

The Case for Social and Emotional Learning

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Who is CASEL?

The **Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)** collaborates with leading experts and supports districts, schools, and states nationwide to **drive research, guide practice, and inform policy.**



Advance research

CASEL advances the knowledge base about SEL by synthesizing, conducting, and commissioning research and sharing findings from the field.



Guide practice

CASEL translates research into action through district partnerships and field-tested resources and tools.



Inform policy

CASEL educates federal policymakers about the evidence to support the value of SEL and support states in developing PreK-12 SEL policies and guidelines.



Mobilize action

Through convenings, collaborations, and partnerships, CASEL assembles experts, practitioners, and policymakers to accelerate and sustain SEL in school systems around the world.

What is Social and Emotional Learning?

Social and Emotional Learning is...

the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

What is SEL?

- Identifying emotions
- Social and cultural identity
- Recognizing strengths
- Growth mindset
- Self-efficacy
- Examining bias
- Sense of purpose



- Perspective-taking
- Empathy and compassion
- Expressing gratitude
- Appreciating diversity
- Identifying social norms and demands
- Sense of belonging

- Communication
- Cultural competence
- Building relationships
- Teamwork and working cooperatively
- Resolving conflicts
- Helping/Seeking help
- Leadership
- Standing up for the rights of others

- Emotion regulation
- Impulse control
- Stress management
- Self-discipline and motivation
- Perseverance
- Goal-setting
- Organizational skills
- Initiative and Agency

- Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
- Identifying and solving problems
- Analyzing situations and consequences
- Ethical responsibility
- Reflecting on one's role to promote individual and collective well-being



What does the research say?

Social and emotional learning improves school climate and safety

Students participating in SEL report:

- Stronger feelings of **inclusion, belonging and connection to school**
- Greater **classroom support**
- Better **relationships with teachers**
- Increased **sense of safety**
- Better attitudes about **school and others**

Cipriano et. al, 2023; Synder et al, 2011; Durlak et al., 2011

SEL in schools also contributes to **reductions** in bullying, cyber-bullying, name-calling, and sexual harassment.

Smith & Low, 2013; Espelage et al, 2015

Students participating in SEL at school had:

- **decreased emotional distress**
- **fewer externalizing behaviors**
- **improved prosocial behaviors**

Cipriano et. al, 2023

Social and emotional learning can also **reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety** in the short term.

Early Intervention Foundation, 2021

Social and
emotional learning
improves student
well-being

Social and emotional learning supports academic achievement

Across PreK-12, SEL in schools has **consistent, positive impact** on student academic achievement.

Durlak et al., 2022

Brain science shows that social, emotional, and cognitive development are intertwined and integral to **academic learning and success**.

Immordino-Yang, 2011

Academic instruction that makes social and emotional connections results in **deeper, longer-term learning**.

Farrington et al, 2012

Years after students participated in SEL, their academic performance was an average of **13 percentile points higher** than peers.

Taylor et al, 2017

Students with stronger social and emotional are more likely to achieve:

- **high school graduation**
- **postsecondary enrollment**
- **postsecondary graduation**
- **stable, full-time employment**

Jones et al., 2015; Coleman & DeLeire, 2003; Heckman et al., 2006

Social and emotional learning builds skills that are key to future readiness

Educators with strong social and emotional competence:

- Report less burnout and stay in the classroom longer
- Build and maintain stronger relationships with students
- Demonstrate higher levels of patience, empathy, and healthy communication.

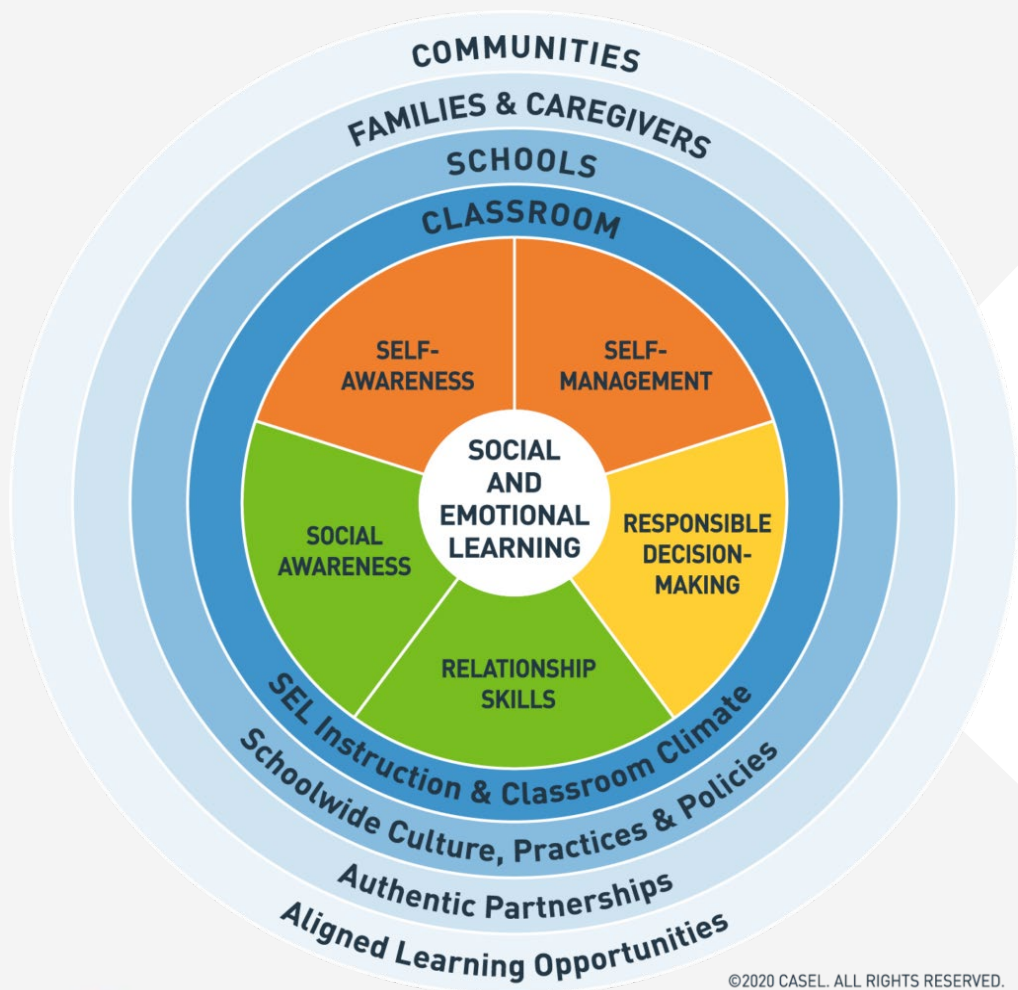
Brackett et al., 2008; Brackett et al., 2010;

Teachers who teach SEL to students also felt more effective at managing behaviors and had lower levels of job-related anxiety.

Greenberg et. al, 2016; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009

Social and
emotional
learning benefits
adults, too

How can we achieve systemic SEL?



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CLASSROOM
SCHOOL
FAMILY
COMMUNITY

-  Explicit SEL instruction
-  SEL integrated with academic instruction
-  Youth voice and engagement
-  Supportive school and classroom climates
-  Focus on adult SEL
-  Supportive discipline
-  A continuum of integrated supports
-  Authentic family partnerships
-  Aligned community partnerships
-  Systems for continuous improvement

HOW DO WE BUILD TOWARDS SYSTEMIC SEL?

HOW?

WHAT AND WHERE?

WHY?

Implementation Focus Areas	
ORGANIZE	Build Foundational Support and Plan
IMPLEMENT	Strengthen Adult SEL
	Promote SEL for Students
IMPROVE	Reflect on Data for Continuous Improvement



Research-based Student Outcomes	
SHORT-TERM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved attitudes about self, others, tasks Perceived classroom and school climate
INTERMEDIATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive social behaviors and relationships Academic success Fewer conduct problems Less emotional distress Less drug use
LONG-TERM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High school graduation College/career readiness Safe sexual behaviors Healthy relationships Mental health Reduced criminal behavior Civic engagement

Focus Area One: Build Foundational Support and Create a Plan

Key Activities:

- Create a representative SEL team
- Offer foundational professional learning to all stakeholders
- Develop a shared vision
- Set goals, timelines, and metrics
- Allocate resources, including people, funding, and time

Focus Area Two: Strengthen Adult SEL Competencies and Capacity

Key Activities:

- Professional Learning:
 - Build SEL expertise
 - Deepen adult SEL skills
 - Develop cultural competence
- Prioritize relationships to build a community of trust
 - promote relationships among staff, with students, and with families and community partners
- Model SEL competence in all interactions

Focus Area Three: Promote SEL for Students

Key Activities:

- SEL in classrooms:
 - Explicit SEL instruction
 - Integrate SEL into instruction
 - Create supportive classroom climate
- SEL in school
 - Adults modeling SEL throughout the building
 - Opportunities for youth voice and leadership
 - Supportive discipline policy
- Align SEL efforts with families and in communities

Focus Area Four: Reflect on Data for Continuous Improvement

Key Activities:

- Examine goals of implementation
- Identify implementation and outcome measures
- Review data and challenges regularly
- Adjust implementation efforts and goals as needed

SEL as a pathway to well being

By prioritizing systemic SEL, schools have an opportunity to:

- Help students develop key coping skills
- Create positive and affirming learning environments where students feel a sense of belonging
- Foster positive and healthy relationships, a key buffer against the effects of stress and trauma
- Support the well being of students and adults alike

For more information about CASEL, visit www.casel.org

Free resources to support SEL implementation:

CASEL Guide to Schoolwide SEL: schoolguide.casel.org

Free online course: [Introduction to SEL](#)

All CASEL professional services:

<https://casel.org/professional-services/>

Thank you for your attention

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