



INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY





Embedding SEL Throughout the Day

From the time students arrive at school to the time they leave, we can weave social and emotional skill development into all aspects of their day. Students can use a challenging art project, a new sport in gym class, or tryouts for an after-school activity to practice hopeful thinking and resilience (Elias, 2018), for example. Setting younger students up with a buddy from an older grade can encourage leadership skills for the older student and foster relationship-building skills in both students. Building these inter-grade relationships develops valuable social skills and creates a sense of belonging in the school community as a whole.



Below, explore grade-level strategies for embedding social and emotional learning into each and every aspect of students' lives:

- K-2: Prepare students to show their SEL skills in the “in-between” times when they are not in the classroom. In class, use games, simulations, and role-play activities that engage the whole student, including their creativity, playfulness, humor, and spontaneity, to foster SEL skills they will need throughout the day (Sugishita & Dresser, 2019).
- 3-5: Prompt student thinking with open-ended questions. For instance, instead of saying “be nice to each other on the bus,” ask students, “how do we treat each other?” or “what kind of words do we use, even outside of school?” This helps students solidify the SEL skills they already possess and arrive at conclusions on their own. It also gives students a few moments to mentally prepare, which can set them up to successfully demonstrate their SEL skills.
- 6-8: As students become more mature and are able to show their SEL skills with consistency, embed goal-setting activities into academics and extracurriculars. Connect the task of setting clear goals with creating the future students desire. For instance, students can look to a role model, like an accomplished athlete or musician, and consider how the goals they set for classes/extracurriculars in that area can help them take a similar path (Elias, 2018).

SEL is an aspect of a child's education that should be integrated into all aspects of students' lives. Fostering SEL skills before, during, and after classes ensures that students are reinforcing their growth across a wide variety of contexts and strengthening their ability to behave appropriately in any situation in which they may find themselves.



References

Elias, M. J. (2018, September 25). SEL skill development during recess and PE. Edutopia. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/sel-skill-development-during-recess-and-pe>

Sugishita, J., & Dresser, R. (2019). Social-emotional learning (SEL) in a field course: Preservice teachers practice SEL-supportive instructional strategies. *Journal of Inquiry & Action in Education*, 10(1), 36–67. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1205159.pdf>