

## SEL Toolkit for Parents & Caregivers

### ★ Overview of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) -

**Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)** is a process through which children and adults develop skills to form healthy identities, feel and show empathy for others, understand and manage emotions, form and maintain healthy relationships, make responsible and caring decisions, and achieve personal and academic goals. SEL strengthens positive youth development and helps students thrive socially and emotionally.

*Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is a student-centered approach that emphasizes:*

- *Building on students' strengths*
- *Developing skills through hands-on, experiential learning*
- *Giving young people voice in the learning process*
- *Supporting youth through positive relationships with adults over an extended period of time*

*Commonly used in school and after-school settings, SEL programming offers behavioral health strategies and techniques that align with the positive youth development approach.*



### ★ Why SEL Matters-

Research shows that SEL improves academic performance, reduces behavioral concerns, promotes emotional regulation, strengthens relationships, and supports long-term mental wellbeing. SEL also creates equitable learning environments and helps families and schools build strong partnerships.



## The CASEL 5 Competencies-

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines SEL as "the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions."

CASEL has identified 5 broad and interrelated core competency areas that are nurtured in SEL programming: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making. The CASEL 5 can be taught and applied at various developmental stages from childhood to adulthood and across diverse cultural contexts. Many school districts in different states and countries have used the CASEL 5 to establish learning standards and competencies for preschool through high school that articulate what students should know and be able to do for academic success, school and civic engagement, health and wellness, and fulfilling careers.

Self Awareness

Self Management

Social Awareness

Relationship Skills

Responsible Decision Making



# The 5 Competencies of Social Emotional Learning

## Self- Awareness

**Self-Awareness** is one's ability to recognize our own feelings, emotions, thoughts and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess our strengths and limitations with a sense of confidence, optimism, and a growth mindset.

(My recognition of who I am, what I need and how I feel relative to the world around me)

### Self-Awareness examples

- Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets
  - Identifying one's emotions
  - Demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
  - Examining prejudices and biases
  - Experiencing self-efficacy
  - Having a growth mindset
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose
  - Understanding stress and stressors
  - Building on emotional intelligence
- Exploring personality and learning styles
  - Exploring identities
- Identifying and building on strengths

## Self Management

**Self Management** is one's ability to successfully regulate their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.

(My ability to manage my emotions and behaviors, to complete a task or succeed in a challenging situation)

### Self Management examples

- Promotes a growth mindset
- Promotes Perseverance
- Nurture the motivation to learn
  - Facilitates goal setting
  - Facilitates emotion regulation
- Integrates mindfulness practices into our daily lives.  
Self Management may look like...
  - Managing one's emotions
- Identifying and using stress management strategies
  - Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
  - Setting personal and collective goals
  - Using planning and organizational skills
  - Showing the courage to take initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency



## Social Awareness

**Social Awareness** is one's ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and support.

(How I demonstrate my consideration of others and a desire to positively contribute to my community)

### Social awareness examples

- Teaches Empathy
- Creates Inclusive and Safe Environments
  - Nurtures Civic Engagement
- Allows us to explore Community Resources
  - Taking others' perspectives
  - Recognizing strengths in others
- Demonstrating empathy and compassion
- Showing concern for the feelings of others
- Understanding and expressing gratitude
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Recognizing situational demands and opportunities

## Relationship Skills

**Relationship Skills** are one's ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help.

(My ability to use positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others)

### Relationship skills examples

- Model and Promote Positive Communication Skills
- Teach Social Skills and Relationship Education
  - Teach Conflict Resolution Skills
  - Communicating effectively
  - Developing positive relationships
  - Demonstrating cultural competency
- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
  - Resolving conflicts constructively
  - Resisting negative social pressure



## Decision Making

**Responsible Decision Making** is one's ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others  
(My approach to problem solving that involves learning from others, from past experiences and using my values to guide my action and accepting responsibility for my decisions)

Decision making skills...

- Promote Problem-Solving Thinking
- Articulate differences and connections
  - Identify emotions behind actions
- Brainstorm different approaches or solutions to a task
  - Explore possible consequences
- Model and articulate decision-making process
  - Reflect on past experiences
- Evaluate actions - did they meet the goal?
  - Simulate or role play a task
- Teach Critical Thinking and Decision-Making Skills
  - Demonstrate curiosity and open-mindedness
- Learn how to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, and facts
  - Identify solutions for personal and social problems
- Anticipate and evaluating the consequences of one's actions
  - Recognize how critical thinking skills are





## Family Engagement & At-Home SEL

### ★ Tips for Families to Build SEL at Home

- Practice naming emotions during daily activities. Name your own feelings out loud.
- Model calm-down strategies like breathing or counting.
- Use open-ended questions to encourage reflection.
- Create predictable routines that build security.
- Encourage responsibility and independence with age-appropriate choices.
- Hold regular family check-ins to share feelings.
- Use everyday moments as teaching opportunities.
- Practice empathy at home.
- Create family problem-solving moments.
- Celebrate small wins.
- Teach coping tools (practice when calm).
  - Keep a family gratitude or “Good Things” routine.
- Build connection moments.
- Teach and model apology and repair.

### ★ Conversation Starters

- What was something that challenged you today?
- How did you help someone today?
- What emotion did you feel the most today?
- What’s one thing you want to work on tomorrow?
- What is one thing we can celebrate from today?
  - What’s a family rule that feels helpful- and one that could be improved?
- What was a tough decision you had to make today?
- What made you feel proud of yourself today?
- What was something kind you noticed someone else do?
- What is one thing you are grateful for today?
- Did anything feel overwhelming? What could help next time?
- What is one thing we should do more of as a family?



## Resources & Activities

### ★ Family Resources & Activities

- Parenting Montana-Tool for Your Child's Success-

<https://toolsforyourchildssuccess.org/parentingmontana/>

This resource helps to promote the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of children by actively growing their social and emotional skills like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. You can learn about strategies to thoughtfully address challenges with their children while at the same time growing and improving social and emotional skills, increasing wellbeing, and reducing risky behaviors. The website includes tools that are organized developmentally by the age of the child.

- Leading with SEL-Social and Emotional Learning Toolkit for Parent Champions

<https://leadingwithsel.org/content/uploads/sites/7/2024/08/Leading-with-SEL-Parent-Toolkit.pdf>

This toolkit is a quick guide for parents and caregivers to share accurate information in support of SEL in our children's schools and communities. Use these tools to ground conversations in facts and data, dispel misinformation, and advocate for high-quality social, emotional, and academic learning.

- SEL Family Toolkit Call to Action A step by step guide for engaging families in social emotional learning initiatives-

<https://www.movethisworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Social-Emotional-Learning-Family-Toolkit.pdf>

- Free course-An Introduction to Social Emotional Learning-CASEL Course

<https://casel.org/an-introduction-to-social-and-emotional-learning/>

- What Is the CASEL Framework? - CASEL

<https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/>

- Ashland Staff SEL - SEL Competencies

<https://sites.google.com/ashland.k12.ma.us/ashlandstaffsel/sel-competencies>

- Social and Emotional Learning in Massachusetts

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/sel/default.html?section=scl>

- Social and Emotional Learning: An Activity Toolkit

[What's in the Toolkit? - SEL Toolkit - ACT for Youth](#)



## Videos-



- **SEL 101: What are the core competencies and key settings?**  
[SEL 101: What are the core competencies and key settings? \(Bing Videos\)](#)
- **Social-Emotional Learning: What Is SEL and Why SEL Matters**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikehX9o1Jbl>
- **Social Emotional Learning For Kids: Benji, the Bad Day, and Me | Vooks Storytime**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CEPw4CEGc1o>
- **How Social-Emotional Learning Benefits Everyone-**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGa9yieENKM>
- **Social Emotional Learning (Explained for Beginners in 3 Minutes)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeil38Szy9M> txt

## Links to Regional School Curriculums-



- **Everyday Speech:** Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum for Tier 1 Students - Resources  
<https://everydayspeech.com/resources/>
- **Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement:** (Hudson) Choose Love Movement - Promoting Hope, Healing & Connection  
<https://chooselovemovement.org/>
- **Positivity Project:** Character Education for Families | The Positivity Project Weekly Family Letter - P2 Introduction - Pre-K-12 - Google Docs  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A8TwDoFbqeJ23IB3oNN1\\_vhLQNSDukHa54KQbIcoE2M/edit?tab=t.0](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A8TwDoFbqeJ23IB3oNN1_vhLQNSDukHa54KQbIcoE2M/edit?tab=t.0)
- **Second Step:** (Northborough-Southborough) Student Well-being Programs | Second Step Resources for Parents | Second Step Free SEL Resources for Families | Second Step-  
<https://www.secondstep.org/families>
- **Wayfinder:** (Natick) Family Information Hub-  
<https://www.withwayfinder.com/resources/information-for-families>