

Using Philosophy for Children to promote Emotional Health and Well-being

Aim of funded project

To produce a video showing how primary teachers can use Philosophy for Children to give children the best possible opportunity to learn and to grow.

Background

As part of Antidote's three-year Emotional Literacy Initiative with partner schools in the London Borough of Newham, Antidote introduced a method called Philosophy for Children to staff and pupils at Gallions Primary School. A small grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in June 2003 allowed us to commission a professional film crew to record the extraordinary impact of Philosophy for Children on children's emotional and social development as well as on their thinking and reasoning skills. In November 2003 Antidote requested further funds from The Funding Network to produce a stand-alone video and teachers' manual, and to provide further training for lead teachers.

TFN funding

James Park and Harriet Goodman of Antidote presented the project at the November 2003 TFN funding day, kindly sponsored by Doro Marden. A generous total of £5,025 was raised for the project.

Summary of progress with the TFN grant

Antidote has used the grant to produce a 22-minute video with accompanying teachers' booklet called *Thinking Together: Philosophy for Children and Emotional Literacy*. Available from Smallwood Publishing for £19.99, the resource is being well received at conferences and training events around the country. TFN funding also provided advanced training for seven lead teachers, enabling them to coach colleagues. The Department for Education and Skills has responded to growing interest in the method and its impact on children's learning by incorporating 'community of enquiry' in the Social and Emotional Behavioural Skills strategy, to be rolled out across England and Wales from summer 2005.

More on how we used the TFN funding

Producing the video and booklet was a collaborative effort between Harriet Goodman of Antidote, film producer Sue Howes of halovine, Philosophy for Children consultant Sara Liptai, and Nathalie Allexant and Lisa Naylor of Gallions Primary, the two teachers whose sessions we had filmed.

Sue Howes, who generously donated her own time at no cost, drafted the script for a 22-minute video. She worked closely with Harriet to define the focus and to select appropriate footage. Once Lisa, Nathalie and Sara approved the script, we commissioned Channel 20-20 to edit the film over three long days in January 2004.

Harriet worked with Lisa, Nathalie and Sara to draft a 24-page teachers' booklet, which includes detailed suggestions for facilitating each stage of an enquiry. It describes the powerful impact of P4C when used as part of a whole-school approach to improving relationships and enhancing learning.

In September 2004 we launched the completed *Thinking Together* video/booklet resource in partnership with Smallwood Publishing, a leading provider of educational resources on emotional health and well-being. Early sales are promising, and we are now distributing flyers promoting the resource to local education authorities and headteachers nationally.

Report to The Funding Network From Antidote: Campaign for Emotional Literacy

TFN funding also covered the cost of an advanced training course in December 2003, leading to the certificate of Coach in the Facilitation of Philosophy for Children (SAPERE level 2). The seven participants from Gallions and other schools are now supporting less experienced colleagues in using the method. Harriet also participated in the training and is coaching interested teachers at Lister Community School, Antidote's secondary partner.

Results achieved

The Department for Education and Skills recommends the use of 'community of enquiry' (i.e. P4C) in the Social, Emotional and Behavioural Skills (SEBS) strategy. On Antidote's recommendation, teachers from Gallions were involved in writing SEBS curriculum materials. These are currently being piloted in 25 local education authorities; refined materials will be offered to all primary schools in England and Wales from summer 2005. That should stimulate demand for 'Thinking Together', one of few available resources on how to facilitate philosophical enquiry, and the only one with a video element.

SAPERE, the organisation promoting Philosophy for Children in the UK, has incorporated the video in its standard level 1 training course. Harriet will run a workshop on promoting emotional literacy through P4C at the SAPERE annual conference on 12 November 2004, which is being run in partnership with the National Union of Teachers.

Since November 2003 over 500 school leaders, teachers and local authority advisers have been introduced to *Thinking Together* at Antidote conferences in London, Birmingham and Manchester, and at Antidote-led training events in Cumbria, Somerset, Cambridge, Lincolnshire and around London. Evaluation forms and follow-up enquiries from these sessions indicate that the footage stimulates teachers to try it for themselves.

'I think children can really surprise us if we give them a chance. I can't wait to start using this in my class.'

*Teacher at St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School, Fulham,
after Antidote-led training on P4C and emotional literacy, 8 October 2004*

Breakdown of expenditure

Professional film editing: (total in next column includes VAT):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editing time (3 days @ £625 per day) • Voice-over and music (£270) • Graphics (1 day @ £350) • Tape stock and mastering (£50) 	(2,990)	
SAPERE level 2 training course for 7 teachers & Antidote project leader:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara Liptai, lead trainer (5 days @ £350 per day) • Trainer's accommodation (£259) and travel (£55) 	(2,064)	
Total expended	(5,054)	
Total grant from TFN		5,025

Media coverage

- *London Evening Standard*, 6 October 2003: Angela Neustatter on Antidote at Gallions
- *Emotional Literacy Update* issue 2, November 2003: Harriet Goodman and Sara Liptai on how P4C promotes emotional literacy
- National Association of Headteachers *Primary Leadership Paper Number 12* May 2004: issue on emotional literacy and emotional intelligence includes James Park on Antidote's work at Gallions
- 'You and Yours', BBC Radio 4, 4 September 2004: Will Ord of SAPERE on P4C
- *TES Teacher*, 10 September 2004: Roger Sutcliffe of SAPERE on P4C and Citizenship
- *TES Teacher*, 15 October 2004: feature on emotional intelligence will highlight Antidote's work and the *Thinking Together* resource