ExCEL
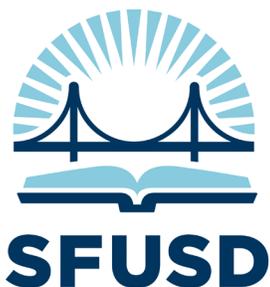
SEL 101

CREATING AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS WHERE SEL THRIVES

SFUSD — SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

San Francisco Unified School District
ExCEL After School Programs

Student Family & Community SUPPORT
San Francisco Unified School District

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This guide provides an overview of **Social Emotional Learning** and how we can create a culture, climate, and program design in our ExCEL Afterschool program where SEL can thrive, for both students and our staff. This guide also contains best practices, activities, and resources to support your team in promoting learning and growth in four key SEL areas: Growth Mindset, Self-Efficacy, Self-Management, and Social Awareness.

We encourage you to review this guide and share it with your team. Consider devoting a series of staff meetings, one to an SEL area, to engage your staff in exploring their own level of SEL skills in these areas, and to generate ideas for activities that support development of these skills.

ExCEL programs are already well-positioned to succeed at SEL integration, with their commitment to **youth development**, and to the ongoing reflection and growth that is inherent in the QAP process. We hope that SEL becomes a useful and inspiring lens through which to view your program, one that leads to life-changing experiences for youth and staff in your programs.

WHAT IS SEL?

Social and emotional learning is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. (CASEL)

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Success in school and in life depends on more than academic ability alone. Rigorous longitudinal research has demonstrated that specific competencies—such as growth mindset, self-efficacy, self-management, and social awareness—have a significant impact on students' academic performance and persistence in school as well as their broader life success, as measured by a variety of health, wealth, and well-being indicators in adulthood.

These interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies predict grades throughout K–12 as strongly as IQ does, and they predict performance in the workforce more strongly than IQ does. U.S. News and World Report indicates that skills such as social awareness, emotional intelligence, and self- efficacy are in particularly high demand by employers. Further, studies have demonstrated that strength in these areas is correlated with such long-term outcomes as higher employment rates and wages, as well as lower risk of substance abuse, obesity, and criminal activity. (TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

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WHAT ARE WE ALREADY DOING THAT SUPPORTS SEL?

Many of the core youth development practices that our programs strive to provide **already support** important SEL outcomes. We strengthen social and emotional skills when we create a safe and supportive culture and climate, when we foster opportunities for building meaningful relationships, when we allow youth voice to inform our programs, when we support skill building and hold high expectations, and when we explore connections with the community around us.

We also encourage SEL when we adopt similar practices for **our staff**: encouraging their leadership and creativity, inviting their input and listen to concerns and ideas, and encouraging them to set high expectations.

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT SEL DEVELOPMENT IN OUR STAFF AND OUR STUDENTS?

An important first step is to provide opportunities for our staff to learn about SEL and why it is important for success (both their own, and for their youth). Share information and watch videos about SEL with your team, provide time to discuss SEL practices at staff meetings, and encourage staff to model SEL skills with their peers and with the youth.

Explore how SEL intersects with other important areas of your program, such as behavior guidance policies and practices, conflict resolution, program design, facilitation, and ongoing goal-setting, reflection and improvement (i.e. the QAP process).

You'll find many other ideas and best practices in this guide, and on the ExCEL Hub.

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FOUR KEY SEL COMPETENCIES

GROWTH MINDSET

Believing that one's most basic abilities (including intellectual ability) can be developed through study, practice, dedication and hard work.
• Effort Equals Increased Intelligence and Ability
• Persist Even with Setbacks
• Believe in Continued Growth

SELF-EFFICACY

This includes a student's belief that she can exercise control over her personal learning process.
• Believe in Success
• Goals are Attainable
• Must See a Clear Path to Reach Goal

SELF-MANAGEMENT

Coming to class prepared, paying attention, avoiding distractions; modulating one's anger or frustration.
• Setting plans and working towards goals
• Overcoming obstacles
• Regulating emotions
• Advocating for oneself
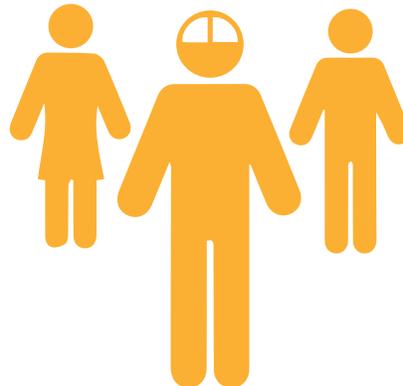
SOCIAL AWARENESS

The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior (e.g., respect for diversity, empathy).
• Feeling of Belonging to the Learning Community
• Connect Learning with Social Rewards
• Belonging Equals Engagement, Which Leads to Pushing Their Potential

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RESOURCES ON THE ExCEL HUB
healthiersfexcel.org/qap/social-emotional-learning/

Handout
Introduction to the Four SEL Competencies

Toolkit
SEL Sample Strategies from Transforming Education

SEL Guide
Strategies to Promote Non-Cognitive Skills from Public Profit

SEL Self-Assessment
SEL and Character Self-Reflection Tool

Training Resource
CalSAC SEL Training Modules

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

Website
Lesson Planet has thousands of videos, worksheets, and activities that support SEL skills, rated by teachers. Free or low cost.
https://www.lessonplanet.com/

Video
Five Keys to Social and Emotional Learning Success
https://youtu.be/DqNn9qWoO1M

Video
Stop. Think. Act: Social & Emotional Learning (PBS)
https://youtu.be/W34KiYJ6W5k

GROWTH MINDSET

Our mindset is the way we see our ability to respond to challenges and to learn and grow.

Students with a **growth mindset** believe that ability can change as a result of effort, perseverance, and practice. They frequently say, "Math is hard, but if I keep trying, I can get better at it." Students with a growth mindset see mistakes as ways to learn, embrace challenges, and persist in the face of setbacks.

Students with a **fixed mindset** believe that their own intelligence and talent are innate traits that don't change. For example, they might say, "I just can't learn math." These students typically worry about not looking smart, get upset by mistakes, and give up sooner on tough tasks. (TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?

Growth Mindset

I can learn anything I want to.
When I'm frustrated, I persevere.
I want to challenge myself.
When I fail, I learn.
Tell me I try hard.
If you succeed, I'm inspired.

Fixed Mindset

I'm either good at it, or I'm not.
When I'm frustrated, I give up.
I don't like to be challenged.
When I fail, I'm no good.
Tell me I'm smart.
If you succeed, I feel threatened.

Mindset affects all students regardless of achievement level. Differences in mindset can lead to achievement gaps in grades, test scores, class behavior, and other student outcomes that last for years.

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WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Whether or not students are aware of their mindset, a broad body of research has shown that what they believe about their own intelligence can affect their effort, engagement, motivation, and achievement as measured by test scores, school grades, passing rate in post-secondary education, and other metrics. (Transforming Education) Luckily, a fixed mindset can be transformed into a growth mindset, when students have opportunities learn and grow through practice and perseverance.

HOW DO WE SUPPORT GROWTH MINDSET?

Six Things You Can Do:
- Praise effort over results.
- Think of the brain as something that grows.
- Encourage youth to share advice.
- Frame mistakes as part of a learning process.
- Specifically reward effort and process (rather than accomplishments).
- Communicate high expectations (envision together what a "great" result would look like).

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

RESOURCES ON THE ExCEL HUB
healthiersfexcel.org/qap/
social-emotional-learning/

Handout
Growth Mindset: Six Things You Can Do

Handout
The Educator and the Growth Mindset

Activities
Growth Mindset Lesson Plan

Toolkit
Growth Mindset Toolkit from Transforming Education

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

Video
Carol Dweck: *The Power of Believing You Can Improve*
https://youtu.be/_X0mgOOSpLU

Video
The Impact of Praise
https://youtu.be/6ILPPxbmRms

Video
The Power of Belief: Mindset and Success
https://youtu.be/pN34FNbOKXc

SELF-EFFICACY

WHAT IS IT?

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to succeed in achieving an outcome or reaching a goal. An internal belief, self-efficacy is related to whether a student believes that s/he has sufficient control over his/her environment in order to succeed. High self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and environment and allows students to become advocates for their own needs and supports. (TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

A person's level of self-efficacy can vary for different subject areas or tasks. Likewise, even within a subject area, a student can have different levels of self-efficacy for different tasks. For example, while a student may feel high self-efficacy in understanding a concept in science, he or she may still feel a lack of confidence in math. Moreover, the student can have high self-efficacy about scoring high on a science exam, but not feel as confident about his or her ability to build an outstanding science fair project. (TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Decades of research show that self-efficacy is a valid predictor of students' motivation and learning. Students with high levels of self-efficacy participate more in class, work harder, persist longer, and have fewer adverse emotional reactions when encountering difficulties than students with lower self-efficacy. High self-efficacy can also motivate students to use specific learning strategies and to engage in self-directed learning. (TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

Self-efficacy determines how one feels, thinks, motivates themselves, behaves, and performs. Students with high self-efficacy:
- Have better **self-regulation**.
- Are **more resilient** in the face of obstacles
- Demonstrate stronger **academic** performance and achievement.
- Are more **motivated** in school.
- Set more **challenging** and higher academic goals.
- Are better prepared to adapt to and succeed in their first year of **college**.
- Go on to have more successful **careers** and are open to a wider range of career choices.
- Are **happier** all around.
(TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

HOW DO WE SUPPORT SELF-EFFICACY?

- **Find the right level of challenge**: Plan for moderately challenging tasks (just above the student's current ability level) that gradually increase in difficulty and reflect progress so that students can build a record of mastery performance and generate evidence that they can succeed.
- **Break down tasks**: Ensure that each level or skill in the progression is broken down into manageable pieces for the student and support mastery in one task or skill before proceeding to the next.
- **Allow students to track progress**: The student should be able to track her own progress and clearly understand how to move forward and master the next step.
- **Acknowledge effort and perseverance (not accomplishment)**: When students are successful at a task, point out where their competence, invested effort, or effective use of a strategy contributed to their success.
- **Visualize success**: Encourage students to imagine what success looks like, including various sensory details. Have students practice relaxation techniques, such as deep belly breaths, while engaged in imagining to help them make a positive, relaxed connection with the experience.
- **Embody efforts**: Give students the opportunity to reflect on and become familiarized with what their bodies and sensations are telling them.
- **Support relaxation**: Push students to think about relaxation strategies they might already be using, but may not be aware of (e.g., taking deep belly breaths, visualizing their favorite, peaceful places).

(TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

RESOURCES ON THE ExCEL HUB
healthiersfexcel.org/qap/social-emotional-learning/

Handout
Self-Efficacy Golden Rule

Toolkit
Self Efficacy Toolkit from Transforming Education

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

Video
The Importance of Self-Efficacy
https://youtu.be/VW5v6PQ5PEc

Video
Self-Efficacy | The New Self-Esteem
https://youtu.be/4ok2SHRJ87Q

Video
Self-Efficacy
https://youtu.be/meDtZ7gs3zw

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

WHAT IS IT?

Self-management, which is also referred to as "self-control" or "self-regulation," is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, delaying gratification, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward personal and academic goals. Students with strong self-management skills arrive to class prepared, pay attention, follow directions, allow others to speak without interruption, and work independently with focus. (TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

Self Management includes a range of skills such as:
- Overcoming obstacles and create strategies for achieve goals.
- Regulating emotions such as impulses, aggression, and self-destructive behavior.
- Managing personal and interpersonal stress.
- Attention control (maintain optimal work performance).
- Using feedback constructively.
- Advocating for oneself.
- Setting plans and work toward goals.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Self-control in children as young as age five can predict important life outcomes such as high school completion, physical health, income, single parenthood, substance dependence, and criminal involvement. (TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

Self-management is a vital skill for learning in all academic and social areas.
Self-management unables us to effectively manage stress, control impulses, and motivate ourselves. And it supports our ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.
- Impulse control
- Stress management
- Self-discipline
- Self-motivation
- Goal-setting
- Organizational skills

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HOW DO WE SUPPORT SELF-MANAGEMENT?

- **Set expectations and not rules.** Expectations give students strategies to follow. Regularly reinforce and acknowledge students when they are following expectations.
- **Help students to create awareness of when they learn best.** Each student creates a list that completes the phrase "I focus best when..." or "I learn best when or I learn best when I see, hear, feel and do. Ask each student to identify three things to seek related to when they learn best and three to avoid. Students record how often these situations occur and track their progress over time. Revisit this exercise regularly.
- **Teach students strategies such as Pausing, Calming, and Visualizing**: Step back and breathe: Students take a physical step backward and a deep breath before reacting positively or negatively to any situation. Expanding breaths: Students notice how many seconds of breathing in and breathing out they do. For each new breath, extend the id and the exhale by one second. Take five slow, extended breaths. Visualize memories: Students visualize a memory of a time when they were happy, calm, proud, or another feeling they want to evoke.
- **Teach students to change the situation or how they think about the situation.** Change your attention: track the speaker in class. Change how you think about a situation or a choice: instead of thinking of homework as a chore, think of how good you feel when your homework is done and you are prepared for class. Choose the situation: Choose to be in places or with people that help you manage yourself. Modify the situation: Modify a situation you can't avoid.
- **Integrate activities into your program that promote Self-Management.** Community Circles. Probing and Clarifying Questions. Seeking multiple perspectives. Using Wait Time.
- **Focus on how to do things, not just what to do**: Using planners. Creating timelines/benchmarks for larger projects. Create checklist. Break big tasks into smaller tasks
- **Teach the WOOP strategy**, which is positive thinking plus a dose of reality:
  - **Wish**: Student's name an important but feasible wish or goal they want to fulfill.
  - **Outcome**: Students imagine, as vividly as possible, what the future will be like once they fulfill this wish (or reach the goal).
  - **Obstacle**: Students imagine the most critical personal obstacle that stands in the way of fulfilling that wish (or reaching the goal).
  - **Plan**: Students name an effective behavior to overcome the obstacle and create a specific plan, using an if-then statement: "If X happens, then I will Y."

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WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

RESOURCES ON THE ExCEL HUB
healthiersfexcel.org/qap/social-emotional-learning/

Handout
Self Management Skills You Can Teach

Handout
The WOOP Method to Support Goal Setting

Handout
Emotion Management Strategies: Pausing, Calming, and Visualizing

Toolkit
Self-Management Toolkit from Transforming Education

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

Video
Let's Talk about Self Management
https://youtu.be/XjdvqFZkdMM

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SOCIAL AWARENESS

Social Awareness is the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports. (TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.
• Perspective-taking
• Empathy
• Appreciating diversity
• Respect for others

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Social awareness may contribute to better behavior and achievement in school and increased engagement with community and school resources.

Positive Classroom Climate: Students and educators with strong social awareness can more easily form positive relationships, adapt to their environment, empathize with the perspectives of others, and feel supported. This, in turn, creates an environment where students can focus on learning.

Better Relationships: Students who demonstrate strong social awareness are able to engage in constructive communication with their peers and resolve conflicts when they arise. These students benefit from peer learning and know how to take advantage of social supports.

Fewer Risky Behaviors: Students who are able to adapt to new environments, understand the needs and perspectives of others, and know where to get support when they need it are less prone to emotional distress and less likely to engage in risk behaviors, such as drug use and aggression, that interfere with school success. (TRANSFORMING EDUCATION)

Social awareness is also widely established as an important factor in workforce success. One recent employer survey conducted by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills demonstrates that four of the five most important skills for high school graduates entering the workforce are linked to social awareness: professionalism, collaboration, communication, and social responsibility.

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HOW DO WE SUPPORT SOCIAL AWARENESS?

Teach social skills early: Create a common social language that becomes part of the program culture through practice and repetition. The language should contain familiar, understandable ways to communicate with others, including:
- How to listen
- To show gratitude
- To apologize

Create shared social norms: Student voice is a basic element in creating shared social norms. Facilitate student discussion around ways in which they would feel most supported including:
- How they should treat each other
- What it means to respect different opinions
- Ways of learning
- What happens when they disagree.

Engage students in cooperative learning: When there is joint ownership of an outcome, students learn to work together. When students learn in supportive, relational groups, they:
- Learn better
- Develop sociability and social skills that strengthen their relationships
- Are better prepared for successful careers.

Teaching perspective taking and empathy. These skills can be taught through participating in community building circles where students are taught:
- Active listening
- Reflection strategies

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

RESOURCES ON THE ExCEL HUB
healthiersfexcel.org/qap/
social-emotional-learning/

Handout
Activities to Support Social Awareness

PDF Book
101 Ways to Teach Children Social Skills

Toolkit
Social Awareness Toolkit from Transforming Education

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

Video
Take a Seat, Make a Friend
https://youtu.be/HfHV4-N2LxQ

Video
All that We Share
https://youtu.be/jD8tjhVO1Tc

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

The proof is out there that programs that intentionally adopt practices that build SEL skills in areas like growth mindset, self-efficacy, self-management, and social awareness can have a long term impact on both staff and the youth they serve. A 2017 meta-study found youth in programs with an SEL-focus performed better in school, made friends more easily, set positive goals, and made wiser decisions, such as avoiding drug use.

Summer and afterschool programs are uniquely poised to take a lead in implementing SEL practices. In fact, SEL has long been a part of high quality expanded learning programs, as we can see from California's Expanded Learning Quality standards, including Safe and Supportive Culture and Climate, Active and Engaged Learning, Skill Building, Youth Voice and Leadership, and Diversity, Access and Equity. By increasing our understanding how each of these standards supports SEL, we can do even better in fostering positive outcomes for youth.

A good first step is to make sure that the leaders and staff in our programs model and practice effective social and emotional skills at staff trainings, during weekly meetings, in the design and facilitation of activities, and through regular and ongoing reflection, goal-setting, and practice to improve program quality.