focus on enhancing young people's strengths, establishing engaging and supportive contexts, and providing opportunities for bidirectional, constructive person-context interactions (Larson, 2000; Lerner, Phelps, Forman, & Bowers, 2009; Snyder & Flay, 2012). Interventions that are grounded in the PYD framework, therefore, must move beyond a problem-oriented focus and address protective and risk factors across family, peer, school, and community environments that affect the successful completion of youths' developmental tasks (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002)

The relevance of working with the context is testified by a systematic review of 25 PYD program evaluations that show PYD interventions operating in family, school, and community settings are effective in promoting positive development in a broad range of outcome domains (Catalano et al., 2002). For example, the authors found that PYD interventions were successful in improving young people's self-control, interpersonal skills, problem solving, the quality of their peer and adult relationships, commitment to schooling, and academic achievement.

Although these examples of asset development are the key outcomes of interest for PYD, some interventions have also decreased substance use, risk taking, and problem behaviours. PYD interventions, therefore, appear to foster positive outcomes and be able to protect against negative ones.

A variety of specific intervention strategies are compatible with the broad asset development and environmental enhancement orientation of PYD, such as service learning, mental health promotion, and social and emotional learning (SEL; Catalano et al., 2002; Tolan, Ross, Arkin, Godine, & Clark, 2016).

Like the goals of PYD, school based SEL involves implementing practices and policies that help students and adults acquire and apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enhance personal development, social relationships, ethical behaviours, and effective, productive work (Elias et al., 2015; Greenberg et al., 2003; Weissberg & O'Brien, 2004).

OUR LENSES: progressing in building a positive future

PYD studies have added both to our understanding of processes, the scope of change, and developmental benefits that intervention studies can make on young people's lives (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, & Osher, 2020; Wiium & Dimitrova, 2019). Some key points emerge, relevant for our project:

Need to focus on earlier ages. Previous work has focused on positive changes in adolescence, but the exploration on how PYD approach is showing benefits among younger children (Leman, Smith, Petersen, et al., 2017; Lerner, 2017), namely primary school children.

Relevance of an integrative approach. Recent studies incorporate not only children and youth responses but also their identity and culture, as they emerge in numerous cultural contexts (Wiium & Dimitrova, 2019). A challenge, within this broader perspective, is then to achieve a consolidation and integration of approaches to produce and drive growth in different contexts.

Attention to building the future. Adults of the future are expected to increasingly rely on their own internal resources and social networks to enter the larger societal systems, including work contexts. It is mandatory to act to support development of relevant attitudes and competencies during childhood, and during age range referring to primary education (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2020)

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1.2 | FROM EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS TO SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Emotions have a fundamental role at the evolutionary level, they serve to protect us, to recognize dangers and to defend us from them. It is necessary for the teacher and parent to build some basic understanding and managing their own reactions and social interactions with other people around them. knowledge on emotions and feelings in the first place. This basic understanding is necessary to be able to communicate and understand children in a better way, to understand what triggers their responses to external and internal stimuli and to be able to support them and guide them in a better way in the process of understanding and managing their own reactions and social interactions with other people around them.

THE ROOTS

We can refer to emotion as a multi-componential term, including subjective feeling, appraisals, reactions in the service of action preparation and expressions, action tendencies, and regulation (Scherer, 2005; Frijda, 2007). For example, an appraisal of unfairness will result in anger, whereas appraisals of outcome uncertainty and outcome motive inconsistency will combine to produce a feeling of fear (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017).

Although emotions and feelings are quite different, these terms are usually used interchangeably to explain how something, or someone makes us feel. However, it is better to think of emotions and feelings as closely related, but distinct instances – basically, they are two sides of the same coin.

When talking about emotions we must also consider their physiological side, the lower-level responses occurring in the subcortical regions of the brain (for example, the amygdala, which is part of the limbic system) (LaBar & Cabeza, 2006) and the neocortex (ventromedial prefrontal cortices, which deal with conscious thoughts, reasoning, and decision making) (Bechara, Damasio, & Damasio, 2000; Donoso, Collins, & Koechlin, 2014). Those responses create biochemical and electrical reactions in the body that alter its physical state. Emotions are physical and instinctive, instantly prompting bodily reactions to threat, reward, and everything in between. The bodily reactions can be measured objectively by physiological measurement and neuroimaging technology, the most common are pupil dilation, skin conductance, skin temperature, blood pressure, vasomotor, brain activity, and heart rate, and facial expressions.

While emotions are associated with body reactions that are activated through neurotransmitters and hormones, feelings are the conscious experience of emotional reactions. Originating in the neocortical regions of the brain, feelings are sparked by emotions and shaped by personal experiences, beliefs, memories, and thoughts that are linked to that particular emotion. Strictly speaking, a feeling is the side product of the brain perceiving an emotion and assigning a certain meaning to it (LeDoux, 2012).

A MODEL OF EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS

One of the first and most prominent researchers is Paul Ekman (2011) who has long supported the view that emotions are discrete, measurable, and physiologically distinct.

For many years Ekman, in his research on facial expression, examined six emotions he theorized to be universally recognized: anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness and surprise (Shiota & Michelle, 2016). His latest research and recent cross-cultural studies have expanded universal emotions and provided evidence for other 22 emotions: amusement, awe, contentment, desire, embarrassment, pain, relief, and sympathy in both facial and vocal expressions, boredom, confusion, interest, pride, and shame facial expressions, as well as contempt, interest, relief, and triumph vocal expressions (Cordaro, Sun, Keltner, Kamble, Huddar, McNeil, 2018)

Robert Plutchik, starting from Ekman's theory, developed the "wheel of emotions" (Figure 1), suggesting eight primary emotions grouped on a positive or negative basis: joy versus sadness; anger versus fear; trust versus disgust; and surprise versus anticipation (Plutchik, 2001). According to the author, basic emotions can change to form emotions, based on cultural conditioning or combined associations. Primary emotions could combine to form the entire spectrum of human emotional experience in a similar way to how primary colors combine. For example, anticipation and joy may combine to form Optimism, joy and trust may mix to form love, anger, and disgust to form contempt.

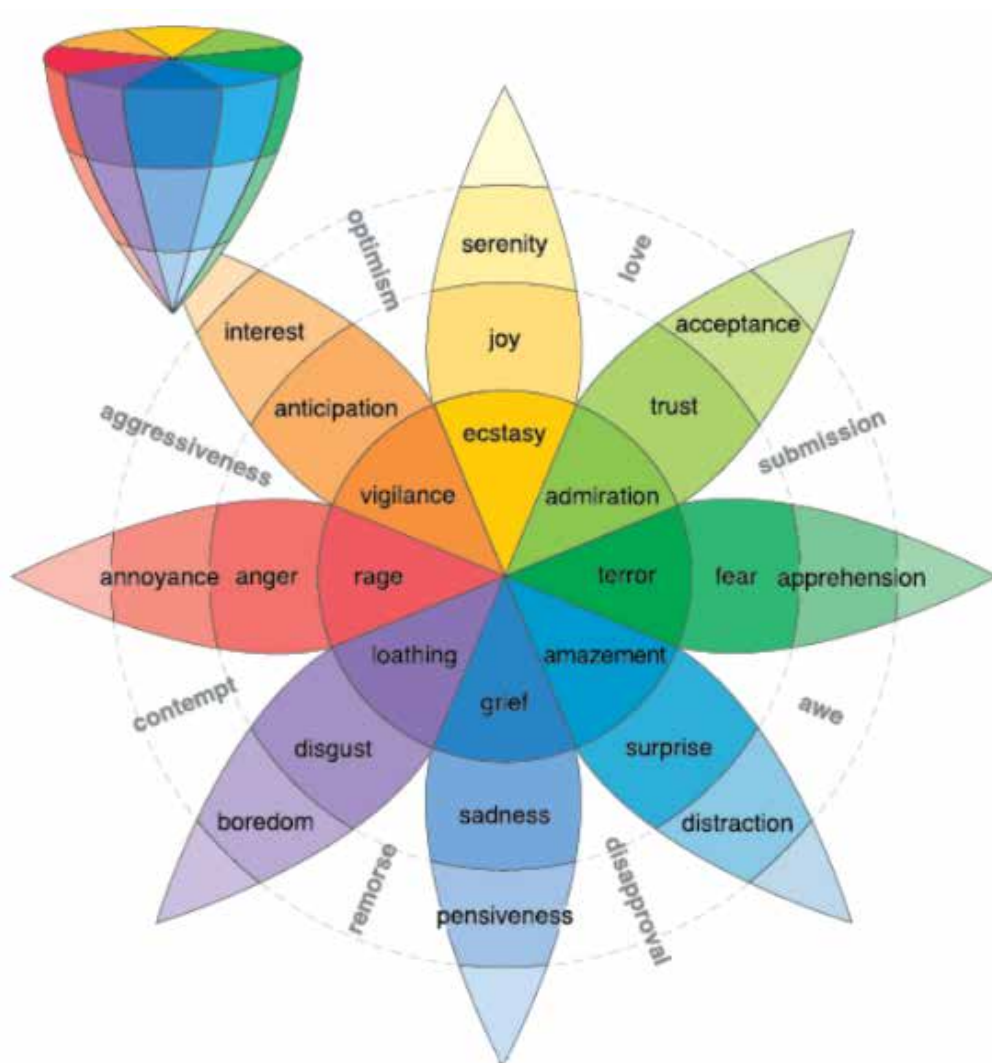


Figure 1. Wheel of emotion, Plutchik (2001)

...FROM EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TO SOCIAL and EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Altogether emotions are represented into the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI). It has been presented as a complex integrative concept and linked to personality traits that contribute to define the emotional intelligence itself. Furnam and Petrides' model proposes 15 specific personality traits. With this concept some authors refer to a broad ability, equivalent to verbal or numerical ability except that the content domain is emotions rather than words or numbers (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2016).

Already in the nineties Salovey and Mayer's (1990) expanded the concept of EI opening to motivation and a social component. They proposed a conceptualization of EI as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions".

Later studies came up with an umbrella description of EI (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017; Mayer et al., 2016) that includes:

- *Perceive emotions: the ability to make judgments of another person's emotional state based on verbal and nonverbal expressions (e.g., tone of voice, facial expression, and posture)*
- *Express emotions: the ability to accurately convey or express an emotional state so that it is easily recognized by others*
- *Understand emotions: knowledge of how emotions progress over time, how they link to situational factors, and how they blend*

- *Regulate own emotions: the ability to regulate one's own emotions, up-regulating positive emotions, and down-regulating negative ones (and occasionally vice versa)*
- *Regulate others' emotions: the ability to regulate other people's emotions, up-regulating positive emotions, and down-regulating negative emotions (and occasionally vice versa)*
- *Regulate Emotion attention: the ability to regulate one's attention toward or away from emotional information*

Within a real-life, practice-oriented, comprehensive framework based on research literature (Jones & Bailey, 2016; Jones & Bouffard, 2012), social and emotional skills are grouped into three conceptual categories:

- *Emotional processes include emotional knowledge and expression, emotional and behavioral regulation, and empathy.*
- *Social/interpersonal skills include understanding social cues, interpreting others' behaviors and perspective-taking, navigating social situations, interacting positively with peers and adults, and behaving in a prosocial manner.*
- *Cognitive regulation includes basic executive functions such as attention control, response inhibition, working memory, and cognitive flexibility or set shifting.*

The authors apply a developmental lens to this topic and suggest that skills are salient at different developmental moments, with early skills laying the foundation for those that come later. These developments emphasize the role of both a behavioral and an interpersonal component within the context of one's culture, neighborhood, and interpersonal situation where the interaction occurs (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017), strengthening the link between the emotional and social component of human functioning and their development, and at the same time, orienting the attention to 'skills'. And a broad definition of social and emotional skills describes them as 'the kind of skills involved in achieving goals, working with others, and managing emotions' (OECD, 2015).

...and Social Emotional competence

Social emotional competence refers to the ability to use social and emotional skills and knowledge to be resourceful, adapt to, respect, and work well with others, and take personal and collective responsibility. Furthermore, Social-Emotional competence involves an individual's ability to express, receive and manage emotions as well as their effectiveness in forming and maintaining relationships, and in general interactions.

Denham (2019) describes emotional competence into these core aspects:

- **emotional expressiveness:** *refers to specific emotions shown, with varying purposefulness, by children (e.g., happiness, sadness, anger, fear, and empathy/love), and the overall rate of such expressiveness, across emotions e.g., positive affect is important in the initiation and regulation of social exchanges; sharing positive affect may facilitate the formation of friendships, and render one more likable*
- **understanding of emotions:** *refers to children's knowledge about the emotions of themselves and others, including comprehension of basic emotions, their expressions, situations, causes, and consequences; and discernment of display rule usage, mixed emotions, and more complex emotions (e.g., guilt and shame) e.g., if a preschooler sees one peer bickering with another, and correctly deduces that the peer suddenly experiences sadness or fear rather than intensified anger, she may comfort her friend rather than retreat or enter the fray*
- **regulation of emotion and behavior:** *when its experience is too much or too little for themselves, or when its expression is too much or too little to fit with others' expectations, by using physical, cognitive, and/or behavioral strategies to dampen or amplify internal emotional experience and/or external emotional expression. e.g., play with peers is replete with conflict, this developmental focus demands emotion regulation; initiating, maintaining, and negotiating play, and earning acceptance, all require preschoolers to "keep the lid on"*

Since it is in the continuous interaction between individual and context that the child learns to regulate better their emotions and relate in a competent way (Denham, 2006), the mentioned emotional skills contribute to social competence (Denham, 1998; Saarni, 1999). Numerous research studies show that a relationship with a consistent, caring adult who actively promotes the development of these dimensions is essential for healthy social-emotional outcomes in young children. In general, positive emotion in the family is associated with children's own positive emotions, with the converse true for negative emotion or lack of emotion (Denham, 2019). For example, family positive expressiveness also promotes emotion knowledge, perhaps because positive feelings render children more open to learning and problem solving (Denham, 2019).

Social and emotional skills influence many important life outcomes, but also the development and use of cognitive skills in people.

Social support is essential to facilitate the development of socio-emotional skills, motivations, and behaviors. Socio-emotional competence does not reside in a child, it is based on the individual's ability to meet their own needs, while positive relationships (Krasnor & Denham, 2009).

OUR LENSES

The components of social-emotional competence do not evolve naturally. The course of social-emotional development—whether healthy or unhealthy—depends on the quality of relationships that a child has the possibility to experience. Actively promoting social-emotional competence requires, then, choices and activities that:

Adopt a perspective where both emotional and social are considered. In the continuous interaction between individual and context it is mandatory to encourage and reinforce social skills such as greeting others, taking turns, cooperation and resolving conflicts. Devoting a specific space to emotions and behaviors, to knowledge and action level, to awareness and management skills, it means creating the bases for these levels to interact and allow children to experience more well-being and maintain satisfying relationships with others.

Care for the significant adults, both teachers and parents. Creating an environment where adult take care of their Social and Emotional Wellbeing and in which children feel safe to express their emotions with the contribution of teachers and family is essential for healthy social-emotional outcomes in young children.”

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1.3 | SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING:

Basic choices

Social and emotional learning is the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors (Donoso, Collins, & Koechlin, 2014). It is the learning that unites all areas of human life: social, emotional, academic, cognitive, physical, etc. It begins in the first year of life and lasts a lifetime. School may play a specific role in its development.

THE ROOTS

For centuries, social and emotional learning has taken place in small groups such as the family, the neighborhood, and the classes. In these small groups, societies had the opportunity of transferring to children their social norms and values, skills, and habits of prosocial behaviour with low level of modification.

The fast and often unpredictable changes and complexities of actual societies highly impacted the status quo. Traditional values and vision are challenges so much that in some cases the liquid modernity is depicted as a crisis of social principles, ethical values, moral directions (LaBar & Cabeza, 2006). Difficulties in adult life could negatively impact the construction of a trust and healthy relationship with children and reduce the opportunity of learning adequate social and emotional skills. Positive child development is, in fact, threatened by unsupportive and unmeaningful relationships with adults. In extreme cases they could experience so negative feelings and emotions that they could arrive to think to have nothing to lose and take dramatic decisions.

What is highlighted by international warning is that mental health problems are arising: anxiety, depression, propensity to use addictive substances, breaking the rules, or criminal behavior. Providing opportunities for social and emotional learning is targeted as a crucial for coping with a variety of life situations since the consequences of social and emotional incompetence limit the future lives of young people. Consequently, adults and educators need to become aware of the importance of social and emotional learning and make all the efforts for providing environments where children and adolescents can experience care and acquire social and emotional competencies.

The school is of course a prominent place where social and emotional learning can be carried out. Educators are requested to be aware of children challenges, understand how complex it is growing in actual societies and become a protective factor that outweighs all these risks.

A GUIDING MODEL

Social and emotional development is a lifelong process, and its success is revealed by the expression of social and emotional competencies. This competence could be conceptualized as the ability to understand, manage, and express the social and emotional aspects of one's life in ways that enable the successful management of life tasks such as learning, forming relationships, solving everyday problems, and adapting to the complex demands of growth and development (LaBar & Cabeza, 2006).

The effort carried out in the United States by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), in the last twenty years has spread research on socioemotional learning (SEL) defined as a process through which children and adults effectively acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, to establish and achieve goals, to try and show empathy for others, to establish and maintain relationships positive, and to take decisions responsibly (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). More specifically, there are five skills that are expected to become an essential - and not ancillary - part of the school curriculum, starting from early ages, to ensure a positive growth of the new generations.

The provision proposed by CASEL is widely followed:

- **Self-Awareness** (Identifying and recognizing emotions; Accurate self-perception; Recognizing strengths, needs, and values; Self-efficacy; Spirituality);
- **Social Awareness** (Perspective taking; Empathy; Appreciating diversity; Respect for others);
- **Responsible Decision Making** (Problem identification and situation analysis; Problem solving; Evaluation and reflection; Personal, moral, and ethical responsibility);

- **Self-Management** (Impulse control and stress management; Self-motivation and discipline; Goal setting and organizational skills);
- **Relationship Management** (Communication, social engagement, and building relationships; Working cooperatively; Negotiation, refusal, and conflict management; Help seeking and providing).
- **A positive school climate** that allows the student to feel a constant care for his or her well-being. In the atmosphere of care and consideration students are motivated to transfer the knowledge gained in the classroom environment and apply it in a variety of activities and settings. Without feeling stressed and emotionally vulnerable, students feel free to demonstrate social and emotional competencies. Only by feeling safe students transfer the social and emotional competencies acquired during lessons outside the classroom and develop appropriate behavioral skills.
- **School - community collaboration.** The level of engagement in local community, the leaders of the community, determines whether the student will apply social and emotional competencies after school. Social and emotional learning outside school takes place only when the school, families and informal community leaders are united by the same philosophy of the importance of social and emotional learning.

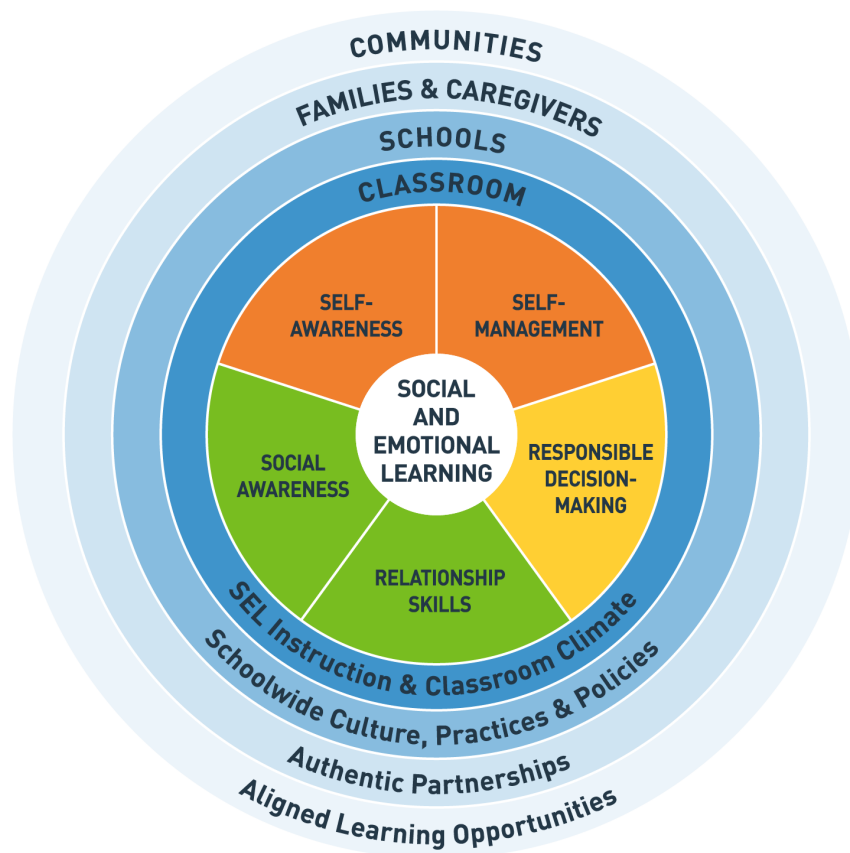


Figure 1. Wheel of emotion, Plutchik (2001)

The CASEL framework promotes a series of skills that allow the development of resources and strengths while preventing counterproductive behavior and unsatisfactory results (Damon, Lerner, Renninger, Sigel, 2006).

Socio-emotional competence is a fundamental factor to be considered in interventions conducted in schools, because it allows us to build in the direction of different aspects:

- **promotes positive, behavioral, and academic results that are important for healthy development;**
- **promotes positive, behavioral, and academic results that are important for healthy development;**
- **can be improved with feasible and cost-effective interventions;**
- **plays a critical role in the behavior change process.**

(Domitrovich, Durlak, Staley & Weissberg, 2017)

RESEARCH STUDIES AND ACTIONS

At the initiative of CASEL and other organizations, many social and emotional education programs have been developed for schools. The impact of these programs on student development and academic success has been analyzed according to the most rigorous research methodologies. Decades of research have revealed that effective social and emotional education programs cover three areas:

Specific social and emotional **learning curriculum delivered in the classroom**. Using student-centered teaching methodology specific SEL methods are developed and used. Students are involved in activities where they practice engagement, communication, collaboration, etc. They demonstrate social and emotional competencies in a classroom setting. These methods can be presented in two ways. The first way is to dedicate a lesson to the topic of developing social and emotional competencies. Learning time is allocated on a regular basis each week, during which students deepen and practice social and emotional competencies in the classroom. The second way is to integrate the content of social and emotional education and the content of the subject. In this case, students perform tasks that require subject knowledge, but successful completion of the task requires the demonstration of social and emotional competencies.

A positive school climate. That allows the student to feel a constant care for his or her well-being. In the atmosphere of care and consideration students are motivated to transfer the knowledge gained in the classroom environment and apply it in a variety of activities and settings. Without feeling stressed and emotionally vulnerable, students feel free to demonstrate social and emotional competencies. Only by feeling safe students transfer the social and emotional competencies acquired during lessons outside the classroom and develop appropriate behavioral skills.

School - community collaboration. The level of engagement in local community, the leaders of the community, determines whether the student will apply social and emotional competencies after school. Social and emotional learning outside school takes place only when the school, families and informal community leaders are united by the same philosophy of the importance of social and emotional learning.

Social and emotional learning for many students nowadays begins in the classroom and provides answers to many concerns. For children and adolescents, relationships are extremely important, so curricula focusing on how to build respectful and meaningful relationships are also very important. On the other hand, the end results of social and emotional learning are determined by the environment. Effective social and emotional learning occurs when the school and community environment supports and affirms the expression of the student's social and emotional competencies.

OUR LENSES

Social and emotional education includes coordinated efforts to teach children self-awareness, social cognition, the ability to make responsible decisions, self-management, and relationship management skills. It is closely related to the improvement of academic results and, together with the teaching methodology and the quality of school management, is one of the three key factors determining the success of a school.

Pillars in this process are then:

Providing opportunities for learning and fostering social and emotional skills. It has multiple benefits for actual and future life of children and their life contexts. The dialogue between personal aspects with social aspects emerge as crucial in thinking about training program that aim to foster a positive development.

Becoming more skilled in making good decision assumes a preventive meaning. It shows its relevance both in personal and social dimensions of actual and future life. Children should in fact be offered opportunities for learning skills that allow them to process the present with a glance to the future in a co-construction effort that joint schools as well as families.

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1.4 | BUILDING A POSITIVE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

Children learn in many different settings, including their families, schools, and communities, with each context playing an important role throughout childhood and adolescence.

The aim of the psSMILE project is to contribute to building emotionally stable, inclusive, and healthy communities where significant adults, namely parents and teachers, take care of their own socio-emotional functioning and support its development in children.

THE ROOTS

Research shows that children have considerable potential to develop social and emotional skills throughout life by their environment (Srivastava et al., 2003).

Most proximal environment as family, teachers and schools have numerous opportunities to provide learning environments where skills can be developed, enhanced, and reinforced through practice and daily experiences. Parents shape the child's first values, familiarize them with societal rules and norms of behavior, communication skills, and the world of feelings.

As Goleman argues (Goleman, 1996) family life is the first gym where children play and develop social-emotional skills. He asserts that here children learn how to know their feelings and what to do with them, as well as how other people will react to others' feelings and choices people make in expressing their feelings. Children come to school with different experiences and different levels of social and emotional skills development. Therefore, for some children it is easier to adapt to the new environment, to meet different requirements, to communicate with peers and to learn, and for other children it is more difficult. Thus, to enhance the development of social and emotional skills, parents should be involved in the educational process.

Researchers have been revealing the importance of parental involvement in children's learning, children showing relevant forms of social behavior (i.e., prosocial behavior refrain from forms of disruptive and antisocial behavior) are positively related to acceptance by peers, motivation to achievement and academic success (Wentzel, 2009) and the lack of these skills often hinders the educational process of students (Sheridan, Kim, Beretvas & Park, 2019).

We can teach the student how to manage anger, how to listen to another person, or how to express what you do not like. However, if the child does not have someone to share these skills with when he or she returns home and no one will support or encourage him or her, he or she will use old and not necessarily appropriate methods.

A GUIDING MODEL

Foundations to family-school-parent connections supporting children's learning and development can be found in Bronfenbrenner ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and later developments (Sheridan, Smith, Moorman, Beretvas & Park, 2019). Children's learning and development are influenced by events occurring within and across multiple systems and the interactions between them.

Microsystems such as family and classroom are most proximal to the child and have an immediate impact on development. The interactions, experience, and relationships between microsystems, such as communication between parents and teachers, represent the mesosystem. Influence on the child's development is also indirectly coming from the exosystem (e.g., events in the parents' workplace) and from the macrosystem (cultural norms and values) and from the effect of the chronosystem (interactions and influences change over time).

Direct influences (the home and school microsystems) and relational influences (the home-school mesosystem) can be seen as the basis of family-school interventions (Sheridan et al., 2019).

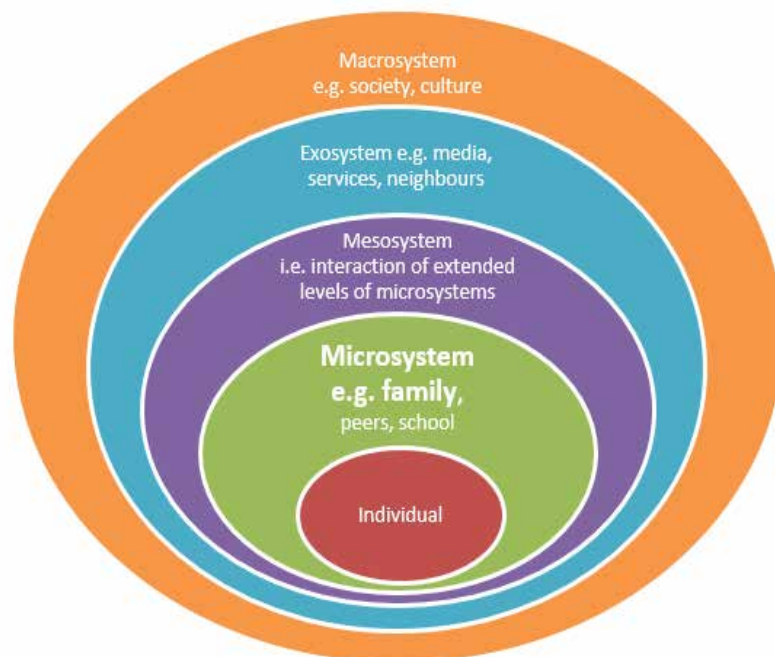


Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner ecological model (1979)

...Participation as a key concept for a positive educational community

Within the systems mentioned, the family-school partnership aims at promoting the participation of significant caregivers (e.g., parents, grandparents, stepparents, foster parents) in the educational process (Fishel & Ramirez, 2005). Participation can be characterized by the quality of the learning experience from the learner perspective, and therefore it must incorporate the views of the learners themselves (Ainscow, 2016). In addition, school-level process factors contribute facilitating or hindering a sense of belonging and a sense of autonomy to the learner, as well as a sense of a meaningful participation with peers of the same age.

For a full participation of all to the educational process, the involvement of both the meso (family, school, or classroom) and micro (individual learner) levels should be then considered (Ramberg & Watkins, 2020). Evidence exists, in fact, that positive parenting roles and practices support children's efforts in school and lead to academic achievement and social skills improvement (Sheridan, Witte, Holmes, Wu, Bhatia, Angell, 2017a; Smith, Reinke, Herman & Huang, 2019). An effective school-family partnership has been shown to be responsible for supporting and improving children's learning opportunities and experiences: when the development of these interactions is regularly part of the education process, benefits for children, teachers and families are achieved through positive changes in social skills and adaptive children's behaviors, through the use of effective strategies for teachers and through the positive and effective practices of parents to help their child succeed in school (Sheridan et al. 219).

Participation for all is also a core concept of inclusive education, that is the "struggle to ensure access to meaningful and equitable education". Besides contextualizing inclusive education within local systems and variable in terms of socio-historical context and school organization (Slee & Allan, 2001; Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013), recent studies underline other key factors responsible for creating an inclusive environment. Attitudes and beliefs of teachers, for instance, play a key role (Oluremi, 2015). It is worth mentioning here, in particular, their self-efficacy and agency that is their ability to be effective in impacting and changing the contexts where they work (Ferrari & Sgaramella, 2020).

CURRENT AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Working for assuring education to all, promoting participation, and fostering the inclusiveness of life contexts align with the recommendation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Published in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly it includes 17 global and interlinked goals (SDGs), to be a "model for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all". Goal 4 of the Education SDG promotes education for sustainable development (ESD).

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all Targets are:

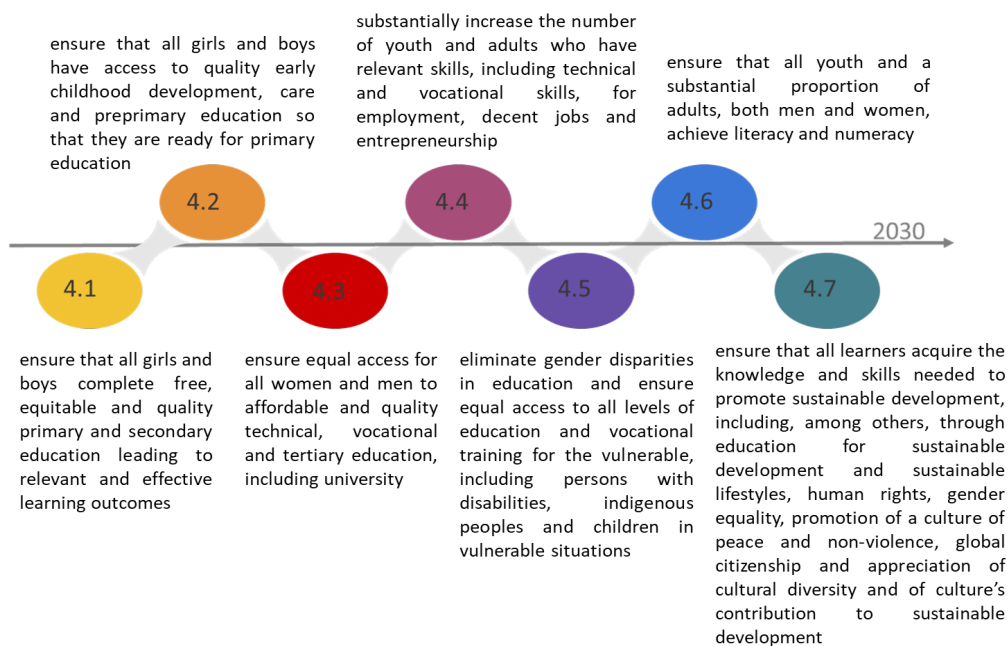


Figure 2: Sustainable development goals (SDGs) 2030, Colglazier, (2015)

Education plays, then a key role in addressing the development challenges promoted by the 2030 Agenda. This is particularly relevant for the most marginalized individuals when it comes to the right to quality basic education (Educate A Child October, EAC, 2016).

Social and emotional skills and educational priorities. Fostering social and emotional skills is also connected with equality for all. Equality in education means that personal or social circumstances (gender, ethnic origin, or family background) but also lack of opportunities for social and emotional skills development, should not obstacle the achievement of educational potential.

These skills, in fact, have the potential to compensate for the effects of socioeconomic disparities on academic performance (Steinmayr, Dinger & Spinath, 2012; Suárez-Álvarez, Fernández-Alonso & Muñiz, 2014; Tucker-Drob & Harden, 2012). By ensuring that all students, besides cognitive skills, develop socio-emotional skills, schools and education systems can be at the forefront of creating more inclusive communities and fair societies.

Agency within schools/ sustainable. Implementing the concept of inclusion in schools suggests that schools can learn and engage in collaborative problem solving, develop the capacity within the organization to support and apply generic problem-solving strategies. Schools, under this lens, are dynamic and fluid organizations with a common goal of sustaining each other by bringing people together to share experiences and find common ground as a basis for action (Shaw, 2016). The idea of working together to achieve common goals, building a collective agency that has greater strength in claiming the right to participation of marginalized people (Burns et al. 2015) and in which there is a greater sense of belonging.

OUR LENSES

When we promote social and emotional skills, we build skills that can offset the effects of differences, promote participation and social inclusion. Social and Emotional Capacity Building contributes to Social Inclusion, to the process that develops “along the domain of participation, connection and citizenship (Cordier, 2017).

Social and Emotional Capacity Building contributes to Social Inclusion by supporting:

- Participation conceived both as economic participation (employment, development of autonomous enterprises, education, and training) and social and spiritual participation.
 - Connection, that is the sense of belonging and relationships within social groups, feelings of attachment to family, friends, neighbors, and the wider community.
 - Citizenship, when inclusion extends to community engagement and access to community services.
- Teachers’ agency supports effective participation. Within this scenario leads them cultivate student learning

and improve education (student-centered strategies, differentiation, flexible grouping, curricular supports); collaborate with school personnel; foster family-school-community connections. These are concrete actions that represent a significant departure point from which teachers can use their agency to support effective participation for all students (Miller, Wilt, Allcock, Kurth, Morningstar & Ruppar, 2020).

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PART II

METHODOLOGICAL BACKGROUND



2.1

DRIVERS FOR EFFECTIVE ACTIONS:

Standards, Learning Principles and Strategies

To set up goals that were adequate for our age group of students, cross culturally adequate for our countries and aligned with the work done internationally about our topic we decided to take into consideration the suggestions from our national and the transnational reports and integrate them two sets of standards:

Learning standards present the goals and benchmarks for student learning in each subject area, they create uniformity and coherence in education by establishing and communicating priorities and providing a common language and structure for instruction within subject areas. They can be considered as an attempt to raise the educational level by providing examples of high-quality standards in different areas of the curriculum (Dusenbury, Zadrazil, Mart, Weissberg, 2011).

DRIVER 1: STANDARDS IN SE LEARNING AND FUTURE CONSTRUCTION

The Illinois SEL standard model (Illinois State Board of Education, 2006) and The Australian Blueprint for Career Development (Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development, and Youth Affairs, 2010) are two model that developed free-standing and comprehensive standards to supporting a positive development a clear priority.

The guiding principles: The Illinois SEL standard model

It is known that CASEL offers a general model of SEL competences to be implement. The work done until now under the Common Core State Standards initiative across 42 states have not produced a unique SEL standard model. As Dusenbury and colleagues highlight in their examination of the states' SEL standard (Dusenbury, Calin, Domitrovich, Weissberg, 2015), the Illinois is the first state that started to develop a model, and this is now considered one of the most comprehensive for K-12 (Illinois State Board of Education, 2006).

The Illinois SEL standard model is organized for each school grade, from pre-school to high school, in 3 main goals. For upper elementary each goal includes three to four standards for a total of 10 and two performance descriptors for each standard for a total of 20 (Figure 1).

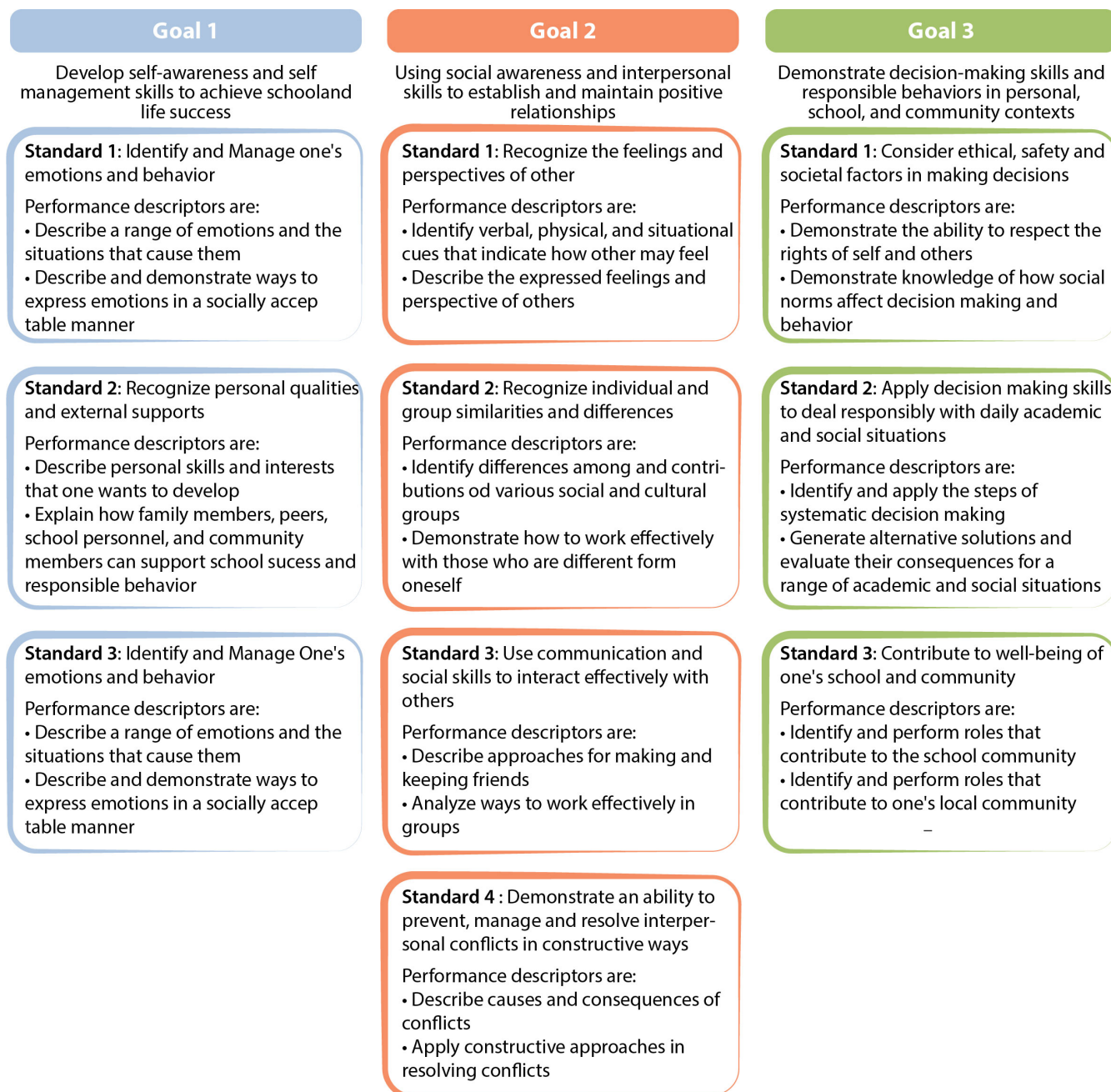


Figure 1. Upper elementary goals, Illinois State Board of Education (2006)

The guiding principles: Australian Blue Print for Career Development

A second set of standards we decided to refer to comes from the Australian blueprint, a document that includes a set of competences useful for supporting a positive development and readiness for working and adult life.

The competences are organized in three main areas:

Personal Management

Learning and Work Exploration

Life-Work Building/Career Building

Competences appropriate for elementary children are described at Level 1 (Figure 2). Competencies ascribed to Personal Management are particularly appropriate for the PSsmile goals. They, in fact, focus on the development of self-awareness and including understanding attributes and attitudes, building positive interpersonal relationships, understanding growth and change is part of human life.

COMPETENCIES	PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III	PHASE IV
Area A: Personal Management				
1 Build and maintain a positive self concept	1.1 Build a positive self concept while discovering its influence on yourself and others	1.2 Build a positive self concept and understand its influence on life, learning and work	1.3 Develop abilities to maintain a positive self concept	1.4 Improve abilities to maintain a positive self concept
2 Interact positively and effectively with others	2.1 Develop abilities for building positive relationships in life	2.2 Develop additional abilities for building positive relationships in life	2.3 Develop abilities for building positive relationships in life and work	2.4 Improve abilities for building positive relationships in life and work
3 Change and grow throughout life	3.1 Discover that change and growth are part of life	3.2 Learn to respond to change and growth	3.3 Learn to respond to change that affects your well-being	3.4 Develop strategies for responding positively to life and work changes

Figure 2. Level 1, Australian Blue Print for Career Development, Ministerial Council for Education (2010)

Learning standards are statements about what students should know and be able to do because of educational route. Both standard models develop an important framework for teaching and practice, with the aim to “integrate thought and feeling to live more effectively” (Australian Blue Print for Career Development, 2010) underlining how the integration between the different domains supports the opening towards future goals and choices.

DRIVER 2: TAKING DIVERSITY IN THE LEARNING CONTEXT

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can be defined as an educational approach or philosophy with the goal of meeting the needs of diversity in learning environments, by suggesting flexible instructional materials, techniques, and strategies that empower educators. By using UDL, educators are proactively designing a curriculum that responds to the needs of the greatest variety of users from the start, reducing the need for costly, time-consuming, and after-the-fact changes and adaptations (Rose & Gravel, 2010).

The guiding principles: Universal Design for Learning

To specify the three main principles, CAST (2018a) published the Universal design for learning (UDL) guidelines version 2.2. The scheme presented below, provides a visual representation of the guidelines, and explores each topic with additional details.



Figure 3: CAST (2018a). Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.2. Wakefield, MA

The guiding principles:

In accordance with CAST's (2018b) definition of the approach, three general principles guide the implementation of UDL:

The WHY of Learning *Providing Multiple Means of Engagemen*

Because learners differ markedly in the ways in which they can be engaged or motivated to learn, it is necessary to provide multiple options for engagement; some students might be attracted to novelty, while others might prefer a predictable routine and structure. Ensuring multiple means of engagement will neurologically activate affective networks that may enhance the outcome of the learning experience.

In our program...

using real-life situations to reflect and enter into the dialogue is one of the strategies to increment engagement. Involving caregivers from different contexts is another key-element for engagement of diversity in the PS SMILE program.

The WHAT of Learning *Providing Multiple Means of Representation*

Students may diverge in the ways they perceive and comprehend the information that is presented; some learners may have with sensory disabilities or preferences (e.g., blindness or deafness), others may present learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia), language or cultural differences. No type of representation is optimal for a particular kind of content and there is no ideal means of representation that suits all the students or all types of learning. It is essential to provide options for the representation of content, as this will neurologically activate recognition networks that will take the learning experience further.

In our program...

texts, comic strips, videos and music are some of the multiple ways used to represent and present the more relevant content, so that different needs, from different children, are addressed.

The HOW of Learning *Providing Multiple Means of Action Expression*

Most likely, different students in the classroom will differ in the ways they can navigate a learning environment and experience and express what they know. For example, some individuals may struggle with expressing themselves by speaking (e.g., someone with a motor speech problem), while others may have difficulty with written expression (e.g., a person with a language disorder). There is not a means of expression that will be optimal for all the learners. Providing diverse options for action and expression is essential and will activate neurological strategic networks with positive impact on learning.

In our program...

children are allowed to express their learning in dialogues, with written texts and even by creating diverse art projects. All these options for engagement facilitate the participation of the diversity of learners in the classroom.

When reflecting about the three principles of the UDL approach, it may be interesting to think of those as a GPS (meaning, the car's Global Positioning System) that supports the educator in understanding where the learner is and how to flexibly conduct him/her towards the intended destination. Rose and Gravel (2010) use this analogy and compare the learning process to a trip; at the end of the trip, the GPS narrator will announce: "You've arrived." Perhaps you did not take exactly the route you were expecting ... Perhaps you had to wander around for a while until you found the right way ... But in the end, you have reached the destination you intended, with just the right amount of support.

The UDL principles are supposed to be used in this flexible and dynamic way, supporting each learner with the appropriate strategies for him/her to find his/her way and co-create his/her learning.

... However, using the UDL approach does not mean that individual adaptations and pedagogical differentiation will no longer be needed or acceptable to better respond to the multiple needs of diverse learners; as will be explored further in the chapter, the UDL guidelines are a flexible way of implementing principles that will conduct to a more universal learning experience.

DRIVER 3: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING

When planning a learning experience, using the UDL guidelines "from the start" will be useful to address the needs of diverse learners more effectively in the group; no group is homogenous or has one optimal learning method, therefore it is unrealistic to plan the learning process thinking of an average student or having a norm as reference.

The guiding principles:

While implementing the learning activities, thinking more specifically about the strategies that will be used may be

important. Weinstein and Sumeracki (2018) suggest six strategies for effective learning, supported by the Cognitive Psychology.

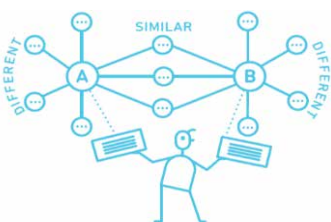
All the strategies below can be considered highly relevant because they have supporting evidence from cognitive psychology and from the science of learning, moreover they have converging evidence from controlled laboratory studies, classroom studies and practical use of the strategies in education (Pomerance, Greenberg & Walsh, 2016).

THE PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

As defined by the authors from The Learning Scientists Project (Weinstein & Sumeracki, 2018), these strategies are:

ELABORATION

Describing and explaining ideas with detail, establishing relationships between different ideas, and connecting them to own experiences and memories.



While using the PSsmile activities you can ...

... describe the skills and topics that are being explored thoroughly, making connection to specific situations from the student's or group's experiences.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

Making the effort of bringing the ideas and content learnt to mind, evoking specific information and details, and checking accuracy afterwards.

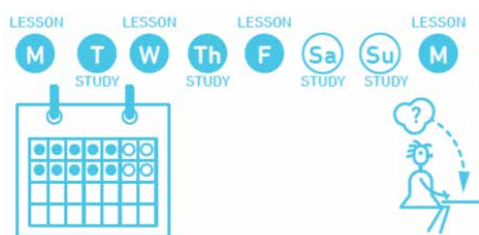


While using the PSsmile activities you can ...

... describe the skills and topics that are being explored thoroughly, making connection to specific situations from the student's or group's experiences.

SPACED PRACTICE

Planning the work spread along the time; it is better to work on a topic for five hours throughout a week, than to study it for five hours in the same day.



While using the PSsmile activities you can ...

... spread the exploration of a specific content (e.g., identifying own emotions) in time, instead of intensively going through the whole content in one long session.

CONCRETE EXAMPLES

Using specific and concrete examples to explain the more abstract and complex ideas, making connections between ideas and examples, and asking for the learners to share their own examples.

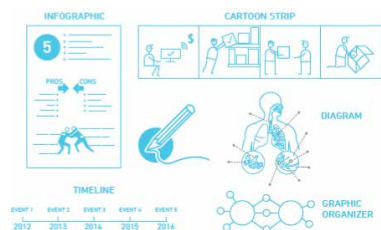


While using the PSsmile activities you can ...

... Use the examples suggested in the manual, ask the students to think of examples, look for more examples on the internet ...

DUAL CODING

Combining words (verbal information) with visuals, such as infographics, diagrams, graphic organizers, or timelines. It can also be done in the reverse way; look at a visual and explain the content in own words.



While using the PSsmile activities you can ...

... draw a facial expression to facilitate learning the names of different emotions

INTERLEAVING

Switching between topics while you explore contents, not studying the same idea for too long and going back over the ideas again to consolidate the learning and to make connections.



While using the PSsmile activities you can ...

... use activities from different domains when you implement the program, switching between topics.

The six key strategies are very flexible, meaning that they can be used in different ways and in diverse learning situations.

... However, this also means that they are not prescriptive, and it is not guaranteed that they will “always work.” A clear understanding of the strategies and how they work can help educators and learners; the first, will be able to use the strategies effectively in their classes and the later might learn to infuse them in their own study sessions and autonomous learning (Weinstein & Sumeracki, 2018).

OUR LENSES

Recent approaches show a comprehensive vision of school and life success that encompasses multiple domains of students' development, including social and emotional development (Pomerance, Greenberg & Walsh, 2016), and how goals and choices can change when we take into consideration different dimensions.

Social and Emotional Capacity Building contributes to Social Inclusion by supporting:

The importance of a future oriented and integrated approach is proposed in the Standard models presented, underlining the relevance of looking at present and future objectives and undertaking a positive approach, emphasizing the role of decision making in the domains and in all proposed activities.

Schools can be seen an ideal place to provide everyone learning activities designed to help them achieve their best leadership chances, happy, healthy, and independent lives, reach their unique career potential. (Patton & McMahon, 2015).

Standards are one element of a coordinated approach to effective education that includes: clear and appropriate educational goals and benchmarks, evidence-based curricula, and instruction to achieve those goals and professional development for teachers to support high-quality instruction (Dusenbury, Zadzil, Mart, Weissberg, 2011).

What is interesting and relevant to bring in PSsmile, is that each competence is described in terms of: knowledge to acquire, skills to apply in numerous situations, personalization and reflection as well as act and practice new knowledge and skills.

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2.2

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY IN SOCIO-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The numerous benefits of SEL (e.g., increased chance of academic and workplace success, reduced emotional distress, reduced risk of behavioral problems, improvement of scholastic environments, etc.) are starting to be recognized by more and more teachers (Fischer & Stacy, 2017; Bhalla, 2019). It may start from school, but it certainly does not end there!

Since it involves such a wide field of action, SEL curricula need new and specific tools to help them overcome those and other deficiencies. If applied wisely, technology can be a useful ally in designing those tools. Within this chapter, it will be shown some of the benefits that technology could provide to SEL, it will be presented some examples and some innovative solutions currently investigated, and it will be also briefly introduced the PSsmile Mobile App, its aim, functions, and components.

THE ROOTS and MAIN RESEARCH STUDIES AND ACTIONS

Stemmed from the recent interest and the recognition of the important role played by non-cognitive skills in the learning process of every age students (from preschool to higher education level), Socio-emotional Learning (SEL) curricula are now booming, as more and more countries are including social and emotional competencies (SECs) in their national education strategies (Cefai, Bartolo, Cavioni, Downes, 2018), and international organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Economic Forum (WEF), are promoting their diffusion (OECD, 2015; WEF, 2016).

Although at an initial stage, research addressing the relation between SEL and technologies are not missing. This manifests a new trend in the use of educational technologies (ed-tech), aimed at enlarging their scope of action, provide more support to teachers and innovate the scholastic experience.

Regarding SEL, a lucid image of the current state of the art is provided by Stern and colleagues who, after presenting an historical account of the reflections that accompanied technological development and the emergence of SEL studies, divided technologies adopted for SEL in three categories: Established, Emerging, Future (Stern, Harding, Holzer, Elbertson, 2015).

Established Technologies	Emerging Technologies	Future Technologies
Online supplementary trainings: - Webinars - Podcasts - Video conferencing	Online professional development: Certification/badging Onsite/Online	SEL-focused videogames and mobile apps
Online supplementary support materials: - Online libraries - Software support - Online discussion forums - Blogs/microblogs - Social media	Online learning communities for teachers: - Mobile learning management systems or collaboration platforms - Remote video coaching - Video libraries or podcasts (showcasing best practices) - Digital teacher manuals Online learning communities for students: - Mobile learning management systems or collaboration platforms - Video libraries or podcasts (showcasing SEL in action) Adaptive learning technology SEL-focused online games and mobile apps	Simulation centers (for teachers and students): - Avatars - Embodied agents - Multimodal sensors Online supplementary support materials: - Online libraries - Software support - Online discussion forums - Blogs/microblogs - Social media

Figure 1. Established, Emerging and Future technologies for SEL applications. Table adapted from Stern et al. (2015)

Morganti and colleagues further developed on this tripartite division focusing on the actual field of applications for these technologies (Morganti, Pascoletti, Signorelli, 2016). They found 4 possible applications for the SEL domain:

• Teachers training

Teachers often struggle to find space in overcrowded curricula, lesson plans and scarce time, for them introducing specific training and including SEL in their classes may become a real challenge. Managing social and emotional skills for a teacher plays a key role in creating a safe and supportive class environment, setting the tone of the classroom through developing relationships with and among students, providing clear expectations of behavior and goals of learning, encouraging prosocial behaviors and being a good model of respectful and positive communication (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). For this reason, today's ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) can provide a big help in delivering fast and easily accessible courses. There are numerous examples of SEL courses provided through webinars, video training, synchronous/asynchronous lessons, online resources, and many other tools. PSsmile's e-learning course can be regarded as an instance of the above cited possibilities.

• Support of didactical implementation of SEL activities at school

According to Morganti and colleagues, the CASEL's curriculum "RULER" provides an interesting example of technological support for the implementation of SEL activities at school, as it offers a web-based learning platform aimed to support and establish a community of teachers interested in the adoption of SEL (Morganti et al., 2016).

Going through the “RULER” portal, teachers start by attending an introductory training and, after that, they are continuously supported by their trainers during the implementation of SEL’s activities, providing valuable feedback both to the teachers and to the trainers themselves. In this way, technology can also help overcome the shared challenges across existing curricula, such as support for out session learning, parental engagement, and feedback for the curricula developers (Slovak, Bahrach, Fitzpatrick, 2015). Another interesting way in which technologies can foster the inclusion of SEL into scholastic activities is by incorporating in the same tool the teaching of “foundational skills” (e.g., literacy, science, mathematics, etc.) and SECs (WEF, 2016). One good example could be the Web-based Inquiry Science Environment (WISE -<https://wiseeducation.org/>), an online multidisciplinary framework which provides customizable curricula and includes the development of SECs, while enabling students to conduct science experiments.

• Promotion of pupils’ (and parents) SECs outside schools

Other challenges sometimes evidenced in SEL’s curricula is their hard applicability in real contexts (Slovak et al., 2015). What is perceived is that SEL programs are more focused on knowledge transfer instead of skills’ development. Socio-emotional exercises outside of school hours could be of great help and they could be provided by videogames and mobile apps. For instance, on the mobile stores, there are several examples of apps and games designed to teach self-management exercises (Gillespie, 2018). However, most of these applications do not cover the whole range of SEL categories (self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, responsible decision making) and leave outside parents, who, as we have seen before, need to be more included in the activities and educated about SEL and SECs together with students and teachers. PSsmile Mobile App aims exactly to face this issue.

• Assessment of SECs

The last field of application regards the assessment of the competencies acquired by students or other trainees. There are already some examples of protocols and guidelines on how to evaluate socio-emotional skills (EAP-SEL and How one Feel [HOF]) and their transfer from physical to digital format bears the potential to spread them further and speed up the same evaluation process by automatizing it.

The World Economic Forum’s report (WEF), in 2016, included those cutting-edge technologies that might play an important role for SEL in the next future. They are the following: Wearable devices, Leading-edge apps, Virtual reality, Advanced analytics and machine learning, Affective computing.

PSSMILE MOBILE APP

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned deficiencies and the possibilities offered by the enormous versatility of technological devices, within the European project Socio-emotional Capacity Building in Primary Education (PSsmile – 2019-1-LT01-KA201-060710)

The app is freely available on the project’s website (www.PSsmile.emundus.eu) and it provides 5 weeks program aimed to develop the target socio-emotional skills.

www.PSsmile.emundus.eu

The app has been designed to deliver adult training, both for parents and teachers, who have their own dedicated sections and activities, since they play different and specific roles in children’s socio-emotional development. The app includes a great deal of daily exercises, a thorough and accurate explanation of the theoretical background on which SEL is based, infographics showing the progress made by the users, and a questionnaire for feedback, providing relevant data for research and the opportunity to improve the app, making it more suitable for the users. The activities included in the app are divided into two categories: basic and advanced. This division has been adopted to escort the learner through the entire course, building his/her socio-emotional skills in an incremental way, one that adapts itself to the needs of the trainee.

OUR LENSES

Technology can provide substantial support for the implementation and improvement of SEL, both in and outside school.

PSsmile Mobile App as an opportunity to apply the most used technologies within SEL, portraying a viable solution for those problems that have been often indicated in SEL curricula. In conclusion, what emerges is a vivid picture of numerous opportunities to overcome those issues that have been restraining the appropriate implementation and diffusion of SEL, providing glimpses of the forthcoming changes that might shape education in the next future.

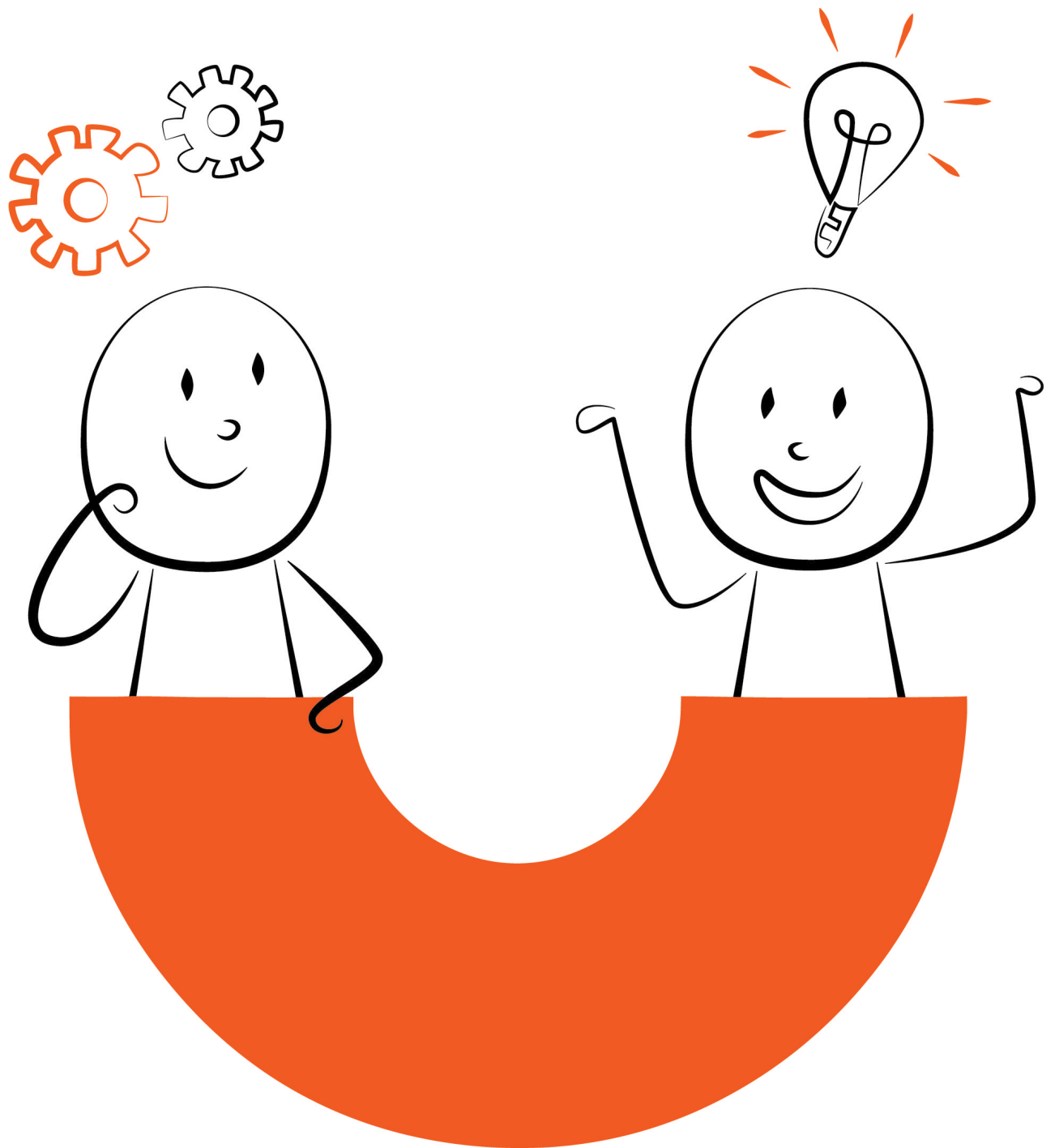
Psmile Mobile App impact in raising adults' awareness of SEL's importance. Disseminating SEL's theoretical knowledge and developing SECs among parents and teachers, these two important groups will be no more neglected as in the past in international projects and (inter)national initiatives (Ferrari, Sgaramella, Drășutê, 2020).

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PART III

THE CURRICULUM

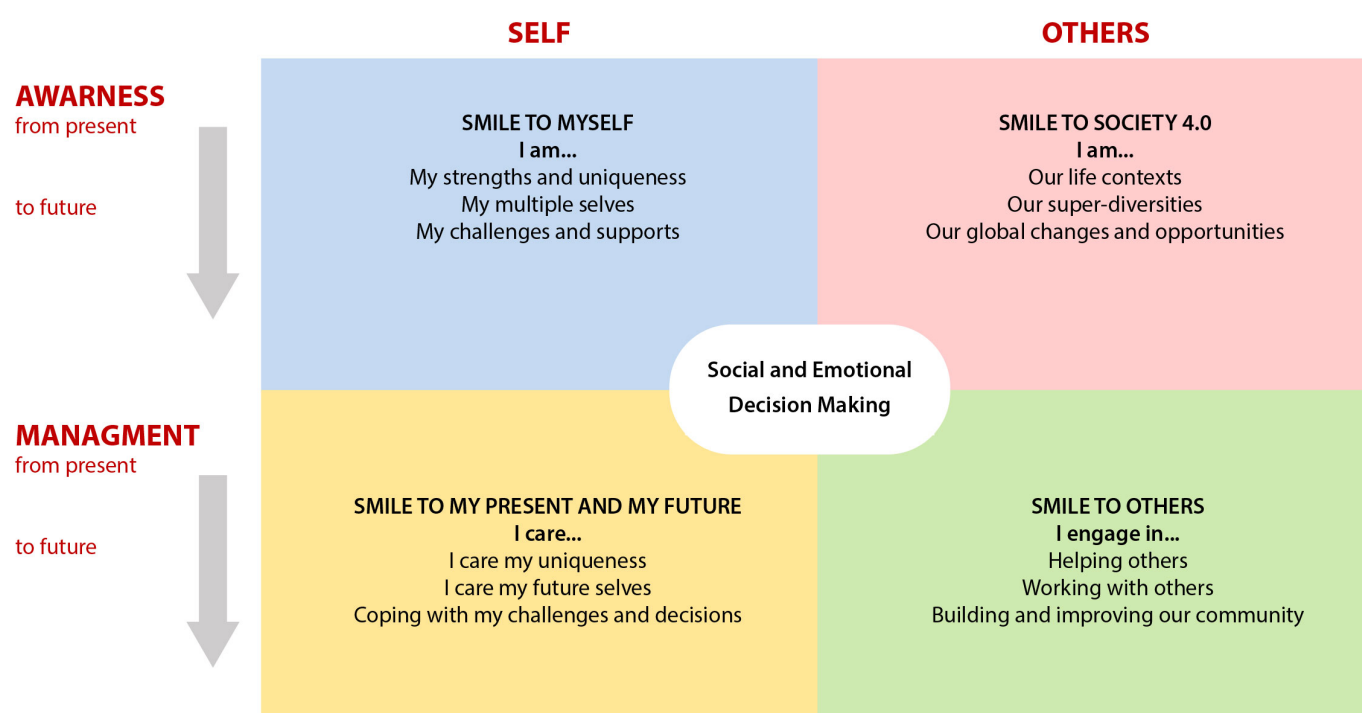


3.1 | CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

DEFINING THE DOMAINS WITH OUR LENSES

The curriculum goals have been developed considering main suggestions coming from international research studies and theoretical approaches both in contents and in methods adopted. Figure 1 provides a summary visual representation of the domains considered.

In more details, for each domain we can identify the focus in the activities:



AWARENESS-SELF: SMILE TO MYSELF

Goals of Didactical activities: to promote knowledge of characteristics and strengths of each child as physical aspects, preferences, interests, dreams, hope, optimism, courage that are included in a positive mindset and the role they play in people life.

Focus: Exploring and developing multiple ideas and perception of multidimensional (social and emotional) components of Selves and focusing on possible consequences and paths for self-development as well as contextual resources as parents, teachers, friends.

MANAGEMENT-SELF: SMILE TO MY PRESENT AND MY FUTURE

Goals of Didactical activities: to promote the development of social and emotional strategies each child could use to presents himself/herself and to describe positive aspects to others.

Focus: learning of strategies on how to find new ways of thinking and feeling about themselves; planning strategies for achieving goals and decision making that improve personal growing and capabilities.

AWARENESS-SOCIETY: SMILE TO SOCIETY 4.0

Goals of Didactical activities: to promote a higher knowledge of both social and emotional aspects in current contexts and environments children attend to and that could be relevant in their adult life.

Focus: knowing multiple aspects, both emotional and cognitive, that contribute to define people in the context and environments and how all this influence thinking and feelings; identifying changes and opportunities that our global times consider as relevant to become citizen of the world.

MANAGEMENT OTHERS: SMILE TO OTHERS

Goals of Didactical activities: to develop social and emotional skills to promote positive relations with others in multiple contexts to actively participate in current and future inclusive communities; developing knowledge on sustainable goals.

Focus: exploring and developing reciprocity of ways of thinking, feeling, and interacting, finding productive strategies to be in and to actively contributing growing of diverse contexts.

The PSsmile choice

As shown in the visual representation, both the emotional and the social component are considered in each domain. Decision making and time perspective are proposed as overarching components, involved both in the development of awareness as well as in management of everyday life situation, both for Self and Others domain.

THE INNOVATIVE FOCUS

It is well-known that the complexities of current times represent threats to well-being and participation and requires the assumption and integration of multiple visions, as well as the involvement of people in life contexts (Fernandez, 2020). In the curricula and activities developed the attention is still strongly oriented to the management of current life while a limited attention is given to future, to direct SE capacities towards the construction of future, to face the challenges that children will almost certainly encounter.

A specific attention is given in all the activities proposed across the four domains on introducing activities where a time perspective view, more specifically a future oriented time perspective, is adopted guiding the decision-making process.

Time perspective (TP) refers to the way each person perceives and interprets experience, according to different time frames (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999), and a sense of continuity between the time frames: past, present, and future (Savickas, 1997).

As regards Future Time Perspective (FTP), definitions in the literature describe it as the ability to imagine one's future, the anticipation of future goals, including learning and academic achievements (Peetsma, 2000; Peetsma, & van der Veen, 2011).

Future Time Perspective encompasses personal cognitions, feelings, and behavioural intentions with respect to the future: cognitions refer to thoughts about future outcomes and goals that are valued; feelings correspond to the emotions (e.g., hope and fear) that are associated with the future; finally, behavioural intentions relate to individual's plans to engage in behaviours to realize future goals.

Future Time Perspective and School Life. Higher Future Time Orientation is associated with various behaviours that promote success in school, such as dedication and commitment to academic tasks; delay of gratification or resistance to distraction and use of self-regulation strategies (Bembenutty & Karabenick, 2004; de Bilde, Vansteenkiste, & Lens, 2011; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Gutierrez-Braojos et al., 2014; Peetsma, Hascher, & van der Veen, 2005; Peetsma & van der Veen, 2011; Simons, Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Lacante, 2004).

Future Time Perspective and Decision Making. The ability to think about the future has been associated with many health behaviours, whereas to be blind to the future has been considered a predictor of a variety of maladaptive behaviours (Chen & Vazsonyi, 2011; Joreman et al., 2012). Having a prospective mindset and future orientation, seems to support the development of a safe decision-making, from the early ages and during adolescence (Daniel et al., 2013; Cheng, et al., 2012; Lin & Epstein, 2014). Moreover, FTP is central not only for education and health: in the domain of work, researchers have linked FTP to effective career decision making and planning, and to career-choice satisfaction.

The PSsmile choice

By orienting to the future and establishing specific goals in different life domains, by anticipating attitudes and behaviour to undertake in future situations, individuals of different ages develop motivation and decision-making skills and are driven to achieve those goals.

Being oriented to the future is therefore a fundamental concept to consider in educational context for supporting the way children build their lives, especially in complex times such as the ones we are currently living and those that future adolescents and adults will navigate through. Being oriented to the future is therefore a fundamental concept to consider in educational context for supporting the way children build their lives, especially in complex times such as the ones we are currently living and those that future adolescents and adults will navigate through.

DEVELOPING GOALS

Focus on:

SMILE TO MYSELF

I am... ■ My strengths and uniqueness ■ My multiple selves ■ My challenges and supports

General goals

Develop knowledge and awareness about strengths (feelings, emotions, personal resources) that promote taking care of positive future selves.

Focus on possible consequences and paths, as well as contextual resources, for development of Self.

Know and explore the nature of emotions and feelings and how they characterize myself in my daily life situations (at school, at home etc.):

- know what emotions and feelings are (i.e., be able to describe their characteristics, differentiate them) and recognize my emotions and feeling (i.e., naming them)
- know emotions and feelings impact reasoning and behaviors, explore my emotions and feelings and how I express them (i.e., describe what I feel, how I behave)
- know what generates emotions and feelings from a biological perspective and recognize what happens to me (i.e., adrenalin, fear, tremble)
- know what generates emotions and feelings from a biological perspective and recognize what happens to me (i.e., adrenalin, fear, tremble)
- discover my uniqueness in interpreting and expressing emotions and feelings (i.e., each person is unique and has specific way of interpreting them) as components of my positive mindset

Explore and understand my positive personal resources

- know what personal positive resources (i.e., optimism, hope, resilience, time perspective) are and recognize my personal resources (i.e., describe their characteristics, differentiate them, name them)
- know that personal positive resources impact reasoning and behaviors, explore my personal positive resources, what happen to me and how I express them (i.e., describe my optimism, what happens to me biologically, how I behave)
- discover my uniqueness in interpreting and expressing my personal positive resources as components of my positive mindset (i.e., describe them)

Discover that the positive mindset plays a role in my flourishing:

- know components of positive mindset (emotions, feelings, and personal resources) that characterize the concept of Me (i.e., a picture of me)
- recognize that a positive mindset reflects my strengths and resources I can count on in my daily life situations (i.e., a picture of my strengths in diverse situations, what I use and not use)
- identify components of a positive mindset that impact the development of my strengths (i.e., positive emotions and feelings contribute to developing my interests, my likes, and dislikes).

Progress in exploring my possible future Selves

- know a positive mindset plays a role in opening my mind and developing my possible future selves (i.e., optimism helps in finding new opportunities)
- identify components of a positive mindset I should take care of to build my future selves
- Identify supports I could count on to strengthen my future selves

Focus on:

SMILE TO MY PRESENT AND FUTURE

I care... ■ I care my uniqueness ■ I care my future selves ■ Coping with my challenges and decisions

General goals

Promote knowledge on ways to manage emotions and feelings each child could experience; Learn and use strategies on how to find new ways of thinking and feeling about themselves; Plan decision making and actions to achieve goals that improve personal capabilities and Self development.

Explore how to manage emotions and feelings

- Know the importance of regulating emotions and strategies for managing them
- Identify and explore ways to manage my emotions and feelings in my daily life situations (what I can do when I am sad, happy etc.)
- Practice and reflect on strategies to react positively to my challenging emotions in my daily life situations

Discover and practice ways to foster my positive resources

- Know the importance of taking care of my positive resources
- Identify and practice strategies for fostering my positive resources in challenging situations and failure (i.e., asking for help, take time to think)
- Reflect on and evaluate strategies useful in fostering my positive resources

Explore and understand how to take care of my personal strengths (i.e., at school, at home etc.):

- Identify what are the strengths (interest, likes) I wish to foster and cultivate, and explore the benefits
- Explore and practice strategies to take care of my strengths and cope with possible challenges (i.e., short term goals, school transitions, etc.
- Reflect and evaluate on strategies and practice in taking care of my strengths

Progress in building possible future Selves

- Explore the concepts of change and growth as part of life and foresee my possible future selves
- Discover that change and growth can impact negatively and positively my goals achievement and happiness (i.e., worries, stress, excitement) and explore ways for managing them (i.e., coping)
- Learn how to set my personal and educational goals and monitor progress on achieving short-term personal goals and possible selves
- Identify resources and supports I could count on to strengthen my future goals

Focus on:

SMILE TO SOCIETY 4.0

I am... ■ My life contexts ■ Our super-diversities ■ Our globam changes and opportunities

General goals

Promote a higher knowledge of social and emotional aspects and personal resources in contexts and environments children attend to;

Identify changes and opportunities occurring in small and large communities and focus on personal contribution to construct a positive community.

Explore the nature of emotions and feelings as positive mindset in people I know in my life context

- identify my life contexts and people with whom I spend my time (people I meet, request they do, what we do together etc.),
- identify attitudes and emotions people I know might experience in our life contexts,
- recognize that each of us feels and respond in different ways,
- understand how emotions are influenced by personal behavior and by others behavior

Explore and understand personal resources as positive social mindset in my life context

- know positive resources relevant in the relationship with others (i.e., curiosity, empathy, solidarity, flexibility, etc.), describe and differentiate them
- know how personal positive resources impact reasoning and behaviors (i.e. analyze positive and negative stories)
- explore cultural diversities in expressing emotions, feelings, and positive mindset in social context
- recognize and appreciate that each person has multiple identities and uniqueness

Discover changes and challenges occurring in small and large communities and understand the impact of positive mindset

- recognize changes occurring in small and large communities, emotions, and feelings they may activate in persons experiencing diversities (social inequalities, climate changes, unexpected health issues)
- identify the potential challenges and opportunity hidden in these changes to positive mindset and relationships (i.e., discover unexpected skills),
- identify and acknowledge that my behavior can change the people mindset (i.e., how people feel) and contribute to the wellbeing of people living in my community.

Progress in exploring positive future communities

- understand and acknowledge the value of diversities and the hidden opportunities in cultural diversity for enriching ourselves and grow
- discover and reflect on situations in which people using their positive mindset transformed a challenge into an opportunity
- identify different lenses to look at possible future challenges in my community
- identify possible resources and supports, as well as persons, I could count on to reach these goals

Focus on:

SMILE TO OTHERS

I engage in... ■ Helping Others ■ Working with Others ■ Building and improving my community with others

General goals

Promote positive relations with others and pro-social behaviors in diverse life contexts

Find and practice strategies effective in supporting growth and development in diverse contexts; Plan decisions and actions to achieve goals that promote active participation in current and future positive communities

Explore and understand positive relationships with others in diverse situations

- Recognize and value positive relationships and the personal needs they fulfill
- Identify emotions and feelings that contribute to a positive climate in group activities
- examine and practice behaviors that promote a friendly and cooperative climate in group activities (i.e., in the classroom, at home in other life contexts)
- identify challenges to positive relationships in everyday life contexts

Know pro-social behaviors and explore ways to work with others

- Explore ways to react positively in challenging interpersonal situations in the classroom, at home and in other life contexts
- Explore positive mindset strategies to adopt in challenging situations
- Know what prosocial behaviours are and practice them in real life situations
- Acknowledge the role of positive mindset in pro-social behaviors

Explore and understand how to take care of my social strengths (i.e., at school, at home etc.):

- Identify what are the pro-social behaviors I wish to foster and cultivate, and explore the gain now and in the future (i.e., what you do today impact your future)
- Explore strategies useful to take care of my prosocial skills and cope with possible challenges (i.e., short term goals, school transitions, etc.)
- Learn how to use pro-social behaviors in my everyday life
- Share and practice effective strategies with my peers to learn from each other

Progress in building future positive communities

- Explore common goals and their characteristics
- Identify how common goals impact me and my future as a community member and foresee their value
- Learn how to set and contribute to common goals and monitor progress on achieving them
- Recognize resources and supports, as well as persons, I could count on to reach these goals and plan actions to strengthen them in the future

IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES

The analysis carried out by the partners underlined the relevance of making some choices at different levels in developing both the activities, the methodological materials, and the innovative resources.

Procedural choices:

- Focus on both Social as well as on Emotional skills with a similar emphasis
- Focus not only on awareness development but also on management on everyday life situations in school and other life contexts
- Devote a specific attention to diversities, vulnerabilities and learning difficulties
- Use a language in line with recent theoretical approaches and enhancing strengths and uniqueness
- Adopt an ecologically relevant approach together with innovative methodologies, with attention to their flexible and personalized use
- Devote space to development of SE skills in teachers and parents
- Train the trainers to make teachers involvement more effective
- Consider resources already developed and in line with the choices of the PSsmile project

Theoretical and methodological choices

- Assuming person centered approach. This means that in the reflection processes activated with the activities proposed we will focus first on people (me, the others) than on skills in themselves and on the agentic role that a person (child or adult) can undertake in their life contexts.
 - Adopting a double lenses approach. This means that as suggested by recent approaches we will devote our attention to a positive development of the individual and at the same time to a positive and sustainable community development (Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Hart et al., 2014).
- a. Orientation towards current and future life.** This means that we will orient the activities proposed toward both current everyday lives, as well as to medium and long-term future time intervals (personal, work, and social future goals).
- b. A self-community binary.** This means that we will consider that an informed and engaged citizen is vital to both the individual positive development and wellbeing as well as to the health of societies.

GRIDS: guiding and supporting teachers

To guide and support teachers in the implementation of the activities, two grids have been developed. The first (Grid A) focuses on the content, the structure of the activity; provides information on the instructions and on the underlying choices; suggests strategies and questions for guiding and monitoring learning.

A. How to develop an activity in detail

DOMAIN	
Name of the activity	
Goals	
Duration and Frequency	
Age of participants	
Persons involved	
Contexts (where at school or at home)	
Structure of the activity	

Short description and instructions	
UDL manipulations means of representation, of expression....	
Activity tool/exercise description	
Materials used	
Fact sheets (grids, activity sheets ...)	
Activities to share with parents or family members	
Learning_strategies	
Learning_performance descriptors	
Learning assessment_reflexive questions	
Learning_assessment tools	
Activity Linked to school subject	

The second grid (Grid B) is meant to support the teacher in checking the activity developed and specifically verify how the guiding principles guided the development of the activity. With some final questions, the grid also can support the teachers in further personalization of the actions proposed.

B. How to check for the guiding principles implementation

DOMAIN	Name of the activity
Goals	
Where and how the activity	
Shows Orientation toward future goals	
Pays attention to diversities (cultural, vulnerabilities and learning difficulties)	
Enhances strengths and uniqueness	
Focuses on the agentic role (me, others) than on skills	

Consider cultural diversity in coding and expressing emotions and positive behaviour	
Embraces a 'decision making' step	
Includes Multiple Means of Engagement, of representation, of Action and Expression (see use of ICT)	
<i>Are there connections with other activities and domains?</i>	
<i>Are there possible manipulations of the activity to move with the same activity to another domain?</i>	
<i>What kind of manipulations can be introduced to make the activity suitable for older students?</i>	
<i>What kind of manipulations can be introduced to make the activity suitable for younger students?</i>	

3.2 | THE CURRICULUM IN PRACTICE

For each domain, the name of all the activities is provided together with goals.

Domain 1 SMILE TO MYSELF

Nº	NAME OF ACTIVITY	Goals
1.	Write about your feelings	Know and explore the nature of emotions and feelings and how they characterize myself in my daily life situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To correctly label my own emotions and recognize what happens to me To explore my emotions and feelings and how I express them Recognize that emotions are temporary and can and will change
2.	Tree of Emotions	Know and explore the nature of emotions and feelings and how they characterize myself in my daily life situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that emotions have physical effects Label and describe a set of emotions in terms of physical changes, feelings, thoughts, behavior Explore how my thoughts and my behaviors impact my emotions and feelings in my everyday life
3.	Look at myself	Know and explore how emotion and feeling characterize myself and impact reasoning and behaviors in my daily life situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote children's understanding of how emotions arise from contextual situations To recognize that people display the same emotion differently
4.	My strengths, my uniqueness	Discover uniqueness in interpreting and expressing emotions and feelings as components of my positive mindset: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognize my positive personal strengths and uniqueness To give a definition of uniqueness and strengths To recognize the advantage of heterogeneity
5.	Strength's chain	Discover my positive personal resources and strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore my strengths and resources I can count on in my daily life situations To build a picture of my strengths in diverse situations
6.	Let it out	Progress in exploring my positive mindset and take care of my strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify components of a positive mindset and how can plays a role in finding new opportunities To explore the strengths that I could take care of to develop my future selves
7.	Snap future me!	Identify components of positive mindset that characterize the concept of me now and me in my future: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify positive emotions, feelings, and personal resources that characterize my present To explore my possible future selves
8.	Feeling proud	Discover that the positive mindset plays a role in my flourishing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the emotion of feeling proud, be optimist, be hope, resilience, about own Look at myself accomplishments through someone's experience To reflect on how the experiences of others can guide me to explore new aspects or ways

Domain 2 **SMILE TO MY PRESENT AND MY FUTURE**

Nº	NAME OF ACTIVITY	Goals
1.	The emotion taxi	Identify and explore the importance of regulating emotions and feelings in my daily life situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognize emotion To understand the connection between emotion and behaviour To discover that the same emotion can match to different behaviours and the same behaviour can match different emotions.
2.	Tucker the turtle	Discover, practice, and reflect on strategies to react positively to my challenging emotions in my daily life situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognize that we can decide how to behave To learn a strategy to use when emotions prevail To identify many positive ways of acting in difficult situations
3.	Thought monsters	Reflect and practice strategies to take care of my strengths and cope with possible challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify negative thought patterns and behaviours To learn how can I switch from negative thought to positive thought and behaviour patterns
4.	Treasure chest	Discover and practice ways for fostering my positive resources in challenging situations and failure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify and practice strategies useful in fostering my positive resources To discover ways to better cope with a challenging situation that happens to me
5.	Snail, snake, or shark?	Explore the concepts of change, growth, and their impact on achieving my goals and building possible future selves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore different challenging situation, I can face (changes, worries, stress, excitement) To discover that different ways I act lead me to different results
6.	Super solutions!	Coping with my challenges and progress in building strategies to react positively to my challenging future Selves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn how to analyze the causes, hypothesize why the situation becomes problematic for me, how I can manipulate it to produce positive emotions To discover the steps, I could take when solving a problem. To identify resources and supports I could count on to strengthen my future goals
7.	Go-goals	Explore how to progress on achieving short-term personal goals and possible selves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To practice how to set my personal and educational goals To identify steps, resources, and supports I could count on to strengthen my future goals
8.	Super star rewards chart	Learn and practice how to monitor progress on achieving personal goals and cultivate my strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognize and practice strategies To monitor my coping strategies To identify a short-term goal to improve my possible selves

Domain 3 **SMILE TO SOCIETY 4.0**

Nº	NAME OF ACTIVITY	Goals
1.	How others smile	Explore emotions, attitudes and feelings people I know might experience in our life contexts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand how emotions are influenced by personal behavior and by others behavior To recognize how others feel in determined social contexts and understanding that each of us feels and respond in different ways
2.	Animal Theatre	Explore cultural diversities in expressing emotions, feelings, and positive mindset in social contexts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discover attitudes and emotions people I know might experience in our life contexts To recognize and appreciate that each person has multiple identities and uniqueness
3.	Wheel of my life contexts	Explore my life context and my attitudes and feelings that characterize them <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To describe the life contexts where we spend our time To understand how each life context impacts our life differently
4.	Where and with Who in the word...?	Identify social and emotional aspects in all my life contexts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the contexts in which we live, in terms of people with whom we spend our time To recognize and appreciate that each person has multiple identities and uniqueness
5.	Helping me, helping you	Discover changes and challenges occurring in small and large communities and understand the impact of positive mindset <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify emotions and feelings they may activate in persons experiencing diversities To explore that we can discover unexpected skills and potential opportunity hidden in these changes To understand that my behavior can change the people mindset and contribute to the wellbeing of people living in my community
6.	Service	Discover changes and challenges occurring in my small and understand the impact of positive mindset: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop ideas and actions that can be of service to others, also that help can be manifested in many different forms and despite the differences To put themselves in someone else's shoes and imagine how someone might feel or need To understand how being at the service of others can contribute to the common good
7.	Escape room	Explore positive resources and a positive social mindset in our life context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore and understand personal resources as positive social mindset in our context To identify positive and relevant resources (curiosity, flexibility, creativity). To know how personal positive resources impact reasoning and behaviors
8.	Goals for all of us!	Explore positive future communities and a positive social mindset in our life context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore different lenses to look at possible future challenges in our community To use their positive mindset and turn a challenge into an opportunity To know how personal positive resources impact our social contexts

Domain 4 **SMILE TO OTHERS**

Nº	NAME OF ACTIVITY	Goals
1.	Walk the Talk!	Identify and explore ways to react in challenging interpersonal situations with other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore and understand that different people have different opinions, emotions, and feelings To learn a way to better express our opinions by better understanding those of others To explore ways to react positively in challenging interpersonal situations in the classroom, at home, and in other life settings
2.	In MY/YOUR shoes	Identify and practice behaviors that promote an empathetic and positive climate in group activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore and identify emotions, feelings, thoughts, and experiences that help to understand those of others and to create a positive climate in everyday life contexts To practice sharing the same experiences and discussing our thoughts, emotions, and feelings To learn how sharing feelings, thoughts and experiences can facilitate a positive climate in our group;
3.	Positive Relationships	Explore and understand how to take care of my social strengths and progress in building future positive relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify the components of our positive relationships To recognize that people can be resources and supports in our daily life To explore forms of pro-social behavior to promote and cultivate our relationships
4.	Giving is Receiving	Learn a way to take care of my social strengths and practice pro-social behaviors in our everyday life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To propose prosocial actions to create a positive mindset in our environment To explore positive relationships with others through personal needs that we can fulfill To practice pro-social behaviors in our everyday life
5.	Blindfolded Leadership	Explore and practice behaviors that promote a cooperative climate in group activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore ways, we can collaborate in a problem-solving situation To recognize strategies that promote an empathic, friendly, and cooperative climate in group activities To identify how to improve our cooperation and contribute to common goals
6.	Memory Challenge	Identify and explore positive mindset strategies to adopt in challenging situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the benefits, we have when we work together To identify common goals and strategies in teamwork To learn how we can contribute to common goals
7.	<i>Por quatro cantitos de nada!</i>	Learn to establish and contribute to common goals, identify how they affect our future in the community and predict their value: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore positive mental strategies that we can adopt in difficult situations. To learn to collaborate with others and find a solution to a problem To learn how to find solutions together, try them out and monitor the result
8.	What makes a GOOD friend?	Explore useful strategies to take care of my prosocial skills and explore the gain now and in the future: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the positive relationships, we have with others To identify the strengths, we have in our friendships and take care of them To recognize the aspects, we would like to improve to become a “good friend”

3.3 | NAVIGATING THE CURRICULUM AND TRACKING LEARNING

Assessment of students' achievement is an inseparable part of education that influences students' motivation, confidence, further academic and career choices as well as well-being. To improve student achievement, which is an ultimate goal of educational systems, an integrated and dynamic assessment system should be applied. Both observation of students' behaviour and their direct involvement reflecting upon school experience and other everyday life contexts.

With a similar importance, to make assessment of individual and class progress, we will involve teachers proposing them tools that address children learning and involve themselves as active participant in the assessment process.

Finally, parents will be also involved to promote the participation in the process and assess the quality of the learning experience from the significant caregivers' perspective.

All tools are proposed to address the SE skills focus of the project, following the specific learning goals associated with the activities and project's guiding principles, that is attention to both decision making and future and adoption of UDL principles.

THE LEARNING PATH

Several actions, actively involving the diverse agents of change with qualitative and quantitative measures, are proposed at different steps in the learning path.

Before We Start Learning, assessment will involve both students, teachers, and family members. SES will be addressed together with individual strengths and in line with the projects the attitudes towards future and decision-making skills will be also measured.

For each activity A specific activity related focus will be adopted involving students with active participation and reflective questions. teachers with quiz, reflective questions, take home activity. family supporting home activities with their children.

Before we move to the next domain Self-evaluation notes will be proposed to teachers asking them to reflect on their implemented activities and adjust their new plans accordingly. Students will be involved answering to questions from a qualitative tool focused on future (A message for my future; The compass of the future, The magic lantern).

Before we move on. At the end of the curriculum learning assessment will again involve both students, teachers, and family members. SE Skills will be addressed as in the Before We Start Phase

Assessment in the preliminary phases of the project and at the end of the curriculum aims to describe the starting level of knowledge and experience and provide general feedback about the level of student achievement with reference to the defined curriculum standards and specific assessment criteria. Intermediate assessment and monitoring will help tracking their own progress, receive feedback on their progress. This will also help teachers monitor the progresses in learning and eventually adjust it to improve learning and stimulate student progress.

CONTENTS OF THE ASSESSMENT WITH THE ACTIVE AGENTS OF CHANGE

Assessment tools are then organized in separate sections:

SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENTS

The tools proposed are meant for students' self-assessment and are recommended to be used on a regular basis. Student self-assessment cards will help students monitor and assess their individual learning progress in developing their social and emotional skills.

"My Personal Learning Log" Self-Assessment Tasks (from the Learning to Be project)

The Modified version of this self-assessment tool for primary school children drawn from the Learning to Be project

is a less formal set of task sheets that children are asked to complete.

The questions and tasks included in both instruments are based on the 3 main SEL goals:

- Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success
- Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Demonstrate decision making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school and community contexts
- Use current experience to orient themselves toward future and building inclusive and sustainable future self and communities

The tasks are structured according to the educational objectives described in the SEL standards for learners 9–10-year-olds .

These self-assessment cards are designed not only to encourage the students to assess their learning individually, but also to support the teachers in implementing strategies of formative assessment.

Each student receives a new assessment card at the beginning of the domain.

Students are asked to fill-in their assessment cards. This could be done at the end of a lesson or during a special class meeting during the week.

At the end of each domain, the responsible class teacher collects all his/her students' assessment cards and writes feedback comments in the dedicated sections. After this, the teacher returns these sheets together with feedback notes back to the students.

At the end of the program, the students are asked to review all their sheets and identify their main areas of progress and major needs for future learning.

The future we want

This tool adapted from Saigh (1997) examines the individual's orientation towards his/her future. It consists of 8 items reflecting:

Future Interpersonal relationships, such as: "In the future I will have friends,"

Expectations for the future, such as: "I like to make plans for things I like to do."

The participant is asked to rate the extent to which he/she agrees with each item on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

My Positive Experiences at School

The Positive Experiences at School Scale (PEASS; Furlong, You, Renshaw, O'Malley & Rebelez; 2013) is a brief, self-report, developmentally appropriate assessment with subscales measuring four school-anchored positive-psychological traits that are linked with youth well-being and school engagement: gratitude, zest, optimism, persistence, and prosocial behavior. The composite score of the four PEASS subscales was hypothesized to represent student covitality.

The survey questions are proposed that ask students, like them, about what they think, feel, and do at school. They are asked to read each sentence and choose the response that tells how true the sentence is for them. Teachers will ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the student responses. Teachers are also encouraged to present the findings to the class and discuss how could make the activities more effective.

Your Opinion Matters

The survey, drawn from the Learning to Be project, is used to ask students about their feelings in class; active involvement; motivation; expectations from the teacher.

Children are asked to read the questions and express the level of agreement they experience.

TEACHERS

Two levels of analysis are considered in the learning assessment that involves teachers:

- **Classroom level** Assessment instruments and simple practices are used by teachers to assess the students' performance and changes in behavior and attitudes.
- **Teacher level** Tools are for self-assessment of their teaching practices as well as personal behavior and attitudes. The tools aim to help teachers reflect on their teaching and encourage professional development.

Class observation tool for teachers (from the Learning to Be project)

This tool was designed for teachers to be able to observe and assess each student in the classroom. This Tool is based on the five SEL Core Competencies and the main goals for social and emotional learning

The class observation sheet consists of 3 parts:

1. **Students' Social and Emotional Skills Observation Table.** This table includes a list of SEL categories to be observed in the students' behaviour during the lesson. Once a week the teacher is asked to make short notes for each student according to the different SEL categories
2. **Let's picture our classroom situation.** In this table, the teacher marks specific experiences or situations in which the students may be involved during the week and which affect the student's behaviour (e.g., negative experiences/situations: conflicts, bullying, disruptive behaviour; or positive experiences/situations: high student engagement, celebrations, class successes). Observing such experiences/situations will help the teacher to become better aware of what is happening in class and plan how to respond to these situations.
3. **Reflection on my practice.** This part is meant for the teacher to evaluate his/her teaching practices and their impact on the students, with the aim of developing professional competences related to a specific domain

School engagement: Psychological Sense of School Membership

The students' emotional engagement as indicated by their feelings about their school and about their relationships with teachers and peers was measured using items from the Psychological Sense of School Membership (PSSM; Goodenow, 1993; You, Ritchey, Furlong, Shochet, and Boman, 2011) tapping Caring relationships and Acceptance.

The items are scored on a four-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) and then summed to form a total score.

My school climate

My school climate points out the strengths of the school and brings attention to the challenges that need to be addressed. The items are scored on a four-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) and then summed to form a total score.

FAMILY

At the beginning and at the end of the program implementation, a family member is expected to be involved.

PSsmile in everyday life

A strength-focused competency-based framework consistent with the five CASEL competency domains is used, consistent with choices and content addressed in the Pssmile curriculum activities. The social-emotional skills represent the five competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision Making. It also includes a section devoted to future.

My school climate for parents

My school climate for parents points out the strengths of the school their children attend and brings their attention to the challenges that need to be addressed. The items are scored on a four-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) and then summed to form a total score.

Learning assessment summary Table

		Before we start	Moving to the next domain				Before We Move On
			smile to myself	Smile to my present and my future	Smile to society 4.0	Smile to others	
STUDENTS							
Social-Emotional Self-Assessment	My Personal Learning Log ” Self-Assessment Tasks”	x	Domain Specific Cards	Domain Specific Cards	Domain Specific Cards	Domain Specific Cards	x
Participants subjective experience	Your Opinion Matters	x					x
School experience	My Positive Experiences at School	x					x
TEACHERS							
Class observation	Students’ Social and Emotional Skills Observation Table	x		x		x	x
	Let’s picture our classroom situation		x	x	x	x	
	Reflecting on My Practice		x	x	x	x	
School	School emotional belonging	x					x
	My school climate	x					x
FAMILY							
Parents report of changes	My school climate	x					x
	My school climate	x					x

3.4 | FIDELITY IMPLEMENTATION

Monitoring fidelity during the design, development and evaluation of an intervention is a fundamental aspect that allows us to obtain information and formulate accurate interpretations regarding the fact that the effects attributed to the intervention are due to the intervention itself, rather than variability in the implementation of the intervention (Borrelli et al., 2005).

Fidelity to treatment has been defined as the degree to which the main components of an intervention are maintained as provided in the intervention protocol (Gearing et al., 2011; Allen, Linnan & Emmons, 2012).

As already shown in SEL interventions, high quality implementation can be associated with positive results, if a program lacks fidelity implementation the chances of producing meaningful and positive results are greatly reduced (Durlak, 2015).

In the literature, the main components considered in the implementation of fidelity focus on:

- **adherence to the program**, that is implementing the program as it was originally designed and including the key elements of the program.
- **quantity**, referring to the timing of the program provided.
- **quality**, that is the way educators implement the program, the way they act as a facilitator, the level of knowledge and understanding of the program, their attitude, preparation and enthusiasm.
- **characteristics and degree of involvement of the participants**, including any adaptation of the program as the degree of modification of methods and contents (Borrelli, 2011; Sutherland, Conroy, McLeod, Algina and Kunemund, 2018).

Additionally, effective interpretations of positive results rely on internal validity check process, that is ensuring that the theoretical foundations and essential components have been implemented effectively (Allen, Shelton, Emmons, & Linnan, 2018).

Furthermore, implementation monitoring, and data collection is necessary to determine what influences the results and lead to the possible replicability of the intervention, helping to determine the external validity. A significant change, for instance, may be noted in the final assessment but if the intervention was not implemented as expected the results may be explained by typical maturation, education in the general educational setting, a substantially modified version of the intervention or from any other element of schooling (Durlak & DuPre, 2008).

Adaptations are often required in real-world environments that can make it challenging to assess whether a program is suitable for larger-scale implementation (Wright, Lamont, Wandersman, Osher and Gordon, 2015). Particularly in school settings some changes may need to be made to achieve the best possible outcomes, to ensure that the program is appropriate, and can serve to improve adaptation and impact between the program, children and school (Durlak, 2015).

In education, interventions are often multidimensional making it necessary to pay attention not only to what and how long a practice is taught, but also to how well and the context in which it is trained (Lynas, & Hawkins, 2017).

ENSURING FIDELITY IN PSSMILE

Following main guidelines from international literature and to ensure fidelity throughout the project, several choices and strategies have been adopted and strongly recommended to teachers involved in the curriculum implementation.

- Teachers are involved in a training course on the implementation of the program where strategies as well as theoretical foundations, essential knowledge and understanding of the program is promoted together with a common attitudes and enthusiasm from networking with colleagues involved in the same proposal.
- Teachers are provided detailed grids for the activities in each domain to guarantee they address the diverse goals for each domain and implement the program as it was originally designed, with the key elements that characterize it (see for instance, the future orientation perspective).

- Eight activities have been fully developed and proposed for each domain to strengthen the timing of the program.
- Adaptations, often required in educational contexts, are guided by suggestions for each activity on the diverse ways to personalize them according to the principles of the Universal Design for Learning.
- Monitoring and data collection are ensured at several levels:
 - a. For each activity teachers fill the Grid B and their reflective questions factsheet
 - b. For each activity answers provided by participants are collected in an online repository
 - c. Weekly teachers fill a short questionnaire, as a Journey LogBook, reporting who guided the activity, students involved, the activities implemented, their duration, manipulations made and the reasons for making them, number of parents actively participating in the everyday life activities.

Teachers are informed on these procedures, on their relevance and how to collect data during the training course.

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