Supporting Students’ Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs in the Pandemic

Sponsored by ACT Learning
Arianna Prothero
Staff Writer, Education Week

Follow Arianna on Twitter @AriannaProthero
Juan Cabrera
Superintendent
El Paso Independent School District, Texas

Melissa Schlinger
Vice President of Practice and Programs, CASEL
An on-demand archive of this webinar will be available at www.edweek.org/go/webinar in less than 24 hrs.
Supporting Students’ Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs in the Pandemic

Melissa Adle Schlinger
Vice President of Practice and Programs
CASEL

September 16, 2020
Who is CASEL?

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) was founded in 1994 to help make social and emotional learning (SEL) an essential part of education by:

- Improving state and federal policies
- Expanding effective SEL practice
- Advancing the science of SEL

Advancing the science of SEL

Improving state and federal policies

Expanding effective SEL practice
Landmark 2011 study documented multiple benefits of SEL

2011 meta-analysis of 213 studies involving school-based, universal SEL programs including over 270,000 students in K-12 revealed:

**Science Links SEL to Student Gains:**
- Social-emotional skills
- Improved attitudes about self, others, and school
- Positive classroom behavior
- 11 percentile-point gain on standardized achievement tests

**And Reduced Risks for Failure:**
- Conduct problems
- Emotional distress

A major new research study finds that social and emotional learning (SEL) programs benefit children for months and even years. 82 different programs reviewed (38 outside U.S.) 97,000+ Students involved, kindergarten through middle school Effects assessed 6 mo – 18 yrs after programs completed

SEL Students Benefit in Many Areas

HIGHER...
- Academic performance
- SEL skills
- Attitudes
- Positive social behaviors

LOWER...
- Conduct problems
- Emotional distress
- Drug use

Higher social and emotional competencies among SEL students at the end of the initial intervention was the best predictor of long-term benefits. Benefits were the same regardless of socioeconomic background, students’ race, or school location.

What is SEL?

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.
Core Social and Emotional Competencies

- Identifying emotions
- Self-perception/Identity
- Recognizing strengths
- Sense of self-confidence
- Self-efficacy

- Perspective-taking
- Empathy
- Appreciating diversity
- Respect for others

- Communication
- Social engagement
- Building relationships
- Working cooperatively
- Resolving conflicts
- Helping/Seeking help

- Impulse control
- Stress management
- Self-discipline
- Self-motivation
- Perseverance
- Goal-setting
- Organizational skills

- Identifying problems
- Analyzing situations
- Solving problems
- Evaluating
- Reflecting
- Ethical responsibility
Systemic Schoolwide SEL Framework

Creates **equitable learning conditions** and **inclusive cultures** that:

- foster **caring relationships**
- actively involve **all students** in learning and practicing **social, emotional, and academic competencies**

This requires:

- aligned policies, resources and actions to **support adults**
- coordinated **school-family-community** partnerships
How can Schools achieve systemic SEL implementation?

- 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

Schoolguide.casel.org
What can schools do to promote social and emotional development?

ORGANIZE:
Build Awareness, Commitment, and Ownership

- Create a representative SEL team to create a plan and lead implementation
- Establish robust structures for two-way communication with families, staff, and community stakeholders
- Collaborate with staff and community partners to develop plans for foundational learning for all stakeholders
What can schools do to promote social and emotional development?

Implement: Strengthen Adult Capacity

- Provide supportive opportunities and resources for adult learning to strengthen staff professional skills and social and emotional competence, especially in
  - self-care
  - trauma-informed practices
  - distance learning strategies for building SEL

- Create structures that foster relationships, trust and collaboration among staff

- Support staff in modeling SEL competencies and mindsets
What can schools do to promote social and emotional development?

Implement: Promote SEL for Students

- Prioritize adult-student as well as peer relationships
  - check-ins
  - advisory
  - morning meetings
  - community building rituals

- Build critical social and emotional skills
  - awareness of emotions
  - coping/stress management
  - empathy/relationship skills

- Create spaces and use practices that allow students to use their voice in instructional activities and also to talk about the impact of COVID, racial disparities, and other issues that they may be facing

- Connect with families regularly, inviting input and sharing information
- Align with community partners to provide supports to students and families
Thank you!

Melissa Adle Schlinger
Vice President for Practice and Programs
mschlingeler@casel.org
ORGANIZE:
Build Awareness, Commitment and Ownership

• Communicate what SEL is and that it is a priority to every employee in the district
• SEL Team established and dedicated to supporting teachers and principals with implementation planning and on-going professional learning
• SEL and Academics teams collaboratively planned teacher professional development so that SEL was integrated with academics
• Parent Engagement Liaisons are trained on SEL practices to build parent capacity to support school efforts
• Robust partnerships with community organizations to address wrap-around support needs
IMPLEMENT:

Strengthen Adult SEL Capacity

• Principals were provided training on relationship-centered leadership in July

• SEL Team has shifted to a “push out” model of supportive micro-PD via a weekly newsletter
  • Connection strategies
  • “Peek at the Week” for the SEL curriculum
  • Adult SEL resources
  • Self-Care resources

• Coordinators have virtual office hours and lead small group PD sessions and/or provide on-demand support
Implement:
Promote SEL for Students

• Teachers trained on the Transforming Education Academic Integration Framework with an emphasis on creating supportive classroom climates
• Conducted student surveys during the first days of school to understand them as learners and individuals
• Daily check-ins are conducted each morning
• Schools have scheduled 30-45 minutes of explicit SEL instruction using an evidence-based curriculum
• Exit tickets provide opportunities for students to share how they are feeling about the learning process
• Student SEL competency is measured and informs school and district support planning
ACT: Helping people achieve education and workplace success.

ACT offers helpful solutions to empower educators, so that your students and community can thrive.

- Social emotional learning
- Academic learning resources
- Tailored learning and professional services
Our Guiding Principles

Inclusive
We do everything we can to level the playing field for everyone, regardless of needs, backgrounds, or resources.

Holistic
We assess and appreciate each person’s unique traits and skills, to help navigate toward college and career success.

Transformational
We lead the industry through our research and technology, constantly evolving as an integral part of the learning process.
COVID-19 and SE Skill Development

**Worry**

- I am worried that school closures will hurt my chances of getting into college.
- I worry about how the COVID-19 pandemic will impact my life.
- I worry about how the COVID-19 pandemic will impact others’ lives.

**Resilience**

- In just 2 months, students grew in:
  - Maintaining Composure
  - Sustaining Effort
  - Getting along with Others
  - Keeping an Open Mind

- And they developed more Maintaining Composure and Sustaining Effort in **2 months** than previous research suggests they should develop in **1-2 years** (Klimstra et al., Pullman et al.)

- Consistent with other research that found an increase in Maintaining Composure in adults during this time (Sutin et al., 2020)

ACT Survey of 642 High School Students
April 2020

Murano and Walton (2020)
Week after week, we see positive changes in the climate and culture of all of our middle schools, district-wide—all because our students and staff truly enjoy applying the SEL tools.”

–Dr. Ilia Molina, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
SEL That Gets Results

Reinforce Resilience with ACT’s SEL Solutions

Create a Culture of SEL
among educators, administration, and staff

Demonstrate Growth with SEL Assessment
through a formative approach

Empower Students to Put SEL in Action
with easy-to-understand mental models and frameworks

ACT SEL Solutions are CASEL aligned
Optimal Learning Continuity

Thanks to seamless implementation options

Options for blended and online instruction and assessment allow learning to continue whether you’re in-classroom, distance learning, or switching between the two.
ACT is here to help.

Watch industry news and social channels for a divisional announcement later this month.

Visit act.org for more info.
An on-demand archive of this webinar will be available at www.edweek.org/go/webinar in less than 24 hrs.
Supporting Students’ Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs in the Pandemic

Suggested Reading From Education Week:

**Teaching Social-Emotional Skills Amid COVID-19**
There are ways to attend to students’ social-emotional growth even when they are learning remotely or sitting in a classroom six feet apart. Ignoring those skills is a recipe for disaster.

**How to Teach Social-Emotional Learning When Students Aren't in School**
Experts offer tactics to teachers on how they can tend to students’ SEL development in this chaotic time.