

LEARN SEL TO TEACH SEL

How parents can model social and emotional learning in their everyday life

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On Friday, March 10th, 2023, Social and Emotional Learning will be celebrated in schools from all over the world with a day full of initiatives that promote social-emotional development.

For many, SEL is an acronym that does not call much to mind, but it is indeed very relevant when we talk about the new generation's education and growth.

But what is SEL? And who can actually teach it?



Increased awareness

Nowadays, words like *well-being*, *resilience* and *holistic approach* have gradually moved from the narrowed field of the academic and pedagogical forums to land on a broader and accessible territory. Especially after the pandemic, people are more aware of the importance of mental health in their everyday life. When it comes to choosing the right school for their children, more and more parents are interested in exploring how institutions take care of the students' well-being.

CASEL has identified that 88% of parents want their children to learn social and emotional skills such as respect, cooperation, perseverance, and empathy. (National PTA, 2022)

CASEL stands for Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

CASEL's mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education from preschool through high school.

What experts say

Recent research has shown that when SEL is implemented in the school's (and after school's) curriculum, students are better supported in gaining important skills such as time management, self-regulation, decision-making, focus, goals setting, collaboration with their peers in their work and play. These competencies play a crucial role in students' growth, from the early years until university. An education model that promotes SEL therefore has a positive impact on a wide range of outcomes, including academic performance, healthy relationships, mental wellness, and more.

Schools can apply modern, research-based programmes to enhance the quality of the overall school community's well-being. These programmes provide training for educators, parents and administrators about child safeguarding, anti-bullying and offer a framework of resources about social and emotional learning.

SEL at home

Schools are not the only place where children can practise SEL. Families are children's first resource for their social and emotional development as they set the examples that inspire younger generations for life.

Therefore, it is crucial to establish a strong connection between educators and families to work together in modeling these set of skills to our young people.

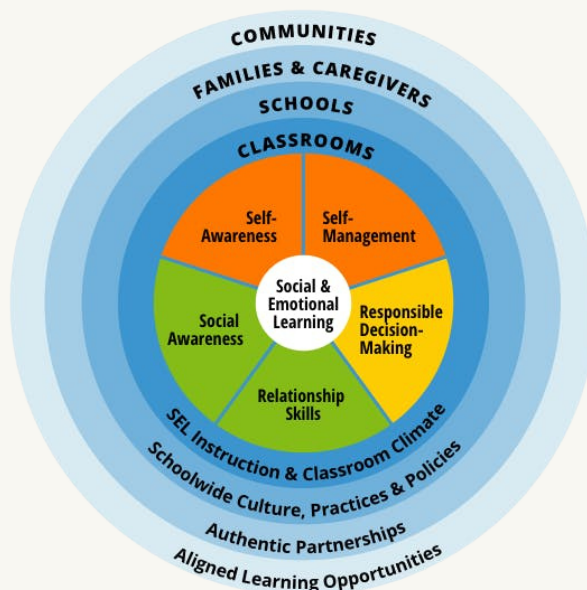
The "CASEL wheel." At the center are the five core social and emotional competencies – broad, interrelated areas that support learning and development.

Circling them are four key settings where students live and grow. School-family-community partnerships

There are different ways to model SEL at home. It is not easy at first, but you can start with thinking that SEL is a subject that needs to be practised everyday, just like playing piano or learning how to read. It requires some effort and some life-style adjustments, but it will give tangible results, as you will notice your family's well-being flourish.

Be kind to yourself: start with taking more care of yourself. Take some time to do what you like, practice mindfulness, make sure that your needs are satisfied. In this way, you will be more ready to model positive behaviour.

Be present: home is the place where you finally can relax from a hard day of work, but your kids still need you. Take some time to talk with them about their day, their challenges, their achievements. Take a break from your phone and practice active listening while you are with your youngsters.





Celebrate your wins together: a small step forward can be an occasion to acknowledge a big effort! Positive reinforcement increases the chances of reaching a target way more than simple punishment.

Self-regulate: It is OK not to feel OK. The important thing is to be able to recognize our emotions, to give them time to come out and be expressed and finally, learn how to feel better. Your children learn from the way you deal with sadness, anger or anxiety. Sometimes, it is useful to find a space in your home that can be used as a "quiet spot" to calm down when needed.

Create new, beautiful memories: a picnic at the park, a new book to read aloud under the blanket, an apple pie baked together on a rainy day. Your children will cherish each moment with you in their hearts. You are your child's heroes.

Teach kindness: Talk gently and respectfully to your children and model positive, empathic communication in your daily interactions with other adults.

Learn how to be accountable: set your pride aside and apologize after a conflict or a misunderstanding. Your child will feel respected and encouraged to do the same when it will be their turn to say sorry.



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International School of Hellerup is an IB World School. The school's mission statement is to provide the highest quality education in a student-centered environment by empowering individuals to fulfill their human potential to become purposeful life-long learners and responsible global citizens.

Link to sources:

ish.dk
casel.org
secondstep.org
panoramaed.com



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