



**International Teacher-Training and Classroom-Intervention Program**

**WeC.A.R.E 2014 - 2015**

**Promoting Positive School Climate and Psychological Resilience in the School Community**

Program Director

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International Program WeC.A.R.E. is part of the larger, multi-level, awareness-raising, prevention, education and intervention program "Connecting for Caring" (C4C)





## Join our International School Partnership Program WeC.A.R.E. 2014-2015

### In this invitation you will find:

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### 1. What is WeC.A.R.E.?

**WeC.A.R.E.** is an online, international teacher training and classroom intervention program that aims to enhance the students' psychological wellbeing, build resilience, foster team-spirit, and create a global support network of educators, psychologists and students (<http://www.connecting4caring.gr/en/content/description-4>).

WeC.A.R.E. is part of the larger, multi-level prevention, awareness-building, education and intervention project Connecting for Caring <http://www.connecting4caring.gr> created and implemented by the Society for School and Family Consultation and Research in Athens, Greece <http://www.esose.gr>, in cooperation with the Center for Research and Practice in School Psychology of the University of Athens <http://www.centerschoolpsych.psych.uoa.gr>, with the generous donation of Stavros Niarchos Foundation during the years 2012-2014.

Project Director: Prof. Chryse Hatzichristou, University of Athens, Greece.

### The main Goals of WeC.A.R.E.

- To support children, teachers and schools, especially during the difficult times of economic hardship and other unsettling events.
- To create bridges that will promote cultural understanding, collaboration and collective action.

- To build resilience and foster positive attitude in the classroom.
- To build an international network of schools as caring communities, in collaboration with university faculty members and psychological associations in Greece, USA and other countries.

## 2. Why should WeC.A.R.E.?


Children today are faced with a large number of major challenges that can have a detrimental effect on their psychological wellbeing and learning. Training and intervention programs such as WeC.A.R.E. can effectively help children through these challenges.

### Major Global Challenges

- Loss or reduced incomes, unemployment of parents
- Economic crisis affecting many countries
- Limited access to medical and mental health care
- Migration and refugees
- Violence in schools and communities
- Limited educational opportunities
- Limited provision of school psychological services
- Lack of in service teachers' training

### Negative Outcomes for Children

- ▶ Increased emotional and behavioral problems
- ▶ Drop out
- ▶ Bullying and violence in schools
- ▶ Drug use

 School intervention programs minimize negative outcomes (risk factors) and promote protective factors in students' lives by helping all children to achieve school success and develop positive life skills that will prepare them for a successful adult life (Biglan, Flay, Embry, & Sandler, 2012; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004).

## 3. Who can participate?

- Any teacher of a kindergarten, elementary school or junior high school class from an institution anywhere in the world where Greek is taught.
- Requirements for participating:
  - basic computer knowledge (i.e. accessing the internet, using email, ability to download pdf and other audio, video, or text files) and internet access - in order to be able to access the training material and communicate with our expert psychologists team, as well as the other program participants.
  - personal e-mail account
  - internet access **in the classroom** (or other accessible part of the school) at least once a month in order to use the online interactive game Sailling4Carring with the students.

Note: The material and activities are adapted for each class level and are available both in Greek and in English.

#### 4. How is the program structured and what is the time commitment required?

The classrooms that participate in WeC.A.R.E. are divided in groups of 4 or 5 classes from different countries – at least 2 in each group are from Greece. Together they make an online sailing journey passing through a series of islands-stations inspired by Ancient Greek Literature and Mythology (e.g. “*The journey of Odysseus*”). Each island station constitutes the platform for each of the modules of the program.



WeC.A.R.E. 2013-2014 consists of **5 monthly modules** on the following topics:

- a) **Building psychological resilience and fostering positivity**
- b) **Recognizing, expressing and regulating emotion**
- c) **Coping with stress and anxiety**
- d) **Understanding diversity**
- e) **Closing project**

**Each module** consists of an online training and preparation session for the teacher, 2 in-class activities and a joint project. The program preparation materials will be available online through the interactive online platform <http://www.connecting4caring.gr/milesplus>

##### a) **Teacher Training and Preparation (approximately 2 hours per month)**

- Viewing training videos (webinars)
- Viewing videos with instructions for the in-class activities
- Reading material
- Preparing the materials for the in-class activities
- Answering a short questionnaire on the material



Note: the videos and other materials for each module are uploaded once a month and each teacher can access, prepare and implement the activities in their class anytime before that month's deadline.

##### b) **In-class Intervention: 2 In-class Activities (2-3 class sessions per month)**

Performing the activity with the students in class according to the instructions. Each activity is planned to last one class session but a teacher may devote more time to an

activity if they find it necessary (Examples 2013-2014: <http://www.connecting4caring.gr/en/content/examples-implementation-program>)

### c) Joint Project (1 class session per month)

One of the key innovative features of the WeC.A.R.E. program is the interactive online game Sailing4Caring <http://www.connecting4caring.gr/en/content/interactive-game-1> through which students make a virtual journey on board the WeC.A.R.E. School Boat. **Each class inhabits a cabin along with the other 3 or 4 classes from Greece & other countries worldwide.** Through the Sailing4Caring game the classes can communicate, collaborate on their group projects, and share their work with their peers from around the world.



The joint project consists in formatting and uploading the product of the second in-class activity together with the product of the other classes in the group. It does not require extra work in terms of preparation, but rather, it is a collaborative synthesis of what has come out of the second in-class activity. For example if the second activity of a particular module produced a collection of photographs, the joint project could consist in having each class upload these photographs on a larger online group album. Teachers that form a 2 or 3 member group can communicate via our online forum be creative in the way in which they will put this material together. The classes' interaction and sharing of material will take place via the online game platform “Sailing for Caring”

## 5. How do I get support?

The teachers who participate in the WeC.A.R.E. program, apart from being paired with three or four other teachers and their classes, they are also placed in a larger group of teachers (approximately 15 members) with whom they can interact via our online platform. The platform includes a **supervision forum**, where teachers can ask questions or comment on the implementation of the program and receive support from our specialized group of Psychologists throughout the course of the program. Live supervision is also an option.

## 6. How has WeC.A.R.E. achieved its goals so far?

**Since the start of the program in 2012 Greek-speaking teachers and students from all over the world were connected with teachers and students from Greece, shared their ideas, and collaborated creatively on group projects.**

A multilevel assessment model was developed for the WeC.A.R.E. program evaluation, which included process and outcome evaluation by both teachers and students. Analysis of the evaluation data suggest that **the WeC.A.R.E. program significantly benefited both teachers and students.**

In particular, teachers reported that following the implementation of the program the students appeared to:

- a) Cooperate more with their schoolmates
- b) To behave with mutual respect
- c) To support each other more.
- d) Recognize and express their feelings
- e) Improve their social skills
- f) Improve their interpersonal relationships
- g) Foster intercultural understanding
- e) Improve their school performance

More specifically, teacher participants of the WeC.A.R.E. program reported:

- *“The theoretical and practical training of the program helped me find better ways to handle my emotions both in and outside school.”*
- *“Implementing the program in my class this year has taught me methods of enhancing positive classroom climate that I plan to continue using in my classes from now on.”*
- *“I feel more confident as a teacher and better able to handle difficult situations with my students.”*
- *“The program helped to strengthen my students’ relationships and to understand and accept each others’ feelings. Additionally, they realized that their classmates and peers from other schools share the same concerns.”*
- *“The program gave my students the opportunity to get to know themselves and each other better and to come closer. Now they feel more comfortable acknowledging and expressing their emotions.”*
- *“Through the WeC.A.R.E. program my students learned better ways to handle their emotion. They realized that they are not the only ones who feel stressed, sad or worried. They became a stronger team. They got to know both themselves and their peers better.”*

Students participants of the WeC.A.R.E. program reported:

- *“Meeting students from other countries and schools gave us the chance to found that adolescents who live in different countries can be quite different in character or habits but they have the same feelings and express the same concerns.*
- *“I learned to cooperate better with other students”.*
- *“We came closer to each other in a different way and we realized that sometimes the people next to us are in need for a good word or a smile more often than we thought.”*
- *“I realized how I can acknowledge and protect my emotions.”*

- “I learned effective techniques for handling stress.”

## 7. Do I receive certification?

Following successful completion of the program the teacher will be awarded a Certificate of Attendance for **90 hours of continuing education training**. In order to receive certification participants need to have implemented the program in full and to have completed the necessary in-class activities and questionnaires within the appropriate deadlines.

## 8. How much does it cost to participate?

Starting from this year, the Greek-speaking schools and teachers from around the world **become the key allies of the program** as have a change not only to **participate** for a small fee, but also, if they can and wish to do so, to **offer their much needed support to schools in Greece** by sponsoring their participation! See the Tuition Fees table for the academic year 2014-2015 below.

<b>Tuition Fees November 2014 - June 2015</b>		
<b>Participants</b>	<b>Euro (€)</b>	<b>Dollars (\$)</b>
<b>1 teacher/class</b>	300€	400\$
<b>2 teachers/classes</b> from the same school or funded by the same person/institution*	550€	750\$
<b>3 teachers/classes</b> from the same school or funded by the same person/institution	800€	1100\$
<b>4 teachers/classes</b> from the same school or funded by the same person/institution	1000€	1350 \$

\* Participation of more than one teacher per school increases the effectiveness of the program in strengthening psychological resilience and positive climate in the school community as a whole.

## 9. How do I apply?

**Apply online by October 15th!**

Individual teacher or group of teachers from the same school:

<http://www.connecting4caring.gr/content/wecare-2014-2015-application-wecare-2014-2015-teachers>

Schools, parents associations, or other education-focused institutions:

<http://www.connecting4caring.gr/content/wecare-2014-2015-0>

**10. How can I offer sponsorship to one or more teachers/schools & support the WeC.A.R.E. Program?**

Anyone who wishes to offer the gift of this educational journey to Greek-speaking students from Greece and the Greek Community abroad can do so by **sponsoring their participation!** **Note:** if you wish to sponsor one or more teachers/classes from Greece and/or abroad you can also benefit from the **group rates** in the fees-table above. e.g. if a teacher/school/individual/other institution from the US wishes to support 2 teachers/classes from the US plus 2 teachers/classes from Greece they can do so by paying the price tagged above as “4 teachers/classes from the same school”. You can choose a to **direct your gift to a specific school/area of Greece or abroad**, or you can offer a sponsorship that will fund the participation of **Greek teachers/classes based on need**.

**To become a supporter** email us at **administrator@connecting4caring.gr** stating your name, the number of teachers/classes you wish to support and the teacher, school or area of Greece and abroad to which you wish to direct your donation if you have a preference.

**WELCOME ON BOARD!!!!**