

What Is SEL?



Information for Parents

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process of developing social-emotional skills, such as coping with feelings, getting along with others, making decisions, and setting goals.

Why is SEL important?

Developing SEL skills helps students succeed both in and out of the classroom. Whether it's communicating effectively with others, navigating conflict, or having a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, SEL will help your student be happier and healthier, do better in school, and have a brighter future.

What are SEL skills?

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (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 emotions, goals, strengths, and thoughts, as well as how these things can affect behavior.

For example, your student might be anxious about a test and snap at you when you ask a question. Self-awareness helps your student understand that their outburst isn't because they're angry at you; it's because they're feeling on edge about the test.

Self-Management

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

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

Social Awareness

Social awareness is the ability to understand the perspectives and feelings of others—and knowing how to behave appropriately in different social situations and settings.

For example, your student knows that they need to behave differently when they're visiting relatives than when they're hanging out with their friends.

Relationship Skills

Relationship skills help students build meaningful, healthy relationships with others.

Having good relationship skills helps your student develop and maintain relationships with various groups of people, both in and out of school.

Responsible Decision-Making

Responsible decision-making means being able to consider rules, social expectations, and personal values in order to make healthy, smart decisions.

For example, imagine that your student sees someone drop a \$20 bill. They pick it up, but instead of keeping it, they make the responsible decision to give it back to the person who dropped it.

For more tips on helping your student make good decisions, watch this short video.

