SEL Strengths Builder Method: Assessing your SEL Best Practices

November 10, 2016
Redwood City, CA
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Icebreaker
Objectives

• Become familiar with three tools to identify the presence or absence of core curriculum features and SEL practices in your program.
• Review the 6 SEL domains.
• Connect to a community of practice.
Agenda

• Overview of the Strengths Builder Method
• Visual Summary
  – Assessing your Curriculum Features
• SEL Domains
  – Assessing your SEL Practices
  – Assessing Youth SEL Skills
• Closing Reflection
SEL Challenge Purpose

The SEL Challenge was designed to:

1. Identify promising practices for building SEL skills with vulnerable adolescents, and
2. Develop a method for taking these practices to scale in thousands of out-of-school time settings.

The promising practices are called Standards for SEL Practice.

The method is called the SEL Strengths Builder.
SEL Challenge Findings

- SEL Field Guide
- Virtual Learning Community and Strengths Builder Content
  SELpractices.org
- Technical Report
Six SEL Domains

Table 2. Standards for SEL Practice in Six Domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Key Youth Experiences</th>
<th>Staff Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotion Management</td>
<td>Youth experience a range of positive and negative emotions in a safe context.</td>
<td>Staff create and adjust the structure of daily activities to accommodate youth's processing of emotions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth have opportunities to practice and develop healthy and functional emotion skills.</td>
<td>Staff model healthy emotion strategies within the context of caring, mutually respectful relationships with youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff provide coaching to youth about handling and learning from their ongoing emotional experiences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Empathy           | Youth explores social structure and power in relation to themselves and others.       | Staff provide programs with appropriate structure for sharing experiences and promoting equity.                              |
|                  | Youth share their stories and listen to the stories of others.                        | Staff model empathy skills with youth.                                                                                        |

| Initiative        | Youth takes on roles and responsibilities within program activities.                   | Staff provide ongoing assistance to help youth develop and sustain motivation within the work.                              |
|                  | Youth develop and sustain motivation by doing work that matters to them.               | Staff encourages youth to pursue through challenges, making sure that the effort behind youth’s achievements is recognized. |

| Teamwork          | Youth develop group cohesion and trust.                                               | Staff provide programs with norms and structure.                                                                             |
|                  | Youth participate in successful collaboration.                                         | Staff model teamwork skills with youth.                                                                                       |
|                  | Youth manage challenges in creating and maintaining effective working relationships. | Staff facilitate or intervene as needed to foster or sustain youth’s group dynamics and successful collaboration.          |

| Responsibility    | Youth takes on roles and responsibilities within the framework of challenging roles.   | Staff provide structured but open-ended roles for youth.                                                                         |
|                  | Youth encounter difficult demands.                                                    | Staff provide clear and consistent roles and expectations for youth.                                                           |
|                  | Youth draw on resources in sustained challenging roles and internalize accomplishments. | Staff demonstrate high expectations, respect youth’s ownership of their roles, and provide help only as needed.               |

| Initiative        | Youth engages in projects that involve organizing actions over time.                   | Staff provide sufficient structure to youth-driven projects.                                                                     |
|                  | Youth move through cycles of strategic planning, execution, and adaptation.             | Staff create opportunities for youth to observe models of successful work.                                                       |
|                  | Youth reflect on how outcomes of their work provide information that helps build and verify youth skills. | Staff encourage students to reflect on how outcomes of their work provide new opportunities for learning.                        |

| Preparing Youth to THRIVE | Promising Practices for Social & Emotional Learning | SELpractices.org #SELchallenge |

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“With all my heart and soul, I love my students. It’s the hardest and most rewarding job, and I feel like I’m making a difference in their lives.”
—Julie Greene, Siemens, Siemens Family Foundation

“While on course, students have an opportunity to see the leadership styles in action. One day, in the debriefing session, there was a discussion about why some students were struggling and what strategies they could implement. This is an empowering experience for everyone. It’s an opportunity for the group to help and take ownership for what they want to be and the cultural shift they are working toward.”
—Laurie Greene, Kepp, Voyager Outward Bound School

“Six SEL Domains”

—Paul Griffin, The Possibility Project

“Whatever you do, do it with all your heart. When you do, you’ll be surprised by what can happen.”
—Hannah Montana, Disney Channel
Six SEL Domains

- Emotion Management
- Empathy
- Teamwork
- Responsibility
- Initiative
- Problem Solving
SEL Program Model

project-based learning with intensive co-regulation
Curriculum Features
SEL Curriculum

Curriculum includes:

• The **sequence** of content and experiences fit to the developmental and learning needs of youth, and

• The **supports** necessary for the instructional staff to plan and implement that sequence.
SEL Domains Jigsaw

1. Find 2-6 people with the same SEL Domain.

2. Become an expert! Review the materials for that domain. Everyone should be prepared to share their newfound expertise in a presentation of 1 minute or less.
SEL Domains Jigsaw

1. Form a new group with exactly 6 members, one for each SEL Domain

   - Emotion Management
     Abilities to be aware of and constructively handle both positive and challenging emotions.

   - Empathy
     Relating to others with acceptance, understanding, and sensitivity to their diverse perspectives and experiences.

   - Teamwork
     Abilities to collaborate and coordinate action with others.

   - Responsibility
     Dispositions and abilities to reliably meet commitments and fulfill obligations of challenging roles.

   - Initiative
     Capacities to take action, sustain motivation, and persevere through challenge toward an identified goal.

   - Problem Solving
     Abilities to plan, strategize, and implement complex tasks.

2. Each person shares their expertise on their SEL Domain.
SEL Domains

• What did you learn?
• What reminded you of your program?
• Questions?
Assessing SEL Practices

Key Youth Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How important is this to your program?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Not important; 3 = Moderately important; 5 = Very important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do youth have this experience in your program?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Youth do not experience this as part of our program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 = This is a casual or incidental part of youths’ program experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 = This is a well-developed part of youths’ program experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many youth in your program have this experience?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = None; 3 = Some; 5 = All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff Practices

<table>
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<tr>
<th>How important is this to your program?</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In our program, we</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = do not enact this practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 = enact this inconsistently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 = enact this consistently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mark with an X when in the program year this practice typically or most frequently occurs. (You may mark more than one column.)

Beginning; ; Middle; End
What were your results?

- What were your strengths?
- What factors contribute to success?
- Which could you do more of?
- Which standards are high priorities for you, based on the youth you serve and the goals of your program?
- Which are less of a priority, and why?
- How do the results of the assessment fit with your vision for your program?
- What practices make sense to focus on first?
- How could you address potential obstacles?
Continuous Improvement

**ASSESS**
Quality assessment.

**PLAN**
Team based improvement planning with data.

**IMPROVE**
Instructional coaching for staff by site managers.
Targeted staff trainings for instructional skill building.
SEL Strengths Builder Method

Available at SELpractices.org.
SEL Strengths Builder Method

- Map your curriculum content sequence.
- Find opportunities for SEL skill development in the curriculum.
SEL Strengths Builder Method

- Rate the intensity and importance of each standard of practice.
- Complete independently and discuss as a team.
SEL Strengths Builder Method

- Rate individual youth to understand the skills youth bring to the program.
- Look at aggregate results to reflect on opportunities the program presents to practice skills.
Engage with the Virtual Learning Community at SELpractices.org

- Post to social media!
- Share resources from your program!
- Look for opportunities to join the discussion!
Looking for more support?

You may be interested in an **SEL Challenge Box Set:**

- SEL Field Guide
- 3 Strengths Builder Assessments
- Planning with Data Handbook
- 5 Live Webinars
- Technical Assistance call from a Weikart Center coach

Visit [https://store.cypq.org/collections/sel](https://store.cypq.org/collections/sel)

*Live trainings* are also available. Email [SEL@cypq.org](mailto:SEL@cypq.org)
Q&A
Thank you!

- SELpractices.org
- #SELchallenge