

Understanding Social and Emotional Learning and its Lifelong Impact on Students



Bringing together the competencies and learning settings to help students effectively navigate the world.

According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL),¹ social and emotional learning is “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.”²

In short, social-emotional competencies are the skills that equip people with the ability to manage their thoughts and feelings, relationships with others, and the way they go about making responsible decisions. While students acquire some of those skills at home, on the playground, and while socializing, the classroom provides another effective forum to boost social and emotional skills.^{2,3}

The Impact of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

An extensive body of research shows how important these skills are to both academic and lifelong success. In particular:

- ▶ A 2015 study published in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that kindergartners exposed to SEL programs have better outcomes in education, employment, criminal activity, substance use, and mental health.⁴
- ▶ A 2017 meta-analysis from CASEL, the University of Illinois at Chicago, Loyola University, and the University of British Columbia found that students exposed to SEL programs demonstrated positive impacts up to 18 years later, with those students-turned-adults performing better than peers in positive social behaviors, skills, and attitudes such as empathy, teamwork, and academics.⁵
- ▶ The same 2017 meta-analysis found that the academic performance of students exposed to SEL programs is 13 percentile points higher than non-SEL peers.⁵

Research Shows the Positive Effects of SEL Interventions



Study skill interventions can positively affect study abilities.⁶



The SEL skill of self-control can be increased, even in very young children.⁸



Stress can be reduced with interventions, as seen in research related to test-taking skills.^{9,10}



Personal growth in SEL can help modern learners in and out of the classroom.

Experts sometimes refer to these CASEL-defined skills as “psychosocial skills” or “noncognitive variables.”⁶ Classified that way, the skills are considered different from natural cognitive ability or acquired knowledge. Extensive studies and research show that when students learn and develop these social and emotional competencies, they can begin to predict their behavior and improve it in many domains, including self-awareness, self-management, and relationship skills.^{2; 3; 6}

5 Ways Social and Emotional Skills Affect Learning and Life

Research shows that SEL-related variables impact these five key areas in academic and work settings.*⁶

1 Finding Academic Success

Organizational skills, from study habits to procrastination tendencies, can forecast academic success. Those skills fall under CASEL’s self-management category, and research shows better self-management links to better learning and better retention of what students learn.⁶

- ▶ SEL skills impact how students perform in class, whether they seek tutoring when needed, and how they relate to others during group project assignments.¹¹

2 Demonstrating Leadership

Becoming a leader, holding a leadership post, and leading effectively are all associated with traits that fall under the umbrella of the CASEL framework, including self-esteem, motivation, communication skills, empathy, and the ability to make decisions.⁶

- ▶ Curriculum that builds social-emotional traits during school years serves students during their academic career and beyond.⁶

3 Demonstrating Good Citizenship

Showing a new student around. Stopping a bully. Both are examples of good citizen behaviors, made more likely, research shows, when kids experience positive emotions.⁶

- ▶ Learning to improve emotion-related skills and social awareness can make for better citizens at school and, years later, in neighborhoods and workplaces.⁶

**Students exposed
to SEL programs
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4 Experiencing Overall Well-Being

The CASEL competencies predict more than just academic and job performance; they also indicate how people generally enjoy and perform in life. For instance, research shows self-control relates to well-being because people who have it are better at forming good habits, which in turn can lead to healthier living and better time management.⁶

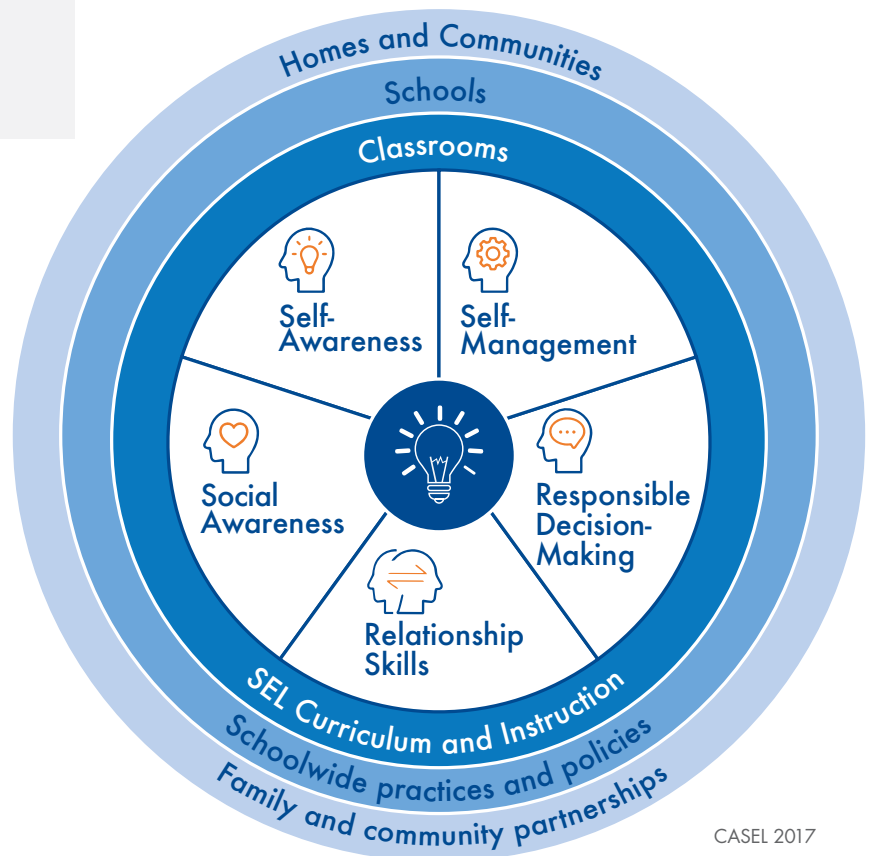
- ▶ SEL skills help students have life satisfaction, relationship success, and resiliency now and later in life.

5 Getting a College Degree

Research says that how well a student adjusts to college is the single best predictor of whether they stay at college and whether they succeed there.⁶

- ▶ CASEL constructs, including Social Awareness and Responsible Decision-Making, help students adjust to college life so they stay enrolled and earn their degree.⁶

Social and Emotional Learning—not just an afterthought or by-product of family life—is a critical factor in students’ success in both academics and life.



CASEL 2017

Academic performance of students exposed to SEL programs is 13 percentile points higher than non-SEL peers.

New Solutions

Students have always felt pressure, but 21st-century learners feel it even more. SEL programs aim to drive students' academic potential and give them the tools to become more self- and socially aware, to develop their relationship skills, and to become better decision-makers. Based on the research-validated CASEL framework, more and more schools are integrating SEL into their programs to address students' needs in these areas.

ERB's SEL Suite gives teachers the professional development and curriculum they need to teach and help students develop social and emotional competencies. It includes a brief student self-report inventory that can be administered in the fall and spring to establish baselines and monitor changes in competencies over time.

**To learn more about ERB's SEL Suite
or to schedule a demo, contact
your ERB Consultant or visit
www.erblearn.org/sel.**

Sources

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²CASEL, SEL Overview, <https://www.casel.org/sel>

³CASEL, What is SEL, <https://www.casel.org/what-is-sel>

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¹⁰Von der Embse, N., Barterian, J. Segool, N. Test anxiety interventions for children and adolescents: A systematic review of treatment studies from 2000-2010. *Psychology in the Schools*, 2013; 50, 57-71.

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¹³ERB, Social and Emotional Learning Suite, <https://www.erblearn.org/sel>

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