

UNDERSTANDING AND NURTURING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING



Core SEL Competencies and Strategies for Implementation

The following competencies develop over time within the family, school, community, and other contexts, and are recognized as “master skills” shaping much of our behaviour.

1

SELF-AWARENESS

- ▶ Help students recognize their emotions, strengths, and challenges by teaching them to identify and label their feelings as they arise.
- ▶ Encourage reflection on past successes and the qualities that helped achieve them as well as the challenges they faced and how they overcame them.

Definition

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships with others, solve problems effectively, make responsible decisions, and adapt to the complex demands of growth and development.

SEL & Drug & Gambling Education

Social-emotional learning helps children and youth develop the knowledge and skills to navigate a world where drugs and gambling are readily available and often promoted. Children and youth with strong SEL skills tend to be more resilient in challenging and complex situations. They excel at recognizing and managing their emotions, use effective coping strategies, and build strong connections with others. SEL also nurtures social responsibility, empathy, and understanding, empowering children to support others and contribute to collective well-being.

2

SOCIAL MINDFULNESS AND EMPATHY

- ▶ Foster understanding, appreciation, and empathy for others by using role-playing to practice recognizing emotions in others and responding appropriately.
- ▶ Encourage students to consider multiple perspectives and discuss how others might feel in different situations.



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3

SELF-REGULATION

- ▶ Create an environment where students are encouraged to reflect on their emotions before reacting, promoting emotional management.
- ▶ Teach self-regulation techniques such as deep breathing, counting to ten, and visualization exercises to help manage emotions and behaviours.

4

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

- ▶ Promote positive relationships and conflict resolution through group activities, role-playing, and cooperative tasks.
- ▶ Guide students in practicing effective communication and teamwork, emphasizing mutual respect and shared goals.

5

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

- ▶ Encourage students to reflect on the impact of their actions and decisions, discussing both positive and negative consequences.
- ▶ Provide decision-making opportunities where students evaluate choices, make decisions, and reflect on the outcomes.



GENERAL TIPS FOR SEL IMPLEMENTATION

- Allocate time for personal reflection, mindfulness, deep breathing, and reflective journaling to help students express their thoughts and emotions and manage stress.
- Use storybooks, real-life scenarios (e.g. stressful situations or poor social choices), and activities (like “feelings collages”) to foster empathy, understanding, and problem-solving strategies.
- Collaborate with students to develop classroom or playground rules, emphasizing shared responsibility.
- Celebrate moments of self-awareness, empathy, and responsible decision-making.
- Encourage students to use a daily planner and reflect on goal setting and achievements.
- Create opportunities for conflict resolution discussions and practice strategies for handling disagreements.
- Use calming music during transitions to help reduce stress.