Promoting Resilience in Early Years &Primary School (RESCUR)

Training of Teachers

Malta September 2014

Learning outcomes

- By the end of the training workshop, participants should be able to

  – Define resilience and how it relates to positive academic and social and emotional outcomes

  – Define growth mindset and how it relates to positive academic and social and emotional outcomes

  – Implement growth mindset activities in their classroom on a weekly basis over a six week period

  – Make use of the teacher and self assessment checklists

  – Use the implementation index as a self monitoring tool

  – Use pedagogical and management strategies to create a positive classroom climate

  – Identify individual and school strategies to nurture their own resilience and wellbeing
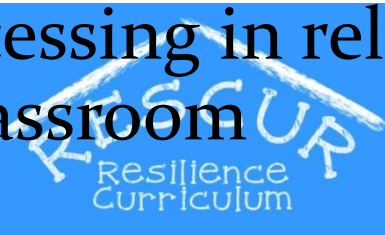
Workshop Outline: RESCUR

- Introducing RESCUR project
  - Defining resilience
  - Curriculum framework and principles
  - Curriculum structure
  - Curriculum content areas

Workshop Outline: Growth Mindset

- Overview of learning goals for positive growth mindset
- Activities for early years: overview, role play of activities and processing in relation to implementing the activities in the classroom
- Activities for early primary school: overview, role play of activities and processing in relation to implementing the activities in the classroom
- Activities for late primary school: overview, role play of activities and processing in relation to implementing the activities in the classroom

Workshop Outline: monitoring, assessment and evaluation

- Use of teacher and self assessment checklists

- Use of Implementation Index

- Use of Teacher Tips handout for the creation of positive classroom climate

- Nurturing teachers' own health and resilience
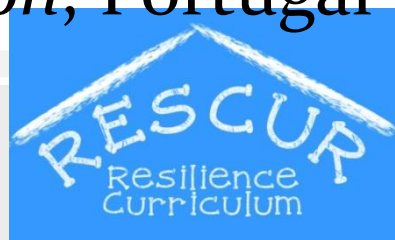
- Evaluation (prescribed form)

RESCUR Project

- 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 succesful 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**)

What is resilience

- Risk: socio-econonic disadvantage, individual educational needs, cultural mismatch, family instability, negative early experiences, eg. children living in poverty, Roma children, children from minority and refugee status, children with disability and gifted children

- Success: academic success, social competence, emotional literacy

Three year programme

- In the first year the consortium has developed 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.
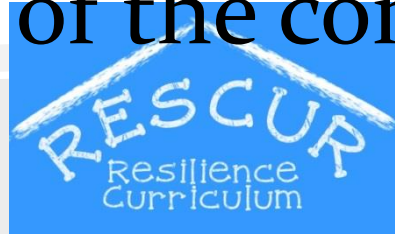
Curriculum Principles

Spiral approach, with identified key themes straddling 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 on, added activity delivered by outside experts

Evidence based

Developmental and inclusive, being flexible and responsive to the needs of the individual learner differences, underlining the right of all learners for a 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

Formatively assessed by both the classroom teacher and the students themselves
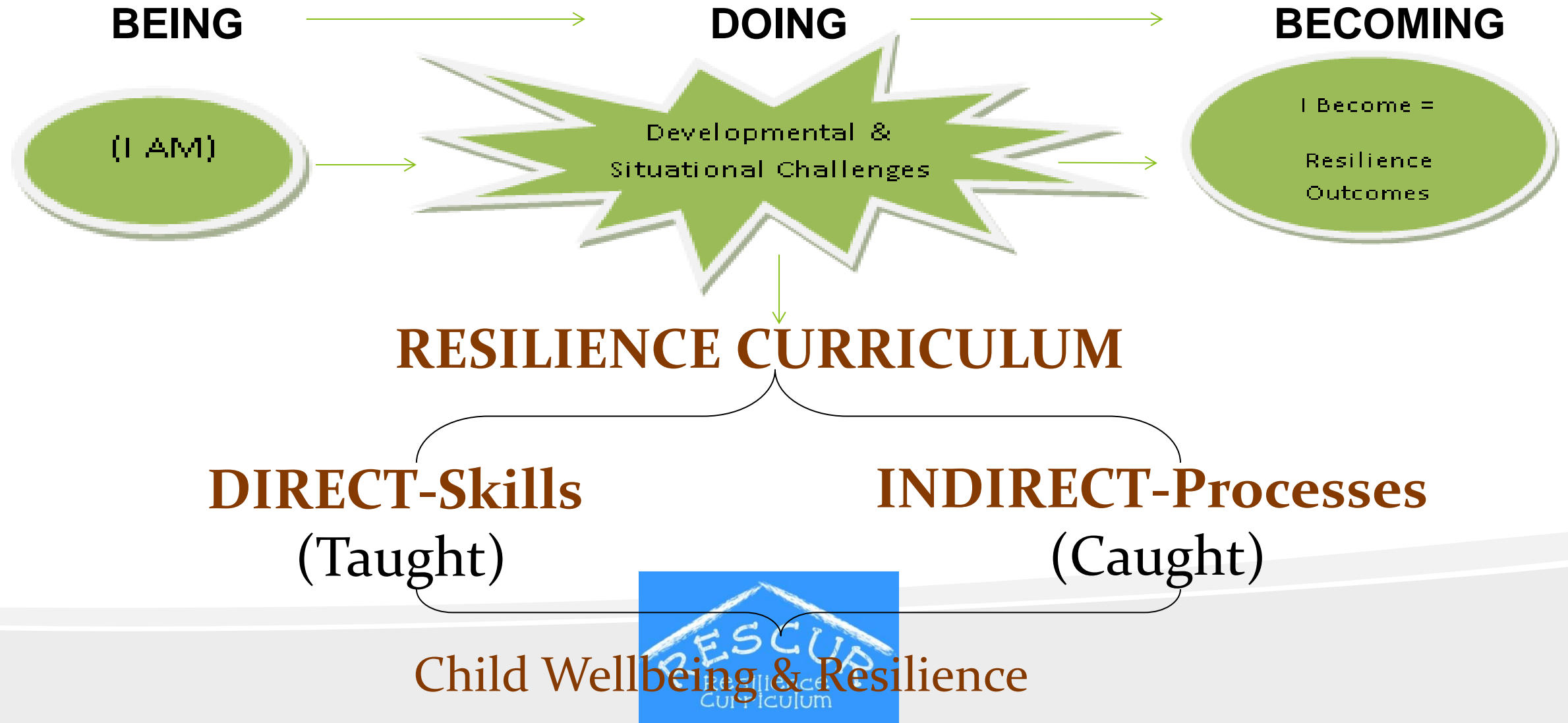
RESCUR
Resilience
Curriculum

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
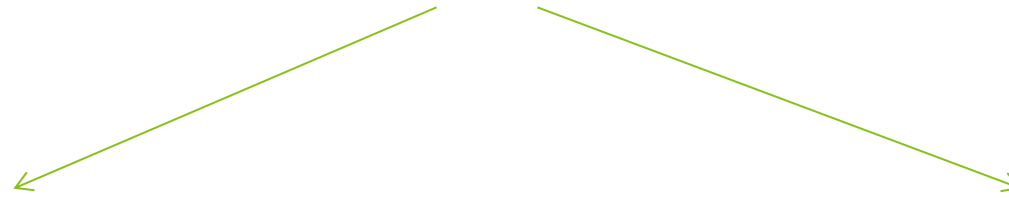
BEING → **DOING** → **BECOMING**
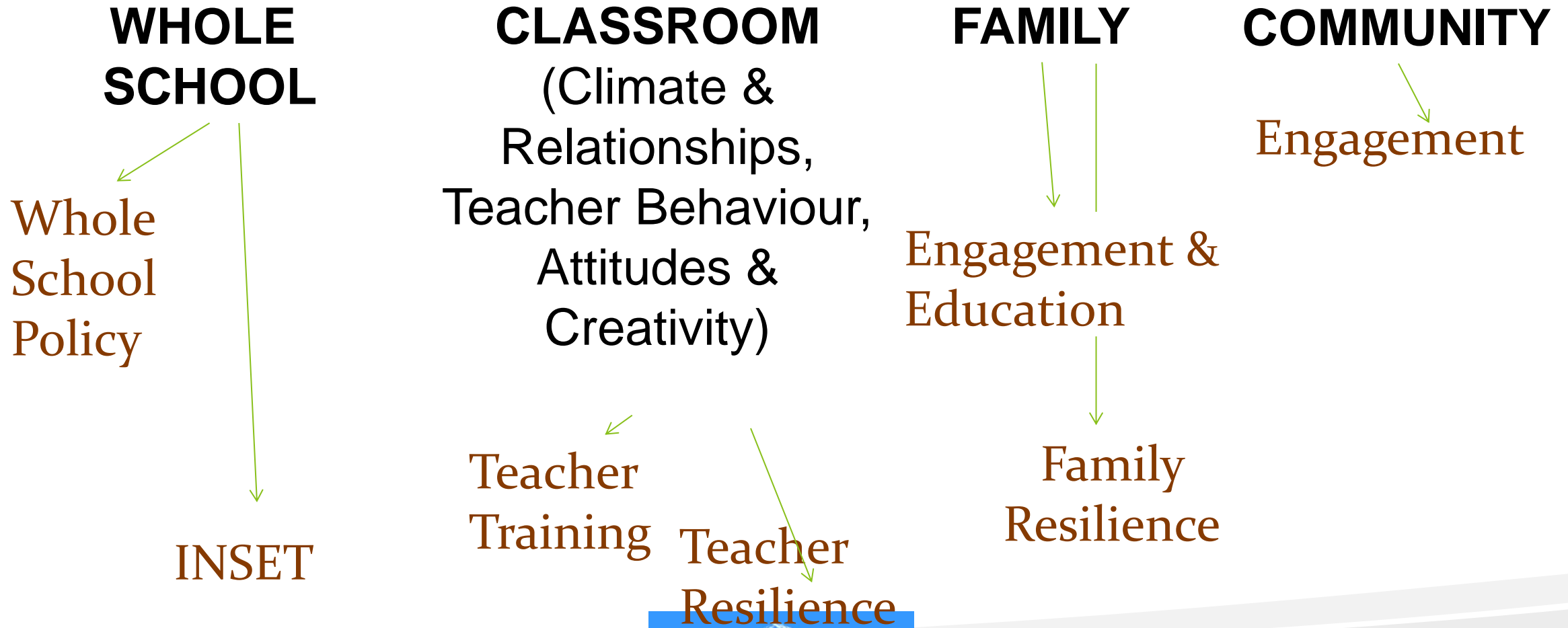
(I AM)

Developmental & Situational Challenges

I Become = Resilience Outcomes

RESILIENCE CURRICULUM

DIRECT-Skills
(Taught)

INDIRECT-Processes
(Caught)

RESCUR

Child Wellbeing & Resilience

INDIRECT-Processes (Caught)

WHOLE SCHOOL

Whole School Policy

INSET

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

Teacher Training

Teacher Resilience

FAMILY

Engagement & Education

Family Resilience

COMMUNITY

Engagement

(I AM) → Developmental & Situational Challenges → I Become = Resilience Outcomes

PRINCIPLES

- taught (teacher) & caught

- curricular & cross curricular

- universal & targeted groups

- classroom, whole/school, family/community

- SAFE approach

- formative assessment

- child-centered

- child, teacher & parent resilience

- inclusive & culturally responsive

- evidence based

- European identity & diversity

RESILIENCE CURRICULUM

(Increasing Protective & Enabling Factors/ Reducing Risk Factors)

DIRECT-Skills (Taught)

Resilience Curriculum (specific curriculum)

Cross-Curricular (Curriculum)

INDIRECT-Processes (Caught)

Classroom Climate & Relationships, Teacher Behaviour, Attitudes & Creativity

Teacher Training

Teacher Resilience

INSET

Whole School

Whole School Policy

Engagement & Education

Engagement

Community

Family

Family Resilience

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 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

determined

- Creative problem-solving and decision making

- Empowerment: autonomy, self-efficacy, internal locus of control)

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Resilience
Curriculum

Theme 4: Enhancing communication skills

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

- Assertive behaviour
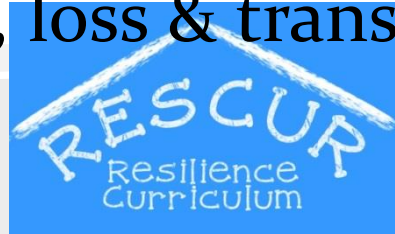
Theme 5: Building healthy relationships

- Establishing & maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships

- Engaging in ethical and responsible behavior

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Resilience
Curriculum

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

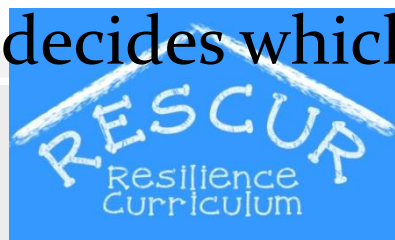- Dealing with change, loss & transitions in life

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
  - **S**equenced step-by-step training approach
  - **A**ctive forms of learning
  - **F**ocus sufficient time on skill development
  - **E**xplicit learning goals

Parents' Manual

- Complementary to teachers' manual

- A guide for parents in building resilience in their own children

  – a systemic perspective

Developing a Growth Mindset

1. **Optimistic thinking and positive mindset when facing life's adversities**
   - **Dispositional optimism**-good things will happen, confidence to persevere in adversity (Scheiner & Curver, 1992)
   - **Positive thinking**/self-talk (promotes health, well-being & longevity (Seligman, 2011)

Developing a Growth Mindset

2. **Using emotions to promote growth and wellbeing:**

– **Appreciating & enjoying one's positive emotions** (positive emotions & adaptive coping strategies important to satisfying life, protects against development of psychological problems (Compton, 2005)

– **Humour** (positive appraisal of life events-less stress, adds to psychological well-being, life satisfaction & self-esteem (Peterson, Ruch, Beerman, Park & Seligman, 2007)

Subthemes

- **Subtheme 1: Positive and Optimistic Thinking when facing Challenges**
  - Positive and Negative Thinking
  - It's good to think positive!
  - Challenging Negative Thoughts

- **Subtheme 2: Using emotions to promote growth and wellbeing:**
  - Hope
  - Happiness
  - Humour

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Learning goals: Positive and negative thinking

Early Years (3-5 years)

- Recognize that we can either look at the sunny side or at the down side of life

- Identify what sunny side thinkers and down side thinkers might say

- Recognize and demonstrate how sunny side thinkers and down side thinkers might react to challenges

Learning goals: Positive and negative thinking

Early Primary (6-8 years)

- Give examples of what sunny side thinkers and down side thinkers might say when encountering challenges

- Identify and demonstrate upside thoughts and downside thoughts to setbacks

- Break down an upside thought (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and a downside thought into 3 parts (Me/ Always/ Everything)

Learning goals: Positive and negative thinking

Late Primary (9-11 years)

- Break down an optimistic explanatory style (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and a pessimistic explanatory style style (Me/ Always/ Everything) into 3 parts

- Change a pessimistic explanatory style (Me/ Always/ Everything) into an optimistic explanatory style (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything).

- Describe a situation that includes a pessimistic explanatory style (Me/ Always/ Everything) and then change it into an optimistic explanatory style (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything).

Learning goals: It's good to think positive!

Early Years (3-5 years)

- Recognize that sunny side thinking can help us feel better while down side thinking might make us feel worse

- Recognize that upside and downside thinking can affect the way we feel and act

- Change a downside thought into an upside thought

Learning goals: It's good to think positive!

Early Primary (6-8 years)

- Identify an upside or a downside thought to a setback, and demonstrate the feelings and actions that might follow

- Illustrate a thoughts → feelings → actions sequence

- Recognize how thinking about an adversity can have consequences on feelings and actions, in an ABC flowchart

Late Primary (9-11 years)

- Complete an ABC flowchart for a setback

- Give an example of an ABC sequence

- Produce their own ABC flowchart

Learning goals: Challenging Negative Thoughts

Early Years (3-5 years)

- Identify why an object is important and mention one good thing they like about themselves

- Identify and draw one good thing they like about themselves and one good thing they like about someone else

- Practice talking back to their negative thoughts

Early Primary (6-8 years)

- Recognize that when we encounter a setback, there are still things in our life that are good

- Identify and list all the counter-evidence to dispute a downside thought

- Distinguish between the best, worst and most realistic case scenario for a setback, and recognize that thinking of the worst case scenario can make us feel worse
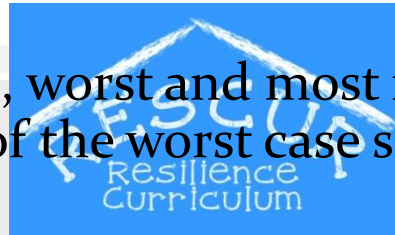
Learning goals: Challenging Negative Thoughts

Late Primary (9-11 years)

- Recognize that there are different ways of thinking about a problem

- Identify alternative ways of thinking about a setback (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not everything)

- Generate alternatives to their negative thoughts (Disputation), list the consequences these alternative thoughts bring (Energization), and add these to their ABC flowcharts
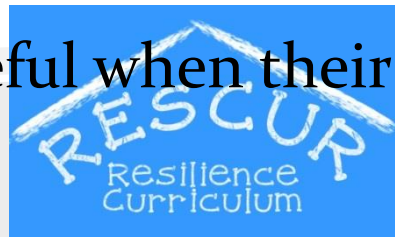
Learning goals: Using HOPE to promote growth and wellbeing

Early Years (3-5 years)

- Recognize that bad times do not last forever

- Recognize that bad times are usually followed by better times

- Identify new goals to help make a bad time get better

Early Primary (6-8 years):

- Practice remaining hopeful when trying to reach a goal

- Practice remaining hopeful when making a plan on how to reach a goal

- Practice remaining hopeful when their first attempt to reach a goal is unsuccessful

Learning goals: Using HOPE to promote growth and wellbeing

Late Primary (9-11 years):

- Practice remaining hopeful during a setback

- Experience and demonstrate a hopeful mindset when setting a personal goal

- Experience and demonstrate a hopeful mindset when reflecting about the future

Learning goals: Using HAPPINESS to promote growth and wellbeing

Early Years (3-5 years):

- Discuss and draw their experience of happiness

- Identify and discuss a time when they felt happy

- Draw an activity or a person that makes them feel happy

Early Primary (6-8 years):

- Recognize that bad feelings can be turned into good feelings

- Identify and act out different things we can do to turn a bad mood into a good mood

- Apply the 'flipping the feeling' strategy to change bad feelings into good feelings

Learning goals: Using HAPPINESS to promote growth and wellbeing

Late Primary (9-11 years):

- Discuss happiness and their experience of it

- Identify and illustrate a person, place, object or event that makes them happy

- Identify 3 things that make them happy and write down how they have contributed to them

- Apply the 'flipping the feeling' strategy to change bad feelings into good feelings

Learning goals: Using HUMOUR to promote growth and wellbeing

Early Years (3-5 years):

- Recognize that when we laugh we feel better

- Identify and draw something they can do to laugh

- Identify and draw something they can do to make someone else laugh

Early Primary (6-8 years):

- Talk about what makes them laugh and make a collage about this

- Identify and write about what makes them laugh

- Identify and write about what makes them laugh and discuss what they can do to ensure humour is helpful and not harmful

Learning goals: Using HAPPINESS to promote growth and wellbeing

Late Primary (9-11 years):

- Identify and list the benefits of humour

- Talk about what makes them laugh and create a 'humour first-aid kit'

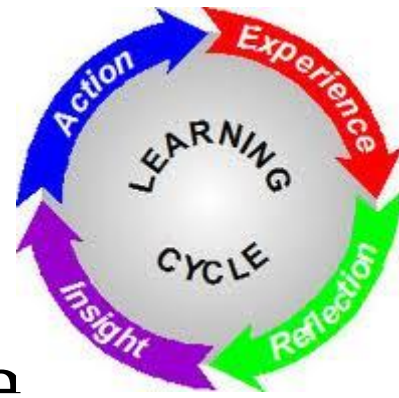- Make a campaign about how we can use respectful humour

Layout of activities

- **Topic of activity**:

- **Age group**: Early Years, Early Primary, Late Primary

- **Learning goal**: Child will be able to…

- **Learning outcome**: By the end of this activity, I will be able to…

- **Level**: Basic/Intermediate/Advanced

- **Resources**: Manual, sheet of paper

- **Activity Steps:**

- **Extended activity:**

- **Take home activity:**

Activities Early Years

- Role play and process two activities, one from each subtheme, from each year groups, making use of SAFE approach

- Activity 1: Positive and Optimistic Thinking when facing Challenges (manual page…)

- Activity 2: Using emotions to promote growth and wellbeing (manual page …)

Activities Early Primary (role play in group)

- Activity 1: Positive and Optimistic Thinking when facing Challenges (manual page...)

- Activity 2: Using emotions to promote growth and wellbeing (manual page ...)

Activities Late Primary (role play in group)

- Activity 1: Positive and Optimistic Thinking when facing Challenges (manual page...)

- Activity 2: Using emotions to promote growth and wellbeing (manual page ...)

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Processing of activities

- How did you feel about this activity? What did you like/did not like?

- What was most helpful for you to learn in this activity?

- How relevant is this activity to the students in your classroom?

- How meaningful do you think your students will find this activity? Would you make any modifications? If yes, what and why?

- What challenges might there be in implementing the activity successfully with your students? How may these be overcome?
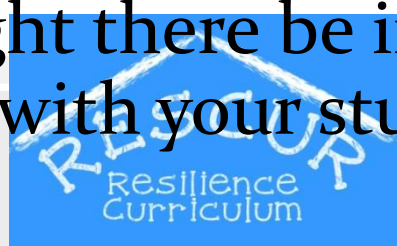
Assessment

- Present the two assessment checklists, one for the teacher and one for the students (included in pack)

- Ask participants to complete the teacher checklist either on their whole class from last year or on a particular student; then discuss in pairs/small groups

- Ask participant to go over and discuss the student checklist in small groups

- Discuss in whole group how the checklists maybe be completed by the classroom teacher and the students at the end of the pilot.

Implementation

- Present the **Implementation Index** (included in the pack)

- Ask participants to complete the index individually, ticking items where they have concerns, issues, difficulties with.

- Ask participants to discuss in small groups.

- Discuss in whole group how the index maybe be used by the teacher during the plan and monitor the implementation

Creating a positive classroom climate

- Present the **Teacher Tips Handout**(included in pack)

- Ask participants to go over the handout individually, ticking, identifying strengths and areas for intervention.

- Ask participants to discuss in small groups.

- Discuss in whole group how the teachers may create a positive classroom climate through their pedagogy, resources, activities, relationships and classroom management.

Nurturing teachers' own resilience

- Ask participants to discuss in small groups the following four issues:
  - What are the main challenges/risks to teachers' own wellbeing and health?
  - Why is it important for the teacher to take care of own health and wellbeing besides those of the students?
  - What can the classroom teacher do to protect own health and promote their wellbeing and resilience?
  - What can the school do to support the teachers' wellbeing and resilience

- Discuss in whole group how the teachers themselves and the school as a community may support teachers' wellbeing and resilience.

- Refer teachers to the handouts on teachers' resilience in the pack (Henderson and Milstein (2003); What makes a resilient teacher).

Evaluation

- Each participant to fill in the evaluation form in the pack (enclosed).