



# Heart & Mind:

## Fostering Our Children's Social Emotional Development

**Burbank Unified School District**  
Special Education District Advisory  
Committee (DAC) Parent Meeting

*September 16, 2025*



# Meet the Presenters

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Coordinator of Special Education

- Alternative Ed.
- Miller/Huerta,
- Nonpublic Schools (NPS) + Mental Health
- Private School
- SLPs, OT, PT

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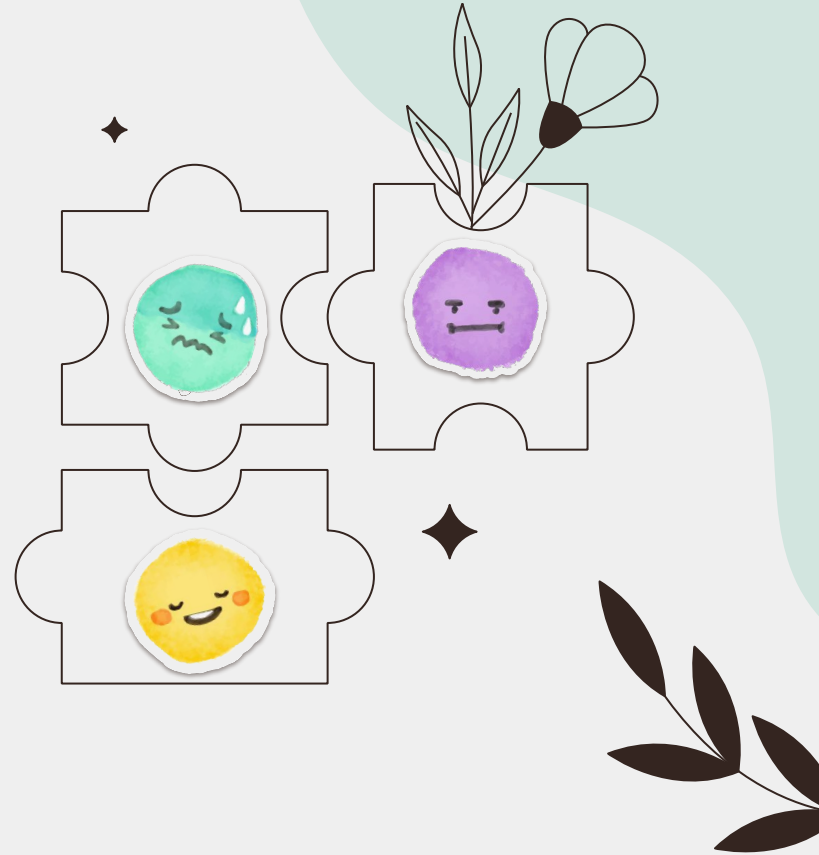
- Collaborative Learning Community (CLC) Schools
- Muir Middle School
- Burbank High School

# Agenda

## Today's Objectives

<b>1. Emotional Development</b>	How do children develop emotional intelligence?
<b>2. Learning Interrupted</b>	How does chronic stress and trauma interrupt learning?
<b>3. Social Emotional Learning (SEL)</b>	What is SEL?
<b>4. SEL at Home</b>	What can I do for my child at home?

# Emotional Development



# Emotional Responses

## Psychological

*Internal feelings*

- *Happy, sad, mad, etc.*

## Behavioral

*What we see*

- *Body language*
- *Facial expressions*

## Physiological

*Physical changes in the body*

- *Increased heart rate*
- *Changes in breathing*

## Cognitive

*Thoughts that arise from emotions*

# Emotional Literacy as a Means to Develop Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is developmental:

- Emotional awareness
- Emotional regulation
- Interpersonal skills

Emotional literacy

- The ability to recognize, understand and express emotions in a healthy way.
- The ability to recognize, name and understand the emotions of self and others.

# Healthy Minds: Developmental Milestones

Emotional development milestones are age-specific signs of a child's growing ability to understand, manage, and express emotions, and to form relationships.

- Childhood (4-7 years of age)
- Middle Childhood (8-11 years of age)
- Young Teens (12-14 years of age)
- Teenagers (15-17 years of age)

# Emotional & Social Changes: Childhood (4-7 years of age)

- Show more independence from parents and family.
- Start to think about the future.
- Understand more about his or her place in the world.
- Pay more attention to friendships and teamwork.
- Want to be liked and accepted by friends.
- Enjoy playing with others.
- Be more conversational and independent.
- Test boundaries but are still eager to please and help.
- Begin to understand what it means to feel embarrassed.
- Are more aware of others' perceptions.
- Try to express feelings with words, but may resort to aggression when upset.
- May complain about friendships and other kids' reactions.
- Want to behave well, but aren't as attentive to directions.

# Emotional & Social Changes: Middle Childhood (8-11 years of age)

- Form stronger, more complex friendships and peer relationships.
- Feel friendships become more important, especially of the same gender.
- Experience more peer pressure.
- Become more aware of physical body as puberty approaches.
- Body image and eating problems can begin to develop at this age.
- Share secrets and jokes with friends.
- Developing their identity by withdrawing from family activities and conversations
- Can be affectionate, silly, and curious, but also selfish, rude, and argumentative.

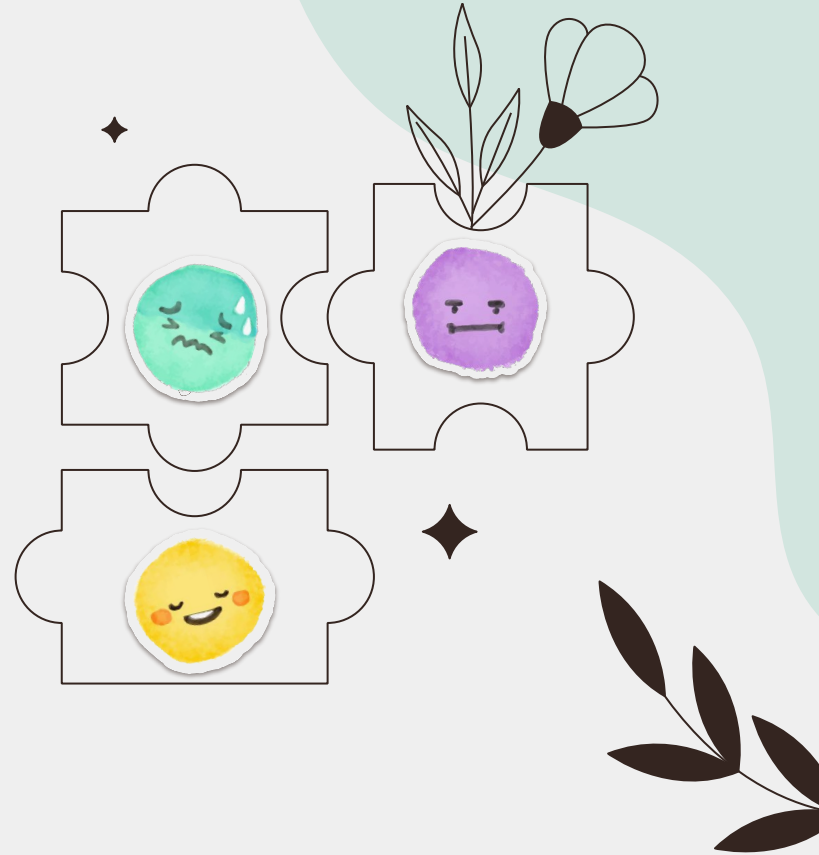
# Emotional & Social Changes: Young Teens (12-14 years of age)

- Show more concern about body image, looks, and clothes.
- Struggle between high expectations and lack of confidence.
- Experience more moodiness.
- Be more likely to be influenced by peer groups.
- Express less affection and sometimes might seem rude or short-tempered.
- Feel stress from more challenging school work.
- Develop eating disorders, experience depression and anxiety.
- May feel sadness, which can lead to poor grades at school, alcohol or drug use, unsafe sex, and other problems.
- May be introspective, moody and need more privacy
- Trying to figure out how and where to fit in
- May test out new ideas, clothing styles, and mannerisms while figuring out

# Emotional & Social Changes: Teenagers (15-17 years of age)

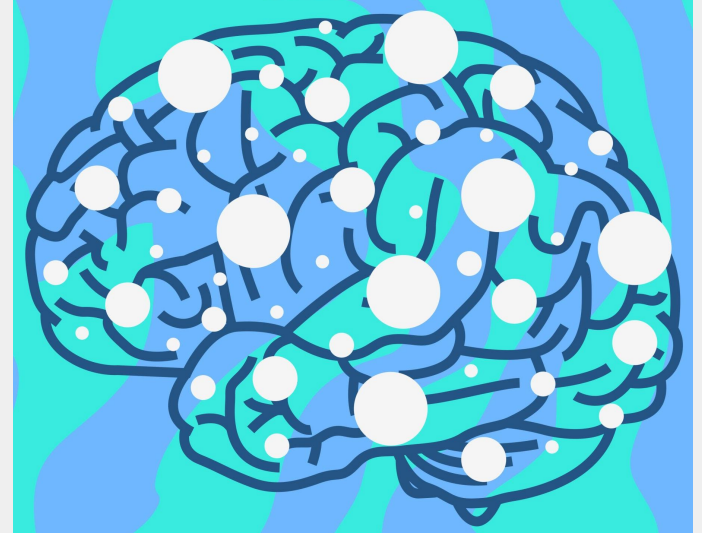
- Have more capacity for caring, sharing and for developing more intimate relationships.
- Have more interest in romantic relationships and sexuality.
- Go through less conflict with parents/caregivers.
- Show more independence from parents/caregivers.
- Spending a lot of time with friends and becoming more interested in dating.
- Experience sadness or depression, which can lead to poor grades at school, alcohol or drug use, unsafe sex, and other problems.

# Learning Interrupted



# Learning is a cognitive process that involves...

- Consolidating short term memory into long term memory
- Sustaining attention
- Visual perceptual and/or auditory processing
- Reasoning, problem solving
- Application of skills



## *How is learning impacted by trauma or chronic stress?*



- Fight or flight response
- Traumatic events
- Traumatic stress for children
- The learning and the survival brain
- Learning and areas of psychological processing



- An automatic physiological reaction to a stimulus or event that is frightening or perceived as stressful.
- Activates the sympathetic nervous system and triggers an acute stress response that prepares the body to fight or flee.
- Evolutionary adaptations to increase chances of survival in threatening situations.
- Overly frequent, intense, or inappropriate activation of the fight or flight response can have significant consequences on learning and social/emotional development.



## What is a Traumatic Event?



- A frightening, dangerous, or violent event that poses a threat to a child's life or body.
- Threatens one's own life or physical security or that of a loved.
- Initiates strong emotions and physical reactions that can persist long after the event.
- Children may feel terror, helplessness, or fear, as well as physiological reactions.
- Can come from outside of the family or from within the family, such as domestic violence, physical or sexual abuse, or the death of a loved one.
- Children may not be able to protect themselves or may lack the protection from others. They may feel overwhelmed by the intensity of physical and emotional responses.



## *What is Child Traumatic Stress?*



Children who suffer from traumatic stress are those who have been exposed to one or more traumas over the course of their lives and develop reactions that persist and affect their daily lives after the events have ended.

# *Traumatic Reactions*

- Intense and ongoing emotional upset
- Depressive symptoms or anxiety
- Behavioral changes
- Difficulties with self-regulation
- Problems relating to others or forming attachments
- Regression or loss of previously acquired skills
- Attention and academic difficulties
- Nightmares, difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty eating
- Physical symptoms, such as aches and pains
- Older children may behave in risky ways



## ***Learning Brain & Survival Brain***



- When children are experiencing traumatic stress, they are functioning in the Survival Brain.
- They are more likely to have overly frequent, intense, or inappropriate activation of the fight or flight response.
- They may not be available or open for learning new information, remembering previously learning information, or making connections.
- Because they are so focused on perceived threats, they may not feel safe to learn.

- When children feel calm and safe, they are more ready to learn and explore.
- They are comfortable with uncertainty and open to ambiguity and vagueness. They can be curious about the future.
- Children feel safe to explore and are not afraid of making mistakes as part of the learning process.

## ***Learning Brain & Survival Brain***



# What can we do?

*Create an environment and culture of safety and security needed to:*

- *Explore and feel secure to take calculated risks*
- *Create and be curious about the world*
- *Make mistakes in the learning process*







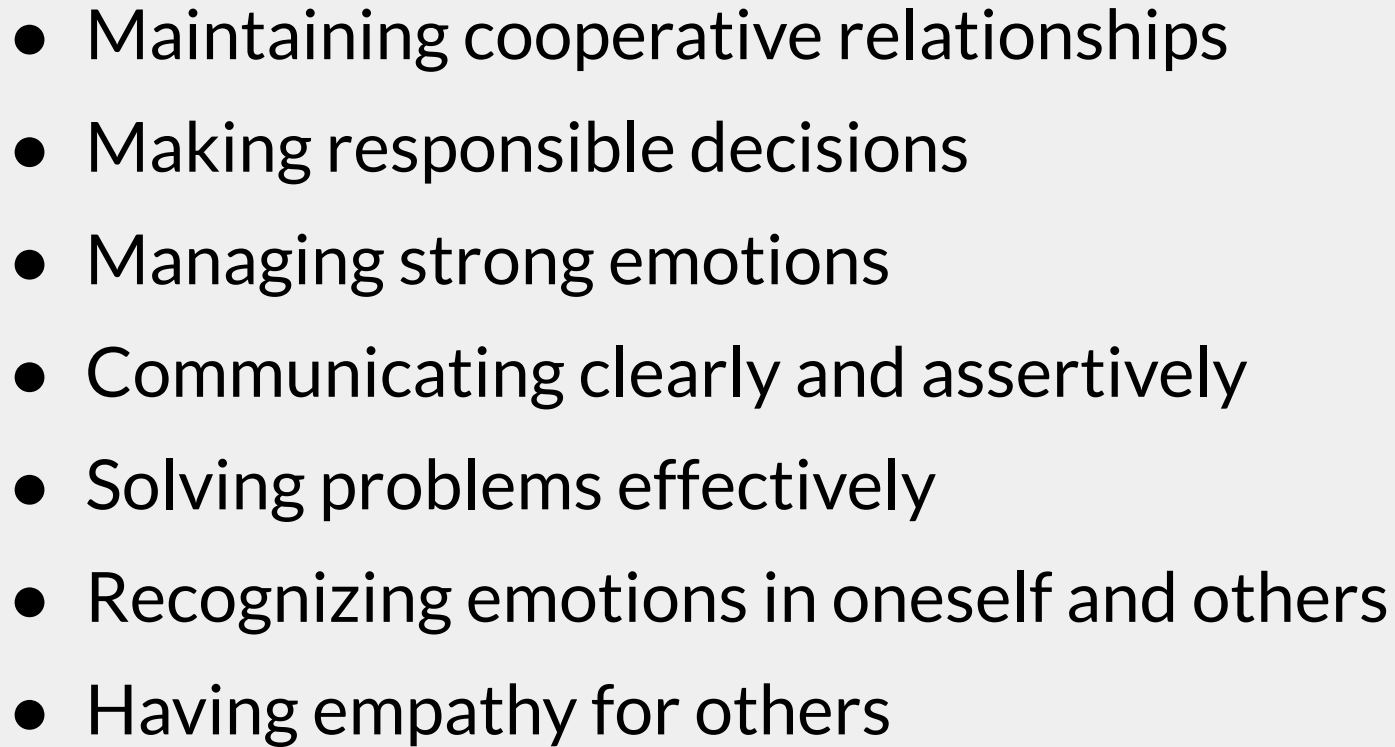
# Social Emotional Learning





# What is Social Emotional Learning (SEL)?

- The process of children gaining the skills and competencies necessary to thrive **academically**, **socially** and **personally**.
  - SEL includes the ability to...
    - Understand and manage emotions
    - Set and achieve positive goals
    - Feel and show empathy for others
    - Establish and maintain positive relationships
    - Make responsible decisions.
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- Maintaining cooperative relationships
  - Making responsible decisions
  - Managing strong emotions
  - Communicating clearly and assertively
  - Solving problems effectively
  - Recognizing emotions in oneself and others
  - Having empathy for others

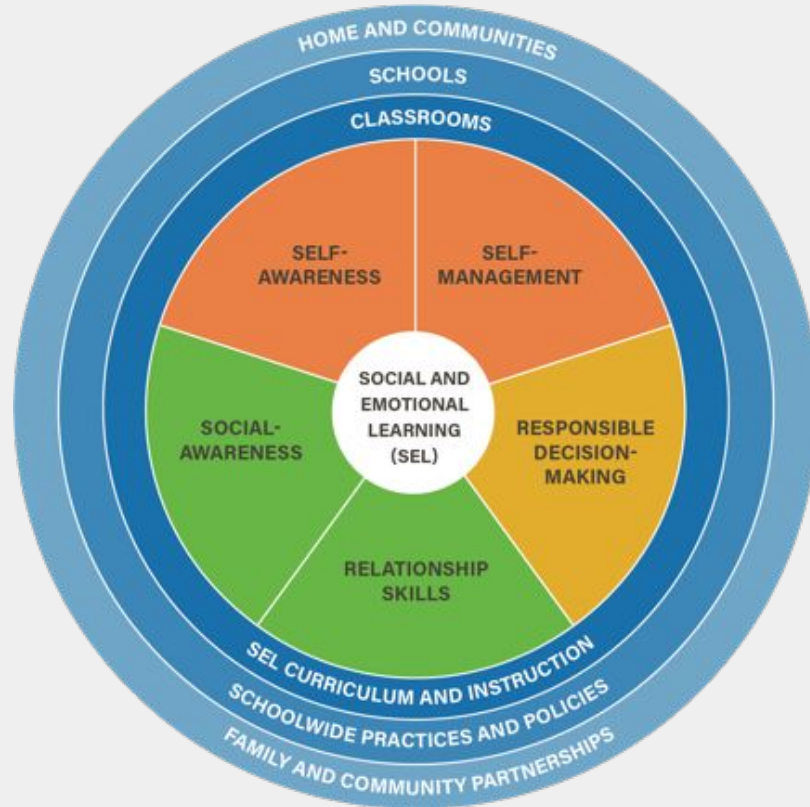
# Benefits of SEL at Home

Children whose parents embrace SEL at home are more likely to:

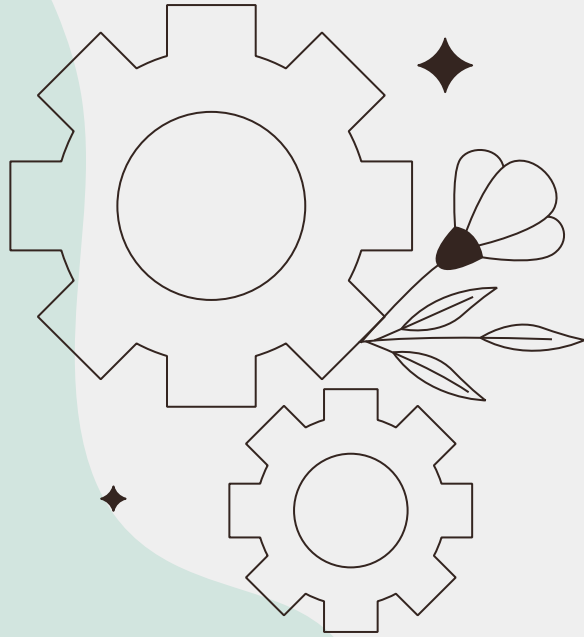
- Have high self-esteem
- Develop positive coping skills
- Achieve high grades
- View others positively



# CASEL SEL Framework



# **Social Emotional Learning At Home**





# Families/Caregivers and SEL

- Partnerships between family and school
  - Made when school norms, values and cultural representations reflect the families' experiences.
- Families/Caregivers model skills, attitudes and behaviors
- Schools engage families in understanding, experiencing, informing, and supporting the social emotional development of their students
  - Two way communication with families
  - Help caregivers understand child development
  - Help teachers understand family background and cultures
  - Provide opportunities for families to volunteer in schools
  - Extend learning activities and discussions into homes
  - Coordinate family services with community partners





# 5 SEL Core Competencies



1. Self-Awareness
  2. Self-Management
  3. Social Awareness
  4. Relationship Skills
  5. Responsible Decision-Making
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# 1. Self-Awareness

The ability to understand one's own emotions, thoughts and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.













Includes the capacity to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a grounded sense of confidence and purpose.

- **Identifying emotions**
  - **Accurately perceiving oneself**
  - **Recognizing strengths**
  - **Developing self-confidence**
  - **Developing self-efficacy**
- 
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**What is filling and draining  
your bucket today?**



# How Am I Feeling Today?

Happy 	Sad 	Worried 	Angry 
Surprised 	Tired 	Frustrated 	Sick 
Silly 	Scared 	Disappointed 	Annoyed 

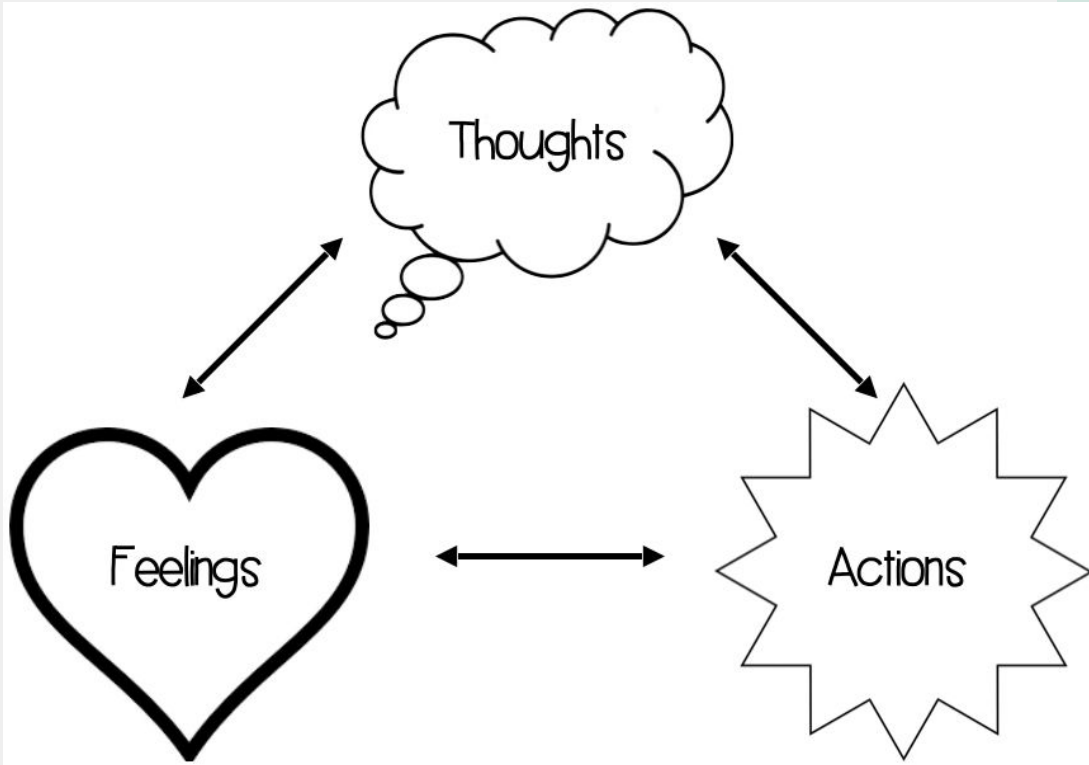
## 2. Self-Management

The ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts and behaviors effectively in different situations.

Includes planning and achieving one's goals and aspirations through delayed gratification, stress management, internal motivation and agency.

- **Impulse control**
- **Stress management**
- **Self-discipline**
- **Self-motivation**
- **Goal-setting**
- **Organization skills**

# Understanding what we FEEL, what we THINK and what we DO



# Processing Your Emotions

1. Pause and notice
2. Find the feeling in your body
3. Name the feeling
4. Regulate the emotion
5. Ask: what need is this feeling pointing to?



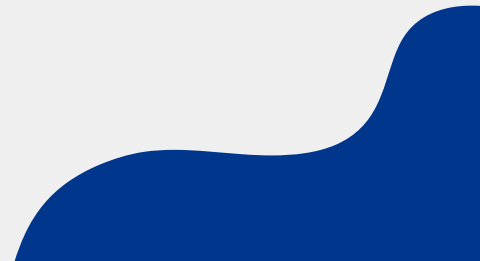
# 3. Social Awareness

The ability to understand the perspectives of others.

Includes empathizing with others with different backgrounds, cultures, and contexts than oneself.

Holds the capacity to feel compassion for others, understand broader social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community dynamics.

- **Perspective taking**
- **Empathy**
- **Appreciation for diversity**
- **Respect for others**



# "I" Message

Sometimes we get frustrated with others. Express your frustration with an I Message, starting the statement with I feel. For example, if someone takes something of yours without asking, you can say "I feel frustrated when you take my toy, because it means a lot to me, and I want you to ask beforehand."

I feel...

When you...

Because...



I would like for you to...



# 4. Relationship Skills

The ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships.

Includes effectively navigating settings with diverse individuals and groups, communicating clearly, listening actively, working collaboratively and cooperatively to solve problems with others, negotiating conflict constructively, seeking or offering help when needed.

- **Communication**
  - **Social engagement**
  - **Relationship building**
  - **Teamwork**
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# Practice Active Listening

Listen,  
connect, and  
support

without judgement  
or lecture



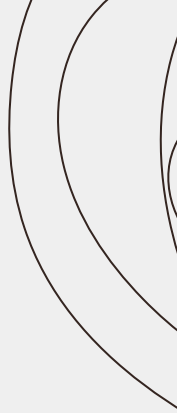
# 5. Responsible Decision-Making

The ability to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across situations.

Includes the capacity to consider ethical standards and safety concerns.

The ability to evaluate the benefits and consequences of one's actions for personal, social, and collective well-being.

- **Identifying problems**
- **Analyzing situations**
- **Solving problems**
- **Reflecting**




## Thinking About My Choices


When did I make my choice?
Who was there?
What choice did I make?
What happened when I made this choice?
What could I have done instead? What would have been a better choice?
What might have happened if I made a better choice to solve my problem?

## Consequences of My Choice

How does my choice affect <b>me</b> ? I feel:
How does my choice affect <b>others</b> ? <b>They</b> feel: <input type="checkbox"/> Friends: <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers: <input type="checkbox"/> Parents:
<b>What is a <i>logical and reasonable</i> consequence for making my choice?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> I did not follow school guidelines and want to help make our school a better place. This is how:  <input type="checkbox"/> I was disrespectful to an <i>adult</i> and want to apologize. This is how:  <input type="checkbox"/> I was disrespectful to a <i>peer</i> and want to apologize. This is how:



Positive experiences  
and relationships  
serve as protective  
factors that can  
mitigate effects of  
adversity and stress.





# Resources

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) <https://casel.org>

Committee for Children (2019). *What is Social-Emotional Learning?*

<https://www.cfchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/policy-advocacy/what-and-why-one-pager.pdf>



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Ristuccia, J. (2018, August). The Impact of Trauma on Learning. Trauma and Learning. Policy Initiative, Massachusetts Advocates for Children and Harvard Law School. <https://traumasensitiveschools.org/>

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