



White Paper

SEL for All Learners

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RethinkEd

Together We Power Potential

Executive Summary

Social and emotional learning. Some think this sounds touchy feely, soft, lovey-dovey, full of hugs and smiles; not academic, not rigorous, not something that belongs in school. This couldn't be more inaccurate. Social and emotional learning is for all learners in the classroom, including students requiring Tier 2 and 3 supports and the teachers who educate them. However, the focus on all learners has been remiss in the current design of most social and emotional learning efforts. A gap Rethink Ed is working hard to fill.

Social and emotional learning, or SEL, refers to evidence-based practices informed by rigorous, systematic social science that underscore the way we understand, use, and manage emotions to learn. Emotions drive how we think, pay attention, make decisions, manage our time, and countless other processes that impact how students and teachers show up in the classroom. SEL programs cultivate the development of five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies: self-awareness, selfmanagement, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies underscore the capacity to learn, develop, and maintain mutually supportive relationships, and be healthy, physically, and psychology. (Visit www.casel.org for more information on the evidence supporting each competencies).

Scientific studies evaluating the impact of SEL programs show that these practices improve students' academic performance, behavior, and attendance. These practices help students and their teachers form and sustain better quality relationships and improve both students' and teachers' psychological health and well-being. One economic analysis that reports an 11:1 benefit:cost ratio of SEL programming (Belfield, Bowden, Levin, Shand & Zander, 2015). For every one dollar invested in SEL programming, there is a measurable \$11 benefit.

Let's take a closer look at the evidence.

ALL Students Need SEL

Empirical investigations of the impact of SEL interventions have found that students who participate in SEL programming perform better academically, have less anxiety, are more attentive and less hyperactive in school, and are less aggressive than their peers. The effects are largest for the students at most need--academically and behaviorally. SEL improves academic outcomes across content areas including English language arts, science, and math. SEL programs promote environments that support the education of the whole student (Brown, Jones, LaRusso, & Aber, 2010; Hagelskamp, Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2013; Rivers, Brackett, Reyes, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2013), providing a mechanism for school leaders to negotiate the often-rigid standardized structures of federal mandates (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Weissbourd, Bouffard, & Jones, 2013). Unlike the marginal at best outcomes currently reported from Common Core practices, the potential for individual student growth from an SEL intervention is high; participation in an SEL program promotes shifts in student achievement, behaviors, and psychosocial functioning (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011).

To reap the benefits of SEL, all teachers need to be trained how to integrate SEL into their classrooms and interactions with students. Investing in teachers is investing in every student they teach, every colleague that they work with, and every parent. Put simply, educators who participate in SEL programs are happier and have happier students. Teachers report being more responsive (Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Rimm-Kaufman, Curby, Grimm, Nathanson, & Brock, 2009) and organized (Hagelskamp et al., 2013), and having greater self-efficacy than their colleagues who did not participate (Graziano, Reavis, Keane, & Calkins, 2007).

Classrooms That Use SEL Are Happier Too

Classrooms participating in SEL programs report improved classroom climate (Rivers et al, 2013; Hagelskamp et al., 2013), increased student engagement, and lower rates of problem behaviors, negative affect, and aggression among their students (Howes, Sanders & Lee, 2008; Network, 2003; Zinsser, Bailey, Curby, Denham, & Bassett, 2013). Teachers and students participating in SEL programs demonstrate increased pro-social behavior and higher quality relationships.

Despite the benefits of SEL programming, to date, the focus on all learners in SEL design and implementation have been overlooked. For SEL programming to be effective for all students, the needs of all students must be considered in its design, including students who require Tier 2 and Tier 3 learning supports. All learners need SEL. Classrooms serving students with special education needs report diminished student engagement, lower quality teacher-student relationships, and fewer instances of pro-social interactions than general education classrooms (Crowe, Rivers, & Bertoli, 2015). Among the learners who are lowest performing and least likely to graduate, students with special learning needs are more likely to have anxiety than their peers without special learning needs, and students with hyperactivity and aggression have a higher placement in special education classrooms (Cipriano, Barnes, Rivers, Bertoli & Flynn, 2016; Siperstein, Wiley, & Forness, 2011). Moreover, educators working in special education report high stress and low efficacy, contributing to attrition rates that are nearly double that of general educators (Crowe et al., 2015; Billingsley, 2004).

The impact is resource intensive, costing teachers time training and orienting temporary staff to support the classroom at the cost of undermining productivity and direct services to the students (Ghere & York-Barr, 2007; Riggs & Mueller, 2001). The over

11% of the public-school population requiring Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports (U.S. Department of Education Data Accountability Center, 2012) have an average annual per-pupil expenditure nearly three times that for Tier 1 learners (Chambers, Shkolnik, & Perez, 2003; Crowe et al., 2015). With the right social and emotional learning program, the likelihood of measurable impact for all learners is high. Rethink Ed is developing an SEL solution that meets the needs of all learners and the teachers who serve them and will launch for the Fall of 2018. Our monthly webinar series launches later this month, and we begin by introducing the What, Why, Who, and How of SEL Follow our blog and webinars as we continue this important conversation and gear up for the launch of a comprehensive, evidence-based SEL solution tailored for all learners! Learn more about our integrated offerings and new resources at www.rethinked.com.

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About Us

Rethink Ed was founded on a simple, yet powerful idea: To re-think education. To make it better and easier. To unburden school districts and empower educators. To improve outcomes and elevate accountability. To promote collaboration and inspire learning. And most importantly, to make a difference in the school day for everyone – administrators, educators, and students.

The Rethink Ed solution is part of Rethink First, a global company that is transforming behavioral healthcare. Similar to Rethink First's other solutions that are innovating and improving outcomes for clinicians and employers globally, Rethink Ed is pioneering EdTech with our relentless pursuit of innovative methods that put evidenced-based, data-informed, digitally delivered instruction and assessments into the hands of educators, clinicians, and parents who share our singularly minded focus: To power the potential of all children and to work together to help them succeed.

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