

SEL Strengths Builder Method: Assessing your SEL Best Practices

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Redwood City, CA

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PREPARING
YOUTH TO **THRIVE**

Promising Practices for Social & Emotional Learning



DAVID P. WEIKART
CENTER FOR YOUTH
PROGRAM QUALITY

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:

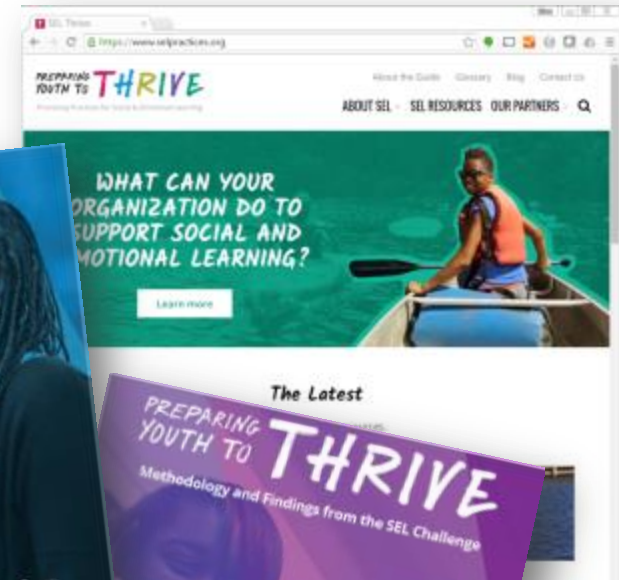
1. Identify promising practices for building SEL skills with vulnerable adolescents, and
2. Develop a method for taking these practices to scale in thousands of out-of-school time settings.

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](https://www.selpractices.org)
- Technical Report



Six SEL Domains

Table 2. Standards for SEL Practice in Six Domains

<p>EMOTION MANAGEMENT</p> 	<p>Abilities to be aware of and constructively handle both positive and challenging emotions.</p> <p>Key youth experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth experience a range of positive and negative emotions in a safe context. Youth have opportunities to practice and develop healthy and functional emotion skills. <p>Staff practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff create and adjust the structure of daily activities to accommodate youth's processing of emotion. Staff model healthy emotion strategies within the context of caring, mutually-respectful relationships with youth. Staff provide coaching to youth about handling and learning from their ongoing emotional experiences. 	<p>"I used to think of this program as more of an outlet too. Whenever I used to have a bad day, I needed to come here. You know you're cutting wood. That's a great outlet for bringing out some of the anger or depression you have. And it really helps you control yourself."</p> <p>—PWBF Youth Focus Group participant</p>
<p>EMPATHY</p> 	<p>Relating to others with acceptance, understanding, and sensitivity to their diverse perspectives and experiences.</p> <p>Key youth experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth explore social structure and power in relation to themselves and others. Youth share their stories and listen to the stories of others. Youth practice relating to others with acceptance and understanding. <p>Staff practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff provide programs with appropriate structure for sharing experience and promoting equity. Staff model empathy skills with youth. 	<p>"When you start teaching about concepts of empathy, you have to be secure in who you are and what your feelings are to be relate empathetically for something that somebody else is dealing with."</p> <p>—Natalie Cooper, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee</p>
<p>TEAMWORK</p> 	<p>Abilities to collaborate and coordinate action with others.</p> <p>Key youth experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth develop group cohesion and trust. Youth participate in successful collaboration. Youth manage challenges to creating and maintaining effective working relationships. <p>Staff practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff provide programs with norms and structure. Staff model teamwork skills with youth. Staff facilitate or intervene as needed to foster or sustain youth-led group dynamics and successful collaboration. 	<p>"When it comes to teamwork it's about doing exercises that allow youth to work together as a team and then process out their experience as a team, so that they're not only understanding the techniques like the craft of being a good team member and how teams work, but also beginning to believe in that as an idea."</p> <p>—Paul Griffin, The Possibility Project</p>

<p>RESPONSIBILITY</p> 	<p>Dispositions and abilities to reliably meet commitments and fulfill obligations of challenging roles.</p> <p>Key youth experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth take on roles and obligations within program activities. Youth encounter difficult demands. Youth draw on resources to fulfill challenging roles and internalize accomplishment. <p>Staff practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff provide structured but open-ended roles for youth. Staff model and fulfill their own roles. Staff promote high expectations, respect youth's ownership of their roles, and provide help only as needed. 	<p>"While on course, students have an opportunity to use their leadership styles as a leader of the day, in the wrap up for the day, there is an opportunity to give the leader of the day feedback - what the group thought that they did well and what they thought they could improve on. This is an empowering experience for everyone involved. It is an opportunity for the group to begin to take ownership for who they want to be and the culture they want to create."</p> <p>—Laura Greenlee Karp, Voyageur Outward Bound School</p>
<p>INITIATIVE</p> 	<p>Capacities to take action, sustain motivation, and persevere through challenge toward an identified goal.</p> <p>Key youth experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth set ambitious and realistic goals. Youth develop and sustain motivation by doing work that matters to them. Youth have experiences persevering through the ups and downs of difficult work. <p>Staff practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff provide ongoing assistance to help youth develop motivation within the work. Staff encourage youth to persist through challenging work, making sure that the effort behind youth's achievement is recognized. 	<p>"The facilitator can really build the service learning as it makes sense for that club. 'Okay, so we did that, and now what are you guys interested in doing, and how do we build upon our success?' So you're trying to engage the youth voice as much as possible in the planning, and you're trying to do it in a way that is manageable within the resources that you have available."</p> <p>—Allison Williams, Wyman</p>
<p>PROBLEM SOLVING</p> 	<p>Abilities to plan, strategize, and implement complex tasks.</p> <p>Key youth experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth engage in projects that involve organizing actions over time. Youth learn through cycles of strategic planning, execution, responding to emergent problems, trial and error, and reflection on outcomes. Youth reflect on how outcomes of their work provide information that helps build and verify youth skills. <p>Staff practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff provide sufficient structure to youth-driven projects. Staff create opportunities for youth to observe models of successful work. Staff provide assistance, as needed, to help youth learn and solve problems on their own. Staff offer youth opportunities for reflection on project outcomes. 	<p>"They kept having to go back to the administration to talk about what it is that they wanted to do and then they kept getting delayed, and so every time they'd set a date, there was another delay. So they kept having to move the date forward which was frustrating, but they continued to go back to the administration to find out what were the specific concerns, how could they address them so that the administration would feel comfortable in letting it go forward."</p> <p>—Beth Chandler, YWCA Boston</p>

Six SEL Domains

EMOTION
MANAGEMENT

EMPATHY

TEAMWORK

RESPONSIBILITY

INITIATIVE

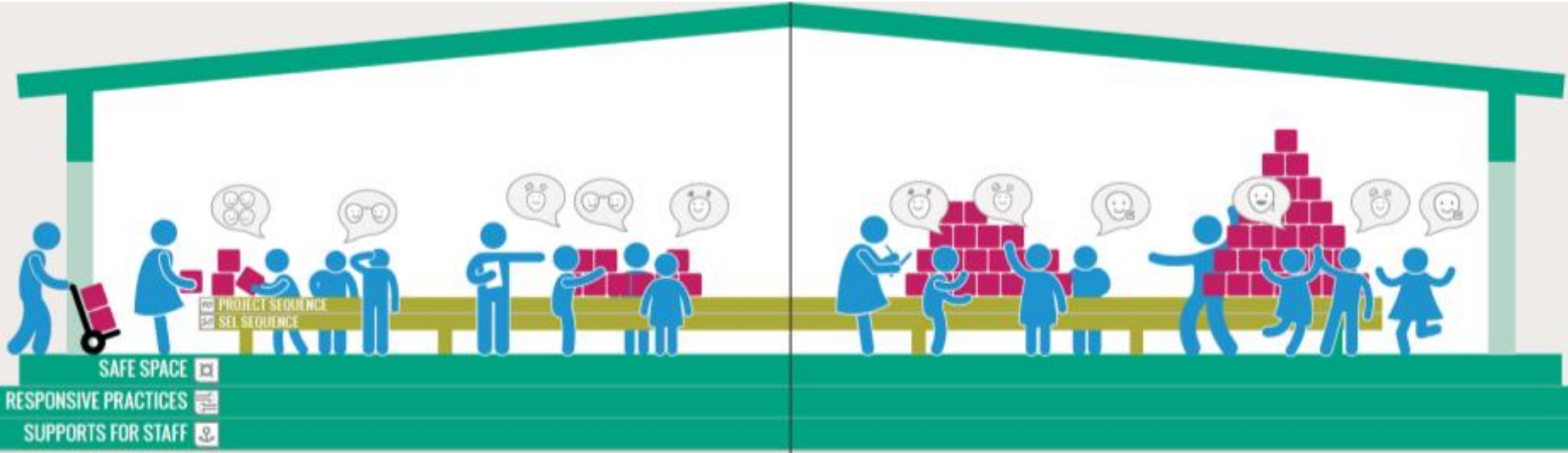
PROBLEM
SOLVING



SEL Program Model

**project-based learning with
intensive co-regulation**

Curriculum Features



Key

STANDARDS FOR SEL PRACTICE

EMOTION MANAGEMENT	EMPATHY	TEAMWORK	RESPONSIBILITY	INITIATIVE	PROBLEM SOLVING

FOR EACH DOMAIN THERE ARE A SET OF STAFF PRACTICES AND KEY YOUTH EXPERIENCES THAT SUPPORT SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILL BUILDING.

SEL CURRICULUM FEATURES

PROJECT CONTENT SEQUENCE	SEL CONTENT SEQUENCE	SAFE SPACE	RESPONSIVE PRACTICES	SUPPORTS FOR STAFF

GLOSSARY



GLOSSARY TERMS ARE HIGHLIGHTED AND DEFINED WHERE THEY FIRST APPEAR IN THE REPORT, AND ARE ALSO FOUND IN THE GLOSSARY ON PAGE 212.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND INFORMATION

KEY YOUTH EXPERIENCES	STAFF PRACTICES	QUOTE	AS YOU READ

- A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF METHODS AND FINDINGS FOR ALL ASPECTS OF THE SEL CHALLENGE IS AVAILABLE IN THE TECHNICAL REPORT FOR SEL CHALLENGE FROM THE WEIKART CENTER, AVAILABLE AT SELPRACTICES.ORG.
- ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND SUPPORTS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT SELPRACTICES.ORG AND FROM THE WEIKART CENTER.

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 <i>Abilities to be aware of and constructively handle both positive and challenging emotions.</i>	 Empathy <i>Relating to others with acceptance, understanding, and sensitivity to their diverse perspectives and experiences.</i>	 Teamwork <i>Abilities to collaborate and coordinate action with others.</i>	 Responsibility <i>Dispositions and abilities to reliably meet commitments and fulfill obligations of challenging roles.</i>	 Initiative <i>Capacities to take action, sustain motivation, and persevere through challenge toward an identified goal.</i>	 Problem Solving <i>Abilities to plan, strategize, and implement complex tasks.</i>
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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

How important is this to your program?

1 = Not important; 3 = Moderately important; 5 = Very important

Do youth have this experience in your program?

1 = Youth do not experience this as part of our program.

3 = This is a casual or incidental part of youths' program experience.

5 = This is a well-developed part of youths' program experience.

How many youth in your program have this experience?

1 = None; 3 = Some; 5 = All

Staff Practices

How important is this to your program?

1 = Not important; 3 = Moderately important; 5 = Very important

In our program, we

1 = do not enact this practice

3 = enact this inconsistently

5 = enact this consistently

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

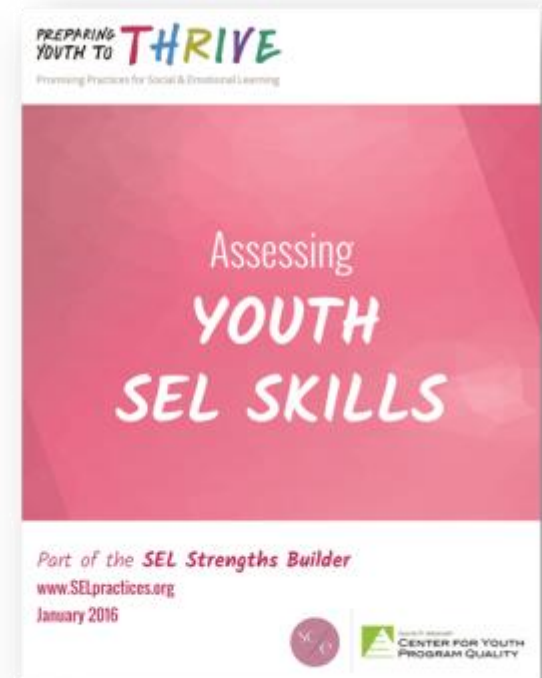
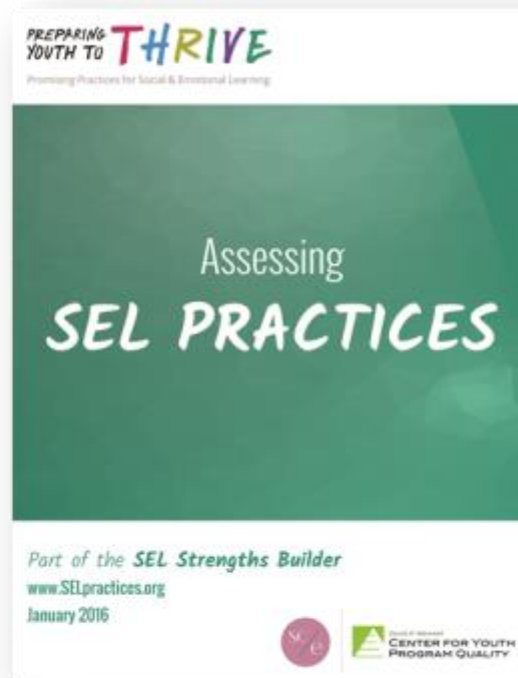
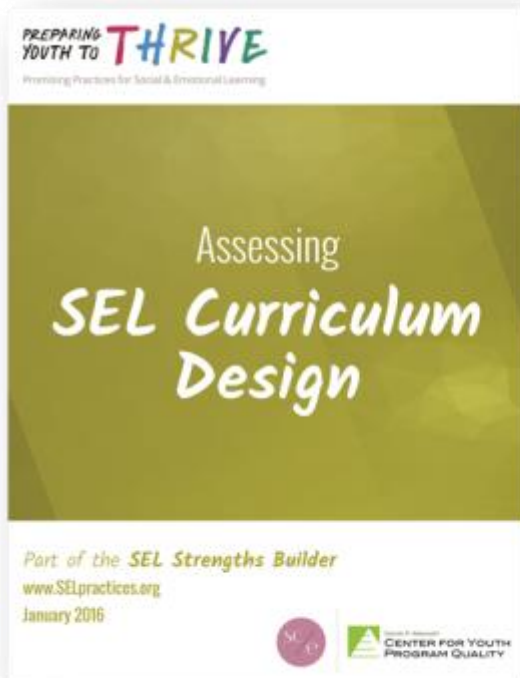
What were your results?

- 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

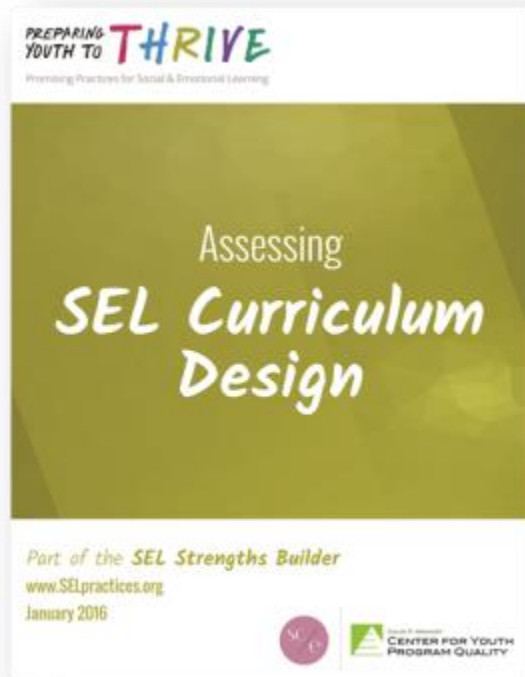


SEL Strengths Builder Method



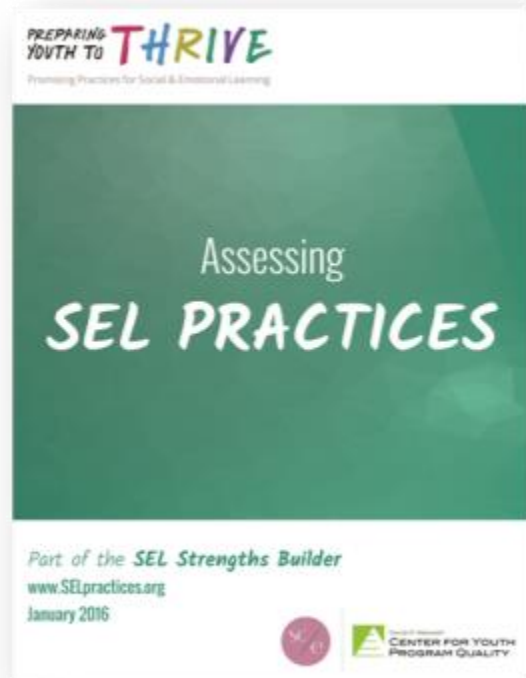
Available at SELpractices.org.

SEL Strengths Builder Method



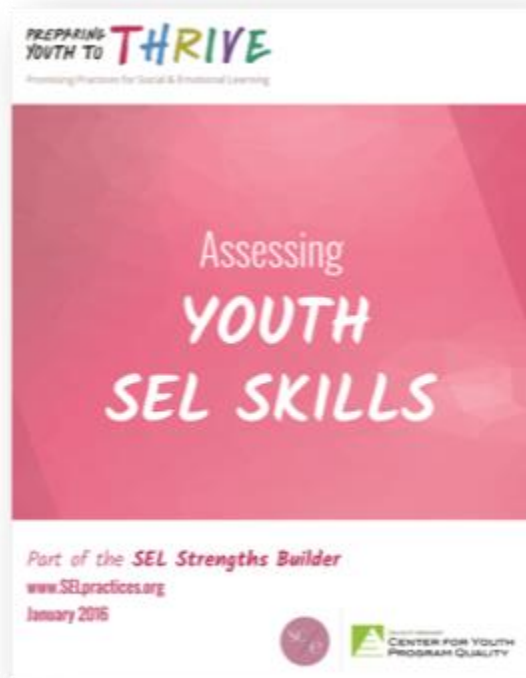
- Map your curriculum content sequence.
- Find opportunities for SEL skill development in the curriculum.

SEL Strengths Builder Method



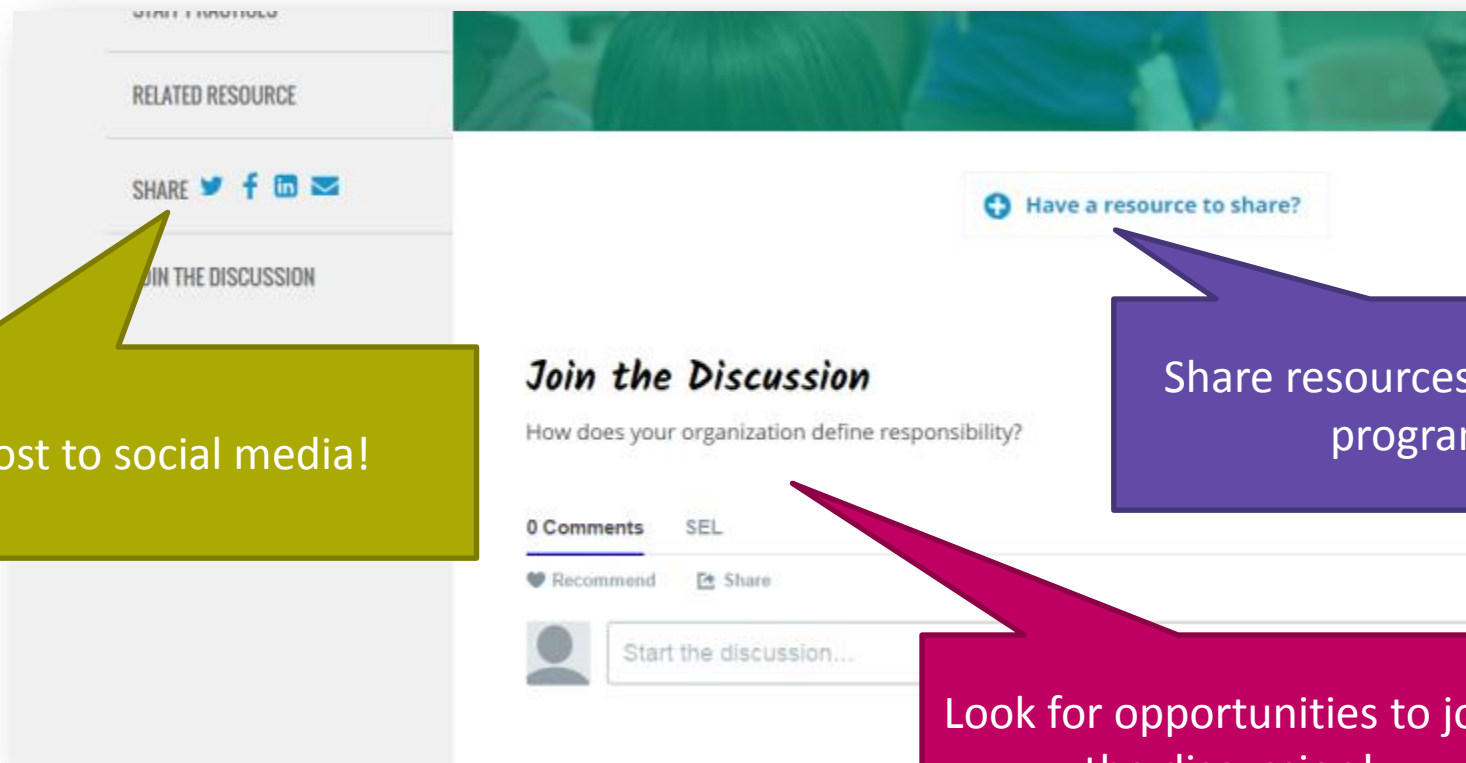
- Rate the intensity and importance of each standard of practice.
- Complete independently and discuss as a team.

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>

Live trainings are also available. Email SEL@cypq.org

Q&A



Thank you!

- SELpractices.org
- #SELchallenge

