

Overview

- Description of RESCUR (resilience curriculum) Project
- Qualitative assessment of project implementation (children's view)



General Aim

“Our vision is to transform lives through education ...”
(World Education Forum, May 2015)

Promoting social justice, social inclusion, equity in Europe

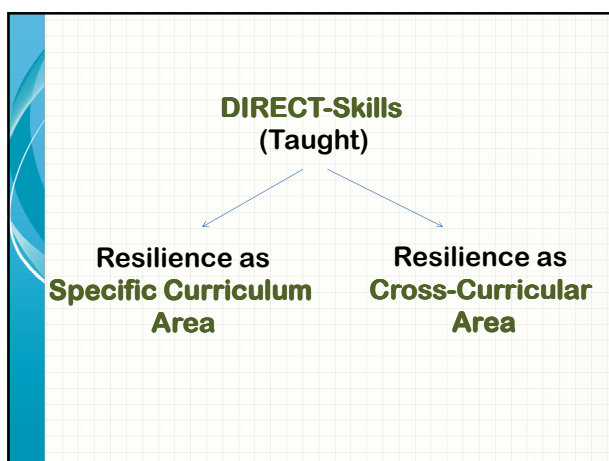
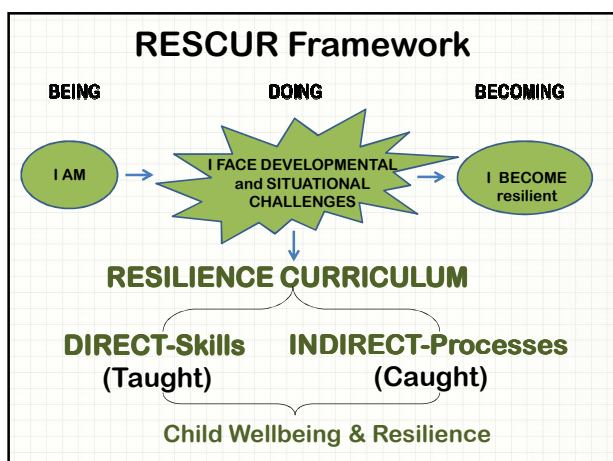
Objectives

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.

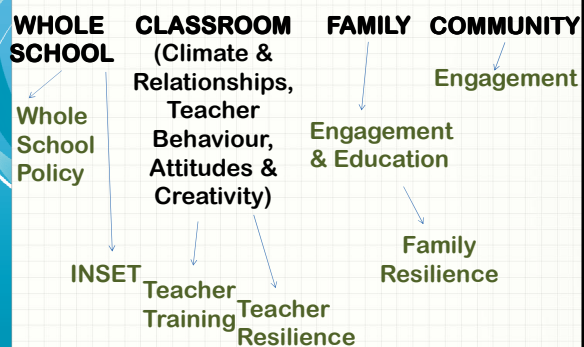
RESCUR : 3-year programme

- 1st year: Developed a universal resilience curriculum for the early years and primary school education.
- 2nd year: Curriculum was piloted in a number of schools in each country
- 3rd year: Curriculum is being revised and published in soft and hard copies in the 6 languages of the consortium and in English.

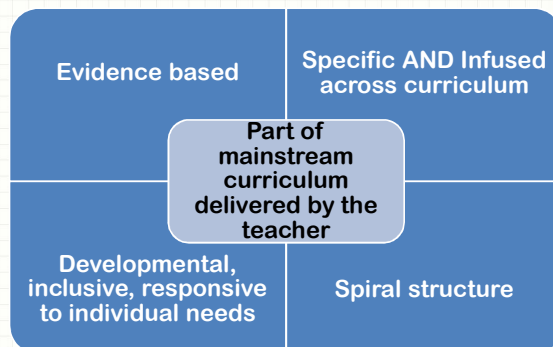




INDIRECT-Processes (Caught)



Curriculum Principles

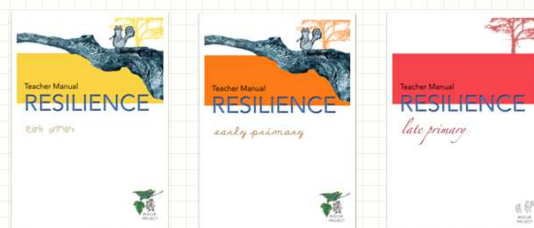


Manuals

- ✓ Three manuals for teachers, including resources and activities around 6 major themes (spiral);
- ✓ Manual for Parents.



Teachers' Manuals



Six Resilience Themes

Identified through review of literature and analysis of socio-economic, educational, and cultural needs of children and young people in Europe:



Developing communication skills



Establishing and maintaining healthy relationships



Developing a growth mindset



Developing self-determination



Building on strengths



Turning challenges into opportunities

Example

Theme 3: Developing a Growth Mindset



SUB-THEME 1: Positive and Optimistic Thinking when Facing Challenges

TOPIC 1

Positive and Negative Thinking

TOPIC 2

It's Good to Think Positive!

TOPIC 3

Challenging Negative Thoughts

SUB-THEME 2: Using Positive Emotions to Promote Growth and Wellbeing Including Hope, Happiness and Humour.

TOPIC 1

Using Hope to Promote Growth and Wellbeing

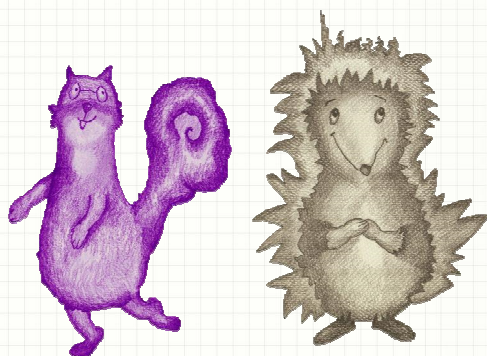
TOPIC 2

Using Happiness to Promote Growth and Wellbeing

TOPIC 3

Using Humour to Promote Growth and Wellbeing

STORY-BASED with CURRICULUM MASCOTS



Session structure

Each session is presented within the following structure:

- mindfulness activity
- learning goal
- learning outcome
- resources to be used in the activity
- story and questions on the story
- practical hands-on activities
- take home activity including handouts for parents

Resources

- Stories for each theme
- Drawings of finger and cloth puppets of the two programme mascots (early years and early primary manuals)
- Sets of worksheets for the learners during the activities and for parents (take home activities)
- Mindfulness exercises and music CD
- Posters on each theme, with a slogan capturing the subject of the theme
- Teacher and learner assessment checklists for each theme

Evaluation of pilot project

The perspectives of children

Participants

- *Participants.* A number of trained early years and primary school teachers in each partner country implemented 1 theme of the curriculum in their classrooms over 6 weeks in 205 classrooms in 79 early and primary schools
- 2895 students from 6 European countries participated: of these, 1935 students from 5 countries participated in the evaluation (Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta and Portugal)

Methods

- Self assessment checklist on each theme, with assessment of each learning objective (primary school)
- Focus groups with each age group, exploring learners' thoughts and feelings on the curriculum
- Drawings of the stories and what children learnt from the stories

Self assessment checklist

- Formative and qualitative rather than normative and standardised, intended to provide information on progress made in each learning objective and to target areas for improvement
- Used only with primary school students (with younger children drawings and story telling used as forms of assessment)

Self assessment checklist

- Response items evaluate whether
 - learner is able to perform that skill (whether the skill has been grasped- 'I can do it'),
 - Learner has internalised that skill (whether the skill has been become part of the learner's behaviour repertoire – 'I like to do it')
- Learners also indicate which skills they enjoyed and which they would like to improve.

BUILDING ON STRENGTHS – POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT AND SELF-ESTEEM		
Knowing things about oneself to have a positive self-concept		
Please tick the face that best describes you.	I can do it	I like to do it
Finding out positive things about oneself to enhance self-esteem	😊 😐 😞	😊 😐 😞
I can identify positive things in myself	😊 😐 😞	😊 😐 😞
I can identify my own unique qualities	😊 😐 😞	😊 😐 😞
I can identify what qualities my friends value in me	😊 😐 😞	😊 😐 😞

Qualitative questions

I enjoyed learning about.....

I would like to improve.....

Focus groups: early years

- Researcher narrates 3 stories, one at a time, based on the theme covered with that age group during the piloting. After each story, learners are asked to discuss what would they do in that situation followed by a graphical representation
- Data is analyzed for content in relation to learning outcomes of the activities

Sunset Mountain

Sherlock the squirrel and Zelda the hedgehog lived in the forest. In the forest, there was a mountain called Sunset Mountain, it was the biggest mountain in the forest. This year it was Sherlock's turn to climb the Mountain. But some of the animals did not think Sherlock could climb the mountain to the very top! "Oh you're just a tiny squirrel!", they would say, "you will never climb to the very top!" Sherlock felt very sad that some of the animals said these things about him. But finally the day arrived and it was time for him to climb Sunset Mountain. He climbed and climbed. But in the middle of the way, he got very tired. "I cannot do this", said Sherlock, "I will never climb to the very top!" So he turned back. The next day he tried climbing the mountain again. But in the middle of the way, again Sherlock got very tired. "I cannot do this", said Sherlock, "I will never climb to the very top!" So he turned back.

Sunset Mountain

The next day Sherlock asked his friend Zelda to go with him. Again in the middle of the way up, Sherlock got very tired. "I cannot do this", he said, "I will never climb to the very top!" Sherlock was going to turn back when he heard Zelda's voice. "You can do it Sherlock! Try again", she said. So Sherlock continued climbing and he climbing. "I can do it", he said with every step. Finally, after a lot of hard work, Zelda and Sherlock reached the top of Sunset Mountain. Sherlock was so happy! He felt glad that he climbed to the top even when the other animals thought that he couldn't do it. Zelda and Sherlock watched the sunset on top of the mountain. And for doing such a good job, Zelda gave Sherlock a special badge for climbing the mountain to the very top!

Focus group: Early Primary

- Researcher describes the key learning outcomes of the theme one at a time and asks:
- Let us discuss the activity we did when Sherlock needed to ask for extra help:
 - What did you like most?
 - What did you learn from this activity?
 - What would you add?
 - What would you delete?

Focus groups: Late Primary

- Researcher describes the key learning outcomes of the theme one at a time and asks:
- Let us discuss the activity we did on a bridge after betrayal:
 - What did you like most?
 - What did you learn?
 - How can you apply this for yourself- give an example from school, home or with friends
 - What would you add?
 - What would you delete?
- Data is analyzed for content in relation to learning outcomes of the activities as well as the application of the knowledge and skills to children's daily life

Analysis and findings

- Work in progress
- But some preliminary general findings from the five countries

Examples



What did you learn from this activity?

EARLY YEARS

To be friends and share with others

EARLY PRIMARY

It is important to follow rules and help each other because then everything is easier and nicer

LATE PRIMARY:

I learned to put myself in someone else's shoes, to be useful and help others

What I learned

- *We learned how to ask for help and support from our friends, teachers and family.*
- *I learned that obstacles can become an opportunity.*
- *I learned how to behave in a calm manner without anger toward others.*
- *We learned to express how we feel*
- *We learned how to think in a positive way.*
- *I learned to be honest and respect my classmates; we shouldn't bully others*
- *I learned how to be a good friend and to share*
- *I learned how to relax*

What I liked

We talked about issues that matter to us and we had a chance to discuss them openly

I liked this program because it helped me to become stronger

I liked this program because we learned how to think in a positive manner and not continuously think negative

I liked that we worked together in the activities and learned together about

What I would like

- *To invite our parents for some of the activities at school*
- *More home activities with parents*
- *Make some of the stories in small plays*
- *More pictures and drawings in the stories*
- *Longer lessons so that we can talk about feelings more and how not to get angry*







Conclusion

- Need for more nonverbal assessment especially with young children (drawings, story telling)
- Need for more child friendly and emancipatory approaches ("creating ethical spaces") to elicit children's views to ensure they can express themselves openly without fear or anxiety (eg. social desirability bias), thus providing authentic representations of their experiences.

Conclusion

- These may include
 - strategies that enhance children's active participation and communication, such as an open, non-hierarchical and facilitative stance on the part of the adult (eg. active listening, empathy, being responsive to cultural differences)
 - child-accessible techniques of self-expression, such as drawings, pictures, storytelling/ writing, sentence completion and balloon-filling

Conclusion

- need to include all children, particularly the most disenfranchised members of the community, combining a 'representative' with more 'participatory' forms of democracy, which accommodates a wide range of abilities and learning styles and interests
 - avoids the danger of student voice becoming another medium for maintaining adult control and power

Qualitative children's world study: Malta 2016

- Listening to children's stories on their conceptualisation of wellbeing, their perception of their own wellbeing and factors promoting and promoting their wellbeing
- Narrative analysis
- Participants will include vulnerable children (resilience perspective)

Good information on childhood must start from children's experiences
(Mayall, 2008)



