

# Social and Emotional Learning in Schools

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*Environmental Scan Resources*

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## Introduction

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a developmental framework in which youth strengthen learning and development of skills and competencies that enable them to: *recognize and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations constructively* (Figure 1) (Greenberg et al., 2003; Catalano et al., 2002).

Schools are critical venues for strengthening the SEL competencies of all youth and can use a variety of implementation strategies that might include:

- Systematic curricula selection, development, or revisions which emphasize SEL core competencies
- Integrating skill-building modeling, practice, and assessment across all content areas
- Strengthening teacher, staff, and administrator core competencies through professional learning opportunities
- Fostering safe, inclusive learning environments for all youth
- Actively engaging families and communities in school-wide SEL initiatives and activities

CDC conducted an environmental scan to identify existing resources that support implementation of SEL approaches and programs in schools. Unique interest in SEL resources, tools, and guidance targeting Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) components (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2014) that improve student health outcomes were prioritized. The environmental scan focused on specific document types, including guides, guidelines, guidance documents, manuals, programs, practices, policies, toolkits and other resources published after 2010. Only resources that were free and accessible to the public were included in the results. The following sections of the report highlight the key SEL resources, tools, and guidance identified.

## Findings

### National Resources for SEL

This report includes 35 resources from national agencies, organizations and universities derived from the scan. The resources were developed to support districts and schools in developing and integrating practices to promote social and emotional learning for students in elementary and secondary schools. The available resources are varied in level and detail – some provide foundational knowledge around SEL in schools, while others provide specific strategies to promote SEL for students or address how to establish and sustain effective practices to integrate SEL in schools. The resources, which include guides, toolkits, policy documents and other resources, largely focus on promoting SEL for students through the development of SEL policies and practices.

### Five Competencies of Comprehensive Social and Emotional Learning

According to Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) the 5 SEL core competences include:

1. **Self-awareness:** Know your strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.”
2. **Self-management:** Effectively manage stress, control impulses, and motivate yourself to set and achieve goals.
3. **Social awareness:** Understand the perspectives of others and empathize with them, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures.
4. **Relationship skills:** Communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.
5. **Responsible decision-making:** Make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety, and social norms.

Many leading organizations in the field of SEL, such as the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), American Institutes for Research (AIR), and the Aspen Institute feature on their websites extensive collections of resources on SEL, including implementation guides, strategies and research briefs. The national resources for SEL are summarized in Table 1.

This report includes 18 resources that address SEL and the school health/WSCC content areas. The resources include documents such as guidelines, guidance, learning standards, and other resources that address SEL topics related to school nutrition, physical activity, counseling and psychological services, out-of-school time, and health education. The resources are summarized by content area in Tables 2-6.

Table 1. National Resources for SEL

Resource Title	Author/Source	Description	Target Audience	School Level
<i>Guide</i>				
<a href="#">2015 CASEL Guide: Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs</a>	CASEL	Provides a systematic framework for evaluating the quality of classroom-based SEL programs and best-practice guidelines for district and school teams on how to select and implement SEL programs	Educational leaders and teams	Preschool and elementary; Middle and high school
<a href="#">A Guide to Federal Education Programs That Can Fund K-12 Universal Prevention and Social and Emotional Learning Activities</a>	The Center for Care and Health Care in Schools, Center on Education Policy	A guide to identifying K-12 grant programs in the U.S. Department of Education that could be used to implement prevention efforts in schools	Districts	K-12
<a href="#">Boosting Social and Emotional Development In and Out of School</a>	National Conference of State Legislatures	Describes state and federal actions supporting SEL in schools	General	K-12
<a href="#">Choosing and Using SEL Competency Assessments: What Schools and Districts Need to Know</a>	The Assessment Workgroup and Rand Corporation	Provides guidance on how to choose and use social and emotional learning (SEL) competency assessments	School and district leaders, implementation teams	PreK-12
<a href="#">Indicators of School Quality: Social and Emotional Learning</a>	Healthy Schools Campaign; Alliance for a Healthier Generation	An overview of SEL and SEL measurement	State and district education leaders	K-12
<a href="#">Integrating Social, Emotional and Academic Development: An Action Guide for School Leadership Teams</a>	Aspen Institute	A resource for mapping out an approach to integrating the social, emotional and academic needs of students into the daily school experience	School leadership teams	PreK-12

<a href="#">Safe and Sound: An Educational Leader's Guide to Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning Programs</a>	CASEL; Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory, The Laboratory for Student Success (LSS)	Provides objective information about nationally available programs for the classroom that promote SEL	Educators	PreK-12
<a href="#">Schools, Families, and Social and Emotional Learning: Ideas and Tools for Working with Parents and Families</a>	CASEL; Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory for Student Success	Describes the roles of parents and schools in promoting SEL for students and provides tools and resources for promoting SEL	General	K-12
<i>Online Collections</i>				
<a href="#">Knowledge Center: Social and Emotional Learning</a>	The Wallace Foundation	A collection of reports and resources for SEL	General	K-12
<a href="#">Making the Case for SEL</a>	Committee for Children	A Collection of reports and research on SEL	General	PreK-12
<a href="#">Social and Emotional Learning</a>	RWJF	A collection of issue briefs, reports and research on SEL and related topics	Educators, policy makers, researchers, general	Mixed
<a href="#">Social and Emotional Learning</a>	Share My Lesson	A collection of SEL lessons and guides	Educators	PreK-12
<a href="#">The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)</a>	CASEL	Includes online resource hubs, including the SEL Resource Library, the District Resource Center, and The Road Map to Financial Sustainability to support the promotion and implementation of SEL in schools	Districts, educators, researchers, policymakers, and parents	PreK-12
<a href="#">The SEL School: Connecting Social and Emotional Learning to Effective Teaching</a>	Center on Great Teachers & Leaders at American Institutes for Research (AIR)	This site includes a collection of SEL tools and resources for teachers. Additionally, the site includes research and issue briefs on SEL topics	Educators	PreK-12
<i>Policy</i>				
<a href="#">A Policy Agenda in Support of How Learning Happens</a>	National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development; Aspen Institute	Policy recommendations to promote state and local collaboration to support the development of the whole child in schools.	State and district education leaders, policy makers	PreK-12
<a href="#">Federal Legislation to Promote Social and Emotional Learning</a>	CASEL	Describes provisions in ESSA that support SEL	General	PreK-12

<a href="#">Social and Emotional Learning and Traditionally Underserved Populations</a>	American Youth Policy Forum	A brief that reviews current research and practice in SEL for three traditionally underserved groups: students with disabilities, English language learners, and justice-involved youth.	Policy makers, practitioners, and researchers	K-12
<i>Practices</i>				
<a href="#">A Practice Agenda in Support of How Learning Happens</a>	National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development; Aspen Institute	Practice recommendations to provide a framework through which key stakeholders collaborate to create learning environments that foster the comprehensive development of youth	Educators, youth development organizations, general	PreK-12
<a href="#">From a Nation at Risk to a Nation at Hope</a>	National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development; Aspen Institute	This report includes recommendations from three separate, related reports and features the Commission's recommendations on educating the whole child based on research and promising SEL practices ( <a href="http://www.NationAtHope.org">www.NationAtHope.org</a> )	Practitioners, policy makers, researchers	PreK-12
<a href="#">Leading an SEL School: Steps to Implement Social and Emotional Learning for All Students</a>	CASEL & The National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention	This brief highlights the role that an SEL approach can play in accomplishing the five SS/HS elements and outlines steps toward implementation of a sustainable, high-quality, school-wide SEL program	Education leaders, Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) project directors	K-12
<a href="#">Sample Teaching Activities to Support Core Competencies of Social and Emotional Learning</a>	CASEL	Describes common strategies used to promote student SEL, based on previous reviews of evidence-based programs	Educators	PreK-12
<a href="#">Social Emotional Learning (From Practice to Policy)</a>	NASBE	A detailed introduction to SEL to support school reform practices and policy decisions	State school board members, educators, policy makers, general	PreK-12
<a href="#">The Practice Base for How We Learn: Supporting Students' Social, Emotional and Academic Development</a>	National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic	Highlights promising SEL practices in schools	Education leaders, policy makers	PreK-12

	Development; Aspen Institute (Yahoo)			
<b><i>Toolkits</i></b>				
<a href="#">Are You Ready to Assess Social and Emotional Development?</a>	American Institutes for Research (AIR)	The Ready to Assess suite of tools, available at no cost, helps education leaders, practitioners, and policymakers decide whether and how to assess social and emotional development.	Educational leaders, practitioners, and policymakers	Early Ed-12
<b><i>Other Resources (e.g., briefs, reports, assessment and planning tools, websites)</i></b>				
<a href="#">Backgrounder: The Importance Of Social Emotional Learning for All Students Across All Grades</a>	National Education Association: Education Policy and Practice Department	This brief outlines benefits and outcomes associated with SEL	General	Preschool - high school
<a href="#">The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)</a>	CASEL	The CASEL website include multiple resources, including research reports, briefs, to support the development and implementation of SEL policies and practices in districts and schools	Districts, schools, educational leaders, educators, general	Mixed
<a href="#">Encouraging Social and Emotional Learning: Next Steps for States</a>	Learning Policy Institute	This brief offers recommendations for how state agencies might measure and promote social and emotional learning in their accountability and continuous improvement plans	State agencies, educational	PreK-12
<a href="#">Funding for Social-Emotional Learning in ESSA</a>	Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)	A list containing the specific programs for which ESSA funds may, potentially, be spent to support SEL activities	General	n/a
<a href="#">Investing in Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning: Companion Guide to Social and Emotional Learning Interventions Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)</a>	RAND Corporation	The purpose of this companion guide is to provide support for educators on assessing local SEL needs and using these needs assessments to integrate SEL into school practices and improvement efforts	Educators, state and local educational agencies, educational leaders	Preschool – high school

<a href="#">Navigating SEL from the Inside Out - Looking inside and across 25 leading SEL Programs: A practical resource for schools and OST providers (Elementary School Focus)</a>	Harvard Graduate School of Education	This report was designed to provide information about the specific features that define SEL programs and that may be important to stakeholders who are selecting, recommending, evaluating, or reporting about different SEL programs, or to those who are aligning efforts across multiple schools, programs, or regions	Practitioners	Elementary
<a href="#">Preparing for Effective SEL Implementation</a>	EASAL - Harvard Graduate School of Education	This brief is part of a series commissioned by the Wallace Foundation that draws upon Navigating Social and Emotional Learning from the Inside Out, a resource developed to analyze widely-used SEL programs and provide comprehensive details, transparent information, and cross-program analyses about the various in-school and out-of-school-time programs that are currently available in US contexts	Education leaders, general	PreK-12
<a href="#">Social Emotional Learning in Elementary School: Preparation for Success</a>	Penn State, RWJF, CASEL	This brief examines the evidence of successful, universal SEL programs and practices used to support social and emotional development during the elementary years	General, educators	K-5
<a href="#">Supporting Social -Emotional Learning with Evidence-Based Programs</a>	Annie E. Casey Foundation	This brief provides strategies and examples from school districts that have successfully funded, implemented and sustained evidence-based SEL programs	Education administrators and partners	PreK-12
<a href="#">When Districts Support and Integrate Social and Emotional Learning (SEL): Findings From an Ongoing Evaluation of Districtwide Implementation of SEL</a>	Education Policy Center at AIR	A brief summarizing findings from the evaluation of districtwide SEL implementation	Educators, policy makers	Elementary - high school

Table 2. Counseling/Psychological & Mental Health SEL resource

Resource Title	Author/Source	Description	Target Audience	School Level
<b>Other Resources (Briefs)</b>				
<a href="#">Connecting Social and Emotional Learning With Mental Health</a>	CASEL	This report explains the relationship between mental health and the promotion of social and emotional learning (SEL). A list of resources is included.	Educators, general	K-12

Table 3. Nutrition SEL resources

Resource Title	Author/Source	Description	Target Audience	School Level
<b>Other Resource (Factsheets)</b>				
<a href="#">Introduction to School Gardens</a>	Collective School Garden Network	Describes the roles of school gardens in social development	General	PreK-12
<a href="#">The Connections Between Food Insecurity , the Federal Nutrition Programs, and Student Behavior</a>	Food Research and Action Center	This brief highlights research on the connections between food insecurity and behavior, and the critical role that the Federal Nutrition Programs play when addressing these issues among school-age children and adolescents.	General	PreK-12
<b>Other Resources (Briefs)</b>				
<a href="#">Learning Through the Garden</a>	Rutgers University	Describes the impacts of school gardens in academic and behavioral outcomes for students (includes SEL outcomes)		PreK-12

Table 4. Physical Education SEL resources

Resource Title	Author/Source	Description	Target Audience	School Level
<b>Practice</b>				
<a href="#">Twelve Games to Teach Social-Emotional Learning</a>	Playworks	Online list of games that can facilitate SEL	Educators	PreK-12
<a href="#">Games for Social and Emotional Learning</a>	Playworks	The games in this guide can be played anywhere, but we have assembled them with schools and youth-serving organizations in mind. In these settings, the challenge is not just to introduce games kids will love but also to ensure that dozens of children can share space safely and respectfully whether in a classroom, a gym, or outside. The games in this guide aim to keep as many kids playing as possible for as long as possible.	Educators	PreK-12

<a href="#">Social Emotional Learning Policies and Physical Education</a>	Society for Health and Physical Education (SHAPE)	Recommendations and strategies for integrating social and emotional learning in physical education	Administrators, school staff	PreK-12
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Table 5. Health Education/Sexual Health SEL resources

Resource Title	Author/Source	Description	Target Audience	School Level
<b>Guidelines</b>				
<a href="#">Guidelines on Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Curricula</a>	Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	This document contains guidelines for schools and districts on how to effectively implement social and emotional learning curricula for students in grades K-12. The information provided relates to leadership, professional development, resource coordination, instructional approaches, policies and protocols, and collaboration with families. (Curriculum is taught through Health Education curriculum for elementary school and Developmental Design Advisory in upper campuses)	District, school staff	PreK-12
<b>Standards</b>				
<a href="#">Colorado's Emotional and Social Wellness Standard</a>	Colorado Department of Education	The ESW standard provides a developmental framework regarding social-emotional skills that are expected at each grade level.	Educators	PreK-12

Table 6. Out-of-School Time (OST) SEL resources

Resource Title	Author/Source	Description	Target Audience	School Level
<b>Guide</b>				
<a href="#">SEL to the Core: Building From Foundational Youth Development to Support Social and Emotional Learning</a>	National Afterschool Association	This guide lays out the practices that support effective SEL in afterschool programs.	OST professionals	K-12
<a href="#">Discussion Guide: Social and Emotional Learning in Out-of-School Settings</a>	National Association of Elementary School Principals	A guide to facilitate discussion on goals and priorities for addressing SEL skills in OST programs	OST professionals	K-12
<a href="#">Assessing Self-Regulation: A Guide for Out-of-School Time Practitioners</a>	Child Trends	A guide to identify and support self-regulation skills for children and youth in OST settings	OST professionals	K-12
<b>Other Resources (Briefs)</b>				

<a href="#">Social and Emotional Learning in Out-of-School Time Settings</a>	Harvard Graduate School of Education (EASEL Lab); The Wallace Foundation	This brief is part of a series commissioned by the Wallace Foundation that draws upon Navigating Social and Emotional Learning from the Inside Out, a resource developed to analyze widely-used SEL programs and provide comprehensive details, transparent information, and cross-program analyses about the various in-school and out-of-school-time programs that are currently available in US contexts.	Educators; OST professionals	K-8
<a href="#">Supporting Social and Emotional Development Through Quality Afterschool Programs</a>	American Institutes for Research's Beyond the Bell	This brief provides an overview of work done to date both in afterschool and school-based settings to define social and emotional learning, shares recent research on how afterschool programs contribute to the development of these competencies, and, finally, offers some next step recommendations to both practitioners and researchers.	OST professionals; Researchers	K-12
<a href="#">Linking School and Afterschool Through Social and Emotional Learning</a>	American Institutes for Research	This third brief in the series, Beyond the Bell: Research to Action in the Afterschool and Expanded Learning Field, covers the policy context reflecting a growing interest in social and emotional learning, how afterschool and in-school educators differ in how they implement social and emotional learning practices, and, suggestions for how afterschool and in-school educators can work together to support the social and emotional development of young people.	Educators; OST professionals	K-12
<a href="#">An Ideal Opportunity: The Role of Afterschool in Social and Emotional Learning</a>	Afterschool Alliance	Describes the roles of afterschool programs in social and emotional competency development among youth	OST professionals	K-12
<a href="#">Social and Emotional Learning: Making the Case</a>	Afterschool Alliance	Overview of SEL in afterschool programs	OST professionals	K-12
<b>Toolkits</b>				
<a href="#">SEL Toolkit</a>	Afterschool Alliance	This toolkit helps explain what SEL is, how SEL connects to the afterschool field, and how to make the case to support SEL, as well as includes webinars, issue briefs, program spotlights, blogs, and more to highlight promising practices and strategies.	Educators, out-of-school time professionals	K-12

### Summary

The goal and process of conducting the environmental scan resulted in the identification of various tools and resources to help schools implement SEL approaches that can improve the social, emotional, and academic success of youth in schools. Findings illustrated a diversity in resource type (e.g., guides, toolkits, competencies), intended target audience (e.g., educational leaders (administrations) and classroom educators), and venues for implementing SEL strategies (e.g., during school and out-of-school

time). Education agencies can use these resources and others to support district and school-wide efforts to promote student social and emotional learning and healthy social and emotional climates in schools.

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