

Developing Social and Emotional Learning Programs

Kulvadee Thongpibul, PsyD
Clinical Psychologist
Email: a.kulvadee@gmail.com





SEL 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.

Social and Emotional Learning SEL



Science Links SEL to Student Gains:

Landmark 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



Reduced Risks for Failure:

- ✗ Conduct problems
- ✗ Emotional distress



Source: Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., & Schellinger, K. (2011) *The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions.* *Child Development*: 82 (1), 405-432.

Impact of SEL: long-lasting and global

A 2017 research study finds that SEL programs benefit children for months and even years.

82

different programs reviewed
(38 outside U.S.)

97,000+

Students, kindergarten
through middle school

Effects assessed

6 mo – 18 yrs

after programs completed



SEL Students Benefit in Many Areas

Academic performance
SEL skills
Positive attitudes
Positive social behaviors



Higher social and emotional competencies among SEL students at the end of the initial intervention was the best predictor of long-term benefits.

Conduct problems
Emotional distress
Drug use



Benefits were the same regardless of socioeconomic background, students' race, or school location.



SEL benefits adults: Positive impact on teachers



Teachers who possess social and emotional competencies are **more likely to stay in the classroom longer.**

Teachers with high levels of social competence are better able to protect themselves from burnout by:

- ✓ developing and managing nurturing relationships with their students
- ✓ managing behavior in their classrooms
- ✓ serving as behavioral role models for children
- ✓ regulating their own emotions



SEL works: Linked to young adult outcomes



Statistically significant associations exist between measured **social-emotional skills in kindergarten** and **young adult outcomes** across multiple domains:

Kindergartners who were stronger in SEL competence were **more likely** to:

- ✓ graduate from high school
- ✓ complete a college degree
- ✓ obtain stable employment in young adulthood

And **less likely** to be:

- ✗ living in public housing
- ✗ receiving public assistance
- ✗ involved with police
- ✗ in a detention facility



Source: Damon E. Jones, Mark Greenberg, and Max Crowley. *Early Social-Emotional Functioning and Public Health: The Relationship Between Kindergarten Social Competence and Future Wellness*. *American Journal of Public Health*: November 2015, Vol. 105, No. 11, pp. 2283-2290.

SEL works: Strong return on investment



The **average return on investment** for six evidence-based programs is:

11 to 1

meaning for every dollar invested there is an \$11 return, savings from costs not incurred for intervention



Source: Belfield, C., Bowden, B., Klapp, A., Levin, H., Shand, R., & Zander, S. (2015). The Economic Value of Social and Emotional Learning. New York: Center for Benefit-Cost Studies in Education.

Theoretical Approaches to SEL

- System Theories
- Learning Theories
- Theories of Child Development
- Theories of Information Processing
- Theories of Behavior Change

Applying Theory to SEL Programming

Programmatic Content

- What are the goals of the SEL approach?
- Who does the program target?
- In what types of settings does the target population spend its time?

Applying Theory to SEL Programming

Implementation Strategies

- Who are the key leaders who will make implementation decisions?
- Who will promote the program and gain buy in from stakeholders?
- Who will implement the program?
- What characteristics of the school and home environments may promote or impede the successful implementation?

What makes a program work?

- Structured and sequenced lessons
- Active learning opportunities
- Multiple opportunities to practice skills (and supervised skills practice)
- Focus on and explicit about targeted skills (vs. psychoeducational and didactic programs)



What makes a program **not** work?

- Interventions tend to be adopted but not fully used
- Interventions are often adapted in ways that cause the intervention core components to lose their integrity
- Intervention efforts are often initiated in early childhood and not sustained over the course of students development

SEL Program Considerations

- Developmentally appropriate
- Explicit instructions vs. implicit instructions
- Multi-systemic programs (home, school, communities)
- Integrated programs vs. stand-alone programs (e.g., after-school programs)
- Quality of training (of teachers, school staff, and parents)

Going Forward

- Identification of intervention core components essential to the efficacy
- Increasing/potential role of technology in SEL

Sample SEL Activities

Kulvadee Thongpibul, PsyD
Clinical Psychologist

What will we talk about?

- COURAGE
- GRATITUDE
- FORGIVENESS
- COMPASSION IN ACTION

Courage

- Perspective taking
- Courage to disagree
- Confidence and courage
- DSMART goal setting
- Ladder of accountability
- Affirmation

Small Group Activities: Perspective Taking

Roles

- ◇ University Administrator
- ◇ University Alumni
- ◇ Professor
- ◇ First Year Student
- ◇ Fourth Year Student
- ◇ Exchange Student
- ◇ High School Student
- ◇ Parents

Situation

University policy requires all students to wear uniform when attending classes

Gratitude

- Development of gratitude
- Mindful thankfulness/focused awareness
- Benefits of gratitude
- Expression of gratitude

"Gratitude is like a flashlight. It lights up what is already there. You don't necessarily have anything more or different, but suddenly you can actually see what it is. And because you can see, you no longer take it for granted."

M.J. Ryan

Small Group Activities: Gratitude Share

- Think about a special experience last year. What made it so special?
- Think about someone that helped make your life better. How did this person do it?
- Think about your special abilities. How do you use them?
- Think about something that you are proud of. Why are you so proud of it?
- Think about something you do that makes you happy. Why does it make you happy?

Forgiveness

- Inner Critic
- Negative self-talk
- Self-reflection
- Self-awareness
- Self-forgiveness
- Forgiveness and courage
- Deep breathing

Small Group Activities: Forgiveness Takes Courage

Write a letter to apologize/ask for forgiveness

- Explain the situation
- Lesson learnt
- If you can turn back time, what would you do differently
- How can you rectify the situation.

Compassion in Action

- Loving the differences
- Self-compassion
- Listening skills
- Ripple effect

Small Group Activities: Self-Compassion I

- Think of a difficult situation that you are facing
- Draw a cartoon character to represent yourself in that situation
- If you are a friend of the cartoon character, what would you say to that cartoon character?
- Write down what you would say or do to the cartoon character

Activities: The Ripple Effect

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovj5dzMxzmc&t=20s>