

SUPSI

Introducing PATHS in Southern Switzerland

Results after three years implementation

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Call Them Emotions: Project's Aims

- Main aim: To promote the development of social and emotional skills alongside school knowledge in the schools of Ticino, to ensure effective learning and global personal development.
 - a) To increase the teachers' ability to manage and deliver social-emotional learning (SEL) contents in schools;
 - b) To increase the children's social and emotional skills.

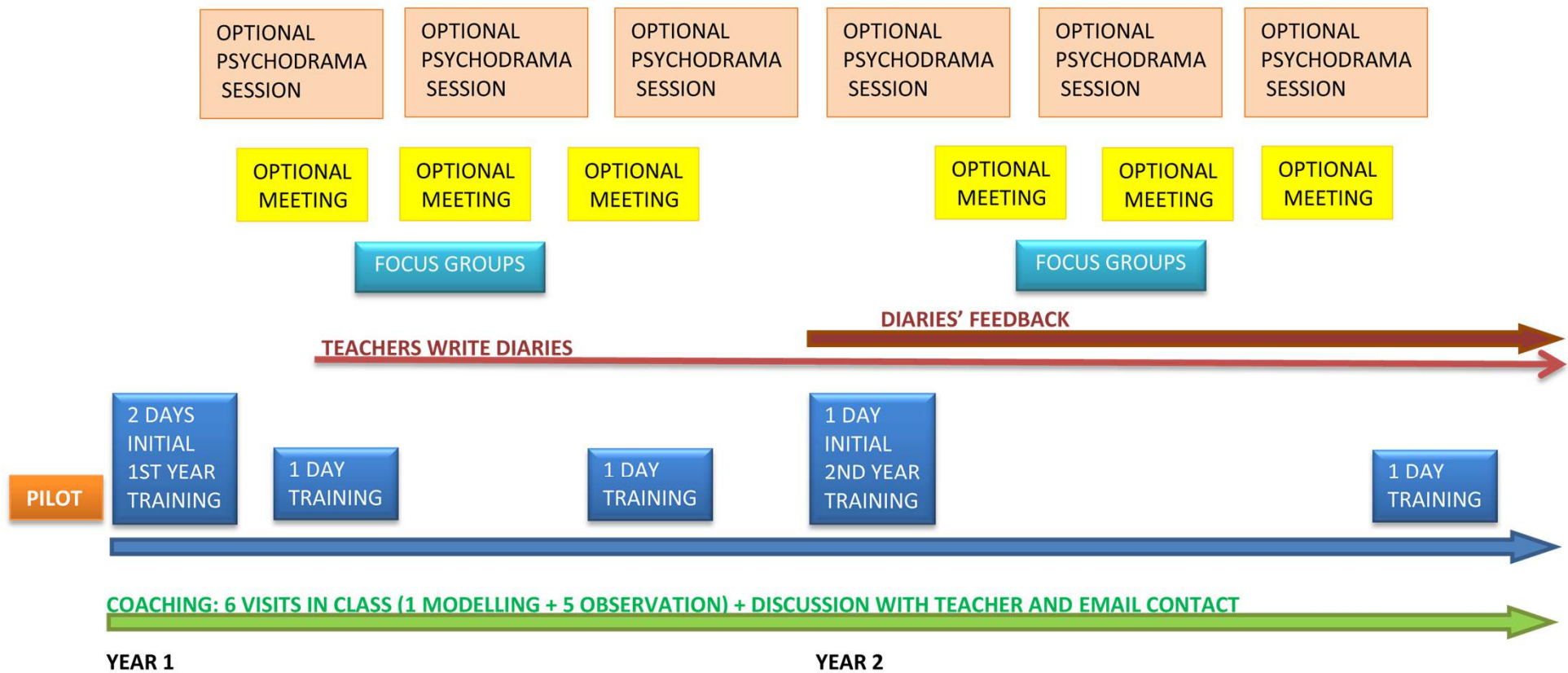
Sample: Teachers

	First group	Second group	Total
Pre-primary school	18	19	37
Primary school	13	7	20
TOTAL	31	26	57

Sample: Students

Number of students	PATHS	Control Group
Pre-primary school	377	121
1 primary school	231	144
2 primary school	250	147
TOTAL	858	412

Implementation Plan



Project life

Programming

Identification

Formulation

Financing

Realization

Evaluation

Evaluation

Ex-ante

During

Final

Ex-post

Monitoring

Monitoring System

Assessment

Teachers

- Diaries
- Focus groups
- Interviews

Students

- Teachers' diaries
- Kusché's Test
- Social Problem-Solving Interview
- Teachers' Evaluation Tool (PATHS Evaluation Kit)
- Managing of Students and Institutes' Database

Main Findings - Teachers

- Teachers have improved their knowledge about SEL and now take much more into consideration the role of emotions in class.
- During the first year, teachers faced doubts and uncertainties: the specific topic focuses on personal and intimate aspects of the children's experiences that are not easy to talk about, they were not sure about how to present SEL. Most of them accepted and used the PATHS curriculum.
- In the second year, teachers felt more sure. They wanted freedom to apply material, change it and add their own activities. Contents became more and more embedded in the school everyday life.
- At a professional level, the process enabled them to reflect upon their practices and find new teaching strategies that suited them better and helped them deliver contents to their students.
- Teachers reported numerous benefits on a personal level, admitting that they had learned more about themselves and had become more sensitive to other people's feelings, both at work and in their private life.

From Teachers' Interviews

The way I look at the child, the children has changed. I have learned to see with new eyes and listen with new ears. It is observation and listening. This is what the value of this project has been.

I had written it down: I have the impression that this work that we did has confirmed that emotional skills can be taught, isn't that right? It is often discussed, some saw that it is something that is inside you, that is in your genes, instead this proves exactly the opposite. Specific cases come to my mind and I say look, if we hadn't gone through this process together, we would probably have labelled them: this child is... But no, they can be educated.

Main Findings – Students

Students' Progress in Teachers' Words

- Awareness towards emotions and ability to express and communicate them in verbal communication and artistic expression.

I realised that in these two years there is something that has totally changed. The children draw emotions. Before they only ever drew characters that smiled. Emotions are now part of their spontaneous productions.

- Richer vocabulary of terms associated to emotions.
- Improvement of the ability to acknowledge emotions.
- Improvement of the ability to manage emotions
- Better atmosphere in the classroom and better relationships between children.

Quantitative findings: Students and SEL

- Teachers' words are confirmed by the results achieved in the Kusché test administered to the classes who participated in the PATHS project, compared to control groups (statistical significance).
- The test on problem solving did not reveal any particular differences between the PATHS group and the control group in the management of problem situations.
- The observation tool revealed that teachers attribute low scores for aggressive or inappropriate behavior and tend to give good scores for behaviors associated to concentration/attention, and social and emotional skills. A significant difference based on gender was found on this item. The result is ascribable to the teachers' perception of their pupils; the reference parameter is a personal evaluation and cannot be ascribed to experts in the evaluation of social-emotional skills.

Quantitative Findings – Students and Academic Performance

- Considering the children in elementary school, a statistically significant difference in the value of “evaluation of behavior” and of “religious education” was found. In both values, the students who took part of the project from 2010 to 2012 scored higher than the control group (i.e. the whole population).

Brief Discussion

Aspects which should be better considered in future:

- Fidelity and adaptation
- Quality of implementation
- Interplay between monitoring and evaluation system
- Implementation environment and support system
- Assessment tools

Future Challenges

- To work in a stronger touch with the school system and explore new directions of intervention and research.
- To consider more carefully the adaptation to our context of the international experience of SEL implementation: finding the balance between fidelity and cultural adaptation.
- To promote interventions based on a whole school approach.
- To explore the way to connect our expertise in training SEL skills in school with the new National Swiss Agreement, which intends harmonize the school system in our nation.

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eland, May 2014

Tuned to emotions!

Being Here

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THANK YOU!