

Fostering ethic of care in the classroom: the effects of creative and manual activities on the teacher-student relationship.

Guillaume Massy & John Didier

HEP Vaud / CREAT

CARE Study Day, Lausanne, 04.07.2025

Presentation outline



Introduction

Theoretical framework

Problems and research questions

Hypotheses

Methodology

Main findings

Discussion

Contributions, limitations and prospects

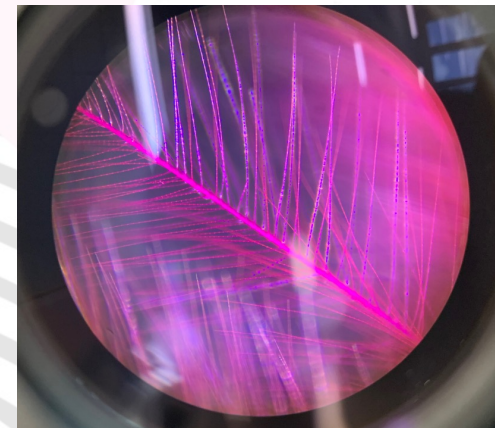
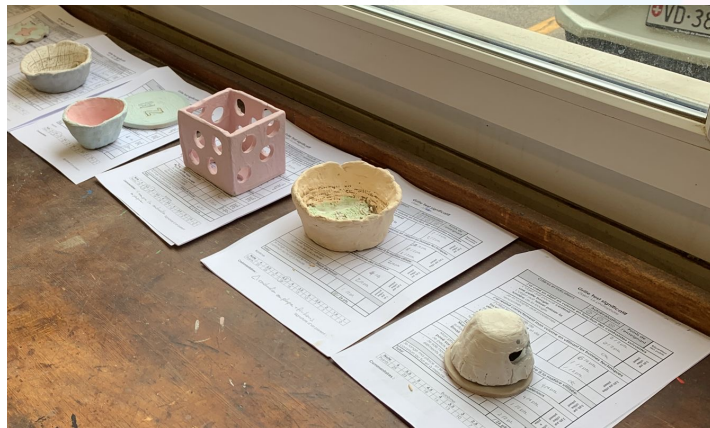
Conclusion

Introduction



Disciplinary context : Creative and manual activities

- > Creative and manual activities = experimentation, autonomy, collaboration
- > The teacher: support for the development of creative and technical skills
- > Materiality as a mediator of relationships



Theoretical framework

Why take an interest in the teacher-student relationship?

- ▶ Care translates into a posture of accompaniment that values taking into account the singular needs of each student, the co-construction of a climate of trust and the recognition of each person's subjectivity (Laville, 2023)
- ▶ The quality of the teacher-student relationship: a key factor in well-being and success (Reis et al., 2023)
- ▶ Teaching is above all taking care of students' emotional and social needs (Noddings; 2015)
 - ▶ The ethic of care: benevolence, listening, attention (Gilligan, 1992; Noddings, 2005)
 - ▶ A teacher who is attentive, present and able to adjust his or her practices nurtures a quality relationship (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009)

Issues and research questions

Issues

- To what extent does teaching creative and manual activities (CMA) influence the perception of the teacher-student relationship and how do the activities promote this development?

Research questions

- Does the integration of CMA modify students' perception of care?
- Which dimensions of care change the most: support, listening, fairness, benevolence?
- Are there gender, age or class differences?

Hypotheses



- ▶ **H1:** CMA significantly improves perception of care.
- ▶ **H2:** The effect is stronger on the “support” dimension than on “qualities”.

(Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Whitehead et al., 2021)

Methodology

Participants

- ▶ 43 students aged 10 to 11 (M=10.60)
 - ▶ Cohorte Autumn : 19 students (M = 10.60 ; F = 10 ; M= 9)
 - ▶ Cohorte Spring : 23 students (M = 10.60 ; F =14 ; M= 9)
- ▶ Balanced gender distribution (F=20; M=23)
- ▶ Students did not initially know the CMA teacher

Scheme : 12 weeks of ACM teaching

- ▶ Ceramics/modeling (6 sessions): basic techniques, free creation
- ▶ Paper/cardboard (5 sessions): folding, cutting, binding
- ▶ Enrichment of the material library
- ▶ 1 reinforcement session, 1 self-assessment/evaluation session
- ▶ Atmosphere centered on exploration, autonomy, co-construction of life rules

Instruments de mesure

Caring Student-Teacher Relationship (CSTR) scale

(Whitehead et al., 2021)

- ▶ 16 items (Likert scale 1 to 5)

Measures two dimensions

- ▶ Teacher support & attention (10 items: 1 to 10)
- ▶ Caring qualities (6 items: 11 to 16)
- ▶ Sample item: “My teacher is attentive to how I feel.”

Caring Student-Teacher Relationship (CSTR) scale
(Whitehead et al., 2021)

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat true	Pretty much	Very true
1. My teacher helps me when I'm sad.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. My teacher is helpful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I can trust my teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. My teacher takes care of me and the other students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. My teacher gives me respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. My teacher listens to me and my problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I can talk to my teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. My teacher gives me time to cool down.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. My teacher supports me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. My teacher treats me fairly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. My teacher is always nice to everyone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. My teacher respects people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. My teacher is kind.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. My teacher is friendly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. My teacher is calm.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. My teacher is caring.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

overall results

Overall care score

- Mean pre : 66.6 Mean pot: 71.7
- Mean difference : +5.2 points (**t = -4.05 ; p < .001**)

Size effect (Cohen's d) : -0.65

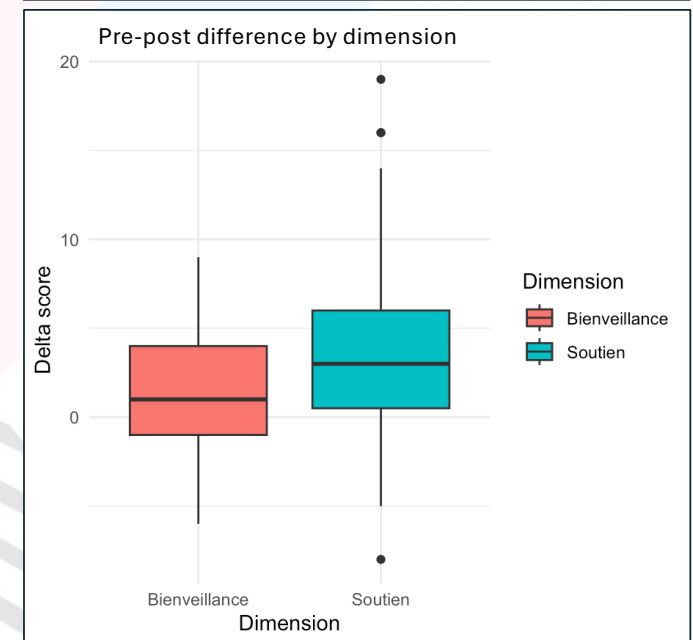
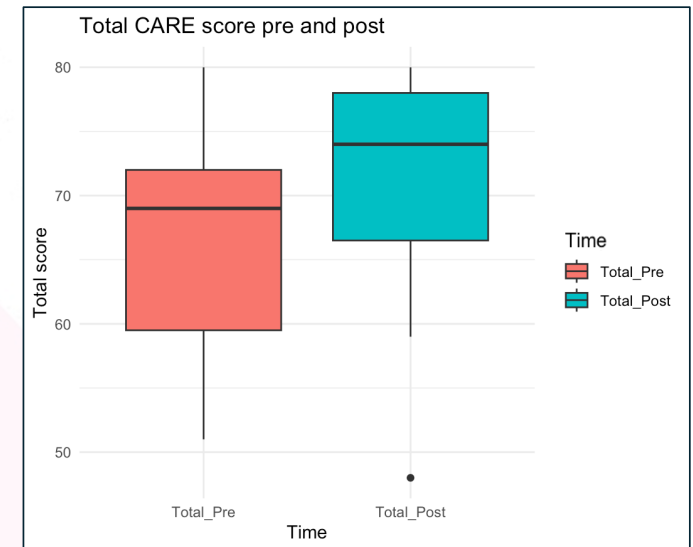
Teacher support & Attention

- +3.8 points (t = -4.38 ; p < .001 ; d = -0.68)

Caring qualities

- +1.3 points (t = -2.27 ; p = .029 ; d = -0.43)
- Significant difference : (t = 3.26 ; p < .002)

No significant difference by gender or class



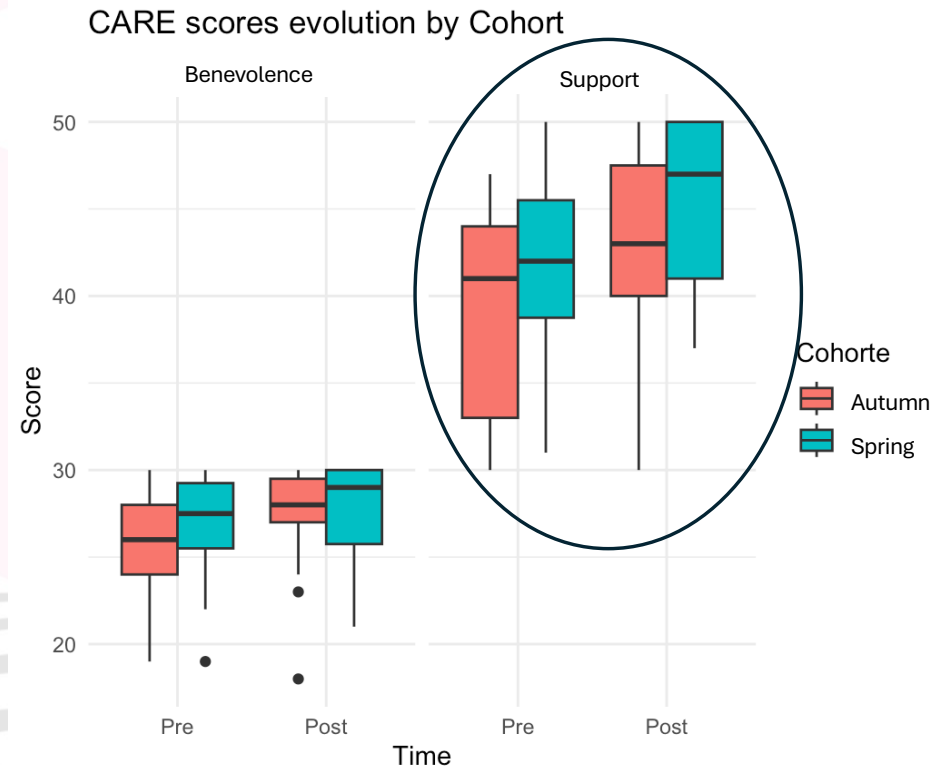
Results by cohort : support end attention

Automne group

- ▶ Mean pre : 39.26 Mean pot: 43.04
- ▶ Mean difference : +3.78 points (t = -3.38; p < .0027)
- ▶ **Size effect (Cohen's d) : -0.66**

Easter group

- ▶ Mean pre : 41.7 Mean pot: 45.6
- ▶ Mean difference : +3.9 points (t = -2.77; p < .0012)
- ▶ **Size effect (Cohen's d) : -0.71**



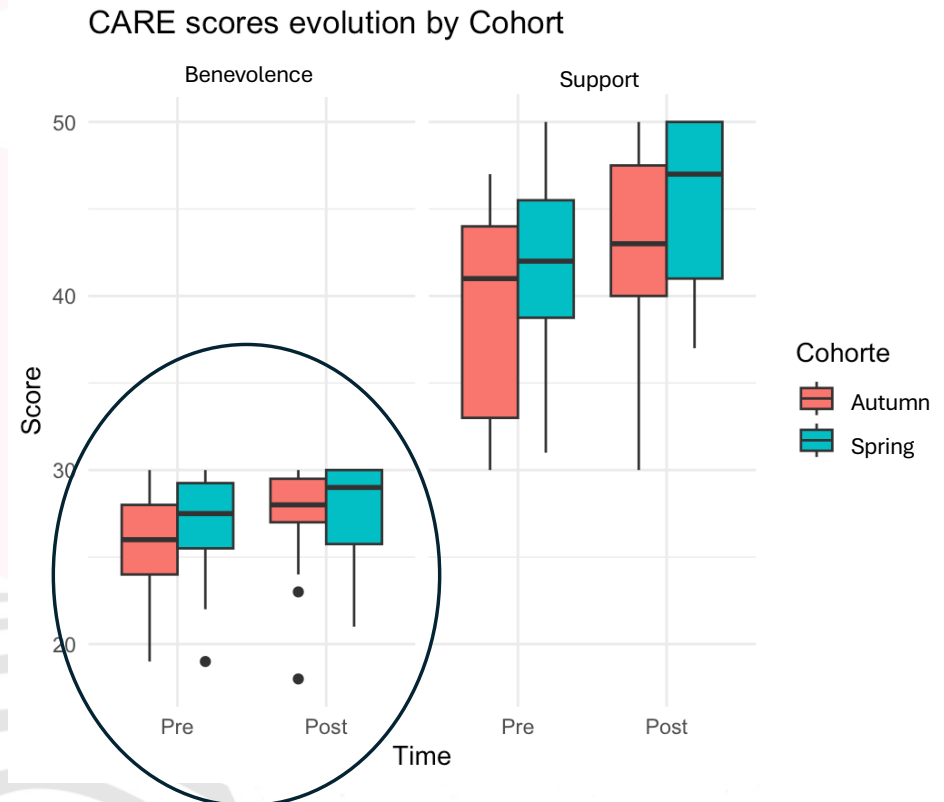
Results by cohort : benevolence

Automne group

- ▶ Mean pre : 25.52 Mean pot: 27.39
- ▶ Mean difference : +1.77 points (t = -2.31; p < .0031)
- ▶ **Size effect (Cohen's d) : -0.62**

Easter group

- ▶ Mean pre : 26.95 Mean pot: 27.65
- ▶ Mean difference : +0.7 points (t = -0.83; p < .417)
- ▶ **Size effect (Cohen's d) : -0.23**



Discussion

Confirmation of main hypotheses

H1 Confirmed : CMAS significantly reinforce students' perception of care, particularly in terms of the “teacher support” dimension measured by the CSTR grid.

H2 Confirmed : the “support” dimension is higher than validated benevolence ($p < .002$)

Interpretations

- ▶ Students perceive a more attentive, individualized and caring teaching posture during CMAS (Laville, 2023; Noddings, 2015; Whitehead et al., 2021)
- ▶ Creative experimentation, autonomy and co-construction of rules foster a climate of trust and individual valorization (Laville, 2023)

No gender differences

No effect of gender or class was observed: the positive effect of CMAs on care is homogeneous for all students.

Contributions, limits and prospects

Contributions

- The teacher-student relationship evolves positively over the weeks

Limitations

- Difficulty of pre-test data entry
- Sample size, specific context, ceiling effect (benevolence dimension)
- Essentially quantitative approach

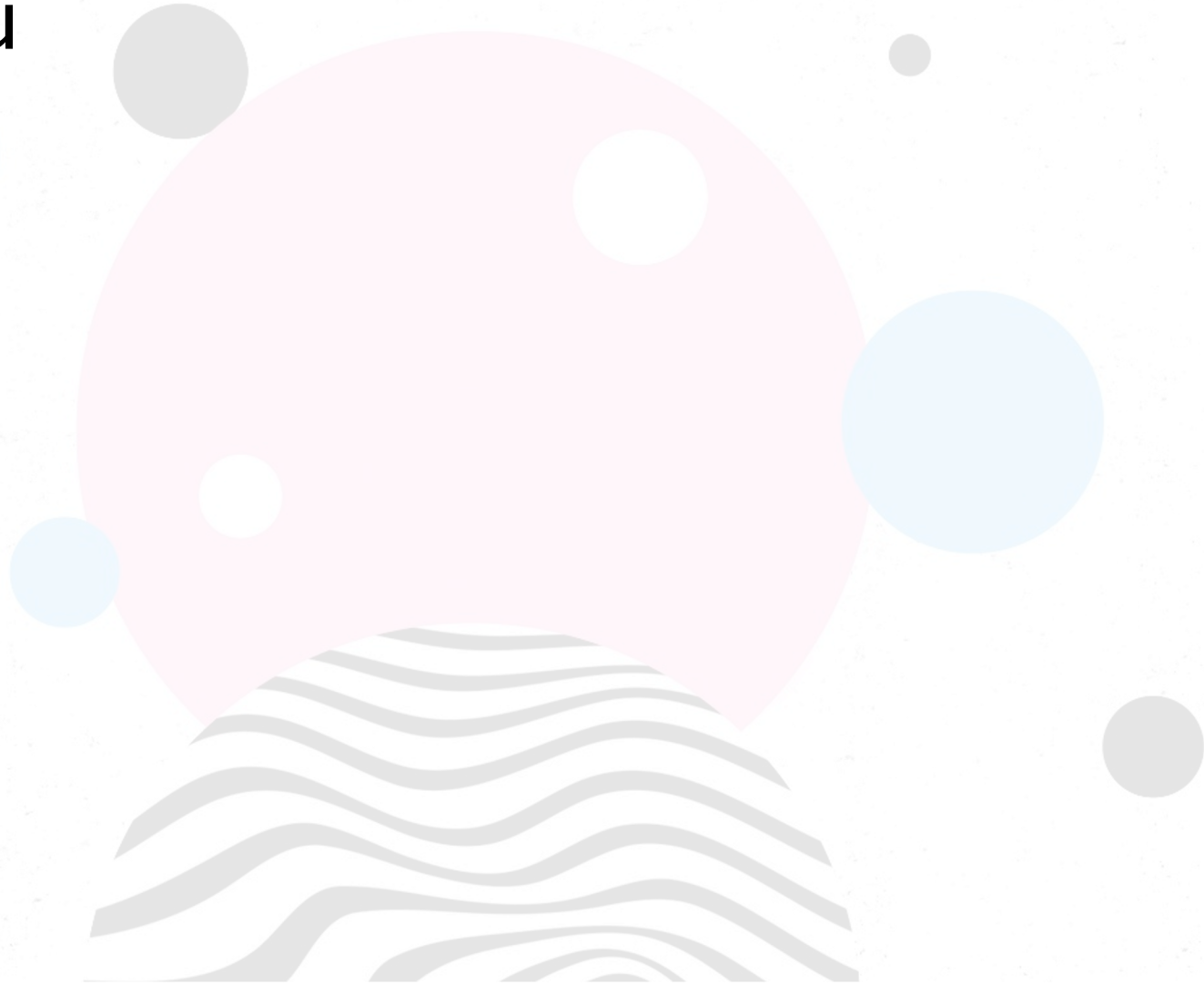
Perspectives

- Qualitative studies (interviews, observations)
- Long-term follow-up, other socio-emotional dimensions

Conclusion

- ▶ The teacher-student relationship is strengthened in ACMs
- ▶ The dimension of support and attention progresses more than kindness
- ▶ These results invite us to identify the practices, postures or summerments in pedagogical devices influencing these dimensions.

Thank you



Main bibliography

- Gilligan, C., Kwiatek, A., & Nurock, V. (2008). Une voix différente: pour une éthique du care.
- Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of educational research*, 79(1), 491-525.
- Laville, M. (2023). Perspectives offertes par le care pour appréhender autrement l'accompagnement auprès des familles d'élèves en difficulté. *Revue internationale de l'éducation familiale*, 51(1), 43-63.
<https://doi.org/10.3917/rief.051.0043>.
- Noddings, N. (2015). *The challenge to care in schools*. teachers college press.
- Whitehead, J., Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Oberle, E., & Boyd, L. (2021, July). Development and validation of a measure to assess early adolescents' perceptions of caring student- teacher relationships. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 6, p. 695298). Frontiers Media SA.