



Be Peace. Choose Peace. Create Peace.

CHOOSE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

What is Social and Emotional Learning?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a crucial part of human development and early education. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines it as a process through which children and young adults learn the skills and attitudes necessary for developing healthy identities, emotional management, and empathy, as well as the means for achieving goals, making conscientious decisions, and establishing healthy relationships.¹

How do people learn Social and Emotional Learning?

Many American schools have begun to implement SEL curriculum, working to create harmonious learning environments with rigorous and thought-provoking lessons in order to cultivate self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness in students.²

CASEL introduced social and emotional learning to classrooms in the 1990s, publishing *Promoting Social and Emotional Learning: Guidelines for Educators* in 1997. In the two decades since, a growing body of research into learning environments has proven that SEL, by facilitating students' emotional development and social awareness alongside more traditional academic learning, has made strides in advancing educational equity.³

How do people implement Social and Emotional Learning?

SEL instructors focus on providing a supportive learning environment for their students, safe from judgment. Their goal is to motivate and challenge their students to learn more academically, emotionally, and socially while creating a learning community. SEL discipline of preschool through high school students is "student-centered" and designed to create a dialogue between the teacher and student, and not focused solely on punishment. In SEL's safe learning environment, students and teachers work to be mindful of each other and students' cultural backgrounds in order to promote communication, cordial relationships between students, and teamwork.⁴

For what types of circumstances is Social and Emotional Learning suited?

Social and Emotional Learning is well suited for developing positive social and emotional behaviors among people who use it.

Does Social and Emotional Learning work for preventing or controlling aggression or violence?

SEL curricula remedy social inequities by encouraging empathy and community in young students, who grow up into conscientious adults accustomed to diversity and inclusion. SEL can

¹ Niemi, K. (2020, December 15). CASEL is updating the most widely recognized definition of social-emotional learning: Here's why. *The 74*. <https://www.the74million.org/article/niemi-casel-is-updating-the-most-widely-recognized-definition-of-social-emotional-learning-heres-why/>

² CASEL. (n.d.) *Fundamentals of SEL*. <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

³ Durlak, J., Mahoney, J., & Boyle, A. (December 2022). What we Know, and What we Need to Find out about Universal, School-based Social and Emotional Learning Programs for Children and Adolescents: A Review of Meta-analyses and Directions for Future Research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 148(11/12), 765-782. [10.1037/bul0000383](https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000383).

⁴ CASEL. (n.d.) *SEL in the Classroom*. <https://casel.org/systemic-implementation/sel-in-the-classroom/>

help bridge the gap between students separated by culture, race, class, and gender and ensures that all its students have equal opportunities to learn and grow.⁵

Where else might I go to learn more about Social and Emotional Learning?

- [Community Matters](#)—an organization committed to improving the social-emotional climate of schools and communities throughout the US
- [The Four Pillars of Wellbeing Curriculum](#)—a lesson plan that incorporates social and emotional learning for seven developmental age groups
- [Learning for Justice](#)—provides educational resources through the lens of racial justice
- [Making Caring Common Project](#)—a project of the Harvard Graduate School of Education that works with families, educators, and communities to ensure children learn to care about others and the common good
- [RULER](#)—a systemic approach to SEL developed by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence
- [Ashoka Youth Initiatives](#)—a carefully selected network of young people engaging their peers and societies in creating a world where everyone is a changemaker

Peace Through Action USA activates and equips Americans to implement practical peaceful solutions to aggression and violence in their communities and our country. We are a national-scope, charitable, civic and social capital-building organization.

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⁵ CASEL. (n.d.) *How Does SEL Support Educational Equity and Excellence?*. <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/how-does-sel-support-educational-equity-and-excellence/>.