

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) focuses on developing the individual qualities, strengths, and assets of a child related to social, emotional, cognitive, and moral development as well as positive mental health.

School-based educational initiatives that focus on youth development, health promotion, and problem prevention can be organized through SEL instruction.¹

ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL SEL SYSTEM

Through various pre-packaged curricula, SEL can be taught and reinforced in concert with other frameworks such as School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) or Restorative Justice (RJ) and can easily be coordinated with a broad array of prevention and promotion efforts.



THROUGH SEL PROGRAMS, STUDENTS LEARN FIVE KEY COMPETENCIES:

Self-awareness—Identification and recognition of their own emotions, recognition of strengths in themselves and others, sense of self-efficacy, and self-confidence.

Social awareness—Empathy, respect for others, and perspective taking.

Responsible decision-making—Evaluation and reflection, as well as personal and ethical responsibility.

Self-management—Impulse control, stress management, persistence, goal setting, and motivation.

Relationship skills—Cooperation, help seeking and providing, and communication.²

IMPLEMENTING SEL BEST PRACTICES

SEL instruction can be implemented either through a pre-set curriculum

taught in every classroom and/or in coordination with other school-wide prevention and promotion efforts, such as SWPBIS or RJ.

TANGIBLE RESULTS OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

An in-depth study found that students who receive SEL instruction had more positive attitudes about school and improved an average of 11 percentile points on standardized achievement tests compared to students who did not receive such instruction.³

Positive Action, an evidence-based SEL approach that promotes an interest in learning and encourages cooperation among students, was found to have reduced disruptive behaviors by 72% and suspensions by 24% when implemented.⁴ In a rigorous study,



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Positive Action reduced suspensions and grade retention by 73% each.

Here in California, Sacramento City Unified School District has implemented SEL and seen improvements in attendance rates and school engagement, along with a 6.4% graduation rate increase (up to a total of 85%), and an 18.2% drop in bullying.⁵

Other examples of demonstrated benefits of SEL instruction include improved graduation rates, reduced violence, lowered substance abuse, and decreased teen suicide attempts.⁶