



## BEST PRACTICE

### Lessonplan

### Extracurricular Project

Theme:	Emotional Wellbeing
School:	
Age:	13-15
Duration:	50 minutes
Number of participants:	Suitable for whole class
Positioning (of tables and chairs, ...):	To be decided by the group
Material:	Focus Group Handout Large sheets of paper and colored pens
Relevant background information:	<a href="http://www.education-and-gender.eu">http://www.education-and-gender.eu</a>
Didactic approach:	Facilitative approach, the teacher should simply facilitate the lesson, but should not make comment or judge any responses.
Role of the observer:	The activity should be observed with a key focus on the different ways in which boys and girls respond to the questions. Traditionally, research and literature about boys and girls state that there is gender difference in the ability to talk about oneself especially where emotions are concerned, there is evidence which suggests that emotional intelligence is particularly advanced in girls in comparison with boys. This would be the point in the exercise - to note the differences and similarities. Do boys and girls have the same lexicon? Are there gender differences in the ability to talk about these things?

## **1. Prerequisites:**

Understanding and defining emotional wellbeing

## **2. Content:**

Class discussion

Emotional wellbeing definition.

Recognising one's own emotions, identifying the strategies to deal with them, categorising emotions and critical discussion.

Group work activity

Class discussion

Emotional wellbeing is described as being important in young people. Good social, emotional and psychological health is said to help protect young people against emotional and behavioural problems, violence and crime, teenage pregnancy and the misuse of drugs and alcohol (Adi et al. 2007).

One of the complexities in defining wellbeing and childhood wellbeing in particular, is that these are widely used concepts but which have a weak theoretical basis (Statham and Chase, 2010). And despite considerable academic and policy interest in wellbeing to date, the concept of wellbeing is difficult to determine. It has been described as 'intangible, difficult to define and even harder to measure' (Thomas, 2009: 11), and as 'conceptually muddy...[but] pervasive' (Morrow and Mayall, 2009: 221).

Research findings state that girls internalise their emotions more than the boys, but they also display more positive emotions. For instance, girls have higher rates of anxiety and sadness than boys, but outwardly express more cheerfulness and joy. Boys, on the other hand, are more likely to exhibit anger and aggression than girls. In social settings, children sometimes feel the need to conform and therefore may not freely express their true emotions, leading to internalising behaviours.

Girls and boys have different standards and evaluate themselves differently. Although girls typically do better in school than boys, they are less confident and more likely to be critical of their own academic performance. Boys, on the other hand, tend to have unrealistically high views of their own academic abilities and accomplishments.

Some girls may even hold back in school as they try to fit in with peers and avoid surpassing boys.

### 3. Educational scheme

<b>Duration</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Teacher activity</b>	<b>Student activity</b>	<b>Teaching situation: Content, working forms, media</b>	<b>Learning objective(s) / Competence development</b>  <b>Assessing Learning objective(s)</b>
10 min	To define emotional wellbeing			<p>Ask the class: what do we mean by emotion?            What do we mean by wellbeing?            What is emotional wellbeing and how does it affect us in our lives?            Literature suggests that girls are better at expressing their emotions than boys but that they tend to internalise the way they feel and will often report feeling happy when they don't really.            To what extent do you think this is true?</p>	<p>Formation of definitions.</p> <p>Quality of discussion</p> <p>Students' response to gender difference.</p>
5 min	To explore the different emotions we sometimes experience.	Teacher asks pupils to write down three emotions they have recently experienced	Write three emotions recently experienced on a post-it note.	<p>Give the class three post-it notes each.            Students note down three emotions, one on each post-it, that they have experienced recently.</p>	Note the use language and gender differences - if any.
5 min	Categorising the emotions	Teacher to facilitate the activity		<p>Stick the notes on the board and see if they can be grouped.</p> <p>Allow students to decide on the categories.</p>	How have the emotions been categorized?

10 min	Critical discussion	Teacher to facilitate the discussion	Students to discuss as a class	<p>Do the categories tell us anything? Eg have they been grouped in negative/positive emotions?</p> <p>Is it bad/ok to feel angry? Why/why not?</p> <p>Are all our emotions acceptable? Think carefully about this question... are some emotions more valid than others or is the way in which we cope and express ourselves that is important? Much of the social and emotional activity in classrooms focuses mainly on 'positive' emotion, why might this be?</p>	<p>Quality of discussion</p> <p>Ability to understand the critical points being raised.</p>
20 min	Exploring the way we feel and the strategies we use.	Give out the handouts		<p>In groups of 6, discuss the questions posed on the handouts and record the discussions in any chosen way using the paper and pens provided. In mixed classes 3 boys and 3 girls.</p>	<p>Group work skills and gender differences in the discussion.</p>
10 min	Discuss the findings and talk about what has been found.	Facilitate the discussion	Participate in the discussion	<p>Consider the findings from the activity in light of the literature, what have you learned about yourself and others as a result of this activity?</p>	<p>How do the findings illuminate understanding of emotional wellbeing and gender?</p>

#### **4. Gender specificity / gender-specific aspects / transfer to specific subjects (recommendations):**

- What are thoughtless expressions of boys and girls in this age group in terms of their emotional well-being?
- How can we help boys to express their feelings verbally better and more honest?
- What differences can be seen between boys and girls in the way they express and control their feelings ?

#### **5. Variations, special features:**

- Integrate and show 2 videos that were produced as part of the project EDGE in England for this subject (Appendix to the present best practice).
- Discussion and analysis of the questions, whether the ideas, the focus of the discussions and results differ or are rather similar as the ones in the videos.

#### **6. Results and experiences of the testphase**

It has been found during the testing of this best practice that the selection of a suitable film/ video for this age group is crucial. An appropriate audiovisual medium needs to be found that can serve as a thematic "icebreaker" ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)) and which can be used.

Also it became clear that the reference to existing resources and social experiences of the class community is extremely important and should be integrated into the group-based approach.

It is recommended to categorize the feelings (characteristics), more specific and differentiated in order to enable precise wording.

**Attachments:** (English expressions)

Group conversation <http://ippf.org/>

## Focus Group

Working together and discussing your ideas is a great way to help you understand yourself and others. Form a focus group to talk about your emotional self-awareness. Emotional self-awareness is the ability to recognise your feelings.

Share your feelings, beliefs and thoughts on the following statements.

I am most happy when...

I feel embarrassed when...

I think negative thoughts about myself when...

I feel proud of my achievements when...

For each of the statements consider the strategies you use to help you understand your feelings.

For example when you are embarrassed, how do you move on, forget what has happened and feel better about yourself?



What have you learned about yourself?

What have you learned about others?

Adapted from an activity available from:

[http://my.extension.uiuc.edu/documents/257080502080208/Emotional\\_Intelligence\\_13-18.pdf](http://my.extension.uiuc.edu/documents/257080502080208/Emotional_Intelligence_13-18.pdf)