PRIORITIES IN
SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING
BY HARRIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESEARCH AND EVALUATION INSTITUTE

THREE IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES IN SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT
Developing teacher competence in addressing students' developmental needs

MENTORSHIP
Promoting social emotional skills by enhancing youth's social relationships and emotional well-being

MEASUREMENTS & EVALUATION
Exploring high-quality social emotional learning (SEL) assessments that can serve a range of purposes

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

Although the importance of teachers in fostering the growth of children's social and emotional skills is well-established, adequate teacher training and support for developing students' social-emotional competencies are not always provided (Waajid, Garner, and Owen, 2013).

WHAT DOES RESEARCH SHOW?

Teachers who participated in a resilience program for themselves and received training to teach social-emotional skills have shown to help students increase their self-management skills (Iizuka, Barrett, Gillies, Cook, & Marinovic, 2014).

Social-emotional skills training for teachers themselves had a significant effect on increasing teacher social-emotional skills, which correlated positively with effective teaching (Karimzadeh, Salehi, Embi, Nasiri, & Shojaee, 2014).

In order to attain the best results in the classroom, teachers must receive continual training, professional development, and support to advance their skills and apply them consistently (Cherniss, 1998).

MENTORSHIP

Mentoring supports and benefits one or more areas of the mentee's development (DuBois & Karker, 2014). Relationships with peers, parents, and other adults are improved, and mentees exhibit social and emotional growth and overall success in life.

WHAT DOES RESEARCH SHOW?

Studies have linked mentoring programs (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002; DuBois, Portillo, Rhodes, Silverthorn, & Valentine, 2011) and afterschool programs (Durlak, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010) to advancements in social and emotional skills and knowledge.

Self-control, social competence, problem-solving ability, goal-setting/pursuit, perseverance, and career exploration are examples of measurable skills that are suitable for a mentoring program to impart upon youth and evidence both long and short-term success in multiple areas such as mental health, behavior, and academics (National Mentoring Resource Center, n.d.).

MEASUREMENTS & EVALUATIONS

While the push to develop young people's SEL has garnered much attention, there is still a shortage in high-quality SEL assessments that can serve a range of purposes (McKown, 2017). In addition to research-based curricula and instruction, a solid SEL program should have defined goals and standards, tools for targeted and universal screening, and progress monitoring (Denham, 2016). success in life.

WHAT DOES RESEARCH SHOW?

Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)

DESSA is a behavior rating scale that allows parents and/or teachers to assess K-8 students' social-emotional competencies in eight areas: optimistic thinking, goal-directed behavior, personal responsibility, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (Haggerty, Elgin, &Woolley, 2011; Denham, 2016).

DESSA can be used to evaluate SEL outcomes at the child, class, grade, school, and district levels (Haggerty et al., 2011).

DESSA offers an online option where web-based scoring and interpretation are available (Denham, 2016).

Social-Emotional Assets and Resilience Scale (SEARS)

SEARS assesses the positive social-emotional attributes at of K-12 students, parents, and teachers.

SEARS studies SEL from the lens of a four-core competency framework which includes responsibility, social competence, empathy, and self-regulation (Denham, 2016).

SEARS measures provide valuable information for intervention planning and strategies and can also be used to create student profiles for progress monitoring.

While DESSA and SEARS both fulfill many important criteria for effective SEL assessment, additional exemplary quality SEL assessments in education include The Social Skills Improvement System Rating Scales and The Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS).

THREE WAYS TO GET STARTED

SEL PD
Designate at least one staff member to prioritize and provide teachers with continual SEL training, professional development, and support to advance their SEL skills and apply them consistently.

MENTORS
Create or revise your mentorship program to include goals, objectives, and activities focused on promoting SEL development.

ASSESSMENT
In addition to incorporating research-based SEL curricula and instruction, explore and select a high-quality SEL assessment tool to evalaute and monitor students' progress. tool to evaluate and monitor students' progress. development.

WE CAN HELP!

HCDE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION INSTITUTE

Contact us for any planning, implementation, or evaluation needs.

Darlene Breaux, Director
Research and Evaluation Institute
dbreaux@hcde-texas.org

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