



# Social Emotional Learning Toolkit

## *A How to Use Guide*

### SEL Implementation Tools and Supplemental Resources

#### About this Toolkit

In recent years, more and more school districts have begun to prioritize social emotional learning (SEL) and adopt a whole child approach to education. Similarly, as they have begun to focus more on the social emotional development of their students, there has been a stronger interest in social emotional learning curriculum. This push, coupled with the recent school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, has sparked the creation of this toolkit.

When students return to school, SEL supports will be more crucial than ever, not just in the immediate future, but also over the next couple of academic years. While all students need supportive relationships and nurturing learning environments, these factors become even more important for those students facing additional stress. Furthermore, skill development on how to express, process and cope with the various emotions, as well as feelings of change, fear, and uncertainty, will be paramount. Schools will need to adopt SEL practices to support the wide ranges of student needs.



This toolkit provides flexible SEL lessons teachers can implement with students in the classroom based on the core competencies from the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Lessons can be delivered in person or virtually to meet the varying needs of educators and students. It is important to note that while the toolkit was developed partially in response to COVID-19, the lessons are not exclusive to just this moment in history and can still be utilized once the pandemic ends.

#### Audience

The toolkit is designed to provide school staff with ready to implement lessons that will assist them in integrating SEL into their teaching practices. Administrators and any educator in the school community can also use this toolkit to find lessons, tools, and resources to improve students social, emotional, behavioral, and academic skills.

#### Toolkit Organization

The toolkit has two primary sections:

 <b>Section 1: Implementation Tools</b>	 <b>Section 2: Supplemental Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understanding, Implementing &amp; Introducing Community Circles</li><li>• 24 SEL Lessons (Series of 8 per grade band: K – 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>, &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>)</li><li>• Sequence Guide and Competency Map</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SEL Overview</li><li>• Strategies and Tips for Teachers in Dealing with Students who have Experienced Trauma</li><li>• Going Virtual: Tips for Teaching SEL Online</li><li>• Additional Lessons: Lessons on Germs and Respect from Popular Movies</li></ul>

## Section 1: Implementation Tools

### I. Community Circles

Based from the social science of restorative practices, the SEL lessons in this toolkit are designed to be facilitated using the community circles process. Proactive community circles cultivate a healthy classroom culture and promote respectful, positive relationships between the teacher and student, as well as, amongst peers. Three documents are provided to assist you in implementing the community circles:

- ***Understanding Community Circles*** – this quick overview will provide a short summary about community circles including their principles and processes.
- ***Implementing Community Circles*** – this document provides information needed to be able to fully facilitate the community circle as part of ones SEL lessons – specifically the structure, the set-up and the sequencing of the circles.
- ***Introduction to Community Circles*** – this is a K-12<sup>th</sup> grade lesson that can be used to teach students the circle process. Circles have their own set of guidelines that are essential for them to function smoothly.

Please note that throughout the toolkit, special consideration was paid to the sensitivities surrounding COVID-19. Thus, particular attention and focus was on developing lessons that were trauma-informed and that included, digital adaptations. Since the lessons were also designed to be long-standing, some processes and activities do not follow current health guidelines for social distancing, etc. Therefore, lessons should be altered, as needed, to ensure that they are in compliance with school and district policies.

### II. SEL Lessons

There are 24 lessons spanning four of the five core competencies from CASEL. While lessons for the fifth competency may be added in the fall of 2020, the current lessons in the toolkit focus on the topics that were determined to be the most essential skills students will need once schools reopen. The following chart is a breakdown of the lesson competencies and sub-competencies:

SEL Competency	SEL Sub-Competencies
Self-Awareness	Emotions
	Self-Confidence
Self-Management	Empathy
	Respect
Social Awareness	Emotional Regulation
	Perseverance and Goal Setting
Relationship Skills	Relationship Building
	Communication Skills

Lessons have been developed for the following three grade bands: 1) K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 2) 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade and 3) 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade. There are many opportunities for choice in the practice and activities sections. It is, however, recommended that teachers whose students fall on either the lower or upper end of each grade band, review lessons across two grade bands to determine the lesson content that is most developmentally appropriate. There are eight lessons in each grade band covering each of the above sub-competencies.

Timing suggestions are provided for each section of the lesson as a guide but will fluctuate per teacher. Please refer to the sequence guide and competency map for more information on the best order of the lessons. It is recommended that schools develop plans that determine when SEL will be delivered and provide the necessary time for teachers to effectively deliver the content.

When it comes to SEL, best practice recommends K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade students benefitting from practice up to 25 minutes daily, 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students benefitting from practice between 30-40 minutes for three to five times a week, and 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade benefitting from practice up to 60 minutes twice a week. The lessons were created to be chunked in parts or delivered in full to meet the various time constraints. For example, the community circle section could be delivered on Monday, the teach and model section delivered on Wednesday and so on. Additionally, some lesson sections (such as the activity) could be embedded into other subjects as extensions. Lessons can be completed in a day, over the course of a week, or even over the course of a month. Maximum flexibility is given to schools in how they will deliver the lessons!

Each lesson follows the same structure of providing for community circles, teaching of skills, modeling of skills, practicing of skills, and activities for reinforcement. The following outlines what you will find in each lesson:

- ***SEL Competency and SEL Sub-Competency:*** this is the SEL core competency and SEL sub-competency that the lesson addresses based on CASEL's SEL framework.
- ***Lesson Concepts:*** these are the "big ideas" that students will be able to take away from the lesson.
- ***Lesson Objectives:*** these define what the students will learn in the lesson.
- ***Why this Lesson Matters:*** this provides a brief overview of the importance of the lesson.
- ***Materials:*** this provides a list of items needed to deliver the lesson.
- ***Session Length and Pacing:*** this is the suggested amount of time needed to complete each section of the lesson.
- ***Community Circle Question:*** this is the question that should be posed to the students during the community circle. The question relates to the overall lesson sub-competency and serves as a way for students to share their perspectives on the lesson topic prior to the teaching and learning phase. Please review to the community circle documents mentioned in the above section for more information.
- ***Community Circle COVID-19 Question Consideration:*** this is an alternate question that could be posed to students during the community circle. This question still relates to the overall lesson sub-competency but looks to explore students' perspectives on their recent experiences surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ***Need for Skill:*** this is a brief introduction for students on why/how this skill will benefit them.
- ***Teach Learning Objectives:*** this is the content part of the lesson. Various resources are provided, including scripts, videos, visuals, handouts, etc. As the lesson is delivered, be aware of cultural differences. Validate cultural background by making sure that students understand

that certain situations may call for different responses and that the current (or family) way of dealing with the situation, while possibly different, is not in any way inferior.

- **Model Examples and Non-Examples:** this is where the teacher will model examples and non-examples of using the skill in context. Scripts are provided.
- **Practice or Engage in Role Play:** this section will either provide an individual or group activity for students to practice the skill or provide scenarios for role play. Please note that the greater the similarity between the classroom setting and the real-world or application setting, the greater the likelihood that the student will actually perform the skill outside of the small group setting. If possible, have the session in a setting where the desired skill is typically exercised. (ex. hallway, cafeteria, school bus, playground)
- **Activity to Practice Skill:** these are activities students can complete to reinforce the skill taught. Several of the lessons provide numerous activities to choose from. Pick one to complete or utilize more than one to address the needs of students. Additionally, many of the lessons can be embedded into other subjects as extensions.
- **Closing Community Circle Question:** this is the question that should be posed to students during the closing community circle. The question allows for students to reflect on the skill learned. For more information, review the community circle documents from above.
- **Digital Learning Adaptations:** this provides suggestions and additional resources/videos for adapting the SEL lesson to a digital setting if needed.
- **Additional Tips and Resources:** these are additional tips or resources teachers can utilize to enhance the delivery of their lessons and increase their own SEL skill sets.
- **References/Resources:** these are the materials used to develop the lessons. Many are researched based.

## Section 2: Supplemental Resources

### I. SEL Overview

This resource provides a quick summary of social emotional learning, CASEL's five core competencies, and the impact of SEL. It also shares how SEL and PBIS compliment one another to provide a strong combination of adequate structure and supportive relationships to increase school climate.

### II. Strategies and Tips for Teachers in Dealing with Students who have Experienced Trauma

This resource provides ways to deliver SEL through a trauma-informed approach. Trauma is in the perspective of the person experiencing it, so an experience may be traumatic for one person but not for another. This is also now commonly understood in the various ways students and families have experienced COVID-19. Therefore, since we typically cannot know which children have experienced trauma, it is important to use trauma-informed practices with all children and provide universal, trauma-informed supports in the teaching of SEL lessons and activities.

### III. Going Virtual: Tips for Teaching SEL Online

This resource provides tips for teachers that they can use to foster students' social emotional skills in a virtual environment. It also shares various technology tools and resources available to assist in creating or developing SEL lessons.

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References:

Oliver, B. (2018). Indiana Department of Education Social Emotional Learning Toolkit, <https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/sebw/sel-toolkit-final-updated-cover.pdf> and Milwaukee Public Schools, Social Academic Instructional Group (SAIG) Curriculum, <https://mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/en/Families/Family-Services/Intervention---PBIS/SAIG-Curriculum.htm>