

What is Social-Emotional Learning?

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process of developing social-emotional skills, like coping with feelings, getting along with others, decision making, and more.



CASEL* breaks social-emotional learning into five competencies: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, social awareness, and relationship skills.

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness means understanding your emotions, goals, strengths, and thoughts, as well as how these things can affect your behavior.

For example, you might be feeling anxious about a test you have tomorrow, and then you snap at your mom when she asks you a question. Self-awareness helps you understand that your outburst wasn't because you're angry at your mom; it was because you're feeling on edge about tomorrow's test.

Self-Management

Self-management is being able to control negative emotions by using positive coping strategies to make good decisions.

For example, if your friend does something to make you angry, self-management helps you take a deep breath, calm down, and explain to your friend why you're feeling angry, rather than lashing out and getting into an argument.

*CASEL - Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness means understanding your thoughts, emotions, and values—and how they affect your behavior.



Key Self-Awareness Skills

Here are five key skills and an example of each.

- ▶ Understanding and labeling your emotions
"Between my schoolwork, my activities, and my chores, I'm feeling overwhelmed."
- ▶ Recognizing how your emotions affect others
"When I'm mean or grumpy at dinner, it kind of ruins dinner for my mom and brother."
- ▶ Understanding what triggers emotions for you
"When my younger sister messes with my stuff, it makes me so angry."
- ▶ Being able to identify your values and biases
"I try not to judge, but I think my friend spends way too much time playing video games."
- ▶ Identifying your strengths and areas to grow
"I'm really good at math and science, but I need to work on my writing."

Self-Awareness in Action

You have a big test coming up. Because tests trigger anxiety for you, you start studying earlier so you're not stressed out and cramming the night before.

On the day of the test, you use positive self-talk. ("I'm going to do great.") You also do some deep breathing to calm yourself down.

Self-Management

Self-management means being able to navigate and control your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in different situations.



Key Self-Management Skills

Here are six key skills and an example of each.

- ▶ Managing stress
"Taking deep breaths before a test helps me relax."
- ▶ Overcoming obstacles
"I want a new bike, so I need to save my money."
- ▶ Setting and working toward goals
"I want to make the soccer team, so I'm going to practice every day after school."
- ▶ Controlling negative impulses
"Her text made me angry, but I didn't respond. I'll talk to her about it tomorrow."
- ▶ Using feedback to improve yourself
"I've been told that sometimes I talk too much. It's hard, but I'm trying to listen more now."
- ▶ Motivating yourself
"When my homework's done, I can text my friends."

Self-Management in Action

You got your grade on a paper you worked really hard on, and it's lower than you thought it would be. Instead of getting upset, you take a deep breath and read the feedback your teacher gave you on the paper. You then decide that you'll use her suggestions in your next paper, and hopefully get a better grade.



VIDEO

To review, watch this quick video!

Responsible Decision-Making

Responsible decision-making is about making choices that are smart, respectful, safe, and ethical.



Key Decision-Making Skills

Here are four key skills and an example of each.

- ▶ Understanding the consequences of your actions
"If I'm late for practice, I can't play in the game."
- ▶ Knowing how your actions affect your well-being and the well-being of others, and responding accordingly
"This post is kind of funny, but I think it might offend some people, so I'm not going to share it."
- ▶ Knowing what behavior is considered to be appropriate in different situations
"Whenever I'm around my parents' friends, I should be on my best behavior."
- ▶ Choosing to do what's right, even when it's hard or unpopular
"I have friends that smoke. They want me to try it, but I'll never do that."

Responsible Decision-Making in Action

You're about to start studying for your history test when you get a text from a friend inviting you to come over and hang out. You need to get a good grade on this test, so you tell your friend that you have to study and can't come over. You're disappointed, but you know you made the responsible decision.



VIDEO

To review, watch this quick video!

Social Awareness

Social awareness is the ability to understand the feelings and viewpoints of others. It's also understanding that different behaviors are expected in different situations.



Key Social Awareness Skills

Here are five key skills and an example of each.

- ▶ Understanding social norms
"I always thank people who open the door for me."
- ▶ Reading body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice
"I can tell by my friend's expression that she's upset."
- ▶ Understanding others' points of view and feelings
"My sister spends a lot of time online. I like to be out doing things, but that's how she stays connected."
- ▶ Understanding that what's considered appropriate behavior changes depending on the situation
"I explained to my little brother that you have to be quiet in the library."
- ▶ Appreciating and respecting diversity
"Everyone deserves to be treated with respect."

Social Awareness in Action

The Golden Rule says to treat others how you'd like to be treated. Having social awareness means taking it one step further: treating others how they would like to be treated. Here's an example.

You and your friends are teasing each other, but when you tease a new girl, she looks upset. You realize that your teasing makes her uncomfortable, so you stop and tell her you were only kidding. You also remind yourself not to tease her like that again.

Relationship Skills

Relationship skills refer to the ability to form and maintain happy, healthy relationships with others.



Key Relationship Skills

Here are six key skills and an example of each.

- ▶ Making friends
"It's always easier for me to make new friends when I'm part of a group or team."
- ▶ Actively listening
"My sister says that she's fine, but I can tell by her tone of voice that she's upset."
- ▶ Navigating and solving conflict
"My friend and I got into an argument. I was wrong and apologized, and now we're okay."
- ▶ Communicating clearly
"I've had texts that were misunderstood, so now I make sure the meaning of what I'm saying is clear."
- ▶ Asking for and offering help when needed
"I was struggling in my math class. I asked my teacher for help and I'm doing a lot better now."
- ▶ Resisting negative peer pressure
"A friend wants me to vape, but I never will."

Relationship Skills in Action

You're working on a group assignment with students you don't know. The other students all seem to know each other, and you feel a little uncomfortable. But rather than shutting down, you introduce yourself, ask the other group members about themselves, and work hard to help the group complete the assignment.



VIDEO

To review, watch this quick video!