



# *Emotions matter*

*Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence*

# *What if*

emotional intelligence became a standard part of the school curriculum?







## *What would be different?*

***On more faces,*** we would see joy as students learn about and explore the world.

***In more classrooms,*** we would find greater respect and stronger connections, resulting in more collaborative and engaged learning.

***In more schools,*** we would discover children and adults working together to build trust and inspiring each other to achieve.

***In more communities,*** we would see children becoming self-aware adults who lead compassionate and fulfilling lives.

## *We know this is possible.*

At the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, we are making this vision a reality in hundreds of schools. RULER is our evidence-based approach that helps schools integrate emotional intelligence into their everyday practice.

***Together, we can help all children better recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate their emotions.***

***Emotions matter for all of us and especially for children. How we feel affects our learning, the decisions we make, how we treat others, and our personal well-being.***



# EMOTIONS MATTER FOR *Classroom Performance*

Our research shows that students with higher emotional intelligence are better prepared to manage their emotional lives so that they can focus, learn, and do their best in school.





*In a nearby* middle school, an 8th-grade math class begins. It's the first class of the day and students are busy trying to solve an equation – all except Patrick.

Patrick is distracted and failing the class. His teacher can see he's having difficulty, but she's asked him so many times to pay attention that she's becoming frustrated.

*How might developing emotional intelligence help Patrick and his teacher?*

Patrick would recognize the source of his distractions: under the pressure of helping his single mother prepare his four younger siblings for the day, he shuts down when he arrives at school. His teacher, more inclined to ask about his feelings, would discover that Patrick's lack of focus is rooted in stress, not boredom. Together, they would devise a plan to help him manage his stress so that he can focus in class.

## RULER leads to IMPROVED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



Students in RULER classrooms perform better academically compared to those in classrooms not using RULER.

## the MOOD METER

the  
TOOL

*How are you feeling?*

Emotional awareness enables students to get the most out of their learning experiences. This awareness, though, is not intuitive and the skill is rarely taught in school. Moreover, instability in homes and poverty in communities can exacerbate the difficulties of coming to school emotionally prepared to learn. The Mood Meter is a simple and effective RULER tool for helping students to recognize and communicate their feelings.



## EMOTIONS MATTER FOR *Conflict Resolution*

In emotionally intelligent schools, children learn to manage the feelings of anger, disappointment, or shame that might otherwise push them to hurt one another. They learn how to be more empathic and build positive relationships. Our research shows these skills can strengthen the emotional climate of classrooms and reduce the incidence and severity of conflicts.

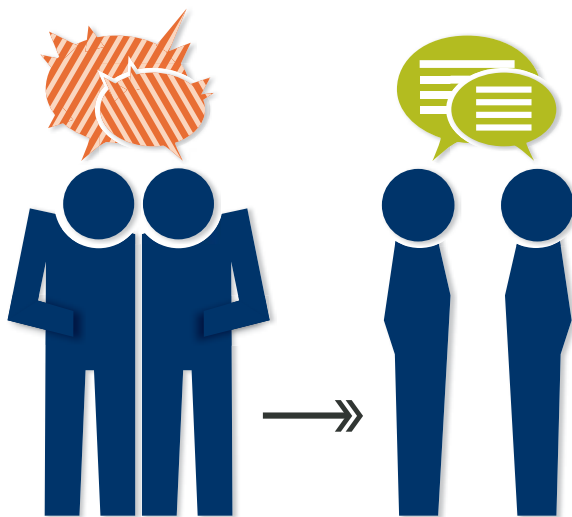


*It's recess* at a local middle school, and a basketball game is underway. A hard foul leads to a shove. Suddenly, two boys, Sam and Kevin, square off and are ready to fight. A teacher intervenes and sends the boys to the principal's office.

*What if emotional intelligence was part of this school's curriculum?*

It would come to light that this confrontation came from a previous misunderstanding. Kevin once made a comment at Sam's expense that Sam felt went too far. More skilled at communicating his feelings, Sam would explain how Kevin's teasing had affected him. Upon hearing Sam and respecting his feelings, it's easy to imagine Kevin apologizing. While the two might continue to exchange jabs on and off the court, conflicts would not escalate.

## RULER leads to REDUCED AGGRESSION



Classrooms using RULER have less aggression among students compared to those not using RULER.

the  
TOOL

## the BLUEPRINT

*How can seeing the world from another's perspective change the course of a relationship?*

Take bullying. Too often, victimizing another person originates in the perpetrator's own frustrations and insecurities, and a lack of knowledge of healthy strategies for solving problems and managing feelings. We created the Blueprint to encourage perspective-taking and empathy, so that students invest more fully in the health and well-being of their classmates and themselves.





## EMOTIONS MATTER FOR *Health & Success*

The stress students and educators feel is reaching epidemic levels. While many pressures can't be eliminated—budgets are tight and expectations for high academic achievement are well-founded—schools can do more to create emotionally intelligent learning and working environments.



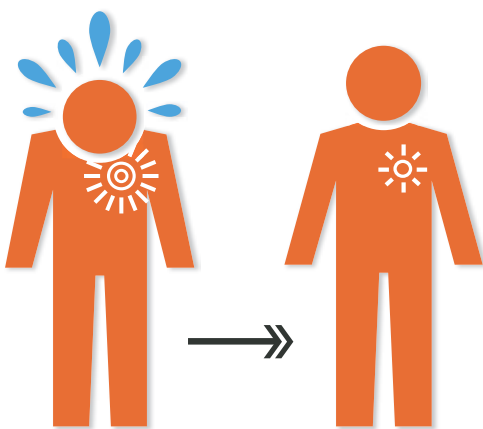


*Budget cuts* are on the agenda for a meeting between a high school's head English teacher, Sheila Jackson, and the principal. The cuts threaten to increase class sizes and eliminate the field trips that Ms. Jackson has used to great effect as capstone experiences for students. She's made no secret of her frustrations. Because the last meeting with the principal ended badly, Ms. Jackson is anxious the next will be worse.

*How might emotional intelligence training help Ms. Jackson and the principal work together?*

Knowing how her anger may prevent her from being the strong leader her colleagues need, Ms. Jackson would take a moment, pause, and then consider: How might she enlist the principal as an ally in her mission? Focused on making the most of this difficult situation, Ms. Jackson and the principal might look for creative ways to restore at least some of the funding for the experiences her students have found so rewarding.

*RULER leads to*  
REDUCED ANXIETY



Students in RULER classrooms have less anxiety compared to those in classrooms not using RULER.

*the* META MOMENT

*the*  
TOOL

*How can you be your best self in tough situations?*

Quick, thoughtless reactions to emotional triggers can complicate getting the best outcomes for students and teachers, both in and out of the classroom. The Meta-Moment process is designed to help children and adults gain emotional self-control and take effective action in difficult moments. By pausing to observe and manage their own reactions, they are better able to respond effectively to challenges and be their best selves.



# EMOTIONS MATTER FOR *All of Us*

At the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, we know that emotionally intelligent learning environments are foundational to helping children and adults lead productive, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

The evidence is compelling. Rigorous research has shown that RULER raises academic achievement and contributes to more supportive, productive, and compassionate classrooms. That research is guiding the development of innovative new programming tailored to a wider range of children and educators, and it is identifying new ways to investigate and unlock the power of emotional intelligence.





***Our work*** won't be finished until emotional intelligence is incorporated into the curriculum of every school, and until every child has the skills needed to lead a productive, healthy, and fulfilling life.

***To find out more*** about bringing RULER to your school or to support our mission, visit [www.ei.yale.edu](http://www.ei.yale.edu).

*“RULER fits so well into the curriculum. With it, we’ve given students higher-level vocabulary to talk about the characters that they’re reading about.”*

— 2ND GRADE TEACHER

*“RULER gives us the skills we need to succeed beyond high school.”*

— 11TH GRADE STUDENT

*“RULER is a way for children to express their feelings without fear of being laughed at... you notice that other people have the same feelings as you... you see what other people have in common with you.”*

— 5TH GRADE STUDENT

*“To see students using words and communicating effectively in adversarial situations where they once used physical aggression and verbal abuse confirms that RULER has had a profound effect on children’s ability to self-regulate.”*

— SUPERINTENDENT



*“Educating the mind without educating the heart  
is no education at all.”*

– ARISTOTLE

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