

TEACHER INFORMATION SHEET

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

There are literally thousands of mental health programs under many names: mental health, 'social and emotional learning' (SEL), 'emotional literacy', 'emotional intelligence', 'resilience', 'lifeskills' and 'character education'. But not all mental health interventions are evidence-based indicating that they improve a young person's mental health and wellbeing. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been instrumental in the North American context for researching, developing and advocating for the promotion of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in schools. CASEL is an international organization.

WHAT IS SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING?

SEL is generally understood to involve the process of acquiring and effectively applying the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to recognize and manage emotions; developing caring and concern for others; making responsible decisions; establishing positive relationships; and handling challenging situations capably.

The five generally agreed upon core SEL competencies include:

Self-awareness – Accurately assessing one's feelings, interests, values, and strengths; maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-confidence.

Self-management – Regulating one's emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles; goals; expressing emotions appropriately.

Social awareness – Being able to take the perspective of and empathize with others; recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences; recognizing and using family, school, and community resources.

Relationship skills – Establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed.

Responsible decision making – Making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others and contributing to the well-being of one's school and community.

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HOW EFFECTIVE ARE SEL PROGRAMS?

Reviews have demonstrated that to date a limited number of SEL programs are effective in improving the wellbeing and mental health of students. Targeted SEL programs yield significant positive effects on social-emotional competencies enhancing student's behavioural adjustment including increasing pro-social behaviours and reducing internalising and externalising behaviours and are related to improved academic performance.

IMPLEMENTATION QUALITY

Implementation refers to how well the program is conducted in the busy world of the classroom. Many factors (some outside the control of the teacher) affect the implementation quality e.g. natural disasters, fire-drills. Factors known to affect the implementation quality include:

Fidelity – Is the program delivered as it was designed to be?

Exposure – How much (H.M. lessons) of the program are delivered?
e.g. All of them or a limited number.

Student Interest – Are students interested/motivated by the program?

Quality of Teaching – Does the teacher feel qualified/comfortable teaching the content?
It is also understood that programs that are interactive; have structured activities; use multi-media resources are more effective than programs that involve simply "talking".

REFERENCES

Student Wellbeing Hub <https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/>

Be You <https://beyou.edu.au/>

Resilience, rights and respectful relationships <https://arc.educationapps.vic.gov.au/learning/resource/2JZX4R?fuse=1>