

Social Emotional Learning

Abstract – Evidence-based Practice, Program or Policy (EBP)

Details

Identification area the practice addresses: Math, reading, attendance, graduation rate

Grade level(s) recommended: K-12

Synopsis According to the [Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#), social emotional learning is “the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.” SEL develops cognitive social competencies, such as self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness. Developing such skills fosters positive social skills, reduces conduct problems, diminishes emotional stress, and improves academic performance.

SEL is a universal approach for all students. The goal of SEL is to address the social and emotional needs of all students to ensure their success in school and in life. Developing SEL skills improves student capacity to engage in academic learning and prepares them to meet college and career readiness standards. In order to meet rigorous standards, students need to be able to regulate their emotions when they become frustrated, collaborate with their peers, communicate their ideas, and take the perspective of others.

Core Components with a brief description of specific adult actions (The teacher will...)

- **Explicit Instruction:** This strategy refers to teaching the specific skills and vocabulary that you want your students to use and master. For example, if you want them to use a specific protocol to solve conflicts, you will have to teach each one of the steps and the strategies/sentence starters that you want students to follow when solving problems. Explicit instruction is very powerful when starting to teach SEL because it will provide students with a common language to communicate about daily issues in and outside the classroom. Schools might use an off-the-shelf curriculum to teach explicit instruction, or they might develop their own lessons and activities.
- **Embedded Instruction:** This strategy connects the content and vocabulary of your SEL instruction with your English/language arts, math, science, PE, or other lessons. For example, in language arts it is possible to connect lessons and activities around the study of characters or the development of themes with emotional literacy and self and social management skills. Teachers include both an academic and a character objective in their lessons plans, and are explicit with their students about the character trait that students are developing when they work on a particular assignment. You can also find SEL programs, like the Ruler Approach, that provide a curriculum already aligned to the academic content. Another example is the Feeling Words Curriculum, which is a language-based emotional literacy program for students that is mapped directly onto the core curriculum and align with the ELA Common Core State Standards.

- **Schoolwide Support:** This strategy refers to the schoolwide focus on building relationships and SEL skill development. School climate has become a priority because students learn best in positive classroom environments that nurture their social, emotional, and cognitive skills. To facilitate the improvement of positive school environments, teachers and administrators need to focus on the development of student social-emotional competencies. When students develop relationship skills, they engage with peers and teachers in a productive way. In addition, when all students develop positive social and emotional skills, they interact more positively with each other. This positive interaction makes students feel more emotionally and physically safe in their schools.
- **Teacher Pedagogy:** This strategy is directly tied to how you organize and manage your classroom. Instructional practices that require students to work and learn together, discuss a topic and collect different points of view, solve a math or science problem in a small group or make choices about their own learning are all activities that ask students to use social and emotional skills in one way or another. To make sure you are consistent with your explicit instruction, you should share with students which competencies they are practicing and developing when they participate in these activities. A few examples of teaching practices that enhance students' competencies are cooperative learning, classroom discussions, project-based learning, workshops, feedback loops or student self-assessment.

Implementation Resources

Tools for improving the EBP. Tools for training and coaching adults to implement and improve a practice over time – operational description of core components. (Examples: [practice profile](#), blueprint, practice guide, innovation configuration).

- [How Social-Emotional Learning Helps Children Succeed in School, the Workplace, and Life.](#) This provides two-page articles from individuals across the education and business sector on the importance of SEL.
- [SEL Implementation Guidance.](#) The Minnesota Department of Education has developed Social and Emotional Learning Implementation Guidance to provide school districts and schools with guidance and resources to help them integrate SEL into schoolwide teaching and learning practices.
- [Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Solutions at AIR.](#) This website hosts numerous tools designed to help district and school staff embed and integrate SEL into work currently underway within the district and school—creating a coordinated, purposeful SEL and school climate effort.
- [The CASEL Resource Library](#) is a comprehensive site containing tools for ongoing measurement and improvement of Social Emotional Learning (SEL). It provides over 500 tools that districts and schools can use to implement SEL in a systematic way. The tools come from CASEL's CDI work with 10 districts.
- [Social and Emotional Learning Toolkit.](#) This interactive toolkit provides an introduction to SEL as well as the five core competencies as defined by CASEL.

Tools to measure the EBP: [Fidelity tools and protocols](#) measure how well adults follow the described actions and behaviors when implementing the practice. Studying this data uncovers the impact of training and coaching and aids in action-planning and improvement of these supports (Examples: core component implementation checklist, classroom instruction walkthrough, lesson plan review, EBP feature self-report)

- [Are You Ready to Assess Social-Emotional Development?](#) This American Institutes for Research (AIR) toolkit includes three resources: a brief, a decision tree, and a list of SEL measurement tools.
- [Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies: A Tool for Teachers.](#) This tool provides a self-assessment for teachers to use in assessing their own social and emotional competencies, as well as instructional practices that promote SEL.
- [Measuring Hard-To-Measure Student Competencies. A Research and Development Plan.](#) This report from the Rand Corporation provides guidelines to promote thoughtful development of practical, high-quality

measures of interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies that practitioners and policymakers can use to improve valued outcomes for students.

Sources for Help: Technical assistance (training support, coaching guide, expert of EBP, purveyor organization)

No resource added.

Indicators of student progress: Types of academic measures, predicted outcomes, or example goals.

- [Self-Assessment Rubric for Social & Emotional Development](#). This rubric, developed by Edutopia, was created for students and educators, and provides questions that address short- and long-term goals.
- [CORE Case Study Tools](#). These tools, created and published by TransformEd, come from their work with the CORE districts and are centered on implementation best practices.
- [Social and Emotional Learning in Practice: A Toolkit of Practical Strategies and Resources](#). This toolkit has multiple components that could be useful to districts and schools, including a readiness inventory.

Additional resources

- [Keeping Social and Emotional Learning at the Center of Teaching and Learning](#) provides an overview of SEL. Specifically provides a “day in the life” of a student who uses a variety of social and emotional competencies.
- [Five Keys to Social and Emotional Learning Success](#) is a video that provides an overview of what SEL is and the five social and emotional competency domains as defined by CASEL. In addition, it shows brief clips of what SEL could look like.
- [Social and Emotional Learning in Washington State Schools: Building Foundations and Strategies](#). This module is designed for educators, administrators, school staff, others professionals and parents who interact with youth as a means to help them build and improve their understanding of social emotional skills.
- [Incorporating Social and Personal Competencies into Classroom Instruction and Educator Effectiveness: A Toolkit for Tennessee Teachers and Administrators](#). This toolkit is designed to increase administrator and teacher awareness of SEL and help them integrate it into the daily classroom and school experience of students.

Notes: (Example topics: considerations for special populations, strengths, cautions or limitations, student group(s) highlighted in research study, Minnesota Academic Standards addressed, time and scheduling requirements, staffing requirements, organizational supports, specific tier level support)

No resource added.

Connection to other EBPs (link to other EBP Abstracts):

Building Assets, Reducing Risks

Evidence cited:

Durlak, Joseph A., et al. "The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions." *Child development* 82.1 (2011): 405-432.