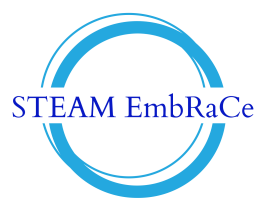


Education Resilience in Europe



Social and emotional development

Social and emotional support for children is very important and now vital. Every day we see that children face problems such as severe anxiety, panic attacks, lack of concentration, procrastination. In order for them to develop and achieve their goals, we, as teachers, must help them to manage social and emotional situations. They need practices that help them both to enhance their emotional development and to be able to cope with difficult situations.

This is the connection between the social and emotional abilities and STEAM practices.

Social and emotional abilities	STEAM
Self awareness	Creativity, growth mindset
Self management	Research, planning, overcoming barriers
Social awareness	Empathy, understanding, design thinking
Relationship skills	Collaboration, communication
Responsible decision making	Problem solving, iterative thinking

CASEL model

The [CASEL \(Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning\)](#) model identifies 5 key and interrelated competencies that Social and Emotional Learning aims to address and they are:

SELF-AWARENESS

SELF- MANAGEMENT

SOCIAL AWARENESS

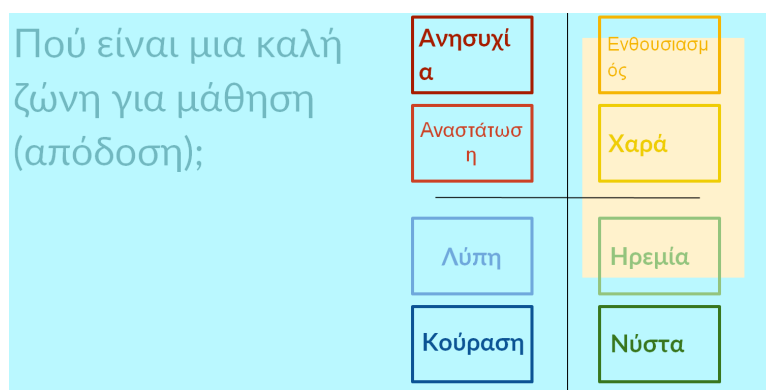
RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

RESPONSIBLE DECISION MAKING

Part A: Self - awareness and self- management

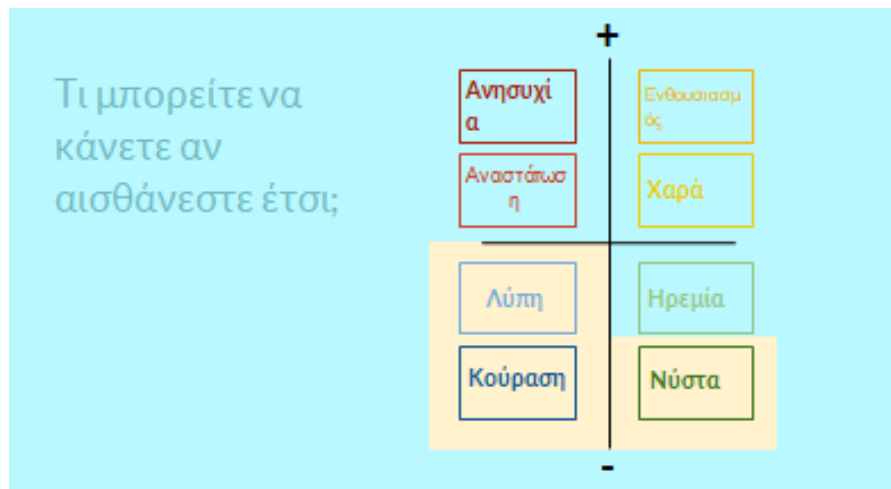
1. Practice of identifying emotional state

Emotional zones

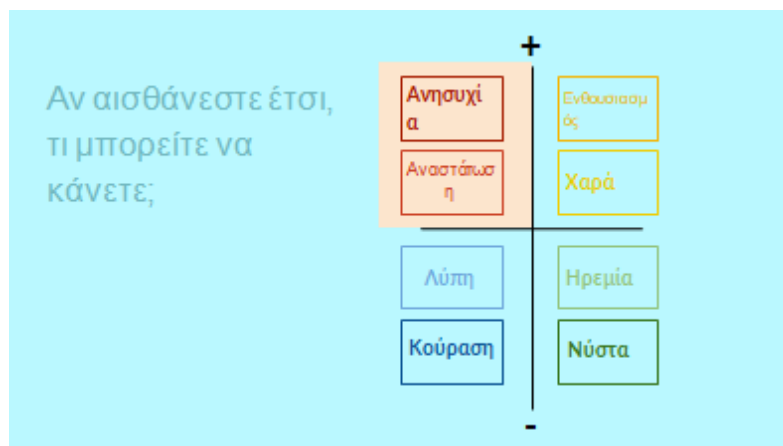


Our emotions affect our daily performance.

When we feel calm, joy and enthusiasm, we can perform better. However, our emotions are not always the same. The important thing is that depending on how we are feeling we try to manage our psychological state, i.e. to be in control of our emotions.



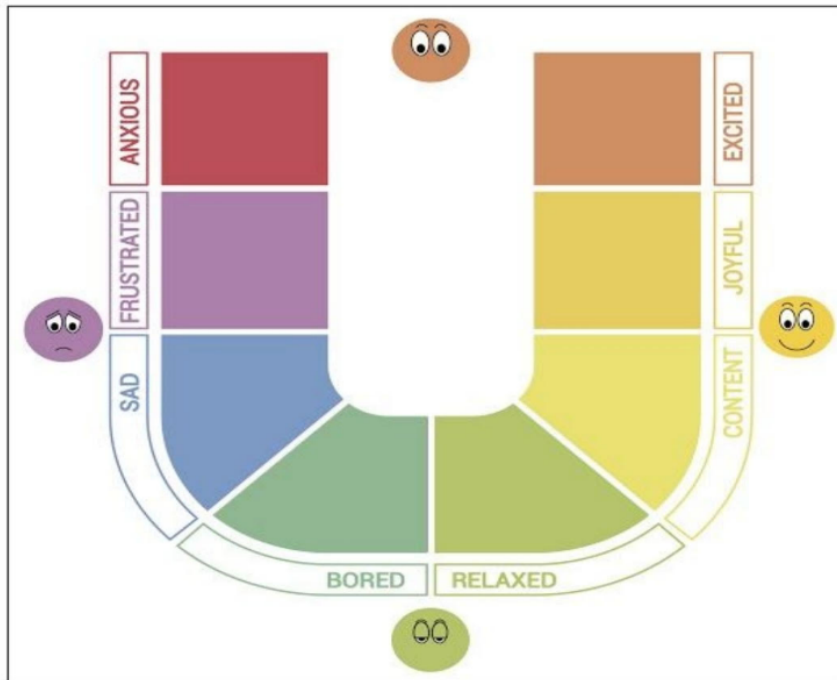
If children feel that they are sluggish, then they should move, because it will help to lift their mood. We ask them to do an Emotional Freedom Technique exercise as described in Practice 2.



If they feel agitated or upset, their level of arousal is higher than it should be to perform well. One of the practices you can implement is to learn to breathe properly (see practice 4 below).

Activity

At the beginning of an activity, we show the children the following picture and ask them to each stick a post it to the emotion they are feeling. In this way we "map" the children's emotional state.



2. Emotional Freedom Technique – tapping (I)

This practice helps in managing stress, dealing with procrastination, lack of concentration. It can also act proactively, i.e. it can be a daily practice.

Tapping is based on the ancient Chinese practice of acupuncture, which teaches that the body's energy travels along specific pathways. Certain points along these pathways are stimulated to improve the flow of energy. It works by stimulating the central nervous system.

Activity

To apply tapping, lightly tap one hand with the other on the sides of the palm,



light bumps just between the eyebrows,



under the eyes,



under the neck,



at the side,



and at the end we deeply breathe in and out.



[Here](#) you can see an example of tapping.

3. Emotional Freedom Technique – Pressure(II)

Activity

Another stress management practice is the pressure we can apply to our fingertips.



We can do the same in a sitting position, pressing the floor with our feet as if we want to break it.



This practice helps us to concentrate on what we have to do and removes thoughts that stress us out. For example, it helps in a presentation in front of an audience, where we may suddenly become anxious.

4. Breath-based emotional awareness exercise

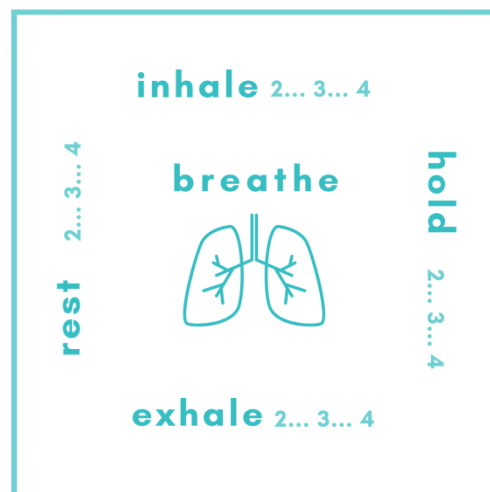
The key to breathing

The type of breathing we refer to, is diaphragmatic or abdominal breathing. Instead of breathing into our chest, we want to breathe lower and move our belly area.

- We need to breathe by contracting our diaphragm (i.e. abdominal breathing)-pushing all the air out and letting new air reach the bottom of our lungs.
- In this way, we are able to bring more oxygen into our body and exhale more toxins when we breathe deeply into our belly.
- This can help our body enter and maintain a relaxed state.
- But we all breathe into our belly at some point in the day. When we are relaxed, such as after waking up after a good night's rest or just relaxing at home, our breathing naturally shifts lower.
- With practice, we can regain our abilities to breathe intentionally in the belly and use it as a tool to help us relax-to reduce our response to stress and help us recover from stressful situations.

Activity

SQUARE BREATHING



Sit comfortably. Back straight (or rest your head on your desk.)

Close your eyes if you feel comfortable.

Inhale for 4 seconds (abdominal breathing, i.e., inflate the abdomen).

Hold for 4 seconds.

Exhale for 4 seconds.

Hold for 4 seconds.

Repeat.

5. Focus training and emotional awareness

Focusing on one point for a while helps us to concentrate, calms our thoughts, relieves stress and helps clear our minds of many thoughts.

Activity

For this exercise, we locate a point in space (a corner, a key on the computer) and focus on it for a while (2-3 minutes is enough). Ideally we can apply square breathing while focusing on this point at the same time.

6. Self-awareness practice

Self-awareness is very important for children to understand what they have achieved, what they would like to achieve and how they can achieve it. Reflection is a big part of self-awareness. The process of reflection can be incorporated into STEM lessons as a step towards increasing self-awareness.

Activity

Reflection can be done at the end of the activity where children answer the following questions in writing.

Short questionnaire at the end of a task

What did I do in this task?

Why did I do it?

What characteristics of myself helped me to do this task?

What characteristics of myself made it difficult for me while working on this assignment?

What did I learn about myself and the world around me?

What would I do differently next time?

Part B: Self-management

Way of living and stress management

If you suffer from stress and anxiety, a good way to start is to try to create a balanced lifestyle.

Sleep and stress management

- Night-time brain work helps us to react well to stress: we are alert when needed, we can find extra strength when needed, but we can also recover quickly from stress.

- At night, our brain processes all the stressful moments we had during the day and tries to overcome them.

- To let your brain do its important work, all you need to do is get enough sleep.

1. Give yourself quiet time before bedtime. Don't study, don't watch TV, don't chat with friends before you sleep. Save some time at the end of the day to give your mind some break time.
2. Reduce blue light at night. Blue light comes from screens -phones, tablets, computers, TV. Blue light lets your body know it's daytime and makes it harder to prepare for sleep.
3. Sleep and wake up at consistent times. If you sleep and wake up at consistent times, even on weekends, then you will get much better sleep overall.

Physical activity and stress management

- If your daily routine includes physical activity such as walking to school, it helps you recover.
- It is a good idea to look for things that motivate you to move. Some people prefer music, others like walking with friends or their dog, others like games such as football or basketball.

Diet and stress management

- Eating lots of high-sugar, highly processed foods (such as fast food, sweets) causes our blood sugar to rise (above normal) and then fall (drop below normal).
- When our blood sugar level drops, we feel tired, hungry and our stress response is triggered - all in response to the food we recently ate.
- Food is usually part of our recovery state, rest and digestion, and should trigger our stress response.

Music and stress management

Music can have a profound effect on both the emotions and the body. Music with a faster beat can make you feel more alert and concentrate better. Music that expresses optimism can make you feel more upbeat and positive about life. A slower beat can calm your mind and relax your muscles, making you feel calm while releasing the stress of the day. Music is effective for relaxation and stress management.

Recent research confirms these experiences with music. Music of about 60 beats per minute can cause the brain to synchronize with the rhythm that causes alpha brain waves (frequencies from 8 to 14Hz). This alpha brain wave is what is present when we are relaxed.

To induce sleep (5Hz delta brain wave), a person may need to spend at least 45 minutes listening to relaxing music. Researchers at Stanford University said that "listening to music appears to be able to alter brain function to the same extent as medication". They noted that music is something that almost anyone can access, making it an easy stress-reducing tool.

Anyone can create a playlist on their devices with music that helps reduce stress. This is a sample of some relaxing songs:

1. Pachelbel's Canon in D
2. "Sailing" by Christopher Cross
3. "Don't Worry, Be Happy" by Bobby McFerrin
4. "Easy" by the Commodores
5. "Hasta Mi Final" by Il Divo
6. "The Best of Michael Franks" by Michael Franks
7. "Wake Up" by Marvin Gaye
8. "When you say Nothing at All" by Allison Krause
9. "Perfect" by Ed Sheeran
10. "In My Time" by Yann

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