

SOCIO - EMOTIONAL LEARNING



Introduction

In the pursuit of educational excellence, it is crucial to recognize that a child's growth encompasses more than just academic achievement. While traditional educational frameworks have long focused on cognitive development, there is a growing recognition that nurturing the socio-emotional well-being of students is equally vital for their overall success and fulfillment. This understanding has given rise to the transformative field of Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL).

Socio-emotional learning refers to the process of acquiring and applying the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, show empathy for others, establish and maintain healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions. It recognizes that education extends beyond textbooks and classrooms, encompassing the development of essential life skills that support personal growth, resilience, and social harmony.

Through SEL, students are provided with a foundation to navigate the complexities of life, to develop a healthy sense of self-awareness, and to cultivate meaningful connections with others. By equipping students with the necessary tools to manage their emotions, communicate effectively, solve problems collaboratively, and show empathy towards diverse perspectives, SEL empowers individuals to thrive academically, personally, and socially.

The importance of SEL extends beyond the realm of education. In an ever-changing world, where rapid technological advancements and global interconnectedness have given rise to new challenges, there is a critical need for individuals who possess not only intellectual prowess but also emotional intelligence. Socio-emotional learning equips students with the essential competencies needed to adapt to a dynamic society, navigate complex social dynamics, and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

So, let us embark on this journey together, recognizing that the holistic development of our children and ourselves is rooted not only in knowledge and skills but also in the nurturing of our hearts and minds. By embracing the power of socio-emotional learning, we can inspire a generation of compassionate, resilient, and empowered individuals ready to thrive in a complex world.

Socio-Emotional Learning



Social Emotional Learning (SEL), what is it, and why does it matter to educators? As an educator, some of the worst things you can hear a student say is, "This is stupid," or "Why are we learning this?" Think back to when you were in school and the subjects that caused you the most frustration.

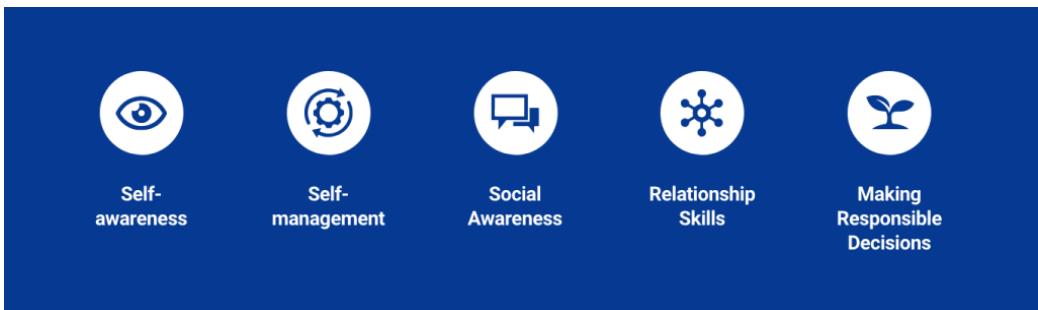
You'd likely find some common ground with your students in wishing you were given clear reasons why something was important and how learning a subject or skill would benefit you now, as well as years later. That frustration and finding constructive ways to deal with emotions and interact with one another in respectful ways are just a few of the guiding principles behind social emotional learning, or SEL.

Today, in an ever-diversifying world, the classroom is the place where students are often first exposed to people who hail from a range of different backgrounds, hold differing beliefs, and have unique capabilities. To account for these differences and help put all students on an equal footing to succeed, social and emotional learning (SEL) aims to help students better understand their thoughts and emotions, to become more self-aware, and to develop more empathy for others within their community and the world around them.

Developing these qualities in the classroom can help students become better, more productive, self-aware, and socially-aware citizens outside of the classroom in the years ahead. Learn more about the importance of social emotional learning, as well as its benefits both in and out of the classroom

Five Socio-Emotional Learning Competencies

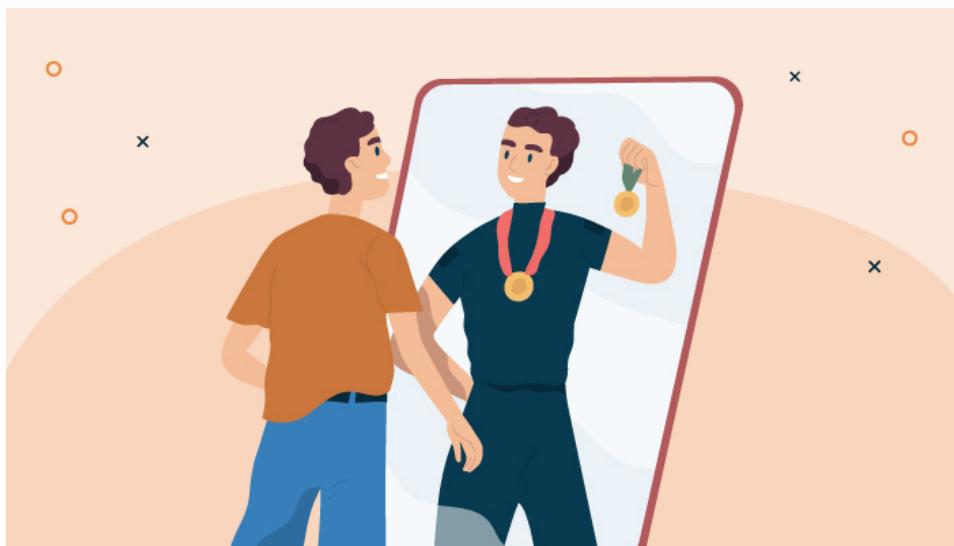
Social emotional learning (SEL) is a methodology that helps students of all ages to better comprehend their emotions, to feel those emotions fully, and demonstrate empathy for others. These learned behaviors are then used to help students make positive, responsible decisions; create frameworks to achieve their goals, and build positive relationships with others.



According to the [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#), an organization devoted to students and educators to help achieve positive outcomes for PreK-12 students, SEL involves five core competencies that can be applied in both the classroom, at home, and in students' communities. These five core competencies are:

Self-awareness

To recognize your emotions and how they impact your behavior; acknowledging your strengths and weaknesses to better gain confidence in your abilities.



Five Socio-Emotional Learning Competencies

Self-management

To take control and ownership of your thoughts, emotions, and actions in various situations, as well as setting and working toward goals



Social awareness

The ability to put yourself in the shoes of another person who may be from a different background or culture from the one you grew up with. To act with empathy and in an ethical manner within your home, school, and community.



Five Socio-Emotional Learning Competencies

Relationship skills

The ability to build and maintain healthy relationships with people from a diverse range of backgrounds. This competency focuses on listening to and being able to communicate with others, peacefully resolving conflict, and knowing when to ask for or offer help.



Making responsible decisions

Choosing how to act or respond to a situation is based on learned behaviors such as ethics, safety, weighing consequences, and the well-being of others, as well as yourself



How Educators Approach SEL

While SEL isn't a designated subject like history or math, it can be woven into the fabric of a school's curriculum. When educators make academic lessons more personal and relatable to students, students may be more inclined to participate and may be less likely to mentally check out during their subjects. By fostering a sense of empathy, self-awareness, and feelings of safety and inclusiveness in the classroom, SEL can have a positive impact that lasts a lifetime.

There are several different approaches to SEL. Some teachers have a more formally designated portion of the school day devoted to SEL – sometimes taught in homeroom. These lessons become a recurring theme throughout the rest of the school day to help make the core competencies of SEL more real to students.

Teachers may want to have students journal or write about their thoughts and feelings on a particular SEL lesson, or even have younger students partner with an older "buddy classroom" (or vice versa) to help students across different age levels bond or find common ground.

Other teachers work SEL-related lessons into more formal subjects, like math, history, or reading. For instance, examples of SEL-in-action can include assigning a group project where students self-delegate roles to work together for the good of the group, role playing as historical figures to understand the rationale behind a person's actions, or for students to conduct formal interviews with one another to take a pulse-check on current events.

Teachers can also work with students to set goals in areas where they may need improvement and help chart their progress, giving them a measurable way to show their achievement and feel a sense of accomplishment.



The Benefits of SEL

SEL is beneficial to both children and adults, increasing self-awareness, academic achievement, and positive behaviors both in and out of the classroom. From an academic standpoint, students who participated in SEL programs saw an 11 percentile increase in their overall grades and better attendance. On a more individual level, the skills learned within an SEL program have been shown to help students better cope with emotional stress, solve problems, and avoid peer pressure to engage in harmful activities.

Students who are equipped to deal with problems that affect them on a personal level are then better able to navigate the pressures of adult life. A report by the AEI/Brookings Working Group on Poverty and Opportunity noted that, “despite their importance to education, employment, and family life, the major educational and social reforms of the K-12 system over the last few decades have not focused sufficiently on the socio-emotional factors that are crucial to learning.”

A study published by the American Journal of Public Health used data from the longitudinal, nonintervention subsample of the Fast Track Project, an intervention program designed to reduce aggression in children identified as at high risk for long-term behavioral problems and conduct disorders.

When educators are able to see which students do not grasp the core pillars of SEL, they can better work with them at an early age and help these students develop better self-control, empathy, and other positive qualities. Learning positive behaviors that extend beyond a purely academic level of achievement can help these students develop the “soft skills” required of many jobs, such as teamwork, and ability to understand others, and problem-solving. This can help set these students up for success throughout their school years and beyond.

How Do You Incorporate Social Emotional Learning in the Classroom?

There are many ways to incorporate SEL in the classroom. The main idea is to provide an ongoing SEL influence throughout the day. In the beginning, you could start by checking in with students to see how they feel. Another great way is to provide students the opportunity to see how a tricky or troubling situation is being handled. This will give them some ideas on how to handle a tricky situation they may encounter. Utilizing students to role-play in front of the class would be a viable example. Make sure there is a place for students to calm down. This safe space will allow for the student to reflect

Measuring Social-Emotional Learning Impact

Measuring the impact of implementing SEL inside the classroom goes way beyond just grades. As Dr. Christina Cipriano explains, “When students are struggling and school performance is poor, they are more likely to find school and learning as a source of anxiety, manifesting in diminished self-efficacy, motivation, engagement, and connectedness with school.”

As a student is provided the tools associated with SEL, they will have more ownership of their actions, a sense of belonging, and will intrinsically care about their education. A student that has had consistent exposure to SEL is able to manage stress better and reduces the chance for that child to become depressed

Why is SEL Important?

While SEL has been more formally stood up as a program in preschools throughout all 50 states, very few states have made SEL a designated part of school curriculum at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. To date, only three states have a fully-designed set of standards for SEL programs with benchmarks for students at every grade level from K-12, according to the AEI/Brookings report. These states are Illinois, Kansas, and Pennsylvania.

Because so few states have made SEL a part of their curriculum for K-12 students, statistical evidence showing the benefits of SEL has been anecdotal. However, preschool-age children who were able to participate in an SEL program and learned these principles early on in their school career were able to reap the intended benefits. As more states and schools consider weaving SEL into their curriculum, it can provide educators with more statistically significant evidence of the program's positive impact.

Social-emotional learning (SEL) helps improve kids' academic performance, curtail bullying, reduce dropout rates, and build character.

Well-implemented SEL programs positively affect students' success in school. Studies show that social-emotional skills—such as problem-solving, self-regulation, impulse control, and empathy—help improve academics, reduce negative social behaviors like bullying, and create positive classroom climates.

Social-emotional skills also help kids successfully manage everyday life. They help students focus, make good decisions, and become supportive members of their community well beyond school.