EDC Education Development Center

EVALUATING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Strategies and Approaches

Josh Cox

Sophia Mansori

Sheila Rodriguez

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Today's Agenda

- Why evaluate social-emotional learning?

- Approaches to evaluating social-emotional learning
  - Examples from the field
  - Existing tools and models

- Activity: Assessing your own SEL program

- Resources

Why evaluate social-emotional learning?

▶ It's a state program objective: *Participants in the program will demonstrate social benefits and and exhibit positive behavioral change*.

▶ For program improvement: How are your SEL strategies being implemented? How can they be improved?

▶ To demonstrate program effectiveness: Are your SEL approaches leading to expected participant outcomes?

Our goal for today…

To help you think about evaluating SEL beyond relying on the APR Teacher Survey.

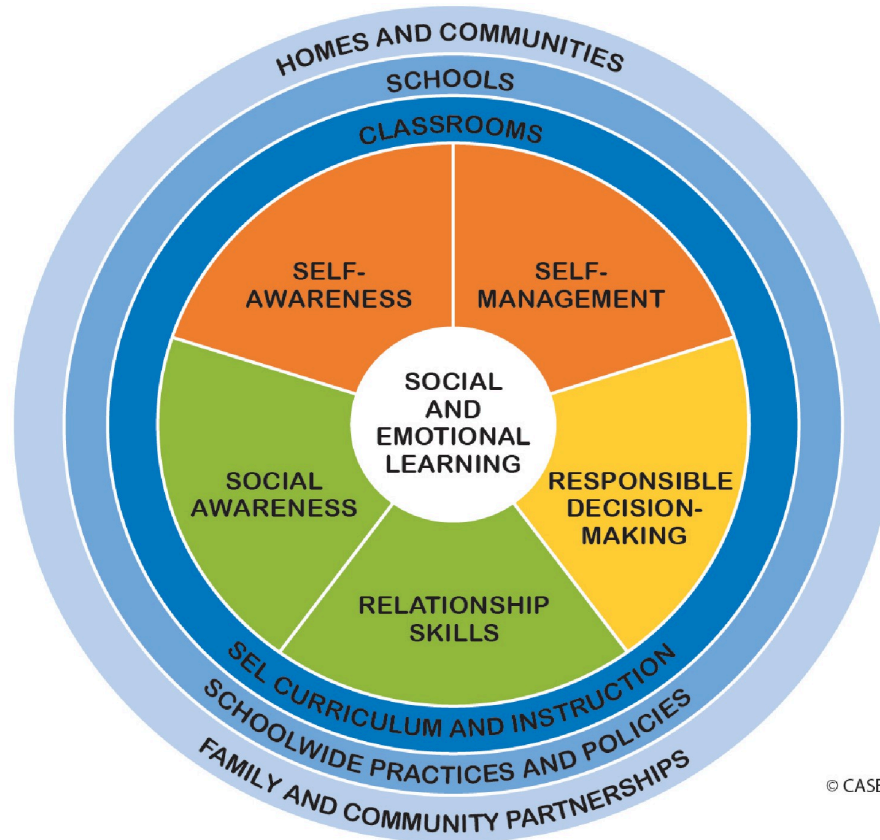| To what extent has the student improved…	Moderate Improvement
Behaving well in class.	✔
Getting along well with other students	✔

APPROACHES TO EVALUATING SEL

Why assess SEL outcomes?

1   **Know every child:** As an opportunity to better customize OST programming to meet the needs of all youth.

2   **Continuous improvement:** To inform the selection of staff professional development opportunities, and as an assessment of the quality of the programming in general.

3   **Understand impact:** As part of a formal evaluation that brings together the community members around a common language to understand the program's impact.

Source: Noam, Allen, and Triggs (2018)

What are the different kinds of SEL outcomes?

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Defining your SEL program

Develop a logic model focused on your SEL programming.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
What resources do you have to deliver the program? Example: SEL Curriculum Trained staff	What are the activities that make up the program? Example: SEL skill instruction Mentoring activities	Who will participate in the program, and for how long? Example: 20 7th grade boys 20 hours of instruction	What changes do you expect as a result of the program? Example: Improved self-management

Identifying or defining indicators

- What do your intended outcomes look like?
- Refer to existing frameworks that describe skills and behaviors (i.e. IL SEL standards, CASEL framework.

From the ISBE 21st CCLC Objectives and Indicators (included in evaluation report templates)

Indicator	Measures	Data Sources
Students in the program will show improvements in measures such as increase in attendance, decrease in disciplinary actions, less violence, and a decrease in other adverse behaviors.	Number of instances of student violence and suspensions; the number of students using drugs and alcohol; and teacher, parent, and student perception of change in behavior.	Disciplinary Data Teacher Survey Parent Survey Student Survey

Forms of Assessment

Forms	Advantages	Limitations
Student self-report surveys and ratings	Cost-efficient	Can be susceptible to bias Require respondents to be able to read and interpret the items
Interview protocols	Allow for complex and in-depth responses May identify issues not captured through questionnaires Do not rely on students' reading abilities as self-report surveys do	Difficult to administer at scale Can be susceptible to bias
Observation protocols and ratings	Do not rely on respondents to be accurate reporters of their own SEL competencies	Can be burdensome to administer or conduct Limited information on students' awareness or beliefs Potential for misinterpreting/ misattributing source of behavior
Performance-based assessments	Designed to approximate real-world conditions Typically do not rely on subjective judgment, as questionnaires do	Can require substantial investments in training Significant investment in time for administration and scoring

What kinds of SEL data do grantees collect? Examples from the field:

▶ Student and parent surveys: Perception of changes in attitude and behavior.

▶ School data: discipline and suspension data for program participants.

▶ Outside SEL instruments:

- ACT Engage
- Botvin Life Skills Assessment
- DESSA Assessment

Research-based assessments

First, some caveats:

- Although SEL is not new, many of the measures are, and lack the reliability and validity evidence that we might want to see.

- It is critical that whatever measures or instruments you use align with the SEL activities/approach/intervention implemented in your program.

Some noteworthy assessments:

- Holistic Student Assessment (HSA)

- Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)

- Relationships, Effort, Aspirations, Cognition, And Heart (REACH)

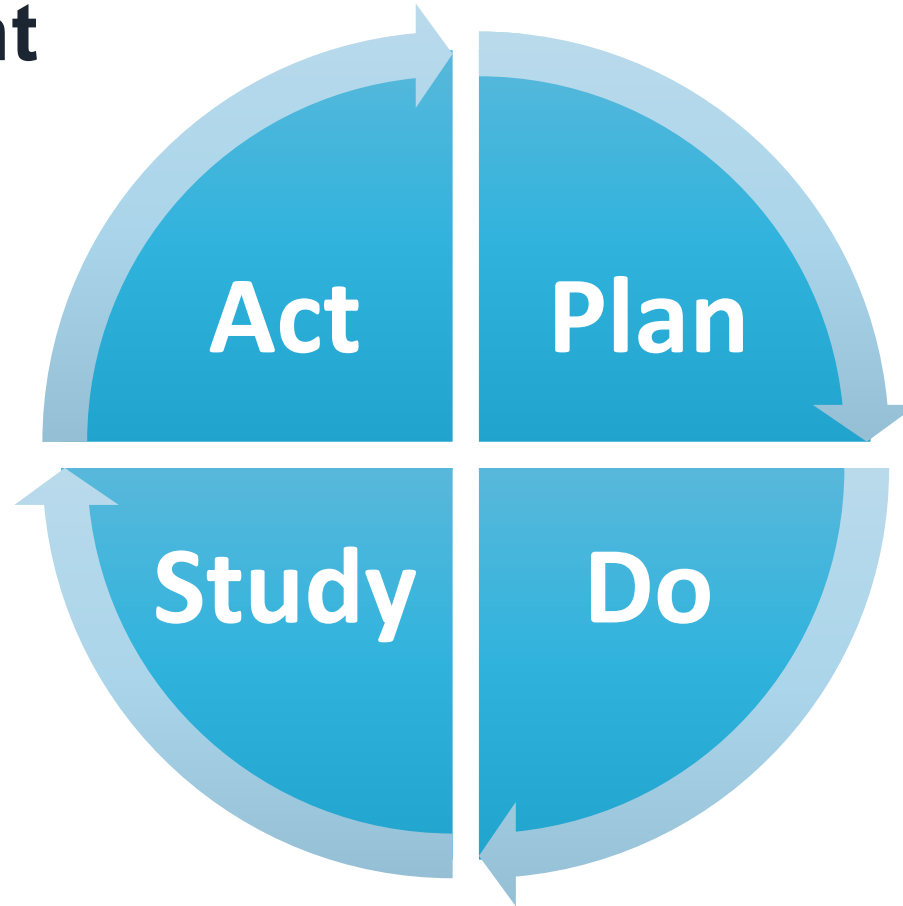- The Survey of Academic and Youth Outcome – Youth Survey (SAYO-Y)

Evaluating PBIS efforts

Many 21st C programs indicate that they use the PBIS system as part of their SEL efforts.

1. Expectations are set by, or with, the school, to provide consistency from the school day into the afterschool setting.

2. Given this connection, it is critical that programs coordinate with the school – with respect to expectations, lessons, supports, *and* evaluation.

3. PBIS provides extensive evaluation tools focused on **understanding implementation.**

Visit http://www.pbis.org

Use SEL Outcome Data to Support Continuous Improvement

Activity: Plan your SEL evaluation

1 Identify 2-3 specific outcomes that you want to have an impact on.

2 What are the components of your SEL program? What activities address your goals?

3 How could you assess for those outcomes? What are some indicators?

4 What are potential challenges for assessment? How might you address them?

Resources

- **Social and Emotional Learning in Out-Of-School Time: Foundations and Futures** [https://www.childrensinstitute.net/sites/default/files/documents/SEL-in-OST_front-matter.pdf]

- **Assessing Social & Emotional Skills in Out-of-School Time Settings: Considerations for Practitioners** [https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/195128/issue-brief-assessing-sel-in-out-of-school-time-settings.pdf]

- **CASEL SEL Assessment Guide** [https://measuringsel.casel.org/access-assessment-guide/]

- **Are you ready to assess Social and Emotional Development**? [Resource from the IQA website]

- **RAND Education Assessment Finder** [https://www.rand.org/education-and-labor/projects/assessments.html]

THANK YOU

Contact the EDC evaluation team at
21stCCLC.Evaluation@edc.org