



Promoting Resilience in Early Years & Primary School (RESCUR)



A European Perspective

Carmel Cefai



Education and Culture

Lifelong Learning Program

RESCUR Project



Education and

Lifelong Learning Program

- 3 year EU LLP Comenius Project (2012-2015)
- 6 research partners:
 - *University of Malta, Malta (Coordinator)*
 - *University of Crete, Greece*
 - *University of Pavia, Italy*
 - *University of Zagreb, Croatia*
 - *Orebro University, Sweden*
 - *University of Lisbon, Portugal*



Objectives

- RESCUR is aimed at developing a resilience curriculum for early and primary education in Europe through the intercultural and transnational collaboration among the partner institutions, tapping into the resources and expertise of the various partners involved.



What is resilience ?

- Definition of resilience implies successful adaptation in the face of adversity and environmental stressors:
 - *“Set of qualities that foster a process of successful adaptation and transformation despite risk and adversity”* (Masten, 1994)





with despite adversity

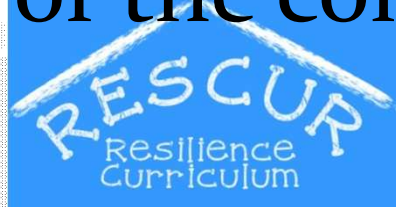
***“ You can’t stop the
waves***

***but you can learn to
surf ”***



Three year programme

- In the first year the consortium seeks to develop a universal resilience curriculum for the early years and primary school education.
- In the second year, the curriculum will be piloted in a number of schools in each country
- In the third year the curriculum will be revised and published in soft and hard copies in the seven languages of the consortium.



Curriculum Principles

Spiral approach, with identified key themes adding across the early and primary school years

Infused in the other content areas of the curriculum as well as in pedagogy, relationships and classroom management

European identity and diversity

Integrated in the mainstream curriculum rather than a bolt added activity delivered by outside experts

Evidence based

Jointly assessed by both classroom teacher and students themselves



Developmental and inclusive, being flexible and responsive to the needs of the individual learner differences, underpinning the right of all learners to quality resilience education and a commitment towards social justice with awareness of the risk for discriminatory practices due to individual educational needs, minority statuses, and poverty

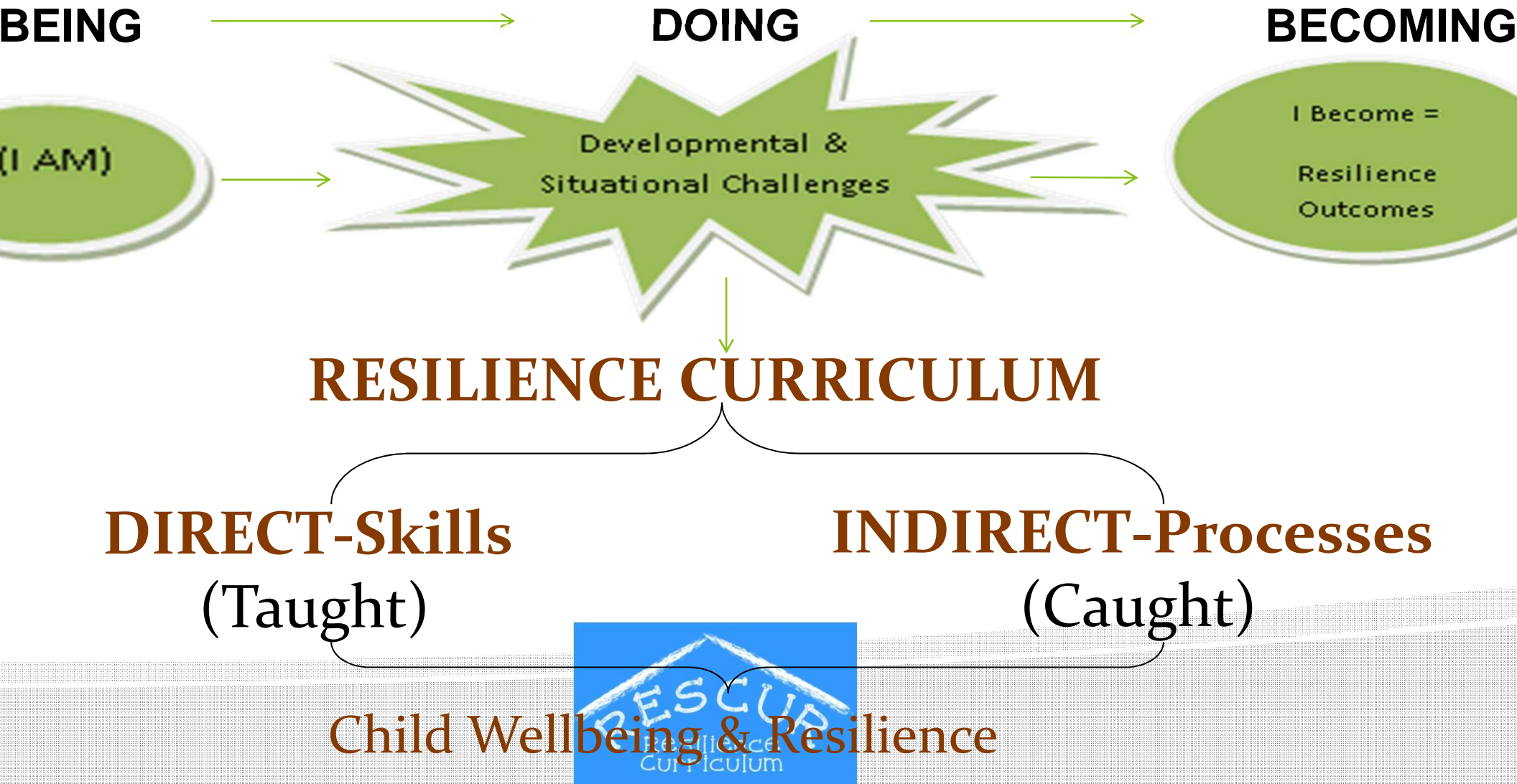
Manuals

- The curriculum will consist of 3 manuals for teachers complete with resources and activities centred around 6 major themes (spiral)
- Manual 1: Early Years (3-5 years)
- Manual 2: Early Primary Years (6-8 years)
- Manual 3 : Late Primary Years (9-11 years)
- There will also be a complementary manual for **Parents**

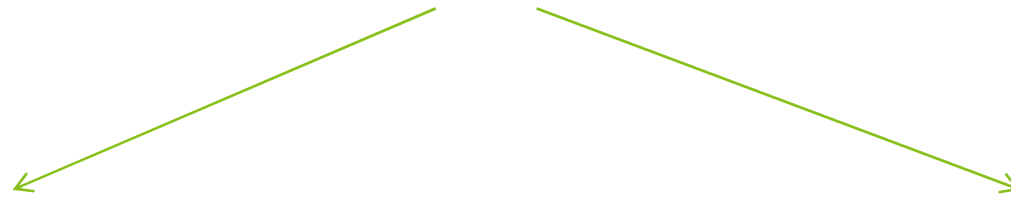


RESCUR Framework

STORYLINE



DIRECT-Skills (Taught)



Resilience as
Specific Curriculum Area

Resilience as
Cross-Curricular Area



INDIRECT-Processes (Caught)

WHOLE SCHOOL

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CLASSROOM
(Climate & Relationships,
Teacher Behaviour,
Attitudes & Creativity)

FAMILY

COMMUNITY

Engagement

Engagement & Education

Family Resilience

INSET

Teacher Training

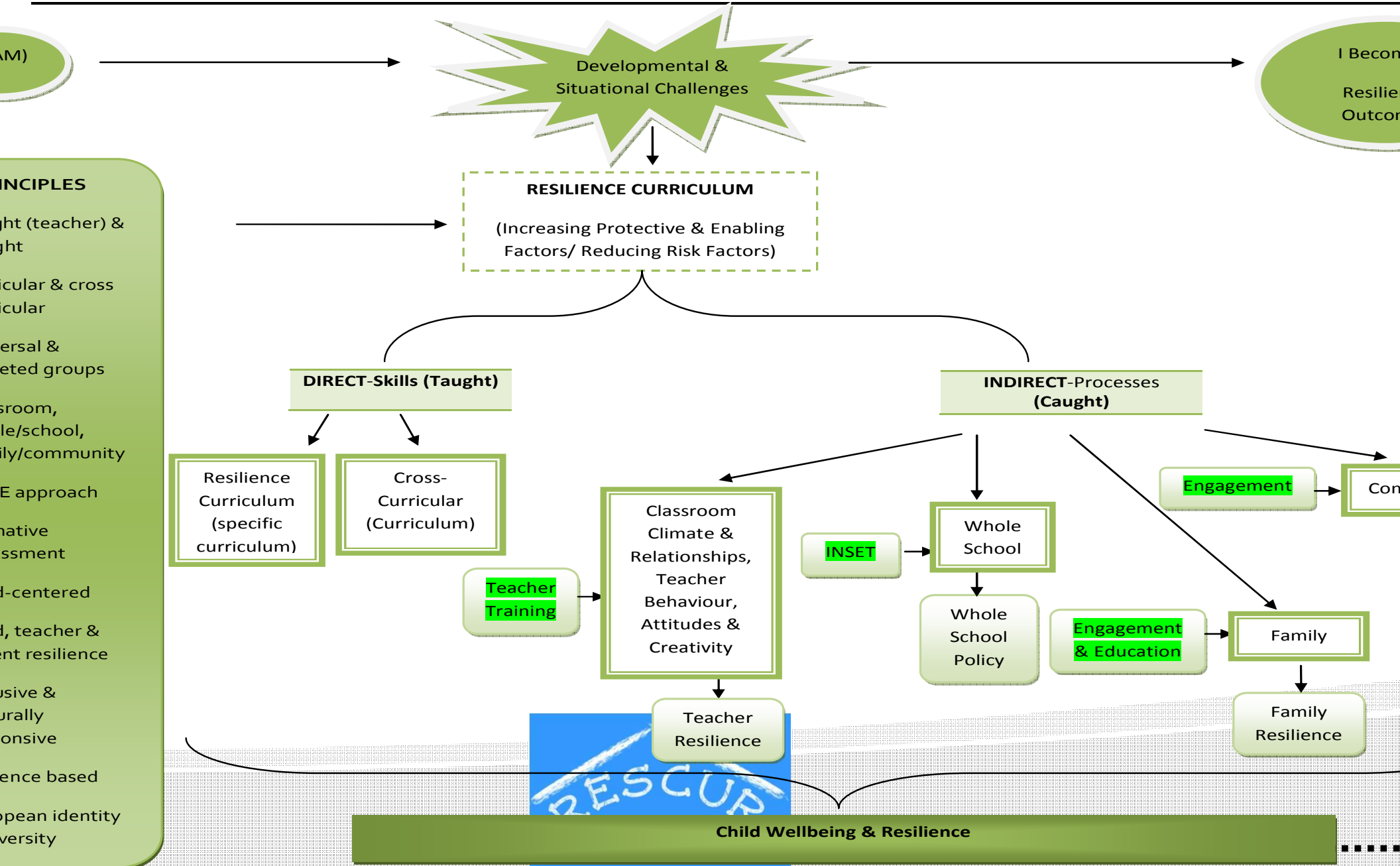
Teacher Resilience



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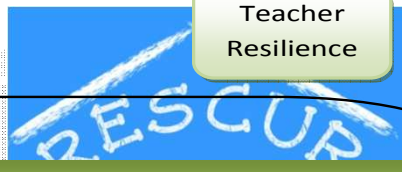
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Child Wellbeing & Resilience

Six Themes of Resilience Curriculum

- Developing a positive mindset
- Building on strengths
- Developing self-determination
- Enhancing communication skills
- Building healthy relationships
- Turning challenges into opportunities (tough mindedness)



Theme 1: Developing of Positive Mindset

- Optimistic thinking and positive mindset when facing life's adversities

Appreciating & enjoying one's positive emotions (including humour)



Theme 2: Building on Strengths

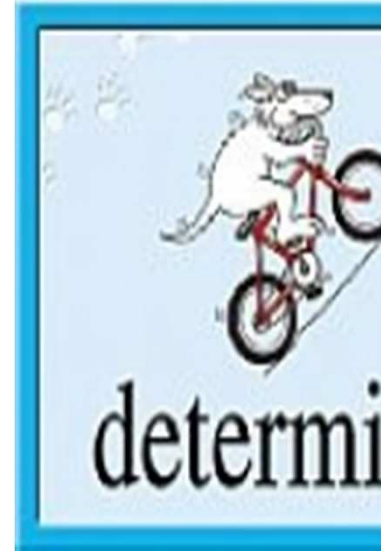


Positive self-concept and self-esteem

- Awareness and use of strengths in academic and social engagement



Theme 3: Developing Self-determination



- Creative problem-solving and decision making
- Empowerment: autonomy, self-efficacy, internal locus of control)



Theme 4: Enhancing communication skills

- Interpersonal communication (effective listening skills, giving feedback communicating ideas)
- Assertive behaviour



Theme 5: Building healthy relationships



- Establishing & maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships
- Engaging in ethical and responsible behavior



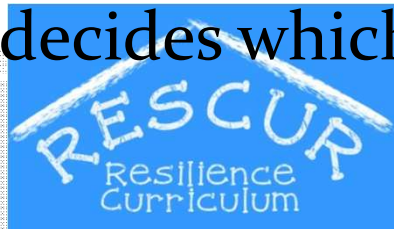
Theme 6: Turning challenges into opportunities (tough mindedness)

- Developing courage in adversity and persistence in the face of failure, injustice, overcoming difficulties and setbacks (e.g. disability, sickness, discrimination)
- Dealing with rejection by teachers, peers, family members and managing related negative emotions
- Dealing with bullying behaviours in school
- Dealing with obstacles such as family conflicts, divorce, poverty & parental unrealistic expectations
- Dealing with change, loss & transitions in life



Structure

- Three manuals: early years, early primary and late primary
- Spiral curriculum, the same themes for all ages
- Developmental/inclusive rather than age determined
- In each group three different levels:
 - Basic
 - Intermediate
 - Advanced (teacher decides which level)



Principles

- Eg. **SAFE** Approach
 - Sequenced step-by-step training approach
 - Active forms of learning
 - Focus sufficient time on skill development
 - Explicit learning goals



Parents' Manual

- Complementary to teachers' manual
- A guide for parents in building resilience in their own children
 - a systemic perspective





Thanks



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