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SELECTED, ADOPTED AND IMPLEMENTED SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM: THE KINDNESS CURRICULUM FOR KIDS

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ABSTRACT

The **aim** of this manuscript is to introduce the program of social-emotional learning. Developed by the Centre for Healthy Minds (CHM) this program is called the Kindness Curriculum (CHM, 2017). Founded by the world renowned neuroscientist Dr. Richard J. Davidson, the Centre for Healthy Minds offers a kinder, wiser, more compassionate world.

Methodology. Qualitative research method was used in this study. The methods of documentary research, observation and interview were also applied. The Kindness Curriculum was employed as a documentary study. The target audience and the object of observation were primary school children aged 6 to 7, the teachers were interviewed.

Results. The mission of the centre is to cultivate kindness and relieve suffering through the scientific study of the mind. There are some social-emotional training programs, but the program developed by the centre is free. This program has been used by preschools and some researchers. The study involves the adaptation of the Kindness Curriculum to Turkish culture. The program contains twenty-four lessons in eight topics. These lessons include short stories, songs and entertaining games. The program can be conducted by one specialist both in preschool institutions and in primary classes. During the adaptation process, the program was translated into Turkish by two specialists and they controlled the entire translation process, which balanced the adaptation of the program by 80%. The benefits of the program for Turkish children have been studied by three psychologists. The program was used as a pilot research in the first grade of primary school.

Conclusions. There are many positive results of the program application implemented by teachers. Schools are encouraged to add this program to their

curriculum, and there is a need for more experimental research on the usefulness of the proposed program.

KEY WORDS: *primary school pupils, the Kindness Curriculum, social-emotional learning, program development, Turkey.*

INTRODUCTION

The importance of social-emotional learning (SEL) has been widely discussed all over the world. There are several associations such as collaborations of academics on social-emotional learning (CASELL) and the Centre of Healthy Minds (CHM) developing and conducting new programs and research on this topic. The program introduced in this manuscript was developed by CHM. Let's look closely at CHM.

SEL program showed that students who participated in the universal, school-based SEL program demonstrated improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviour compared to students who did not participate in the universal SEL program Portnowa, Downera & Brownb, 2018).

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is mainly in the course of development, children must learn how to communicate with others and think, feel, and act in contexts that they distinguish from all that happens around them (Elias, 2019).

The Centre for Healthy Minds (CHM).

This organization was set up in the University of Wisconsin Madison. Established by the world-renowned neuroscientist Dr. Richard J. Davidson, the Centre for Healthy Minds offers a kinder, wiser, more compassionate world. The purpose of the community is to promote well-being and reduce sufferings through scientific knowledge of the mind.

There are some important questions and comments by the CHM. What if our world were a kinder, wiser, more humane place? The world where changing your mind not only increases your well-being but leads to the well-being of others in your society and throughout the globe?

This is the aim of the Centre for Healthy Minds at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Being born with rational and physical strength is required at a global scale, manage accurate scientific research to bring new penetrations aimed at promoting the well-being of all people.

Their inquiry, rooted in neuroscience, proceeds down to one primary question: What establishes a healthy soul?

To start answering this question, we have examined the science of emotions, meditative traditions and conditions of mind we assume affect well-being, including mindfulness, flexibility, patience, enjoying positive emotions, kindness, understanding, gratitude and empathy.

The Centre, part of one of the world's top research organizations, profits from cross-disciplinary collaborations in the arts and virtues, the physical and natural sciences, and the social sciences. They take satisfaction in being a global centre for changes in affective and thoughtful neuroscience in expanding to well-being over the lifespan (centrehealthyminds.org, 2021).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Core values of the association are:

- *Create an impression on the society*

The meaning is the grounding system for all the experiments and professions do commonly. Centre gives awareness of what our product involves in the world, prioritizes research and projects that have the highest potential to improve well-being and reduce suffering and attempt to increase the influence of advantageous results of our work.

- *Encourage a prosocial workplace*

Whereby the community does its professional common values. They are dedicated to producing a workplace and society of collaborators that incorporate their purpose and revelation. They take this responsibility by communicating with respect, kindness, empathy, and appreciation approaching each other and the support they share.

Who is Dr. Richard J. Davidson?

Having dedicated life to healthy minds at University of Madison, Davidson is well-known for his groundbreaking achievement investigating emotion and the brain. A friend and confidante of the Dalai Lama, he is a highly sought-after authority and chairman, leading consultations on well-being on international platforms such as the World Economic Forum, where he attends the Global Council on Mental Health. Time Magazine described Davidson as one of "The 100 Most Influential People in the World" in 2006.

His investigation is broadly based on the neural principles of emotion and emotional technique as well as techniques to improve human flourishing, including meditation and explained thoughtful applications. His studies have focused on people across the lifespan, from birth to old age. Besides, he's conducted studies with people with emotional disturbances such as different disorders and autism, as well as proficient meditation practice. His investigation uses a wide variety of techniques including MRI, positron emission tomography, electroencephalography, and advanced genetic and epigenetic systems.

Davidson has written hundreds of experimental papers, numerous parts, and articles, and is a co-author with Daniel Goleman of "Altered Traits: Science Reveals How Meditation Changes Your Mind, Brain, and Body" (Avery, Sept. 5, 2017). He is also the producer, with Sharon Begley, of The New York Times bestseller "The Emotional Life of Your Brain" (Penguin, 2012). He has

been emphasized widely in conventional media, including The Today Show, ABC's Nightline, National Public Radio, National Geographic Magazine, Time Magazine, Newsweek, O: The Oprah Magazine, PBS's The Charlie Rose Show, Harvard Business Review, and further national and international programs.

Davidson is Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he has had a faculty post since 1984. He is the founder of Healthy Minds Innovations, Inc., an altruist dedicated to promoting the purpose of the Centre for Healthy Minds.

So, the **aim** of this manuscript is to introduce the program of social-emotional learning. Developed by the Centre for Healthy Minds (CHM) this program is called the Kindness Curriculum.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research method was used in this study. The methods of documentary research, observation and interview were also applied. The Kindness Curriculum was employed as a documentary study. The target audience and the object of observation were primary school children aged 6 to 7, the teachers were interviewed; 102 primary school first grade children from four different classes participated as volunteers in this pilot study.

RESULTS

About the Kindness Curriculum.

The Kindness Curriculum of social-emotional program consists of eight topics and twenty-four lessons (Table 1 Kindness Curriculum Distribution). Topics and lessons are the following:

Topic 1: Mindful Bodies and Planting Seeds of Kindness.

Lesson 1 Mindful Bodies and Awareness of Attention and Breath.

Lesson 2 Growing Seeds.

Table 1. Kindness Curriculum Distribution

LESSON	LESSON TITLE	NOTE	BOOK TITLE	AUTHOR	ESTIMATED TIME	THEME(S)
Topic 1: Mindful Bodies and Planting Seeds of Kindness						
3	Growing Friendships with Kindness		Sumi's First Day of School	Soyung Pak	7 minutes	Emotions and caring behaviors
4	Quiet Emotions on the Inside	Begin reading portions of this book on first day of curriculum.	A Quiet Place	Douglas Wood	Read in multiple sittings.	Restfulness and quiet
5	I Can Notice Things When I Am Quiet Inside	Read story with students prior to lesson.	The Listening Walk	Paul Showers	10 minutes	Restful and quiet place
6	Different Emotions Feel Differently on the Inside		Quick as a Cricket	Audrey Wood	10 minutes	Feelings in the body
8	Working with Emotions in a Kind and Friendly Way	Read story with students prior to lesson.	I'm the Best	Lucy Cousins	7 minutes	Hurting feelings and fixing them
9	Emotions Change Many Times Each Day	Read story with students or play audio recording prior to lesson; skim and summarize text as needed.	Dogger	Shirley Hughes	10 minutes	Kindness and gratitude
10	Busy Mind and Clear Mind		Moody Cow Meditates	Kerry Lee MacLeann	8 minutes	Being with anger
12	What Can We Do When We Are Upset?		When Sophie Gets Angry	Molly Bang	6 minutes	Working with anger and uncomfortable feelings
14	Forgiving Myself	Read story with students prior to lesson; skim	Down the Road	Alice Schertle	10 minutes	Forgiveness

		and summarize text as needed.				
16	Gratitude for People or Things in My Life		Gracias/ Thanks	Pat Mora	10 minutes	Gratitude for all that we have
17	Gratitude for My Body	Read story with students prior to lesson.	All of Me!	Molly Bang	10 minutes	Gratitude
18	Gratitude for Other People		What's My Job?	Lyn Calder	10 minutes	Adult jobs and services offered
19	People Around the World Want Peace		Can You Say Peace?	Karen Katz	5 minutes	Peace
20	Connections with Others/ Dependence	Read story with students prior to lesson.	Somewhere Today	Shelly Moore Thomas	8 minutes	Depending on each other
			How Kind!	Mary Murphy	5 minutes	Passing kindness on to others
21	Caring for Animals and Insects		Hey, Little Ant	Philip and Hannah Hoose	7 minutes	Kindness, helpfulness, empathy
22	Gratitude and Caring for Our World		In My World	Lois Ehlert	2 minutes	Gratitude for the world

Lesson 23 Bringing it All Together

Lesson 24 Wrap-up

The Kindness Curriculum lessons provide opportunities for literacy learning in the classroom. Literature for children used at these lessons offers reinforcement of literacy skills as well as a way of engaging students in the lessons. Books are not just read to students; the reader engages the students in the book as an adventure, arousing their natural curiosity and problem-solving skills. Asking questions about what characters feel, what might happen next and the links with what students learn now (HMO, 2017: 63-64).

This study lasted 22 weeks and included two terms. The program was held as a game and

physical activity lessons. The SEL program is used only half an hour weekly. All participants seem to be very glad to take part in the study not only university students but also primary school pupils and their teachers.

This long-term program was successfully used for the fourth grade pupils in primary school, and is important for both teachers and parents. Of course, cultural peculiarities are very important. Developing and applying social-emotional programs are vital.

SEL aims at developing students' social-emotional skills and promoting a positive school environment. It is of great interest to educators, policymakers, and researchers

(Nickersona, 2019). SEL describes a variety of skills such as responsible decision-making, relationship skills, self-management, social awareness, and self-awareness (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2020)

DISCUSSION

A study highlighted indications of perceived positive changes in children's social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties and the importance of making and thinking about art and overcoming such difficulties in art therapy (McDonald, Holtum & Drey, 2019).

Many schools have Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (or its School-Wide form); many have SEL program in curriculum. Others have adopted mindfulness, growth mind-set, restorative practices, or the increasing popular

“kernals” interventions designed to build SEL with high efficiency (Elias, 2019).

CONCLUSIONS

By taking the time to determine where social-emotional learning can fit into the curriculum, health educators maintain high standards of practice that continue to benefit their students. Ignoring social-emotional learning is a great disservice to the students who rely on health education to learn to be their healthiest, happiest selves (Bartlett, 2019).

Social-emotional learning program is very important for well-being of children. Bear in mind that developing SEL program is not easy. Those program requires specialists, educators and child development psychologist. Adaptation to target culture using such program as Healthy Minds will be very useful. Further studies and experiments are required.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

**ОБРАНА, АДАПТОВАНА ТА ПРИЙНЯТА ПРОГРАМА СОЦІАЛЬНОГО
ЕМОЦІЙНОГО НАВЧАННЯ: ПРОГРАМА ДОБРОЗИЧЛИВОСТІ
ДЛЯ ДІТЕЙ**

Метою статті є представлення програми соціального емоційного навчання. Ця програма, розроблена Центром здорового розуму, названа програмою доброзичливості у 2017 р. Центр здорового розуму, заснований всесвітньо відомим неврологом доктором Річардом Дж. Девідсоном, пропонує створення більш доброго, розумного і співчутливого світу.

Методологія. У цій розвідці використано метод якісного дослідження. Використовувалися метод документального дослідження, спостереження та співбесіда. У якості документального дослідження використана програма доброзичливості. Цільова аудиторія – діти початкової школи віком від 6 до 7 років – були об'єктом спостереження, а вчителі були опитані.

Результати. Місія центру полягає у вихованні доброти та полегшенні страждань за допомогою наукового вивчення розуму. Існують деякі програми соціального емоційного навчання, але програма, розроблена центром, є безкоштовною. Цією програмою користувались дошкільні навчальні заклади та деякі дослідники. Дослідження включає адаптацію навчальної програми доброзичливості до турецької культури. У восьми темах програма містить двадцять чотири уроки. Ці уроки містять короткі розповіді, пісні та розважальні ігри. Програму може проводити один фахівець як у дошкільних закладах, так і в початкових класах. В процесі адаптації програма була перекладена турецькою мовою двома фахівцями і вони контролювали весь процес перекладу, що збалансувало адаптацію програми на 80%. Турецьку програму досліджували три психологи, корисна вона для турецьких дітей чи ні. Програма застосовувалася як пілотажне дослідження в першому класі початкової школи.

Висновки. Є багато позитивних результатів застосування програми, яку впроваджували вчителя. В якості рекомендації школи можуть додати цю програму до свого навчального плану, також існує потреба в більш широких експериментальних дослідженнях щодо корисності пропонованої програми.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: учні початкових класів, програма доброзичливості, соціальне емоційне навчання, розробка програми, Туреччина.

ÖZET / ABSTRACT [in Turkish]:**SEÇILMIŞ, BENİMSENMIŞ VE UYGULAMALI SOSYAL DUYGUSAL
ÖĞRENME PROGRAMI: ÇOCUKLAR İÇİN İYİLİK MÜFREDATI**

Bu yazının **amacı** bir sosyal duygusal öğrenme programı tanıtmaktır. The Centre for Healthy Minds (CHM) tarafından geliştirilen bu program Kindness Curriculum (CHM, 2017) olarak adlandırılmıştır. Dünyaca ünlü sinirbilimci Dr. Richard J. Davidson tarafından kurulan Sağlıklı Zihinler Merkezi, daha nazik, daha akıllı ve daha şefkatli bir dünya öngörüyor.

Metodoloji. Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır.

Sonuçlar. Misyon derneği, zihnin bilimsel bir anlayışıyla refahı geliştirmek ve acıyı dindirmektir. Mevcut bazı sosyal duygusal öğrenme programları vardır, ancak CHM tarafından geliştirilen program ücretsizdir. Bu program anaokulları ve bazı araştırmalar tarafından kullanıldı. Bu çalışma, İyilik Müfredatının Türk kültürüne uyarlanmasını içermektedir. Sekiz temada programda yirmi dört ders bulunmaktadır. Bu dersler arasında kısa hikayeler, şarkılar ve eğlenceli oyunlar yer alıyor. Program, anaokullarında ve ilkokul sınıflarında tek bir uzman tarafından yürütülebilir. Uyarlama sürecinde program iki uzman tarafından Türkçeye çevrildi ve tüm çeviriler kontrol edildi ve % 80 uyarlama dengelendi. Türkçe programı, Türk çocukları için yararlı olup olmadığını üç psikolog tarafından araştırıldı. Program, ilkokul birinci sınıfta arsa çalışması olarak uygulanmıştır.

Bulgular. Programın uygulanmasının öğretmenler tarafından ima edilen birçok olumlu sonucu vardır. Bir öneri olarak okullar bu programı müfredatlarına ekleyebilirler ve bu programın yararlılığı için deneysel araştırmalara ihtiyaç vardır.

ANAHTAR SÖZCÜKLER: İlköğretim Öğrencileri, İyilik Müfredatı, Sosyal Duygusal Öğrenme, Program Geliştirme, Türkiye

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