



# RESEARCH & PRACTICE CONFERENCE 2023

## SUMMARY

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## WELCOME

Since the introduction in 2010 of Emotion Coaching (EC) into community and educational settings, interest has continued to grow, going from strength to strength. This is reflected in the thriving Emotion Coaching UK community, our active and resource-laden website and through national and internationally recognised research endeavours. This is something Janet, Licette and I could never have predicted, but we are thrilled to be on this exciting journey.

Ongoing research at personal, national, and international levels is corroborating earlier EC findings. This confers credibility to the belief that EC is a universal, adaptable, relational approach that promotes a sense of connection and through co-regulation supports self-regulation and resiliency. Current research is expanding foci and diversifying contexts to explore EC use in differing community and educational settings, in health services and with families. EC has also been included in national research programmes promoting the introduction of whole school approaches to support children's needs evidence. These research endeavours contribute to a growing shared knowledge base which guides EC expertise and supports effective practices.

Now we are all living in the challenging aftermath of the recent pandemic and natural disasters, the potential to actively contribute through EC has never been more apposite. Research tells us that consistent, empathetic, nurturing relationships, practices, and communities, such as those promoted by EC, are foundational to optimising problem-solving. They are integral to the development of resiliency skills, necessary to support survival and thriving.

Serendipitous in timing, this biennial EC Research and Practice Conference is a great opportunity to bring together like-minded individuals to share research findings, discuss research opportunities, celebrate EC practice developments, and consider what next for EC.

ECUK strives to promote ethical, critical, rigorous, and credible research into Emotion Coaching, and we support our community to engage in quality research as part of their everyday professional practice. We recognise that all dominant theories and research endeavours start with interested individuals wanting to explore further and test personal observations and wonderings. Historically, research grounded in the reality of everyday practice, has often been invisible, undervalued, and its contributions challenged. However, small, quality research, often completed by a single researcher, are integral to any larger research journey. Accumulative, credible pieces of focussed research that emerge from direct experience/ observation have the potential to form a body of robust research directly applicable to educational and community settings experience.

So, this conference is a celebration of the many hours of work carried out by educational, health and community practitioners, and parents/carers. We recognise and thank all those engaged in serious, meticulous research underpinned by a common desire to improve the lived experiences of children, young people, and adults.

This second ECUK Research and Practice Conference reflects the increasingly wide range of research. Presentations include an international, USA interstate project to investigate *Headstart*, a social and emotional programme supporting the needs and progress of disadvantaged children through statistical data; a national project in Turkey to train practitioners and parents to embed shared approaches to support children's emotional wellbeing and a UK local city-based project to introduce EC training for parents/carers in a cluster of EC primary schools.

An overarching aim of the conferences is to give credence to the voice of the practitioner. The day aims to provide an opportunity to raise awareness and emphasise the importance of individual, ongoing, informal research and reflection, and the value of learning with and from others. Peer-led discussion forums offer time and space to network and focus debate on the role of empathy, emotional awareness, and emotional identities in EC practice. These discussions will contribute to developing practical guidance and application of the model of EC engagement (Gilbert, 2018), which suggests there are recognisable, incremental stages to the process of integration EC into practice and settings.

Individual speakers will share personal EC journeys, offering powerful insight into EC's adaptability to complement and enhance skills and practice. These accounts include reflections on personal and professional developments in home and work settings; sharing the conundrums of setting up and running EC action research projects; implementation practice tips to adopt, adapt and sustain EC in practice and setting ethos; and a rare opportunity to listen to one child's experience and perspective of being part of a setting where EC was a routine and universal practice approach.

We hope that you enjoy this summary of the second ECUK Research and Practice Conference. We want to fire your interests, develop further understanding, support the sharing of expertise and thank you all for your ongoing companionship on the EC journey.

Louise Gilbert  
Co-founder Emotion Coaching UK

## SCHEDULE

TIME	CONTENT	NOTES
10 – 10.15	Introduction and welcome	
	<b>EC RESEARCH PROJECTS</b>	
10.15 – 10.30	<b>JAMIE SATO</b>	‘The Association between Teacher Emotion Socialization Practices and Preschoolers’ Emotional Competence.’
10.30 – 10.40	Q&A	
10.40 – 10.55	<b>NALAN KURU</b>	‘Promoting sustainable emotional and behavioural well-being in early childhood through the creation of Emotion-Friendly Kindergartens- A national Government-funded research project in Turkey.’
10.55 – 11.05	Q&A	
11.05 – 11.20	<b>GSPEC: NATASHA HANNAWAY &amp; LOUISE GILBERT</b>	‘Evaluating the Gloucestershire Schools Partnership Emotion Coaching Project - an Emotion Coaching training programme for parents/carers to support a community-wide approach to children’s health and wellbeing.’
11.20 – 11.30	Q&A	
11.30 – 11.40	<b>BREAK</b>	
11.45 – 12.15	<b>WORKSHOP:</b> Small Group Discussion	‘The role of empathy in connecting with self and others: emotional identities and emotion awareness.’
12.15 – 12.30	Feedback	

12.30 – 1.00	<b>LUNCH</b>	
1.00 – 1.10	Intro to afternoon:	
	<b>EMOTION COACHING IN PRACTICE</b>	
1.10 – 1.20	Snapshot #1: <b>SARAH AHMED</b>	Supporting parents of children and young people with neurodiverse differences around their child's 'behaviour that challenges others'.
1.25 – 1.35	Snapshot #2: <b>ANA STOICA</b>	Supporting the feeling of safety
1.40 – 1.50	Snapshot #3: <b>TAMSIN GRIMMER</b>	Emotion Coaching autistic young people
1.55 – 2.05	Snapshot #4: <b>AMELIA DONOHOE</b>	Imbedding Emotion Coaching in Schools
2.05 – 2.15	Snapshot #5: <b>KAREN PICKLES</b>	Emotion Coaching pupil voice. An autistic young person's reflection on the impact of Emotion Coaching on his understanding of emotions.
2.15 – 2.30	Q&A	
2.30 – 2.45	<b>NEW RESOURCES</b>	
2.45 – 2.55	<b>EMOTION COACHING UK: PANEL</b>	
2.55 – 3.00	<b>Evaluations &amp; farewell</b>	
	<b>CLOSE</b>	

## EMOTION COACHING RESEARCH PROJECTS

JAMIE SATO, PhD, NCSP



**Jamie Sato** studied child development to become a preschool teacher at the University of La Verne. She obtained Masters' and Doctorate degrees in school psychology at North Carolina State University. She is a nationally certified school psychologist in Scottsbluff, Nebraska.

**ROLE:** School Psychologist

**CONTACT:** [jsato@esu13.org](mailto:jsato@esu13.org)

### PRESENTATION

The Association between Teacher Emotion Socialization Practices  
and Preschoolers' Emotional Competence

#### FOCUS:

My focus was 4-year-old preschoolers attending Head Start programs, and their teachers.

#### WHAT I WAS HOPING TO ACHIEVE:

I wanted to examine to what extent preschool teachers are utilizing socialization practices (e.g., emotion coaching) and the associations were to preschoolers' emotion understanding and expressive regulation.

#### WHAT CHANGES WAS I EXPECTING:

I was expecting that children with teachers utilizing these socialization practices would be positively associated with children's emotion understanding and expressive regulation.

#### WHAT DID I DO?

I utilized the Head Start CARES dataset (data collected by Head Start) and examined teachers' emotion socialization practices (e.g., emotion coaching, fostering positive environment,

modelling) and children's emotion understanding (i.e., recognizing facial expressions, emotional situations) and expressive regulation (i.e., behaviour problems) while controlling for children's expressive language, inhibitory control, and teacher burnout.

### **WHAT HAPPENED?**

I found that teachers are overall fostering a positive classroom environment that is conducive to social-emotional learning, but as a whole, they are not utilizing explicit emotion coaching strategies and social-emotional teaching.

Surprisingly, I found that classroom climate and teacher emotion coaching did not have a significant association with children's emotion understanding. I also found that classroom climate is positively associated with children's expressive regulation, but children in classrooms with teachers utilizing emotion coaching and social-emotional teaching had poorer expressive regulation. This can be because children feel more comfortable to express their emotions and teachers are walking children through their emotional experiences.

I also found that inhibitory control plays a large role in emotion understanding and that teachers' emotional support is positively associated with emotion understanding. The Incredible Years and PATHS interventions are positively associated with emotion understanding. These two interventions focus on classroom management and climate, as well as social-emotional teaching. Unsurprisingly, I found that children with teachers experiencing burnout had more behaviour problems.

### **WHAT NEXT?**

Some of these findings are contrary to previous studies. Thus, no definitive conclusions can be made about causal relationships and more research is warranted in this area as a whole. Something to keep in mind is that two of the measures used (BPI and TSRS) were not used as they were initially designed and intended, rather the researchers at Head Start adapted them for their research purposes. Additionally, most of these measures were more than likely normed and developed in urban, White, middle-class populations. This is not representative of the Head Start population; the Head Start population are more racially and ethnically diverse, low-income, and in both rural and urban settings.

Additionally, more research is warranted on teacher emotional exhaustion and burnout. More practices and policies need to be put in place that prioritize teachers' emotional well-being. This also underscores the need for teacher training on social-emotional learning and practices. It also confirms that children's individual characteristics and differences need to be considered when teaching these social-emotional skills. Finally, this underscores the overall need for social-emotional learning and research in preschools, not just Head Start centres.



## DR NALAN KURU



**Dr Nalan Kuru** is an associate professor at Uludag University Faculty of Education in Turkey. She completed her Masters and Doctoral studies in the Department of Preschool Education of Marmara University Institute of Educational Sciences in Turkey. Nalan then completed her post doctorate studies in Canterbury University Research Centre for Children Families and Communities in the UK. Her specialty area is early childhood education. Nalan's focus in this field is on social emotional development, social skills, self-perception, and the role of emotions in learning. She is a Practitioner Trainer of Emotion Coaching UK and provides various trainings in Turkey called "Emotionally Friendly Teaching & Parenting" for preschool teachers and parents. Nalan has been carrying out studies at both academic and practical levels as part of her translation of the Emotion Coaching Approach to pre-school education institutions in Turkey.

**ROLE:** Project Coordinator

**CONTACT:** [nalankuru2@gmail.com](mailto:nalankuru2@gmail.com)

### **PRESENTATION**

'Promoting sustainable emotional and behavioural well-being in early childhood through the creation of Emotion-Friendly Kindergartens - A national Government-funded research project in Turkey.'

### **FOCUS:**

The presentation focused on the presentation of a major project on social emotional well-being and emotion coaching in early childhood education in Turkiye.

### **WHAT I WAS HOPING TO ACHIEVE:**

It aims to create a model that facilitates the dissemination of social emotional well-being and emotion coaching in early childhood education.

**WHAT CHANGES WAS I EXPECTING:**

We expect the awareness of social emotional well-being and emotion coaching to be increased and published by all stakeholders in schools. We plan to follow this up both quantitatively with some scales and qualitatively with observations and interviews.

**WHAT DID I DO?**

In the study, it was aimed to popularize the use of emotion coaching as a communication method to support social-emotional well-being in schools and environments. For this purpose, emotional coaching trainings will be given to all stakeholders.

**WHAT HAPPENED?**

The project is not yet completed. At the end of all training and mentoring activities, it is expected that emotional coaching communication will be published in home and school environments, and social emotional well-being will increase in this way.

**WHAT NEXT?**

As a result of the needs analyses we have made, it has been understood that the early childhood stakeholders (parents, teachers, staff, etc.) in Turkey do not have enough knowledge about social emotional well-being and emotion coaching. This allowed us to see that the study is a candidate to meet a very important need.

## THE GLOUCESTER SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP EMOTION COACHING PROJECT (GSPEC)



### **LOUISE GILBERT**

Research Coordinator  
ECUK Co-founder

### **NATASHA HANNAWAY**

Assistant Head of School  
Moat Primary Academy

### **CHARLOTTE HOLLOWAY**

Federation Inclusion Lead  
Longlevens Primary Fed.

### **PRESENTATION**

‘Evaluating the Gloucestershire Schools Partnership Emotion Coaching Project - an Emotion Coaching training programme for parents/carers to support a community-wide approach to children’s health and wellbeing.’

### **FOCUS:**

Gloucester’s Local Inclusion Cluster (LInCS) wanted to support initiatives to promote ‘an inclusive community model, develop sustainable mental well-being whereby schools and homes support children's emotional regulation through an agreed, city-wide, annual programme of shared practices and understanding.’

### **WHAT WE WERE HOPING TO ACHIEVE:**

Gloucester Schools Partnership (GSP) (an alliance of 39 schools in Gloucester) decided to run a project (GSPEC) to create a route planner of activities/tasks based on the research of ‘Emotion Coaching’ than can be adopted by any school with an on-line resource base. This was to be phase 1 of the initiative: a pilot project involving 5 settings – due to Covid became 3 and when relaunched (2021) included 8 settings (including 3 from original) with 7 completing the project.

### **WHAT CHANGES WERE WE EXPECTING:**

- More consistent use of EC throughout the school community
- Increase in quality and confidence of relationship between parent/carers and staff
- Resources and tools to promote, deliver, monitor and sustain EC use in setting and home

Process and measures:

- Pre-selection criteria to select participating pilot schools

- Direct and cascade model for EC training to train schools participating in project
- creation and further training for 2 EC leads per setting to act as GSPEC coordinators
- Creation with EC leads of 3 resources to support implementation of EC approach
- Mixed methods approach with measures to assess:
  - changes in parent/carers sense of belonging to school
  - parent/carer evaluation of the 4-session parent/carer Ec training course
  - Parent/carer detailed views on effects of EC on home and school life through voluntary semi-structured interviews
- EC Lead - evaluation of EC, parent/carer content and session logistics
- EC Leads – logistical needs to support the parent/carer EC course - mentoring to facilitate sessions

### **WHAT DID WE DO?**

Project focus was to promote consistent approach between home and school to support children’s mental wellbeing through the use of EC; to promote, support, sustain effective relationships across settings and with parent/carers. This was to be achieved through the development of 3 EC focussed resources:

- An online video to promote awareness of Emotion coaching and that ‘emotions matter to learning’; this was to highlight to parent/carers the focus and use of Emotion Coaching in the setting
- A parent/carer EC training course for delivery by school EC Leads: to train and encourage parent/carer understanding and involvement in using EC to support children’s emotional and social wellbeing.
- An online interactive EC planner for year group and school setting to identify where EC is introduced, developed, revisited for children, staff and parents\*

In the EC model of engagement, the primary focus of:

- Resource 1 was to raise awareness and accept the EC premise
- Resource 2 was focussed on promoting the adoption and adaption of EC and
- Resource 3 was to support integration and sustain EC in the school curriculum and school experience for parent/carers, staff, and children.

### **WHAT HAPPENED?**

Data analysis mixed methods

Data from post EC parent/carer course:

- 97% now use EC with children
- 91% felt more confident ‘talking with teachers’
- 90% more confident ‘to participate in school decisions’
- 93% knowing schools used EC felt their child’s needs were being met
- 91% felt ‘more part of the school community as a result of taking part in the course’
- 93% talked to others parent/carers about the course and EC
- 100% recommend it to other parent/carers

Thematic analysis of semi-structured parent/carer interviews and EC lead supervisions

## Resource 1

EC video used to launch GSPEC and raise awareness of EC in schools. It was used online school website, link to online newsletter, but not active in school setting as parent/carers not encouraged to congregate to meet children.

## Resource 2

PARENT/CARER Training Course: EVALUATIONS POST COURSE

- Changes in parent/carer behaviours
- Changes in parent/carers thinking about emotions
- Changes in children's behaviours
- Changes in awareness, confidence, and commitment to school environment/sense of belonging
- Emotion Coaching journeys- next steps

Parent/carers particularly enjoyed:

- Having an opportunity to talk with others and listen
- Meeting staff and knowing what is going on in the school community
- Reassurance from others
- Sense of part of the school community

EC leads running parent/carer training:

- Felt responsibility to deliver groups need to gel to discuss
- Enjoyed working in pairs with other EC lead-
- Liked the recap format for each session
- Recognised the group development dynamics of forming, storming, norming and performing
- Felt more aware and connected to parents- sense of purpose
- Frustrated by technology failures and unstable numbers of participants

## WHAT NEXT?

EC is a journey everyone can join and make it their own. Personal EC learning contributed to collective EC gain and collective EC gain encouraged personal interest to sustain EC commitment.

- If we had a crystal ball, we would not have planned a project such as this just before a pandemic!
- We would reduce/simplify our 'number of measures' and consider the restrictions/difficulties of carrying out research in a living and breathing setting (voluntary, consent, recording, capturing data).
- Perhaps ensure that prerequisites are clearly communicated/understood and to be adhered to/agreed with setting (particularly management) – perhaps signing an agreement to participate.

**LG:** For me this project reinforced my belief in the power and joy of community research approaches. The creative skill and contribution of educational practitioners has for too long been undervalued and hidden. As someone interested in research, being able to work alongside 'the experts' whose experience and knowledge is real, means these research findings and resources are reflective of current realities, 'relevant' and 'fit for purpose', they

have credibility amongst colleagues. Both the positive findings of the research and the collaborative experience of carrying out the project reinforces my belief in EC as a useful and effective tool to optimise outcomes for all.

## WORKSHOP: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

### BREAK OUT ROOM DISCUSSION:

*'The role of empathy in connecting with self and others: emotional identities and emotion awareness.'*

#### QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS:

- What does 'empathy' mean to you and how does it feel?
- How do you show empathy and recognise it in others?
- What supports you to be empathetic and what are potential barriers?
- Are there any potential risks involved in being empathetic?
- What skills do you need to feel and show connection with others?

#### FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE & DISCUSSION, CREATE 'TOP TIPS' ON HOW TO:

- Develop empathetic skills
- Maintain and sustain empathy in practice
- Teach others about the role of empathy in relationships (e.g. an activity, experiences, opportunities etc.)

These 'Top Tips For Empathy' emerged from the discussions, authored by all the contributors:

### TOP TIPS FOR EMPATHY

- Practice what we preach, being empathetic to the audience. Modelling from the top.
- Video – why children behave badly (child views) – some schools got their children to do it – very powerful for teachers to see.
- Compassionate supervision – utilize to sustain empathy. Restorative supervision.
- Times you felt like that? We all have the same emotions (all human). What did *you* need?
- Practitioner self-care – not being able to pour from an empty cup. Remember to pause and check in with self.
- Listen to hear – being emotionally present – rather than listen to problem-solve.
- Principles of attuned interaction and guidance – seeing what it looks like.
- Remain curious not furious – and help others to do the same.

- Need to develop/show a genuine empathy possibly by 'knowing' the person/sharing interests.
- Being mindful of being over-reliant on 'scripts' to avoid the lack of authenticity.
- Being aware of own well-being and being supported by a team/supporting others e.g the use of codeword
- Activities - IDP Autism had a good video to understand empathy.
- Modelling from the top.
- Recognise the difference between empathy and sympathy. Don't confuse the two, and understand why sympathy drives disconnection. *Empathy* is needed to co-regulate effectively.
- Learn to check in with yourself.
- Learn how to check in with people.
- Think about staff wellbeing and burn out in staff. Be sure to protect staff as being very empathic can be exhausting.
- Remember that boundaries are still needed with Emotion Coaching – Step 4 can help.
- Maintain ongoing connections with children to help in times of dysregulation.
- Be nonjudgmental. Be vulnerable enough to put yourself in the other person's shoes.
- Help staff to understand a child/young person's perspective – particularly around not having autonomy in their day.
- Don't take things personally.
- Manage your urges to 'fix'. Adapt strategies and individualise according to the needs of the child.
- Use non-verbal as well as verbal communication to convey empathy. Being present can sometimes be enough for a period of time.
- Be aware of your language and how you use it (tonality, rate of speech, complexity of language) as well as physical proximity, confidence to be flexible.
- Show 'unconditional positive regard'.
- Read and mirror facial and body language.

# EMOTION COACHING IN PRACTICE: SNAPSHOTS

## SNAPSHOT #1: SARAH AHMED

**TITLE:** Supporting parents of children and young people with neurodiverse differences around their child's 'behaviour that challenges others'.

**POSITION/ROLE:** Assistant Principal Educational Psychologist (APEP) in the Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support Service (BHISS)

**CONTACT:** [Sarah.ahmed@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.ahmed@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

### PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Who /What was the context of the experience I am going to share?
<p>The focus will be on sharing the real-life opportunities and challenges presented when carrying out EC work in the parent community. I will briefly summarise our EC journey in BHCC and our citywide approach/ implementation involving a wide range of professionals and parents/carers.</p> <p>I will <u>reflect on our work</u> this year with a particular cohort of parents/carers linked to Amaze, <u>a charity for families with disabled CYP in Sussex</u>. This work builds on previous EC parent work carried out via school communities and has involved initial EC training input to parents and small follow up parent groups to reflect experientially on their early journey of using EC. 6 groups of parents linked to the Amaze Neurodevelopmental Pathway (NDP) Family Training and Navigation Service accessed a 5 week group intervention to learn about EC and reflect on how they have started to use it.</p>
What was I hoping to achieve?
<p>A piece of action research in a community setting where pre and post measures indicate that EC has been a useful 'strategy' for parents to learn about and have a go at using (and linking with other approaches such as Just Right, which is well embedded across the city).</p>
What changes was I expecting to see?
<p>Parents/carers showing increased awareness of their own emotional regulation and reporting that it has been useful to learn about EC and see some of its benefits.</p>
What EC steps/tools did I use? What was my model of engagement?
<p>At the awareness and accepting stages of these parents' EC journey: supporting them to recognise and acknowledge the role of emotions and become more aware of their own emotional regulation. Through promoting and providing training and discussions, giving them a chance to practise and reflect on their experiences of using EC, using tools such as the reflective log.</p>



What was the outcome?
Not yet known as we are still running the groups, having had numerous obstacles along the way!
What would you do differently or the same next time and/or what did you learn about EC?
So many things! Ensure the work is carefully contracted to manage parental expectations. Shorter more accessible training input (not a webinar) delivered face to face with opportunities for Q&A; longer and potentially more group sessions to really give more time to build the relationships and trust within the groups etc! Once we have collated the evaluations, we will know more! But I would love to hear ideas from others!

**SNAPSHOT #2: ANA STOICA**

**TITLE:** Supporting the feeling of safety.

**POSITION/ROLE:** Early Years Teacher

**CONTACT:** [astoica@ais-antwerp.be](mailto:astoica@ais-antwerp.be)

**PRESENTATION SUMMARY:**

Who/What was the context of the experience I am going to share?
Working with a student that was extremely dysregulated and had a hard time connecting with others.
What was I hoping to achieve?
I wanted to help his spend less time in flight-or-flight, help him feel more regulated, and basically help his nervous system reach a state of regulation. As a result, I wanted to support him in improving his relationship with others.
What changes was I expecting to see?
I was hoping to build a safe and trusting relationship with him. I was not expecting to see great change in his behaviour at school in only a few months of working with him but was hoping to notice him more regulated and calmer than he was when he first joined my class. My goal was also to support his parents in building this routine of co-regulating with him and therefore, carrying on my work at home as well.
What EC steps/tools did I use? What was my model of engagement?
Mostly focused on noticing/recognizing the child’s feelings and empathizing with them as well as labelling and validating the feelings. My main focus was co-regulation.
What was the outcome?

Was often calmer and regulated after time spent together and enjoyed being closer to me.

What would you do differently or the same next time and/or what did you learn about EC?

Still need to do a reflection on this one...:)

## SNAPSHOT #3: TAMSIN GRIMMER

TITLE: Emotion Coaching autistic young people.

POSITION/ROLE: Early Years Consultant, lecturer (but speaking as a parent of autistic children)

CONTACT: [tamsingrimmer@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tamsingrimmer@hotmail.co.uk)

### PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Who/What was the context of the experience I am going to share?

I am the parent of 3 children with ASC. I am also an EC practitioner, so have been using this in the home. I have 3 girls aged between 12 and 15.  
I will share a recent story of when I used EC with my girls.  
After school one day last week they found out that the only online game they play, *School of Dragons*, is coming to an end. The servers will shut down at the end of June and no user game data will be saved. This game relates to a special interest my three girls share which is *How to Train Your Dragon*. They were devastated to say the least. My middle daughter cried non-stop for about half an hour.

What was I hoping to achieve?

At the time I wanted to calm things down, offer a holding space for their emotions and help them in the short term with coping with the emotional upheaval that they were experiencing. Longer term, every time I use EC, I hope it will support my girls to self-regulate, develop empathy and learn strategies for how to resolve conflicts independently in the future.

What changes was I expecting to see?

On the immediate level, I was hoping to see emotions calming down. Longer term, I was hoping to see changes to behavioural responses as the girls learn more about themselves and how to cope with stress levels.

What EC steps/tools did I use? What was my model of engagement?

I mostly used steps 1, 2 and 3 with elements of 4.  
Recognising emotions and acknowledging feelings.

I knelt on the floor in the lounge – they were all three on the sofa/chairs. I tried to acknowledge their feelings and empathise saying something like, “This is such a shock. You must be feeling really

upset, I know how much you love *School of Dragons*.” I made sure that I was talking softly and was trying to attune to their sadness. Although my middle daughter doesn’t usually like cuddles, I offered to hold her and she agreed, so I sat next to her on the sofa and she cuddled into my shoulder and sobbed a little. I said it was OK to be upset – that I thought it was like a bereavement for them, so they were probably feeling a huge sense of loss so it’s very natural to feel that way.

I used my knowledge of upstairs/ downstairs brain, recognising that they won’t be able to think very rationally in the midst of the massive upset.

So it took some time, then we could explore the issue a little. We talked about how long left they have with the game and also, what the phrase the servers will shut down means... We decided I would contact their cousin who has just finished a degree in games design and ask him what it means. (Which I did and, indeed, it does mean the whole game is finishing)

Later we were able to talk more proactively about what they could do. They had a discussion with me, their father and also between themselves and came up with lots of ideas in the end.

What was the outcome?

My middle daughter who had been so dreadfully upset created a rota for the three of them so that they could make the most of the time they have left – we have agreed that they can each play a few times a week until the end of June (it used to be only once per week). They are also going to document their play, taking photos and screenshots, then once the game has ended, they intend to role play the many quests they have yet to do. My eldest daughter found a petition online asking for the game makers to reconsider, which we have all signed and she has posted on lots of fan websites and chat areas. She also wrote a poem sharing her feelings about it.

What would you do differently or the same next time and/or what did you learn about EC?

We must go at the child’s pace. It was not possible to problem solve this until the girls were feeling a little less overwhelmed. Sometimes just being there and holding the child is enough to begin with. Sometimes I wonder if I go in with words too soon.

## SNAPSHOT #4: AMELIA DONOHOE

TITLE: Imbedding Emotion Coaching in Schools.

POSITION/ROLE: Previous Head of School, Kent

CONTACT: [Arb4464@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Arb4464@hotmail.co.uk)

### PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Who/What was the focus of my inquiry related to this presentation?

Implementing a whole School approach to Emotion Coaching in a small, rural Primary School in Kent. The school currently has 4 mixed age classes, with 60 children on role and 16 members of staff. The school currently sits at 37% SEN.

### The impact I thought EC would have on my subject or what I wanted to find out

I wanted to improve relationships between adults and children. There were key adults in the school which were natural Emotion Coaches, and these adults would be called upon to deescalate and regulate children to enable them to access learning. I wanted to widen children's connected relationships to beyond key adults, to all adults in the school. We were fortunate enough to have the opportunity for all teachers, Senior leaders, and the pastoral team to be trained in Emotion Coaching over two, two-hour twilights delivered by Educational Psychologist Jeanette Slater, the training was in depth and inspired the team to imbed the approach in their own practice. I felt that Emotion Coaching was supported by science, but also a simple enough framework for all adults to use. I wanted to create a consistent approach to behaviour and relationships across the whole School.

### How would I notice this?

- We monitored staffs use of Emotion Coaching through incidental observations.
- We would regularly feedback to staff and reflect upon their practice with them.
- We would notice moments that could have been improved, but also moments of success.
- We would ask staff to write accounts and logs of behaviour incidences. We would ask them to include their actions, as well as the children's, to encourage staff to unpick their reactions and behaviours when a child was escalated.
- We asked staff to notice when steps were used and to log how quickly children would begin to deescalate.
- We would celebrate the successes of implementation of the approach with the whole team.
- We placed high expectations on staff's interactions with the children.
- We gathered feedback from parents who used emotion coaching with their children.

### What did I do?

- We made emotion coaching a priority on our School Improvement Plan and placed it high on SLT's agenda.
- We implemented a whole School approach to Emotion Coaching by making sure all adults in the school had been trained.
- We used the ethos and framework to hang our new Relationships Policy, which was created based on emotion coaching.
- We created 20-minute workshops for teachers and teaching assistants to keep the initiative alive and to support staff with their Emotion Coaching journey.
- We delivered parent workshops, which focused on the strategies and science around the hand model.
- We created a scheme of learning and resources for ks1 and ks2 which focused on teaching children about their emotions, the hand model and de-escalation strategies.
- We used Emotion Coaching strategies on children's provision plans and created mantras and scripts to support staff.

### What happened?

Impact on Staff and Pupils relationships:

Relationships across the children and staff improved. I noticed staff making efforts and initiating opportunities to relate. Staff showed more interest in learning about individuals and what made

the children tick. Staff seemed to place their relationship with a child higher on their agenda, than before the school had implemented Emotion Coaching.

Impact on Children:

Children were more engaged with learning and cared more about what all adults felt about them. They seemed to want praise and acknowledgement of positive moments from all adults, rather than just key adults. Children became more emotionally attuned to their peers; we observed children Emotion Coaching each other. We noticed children being more empathic towards their peers, the more they recognised and labelled each other's emotions. They would repeat key phrases e.g 'I can see you are crying; I wonder what has made you sad' etc.

School culture and Ethos:

Logs of behaviour incidences where SLT were asked to intervene reduced in number. Staff felt more equipped to Emotion Coach and regulate children. Staff felt that Emotion Coaching added to their 'tool kit'. Before Emotion Coaching all escalated behaviours would be dealt with by SLT and pastoral support. Since Emotion Coaching staff felt empowered by using the strategies as they could see the impact it had when dealing with an escalated child. Over the past 9 months of implementing Emotion Coaching, I saw a reduction in suspensions; excludable behaviours (which included physical and verbal aggression towards staff and children) and a reduction in all recorded behaviour incidences.

Personal learning/Reflections

Next steps: What you'd do differently or the same next time and/or what did you learn about EC?

I learnt that implementing a whole School approach has its challenges, particularly with staff who are reluctant to change or see another way to address children's behaviour. I learnt that emotion coaching takes time to implement, however if it is a school priority it can be implemented fairly quickly and effectively. I feel that the science behind Emotion Coaching engages even the most reluctant staff. The simple, yet detailed steps mean that even staff whose core beliefs don't align with Emotion Coaching, were able to deliver the steps and engage with the strategy. I think training all staff is essential to a whole school approach and this should include every adult in the school including parents, having all parties on board is where I feel you will see lasting change in ethos. I feel that making Emotion Coaching a part of a school's policy creates sustainability and longevity to the approach. I think that incorporating Emotion Coaching into policy means that the journey is kept alive. As part of the policy, all new staff are trained in Emotion Coaching and Emotion Coaching becomes part of the steps we take to help children de-escalate, repair damage done, and problem solve to support a better outcome for themselves the next time they face a similar situation.

## SNAPSHOT #5: KAREN PICKLES

**TITLE:** Emotion Coaching pupil voice. An autistic young person's reflection on the impact of Emotion Coaching on his understanding of emotions.

**POSITION/ROLE:** Head of School, Kent

**CONTACT:** [01677422446](tel:01677422446)

**PRESENTATION SUMMARY:**

Who/What was the context related to this presentation?
William attends Mowbray School for pupils with SEND. He has progressed through the school and is now in year 11. William is Autistic.
What was I hoping to achieve or address?
This amateur video was intended for a small number of staff interested in Emotion Coaching and Autism at a National Autistic Society event.
What changes was I expecting? How would I notice this?
I found it very powerful to record Williams spontaneous responses, there were no 'second takes', this was a recorded conversation and spontaneous pupil voice.
What EC steps, tools, and/or model of engagement did I use?
n/a
What was the outcome?
A resource which gives an insight into the genuine and powerful impact of Emotion Coaching.
Personal learning/Reflections What would you do differently or the same next time and/or what did you learn about EC?
Make a more professional video!

## NEW RESOURCES...

### THE 'ETHAN' SERIES OF VIDEOS

In this series of videos, an adolescent boy Ethan struggles to remain focussed on the task set for him in class. In each video his class teacher illustrates one of the emotional styles we use to respond to emotions in others: emotion disapproving, emotion dismissing, laissez-faire, and emotion coaching. At the end of each video, a guide supports reflection about the style depicted and the impact the interaction has upon Ethan, the teacher, and the other pupils.

You can find this new resource on our website:

<https://www.emotioncoachinguk.com/copy-of-professionals-parents-carers>

### THE HAND MODEL OF THE BRAIN - Animation

An animated adaptation of Dr. Dan Siegel's original concept, 'The Hand Model of the Brain' is aimed at children and young people, as well as the adults who interact with them. In this video links are made between how the body, brain and emotions work together to support our responses to stress.

You can find this new resource on our website, as well as here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kx7PCzgOCGE&t=8s>

## IN CONCLUSION, SOME REFLECTIONS...

A wonderful day of people coming together, 'being curious' and continuing to support our Emotion Coaching community.

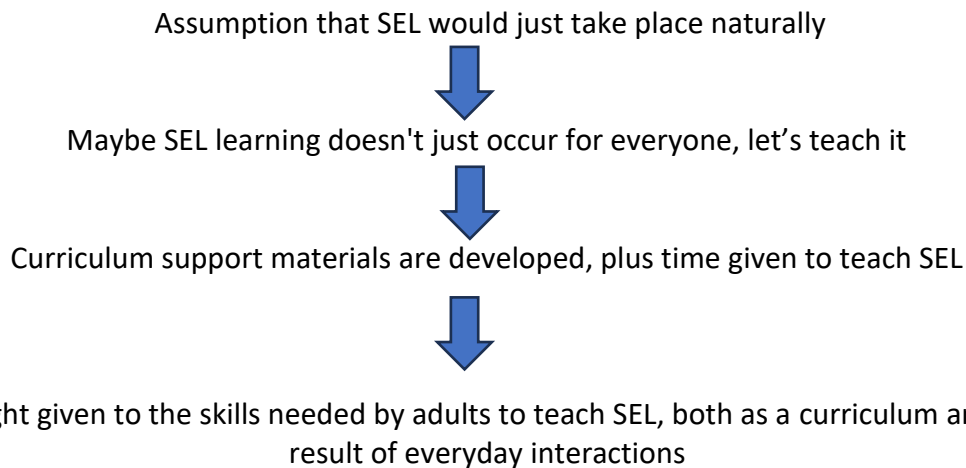
People appreciated hearing about work related to Emotion Coaching that is going on in settings different to their own, in different roles and in different countries. As usual, everyone enjoyed getting into the breakout rooms and having a chance to chat about Emotion Coaching with a wide range of people. The empathy themed discussion guides will generate another resource for everyone.

The larger research projects certainly were diverse in terms of location, data collection methods and research focus. Three research papers covered three countries, USA, Turkey and England. Different ways of collecting data were employed, from using existing data sets, to collecting new data in response to a development project. The foci of the projects were also diverse; teacher emotion socialisation practices, designing a model to promote social and emotional wellbeing in early childhood education incorporating both home and school environments and promoting inclusion between home and school.

A couple of threads seemed to link all of the presentations.

### 1. THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

Each project could be seen to be somewhere placed along this development line:



### 2. CASCADING MODELS OF SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEL

Throughout the presentations the following ripples of influence were evident

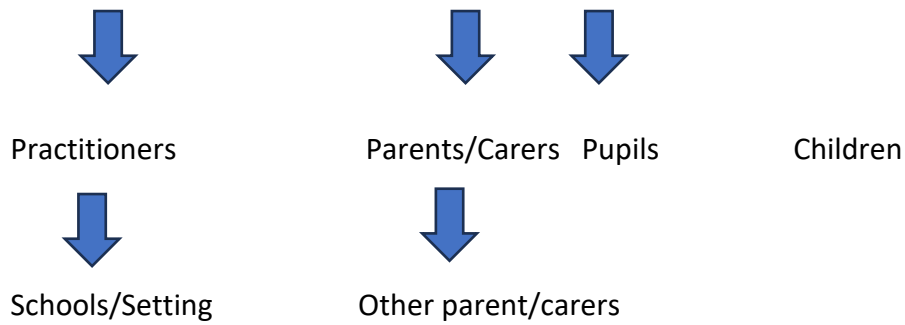
ECUK

School/Setting

Parents/Carers







In addition to the larger projects, the ‘snapshot presentations’ gave us an opportunity to learn about the reflective practices of some of our Practitioner Trainers. These presentations were indicative of the everyday ongoing research that we all do in our lives.

We were fortunate to hear about the wonderful work some settings and people are engaging in using Emotion Coaching to support neurodivergent pupils, children, and their families. A highlight for many was to view the videos of a young male pupil with additional needs, speaking about being Emotion Coached.

As always, the work with individual children and pupils is embedded within a context. One snapshot presentation shared how a small primary school implemented Emotion Coaching to improve relationships between adults and children. Impacts were noted on children's academic and social and emotional learning, overall behaviour in the school and staff confidence to deal with behaviours they found challenging. It was useful to hear how the head managed the organisational challenges presented by the initiative.

A wonderful time spent together. We thank all the presenters for making the day inspiring, engaging and informative. Without them and the work you all do, to support the development of children’s social and emotional development, days like this could not take place.

In response to one of the comments made after the conference “please keep this day in the diary every year!” We’ll see you next time!

Licette Gus  
Co-founder Emotion Coaching UK

## CITATION

If using any of this material as a citation, please use the following:

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