

## Emotional intelligence and mental health education in school curriculum

Anna Kristine Psomiadis  
Seneca College, Canada

The purpose of this paper is to explore and educate on the importance of teaching emotional intelligence and coping skills to individuals and having these programs be a mandatory part of the school curriculum. If children are taught and understand their emotions, they will be able to develop healthy coping skills and manage life stressors in more positive and healthy ways. Several studies suggest unhealthy coping is related to delinquent behavior in youth; individuals with avoidant coping skills may distract themselves from problems or stress with criminal behavior and substance use. However, if individuals are never taught about emotions how can we expect them to understand emotions, handle stress and develop healthy coping skills. Throughout our lives, we experience many emotions daily and sometimes we are not able

to accurately describe what we are feeling, or we don't know what to do to help ourselves feel better. We are expected to know our emotions and how to cope in healthy ways without ever being taught. The way society is constructed makes expressing and understanding emotions almost impossible which leads to unhealthy coping methods, poor health and other issues in society such as mental health issues and crime. Emotions are a crucial and constant part of individuals lives from birth, we are taught everything from walking to eating, yet no one teaches how to cope and understand emotions. Children are vulnerable and constantly learning about themselves and the world around them, their emotions and the way they perceive things is what develops their world schema. The schema that they develop is what is the foundation of their lives and determines their future success it is important that we teach and guide them to prepare them for healthy and successful lives; children are our future and it is our job to support and guide them. It is crucial to educate children on emotions and how

to cope and therefore should be included as a mandatory requirement of the school curriculum. There has been a lot of research around child development and emotional intelligence and research shows that an interactive relationship between children's emotional and cognitive development. Emotional intelligence has been found to be a critical aspect of children's early development, learning and relationship building. Emotions are a part of life from birth throughout our entire lives and stress is a constant part of life. Every individual experience many emotions and will experience stress daily, yet no one is taught about emotions or coping skills. Individuals are left on their own to figure out emotions and find their own ways to cope and often individuals facing a great deal of stress turn to unhealthy ways to cope. The world is constantly changing and evolving yet our school system has remained the same and is structured to teach academics like Math and English but doesn't teach essential life skills such as coping. The world and society are structured to teach individuals to suppress

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emotions and that negative emotions are bad and that being vulnerable is uncomfortable, bad and embarrassing. This further causes individuals to suppress their emotions and leaves them lost for ways to cope with life. Many studies and research show that teaching emotional intelligence and coping skills has countless benefits. Emotional intelligence and coping skills increase academic performance, creates better relationships, reduces anxiety, depression, increases problem-solving skills and reduce crime and bullying. Research shows that teaching these skills to children in their early years is crucial to their development and later outcomes

in life. This highlights the need, importance and effectiveness of teaching emotional intelligence and coping skills to children in school. By teaching children this in school we ensure that they are getting the knowledge and skills they need to lead healthy and productive lives and to be prepared for their lives. It is our job to guide, teach and prepare our children for life and emotions are a critical part of life; we need to teach children about emotions and healthy ways to cope. We are failing as a society by leaving children to learn about emotions and find ways to cope on their own. Teaching emotional intelligence and coping skills in school is

crucial and a change that is necessary for society. Children only learn what they are taught so it is critical to teach them about emotions and healthy ways to cope in order for them to lead successful, productive and healthy lives overall.

## Biography

Anna has completed her social service worker diploma and is currently studying for her bachelor's degree in mental health. She has worked in daycares, schools and is currently working in the field at a youth shelter supporting homeless youth. She plans to obtain her PhD and open her own practice. She is married and has a 4year old son who she loves dearly. She has written many essays in her educational career and has many years of experience working with youth. She is very passionate about her career and mental health and hopes to make changes for society and the lives of youth.

*annakristine20@gmail.com*