SEL Methods:
Empathy and Emotion Management

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Des Moines, WA
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Ice Breaker!
Objectives

- **Understand** the definitions of Empathy and Emotion Management.
- **Learn** strategies to support youth in developing empathy and emotion management skills.
- **Assess and Identify** a next step in your support for Empathy and Emotion Management.
This workshop will NOT...

- Make you an SEL expert.
- Train you in clinical intervention.
- Be the last time you need to think about these practices.
Agenda

• Welcome
• Introduction to the SEL Challenge Research
• Group Norms
• Opening: “The last time I lost it…”
• Central Ideas - Strategies
• Application – BOOM! Dilemma
• Implementation – Self-Assessment
• Implementation – Emotion Coaching
• Closing Reflection
Definitions

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL): the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to:

- understand and manage emotions
- set and achieve positive goals
- feel and show empathy for others
- establish and maintain positive relationships
- make responsible decisions.*

*Definition from the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
SEL Challenge Partners

A collaboration between:

- expert practitioners delivering exemplary SEL programs in 8 unique communities

[Logos of Partner Organizations]

SELpractices.org
#SELchallenge
SEL Challenge Partners

A collaboration between:

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• a team of researchers
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A collaboration between:

- expert practitioners delivering exemplary SEL programs in 8 unique communities
- a team of researchers
- a national foundation.
SEL Challenge Purpose

The SEL Challenge was designed to:

1. Identify **promising practices** for building SEL skills with vulnerable adolescents, and

2. Share these practices across a range of expanded learning opportunity settings.
Six SEL Domains

- Emotion Management
- Empathy
- Teamwork
- Responsibility
- Initiative
- Problem Solving
Our Agreement

LEARN
FEEL SAFE
BE ENGAGED

In order to
I need _______.

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Group Norms and Expectations

- To support everyone’s ability to learn, feel safe, and be engaged, we will:

  ➤
  ➤
  ➤
  ➤
Curriculum Features

Sequence and Supports
Curriculum Features
Curriculum Features

- Emotion Management
- Empathy
- Teamwork
- Responsibility
- Initiative
- Problem Solving
Curriculum Features

RACISM  VIOLENCE  SEXISM  HOMOPHOBIA  TRAUMA
Curriculum Features

- Safe Space
- Responsive Practices
- Supports for Staff
Curriculum Features
Six SEL Domains

- Emotion Management
- Empathy
- Teamwork
- Responsibility
- Initiative
- Problem Solving
Definitions

**Empathy:** relating to others with acceptance, understanding, and sensitivity to their diverse perspectives and experiences.

**Emotion Management:** the abilities to be aware of, and constructively handle, both positive and challenging emotions.
“A Time I Lost It”

Think of a recent time when you “lost it.”

• What happened?
• What emotions took over?
• Where did you feel it in your body?
• Did you experience fight, flight, or freeze?
• How did you or could you have calmed yourself down?
Break!
Reminder: Definitions

**Empathy:** relating to others with acceptance, understanding, and sensitivity to their diverse perspectives and experiences.

**Emotion Management:** the abilities to be aware of, and constructively handle, both positive and challenging emotions.
Empathy and Emotion Management: Strategies

• **Structure** an inclusive space that is safe for sharing and processing personal experiences and emotions.
Empathy and Emotion Management: Strategies

• **Structure** an inclusive space that is safe for sharing and processing personal experiences and emotions.
  
  – Must be **intentional**, not just **incidental**.
  
  – What **purpose** or **goal** is everyone working toward?
Empathy and Emotion Management: Strategies

• **Structure** an inclusive space that is safe for sharing and processing personal experiences and emotions.
  
  – Create time, space, or rituals within program activities for youth to process and learn from emotion. Include ritual structures for multiple sessions that allow youth to first check in, then open up, and end with reflection.
  
  – Adapt program activities to respond to youth’s emotional readiness and needs.
  
  – Employ structure for sharing different cultural backgrounds, personal beliefs, and stories without judgment. Actively promote inclusion and equity and demonstrate support for the principles that all are different, equal, and important.
  
  – Cultivate a program culture in which people actively care for each other.
Empathy and Emotion Management: Strategies

- **Model** empathy and healthy strategies for dealing with emotions.

“If you desensitize and numb yourself to your own pain, you desensitize yourself to the pain of others.” – Marianne Williamson
Empathy and Emotion Management: Strategies

• **Model** empathy and healthy strategies for dealing with emotions.
  
  • Intentionally recognize the influence of your own identity and how it may affect interpersonal relations. Serve as an ally for youth who are isolated by differences in culture, family background, privilege, or power.
  
  • Respectfully acknowledge and validate emotions in others. Listen actively, remain calm during intense episodes, and use problem-solving methods.
  
  • Communicate effectively and honestly about emotions, including your own. Model boundary-setting, including sharing or withholding personal experiences as appropriate and as needed.
Empathy and Emotion Management: Strategies

- Explicitly **coach** youth in handling and learning from emotional experiences.
Empathy and Emotion Management: Strategies

- Explicitly **coach** youth in handling and learning from emotional experiences.
  - *Use deep understanding of youth and their emotional styles to monitor, appraise, and respond in the moment to youth’s ongoing emotions.*
  - *Foster emotional awareness and reflection. Help youth frame the situation and emotion.*
  - *Encourage problem solving in response to challenging emotions and the situations creating them. Suggest strategies for dealing with them.*
Summary – the Strategies

- **Structure** an inclusive space that is safe for sharing and processing personal experiences and emotions.
- **Model** empathy and healthy strategies for dealing with emotions.
- Explicitly **coach** youth in handling and learning from emotional experiences.
Practice – Brainstorm!

• What examples of this strategy have you seen?
• How do you think youth benefit from the strategy?
• What questions do you have about it?
Emotion Coaching—Research-Based

- From research by Gottman, Katz, & Hooven
- “Emotion Coaching” vs “Dismissing” or “Disapproving”
- Children “learn to trust their feelings, regulate their emotions, and solve problems. They have high self esteem, learn well, get along well with others.”

Example Responses

Scenario: Crestfallen youth confesses to staff: I really, really wanted to get the part of superhero in the play.

• **Disapproving response**: “You should be happy you got a part at all! We can’t have everyone selfishly wanting their own way!”

• **Dismissive response**: “Well, that’s no big deal. The most important thing is working together.”

• **Emotion Coaching response**: “You seem sad about that. It can be disappointing when you had your heart set on getting a certain part.”
Implementation – Self-Assessment

- Choose one of the two domains.
- Complete the Strengths Builder assessment.
Implementation – Next Steps

• Assign yourself a task to complete within the next three days.
• Who are you going to contact or follow-up with first?
Reflection

• What are you taking with you?
  – An idea?
  – An experience?
  – An emotion?
  – A question?
  – A resource?
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.
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!
Thank you!

- SELpractices.org
- #SELchallenge