THE

Portability

OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

TALE *Academy*

Module 6 - Session 2

Introduction

In Session 1, we learned about the NYSED SEL Benchmarks and how the CASEL Framework aligns with the benchmark goals.

In this session, we are going to consider the CASEL 5 core competencies through the lens of portability.

Portability is the ability to take an instructional practice or routine and shift it to another learning environment (e.g., from in-person to remote).

We will explore how to leverage the CASEL 5 SEL competencies in ways that are portable, consistent, and achievable across the four key settings in which relationship-building occurs: in the classroom, in the school, at home, and in the community.

Did you know?

Did you know that 98% of teachers believe social emotional development is important to their role as an educator? Teachers know firsthand that when students feel safe, know what to expect, and how to get help, their trauma responses are decreased, and they are able to engage in the learning process.
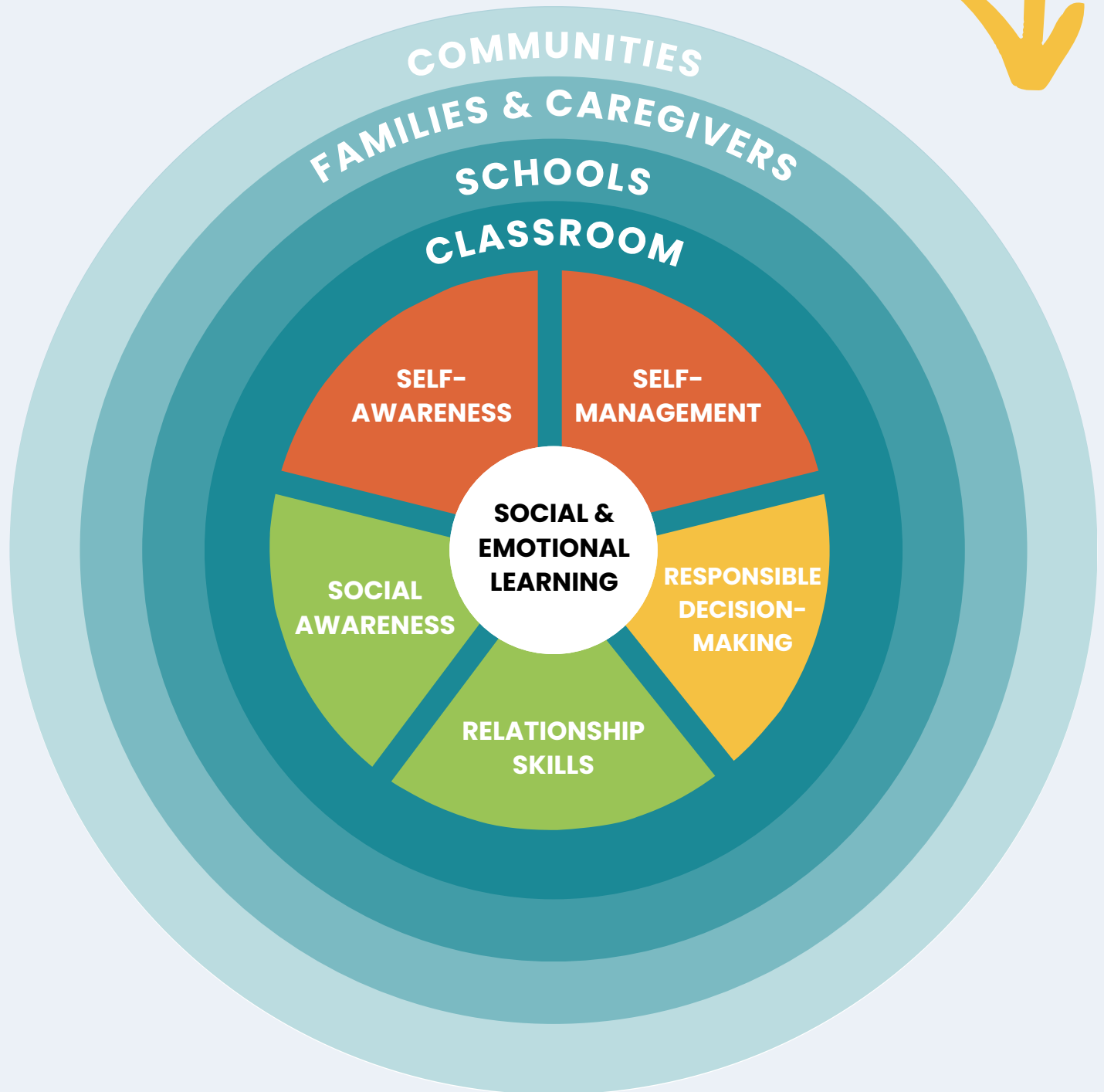
Defining SEL

In 2020, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) updated the most widely recognized definition and framework for SEL:

> SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions...SEL can help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities.

The CASEL Wheel

To apply the demands of such a multi-faceted definition of SEL, we turn to the core of the CASEL Wheel (below). On the following page, we define each of the CASEL 5 competencies and consider what student demonstration of that SEL competency might look like **across learning environments.**

COMMUNITIES

FAMILIES & CAREGIVERS

SCHOOLS

CLASSROOM

SELF-AWARENESS

SELF-MANAGEMENT

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

SOCIAL AWARENESS

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

CASEL SEL Competencies

SELF-AWARENESS

The key components of self-awareness have been defined by CASEL as "the abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts." A student may demonstrate self-awareness in the following ways:

- Interacting in virtual and in-person classrooms in ways that align with the classroom norms
- Responding to challenges in their learning with a growth mindset
- Recognizing their limitations in the remote classroom and seeking support

SELF-MANAGEMENT

The key components of self-management have been defined by CASEL as "the abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations." A student may demonstrate self-management in the following ways:

- Managing stress in different classroom settings
- Learning to work collaboratively with peers in person and remotely
- Exhibiting self-motivation during asynchronous and independent learning

SOCIAL AWARENESS

The key components of social awareness have been defined by CASEL as "the abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts." A student may demonstrate social awareness in the following ways:

- Understanding the emotions of others and adjusting their response
- Seeking ways to foster positive relationships when learning remotely
- Using appropriate and empathetic language in online forums

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

The key components of good relationship skills have been defined by CASEL as "the abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups." A student may demonstrate these skills by:

- Resolving conflicts with empathy and kindness in groups, chat rooms, video calls, and other collaborative settings
- Communicating effectively with the teacher across multiple platforms
- Showing leadership in groups by offering support to peers

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

The key components of responsible decision-making have been defined by CASEL as "the abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavioral and social interactions across diverse situations. This includes the capacity to consider ethical standards and safety concerns and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being." A student may demonstrate responsible decision-making in the following ways:

- Approaching new learning tasks with curiosity and open-mindedness
- Seeing the value of critical-thinking skills outside school
- Assessing the feelings and perspectives of others, in person or in a remote setting, to effectively find a solution with empathy

MAKING SEL PORTABLE: FROM CLASSROOM TO SCHOOL TO HOME TO COMMUNITY

Tight-knit and authentic partnerships among schools, families, and communities is the essential foundation upon which an effective SEL program is built. This is why the CASEL Wheel specifies four key settings in which SEL skills can and must be taught, learned, and applied for student success:

- Classrooms
- Schools
- Families and caregivers
- Communities

Let's consider some of the portable SEL strategies that teachers can use across each of the four key settings.

Portable SEL Strategies at the Classroom Level

- Support students in identifying emotions by explicitly teaching **feeling words**.
- Implement **SAFE lessons**:
    - **S**equenced lessons that foster skill development
    - **A**ctive forms of learning
    - **F**ocused on personal and social skills
    - **E**xplicit in targeting an SEL skill
- **Model positive self-talk and practicing gratitude.**

Example: Model positive self-talk and practicing gratitude.

How is this a portable SEL practice?

- Model positive self-talk and gratitude, using statements such as the following:
    - I am thankful to have this opportunity to practice.
    - I can put my best foot forward.
    - I am grateful to have friends that support me.
    - I appreciate having a safe space to make mistakes.
- Allow students the opportunity to practice gratitude through journaling, sharing in person, recording their thoughts, completing an anonymous Jamboard activity, or sharing in the chat box, if they choose.

Portable SEL Strategies at the School Level

- Provide **community-building circles** to address conflict and adverse conditions impacting students as soon as the concern surfaces.
- Provide **peer mediation** in which an impartial, third-party, student mediator facilitates the negotiation process between peers who are in conflict so that they can come to a mutually satisfactory resolution.

We discuss the portable practice of community-building circles more in Module 1–Session 6 and Module 6–Session 3 (the next session in this module).

Example: Provide peer mediation.

How is this a portable SEL practice?

- Consider virtual perspective-seeking exercises (e.g., provide the opportunity for both sides to share their perception and their peer's perspective of the conflict through journaling, padlets, Jamboards, etc.).
- In an asynchronous approach to peer mediation, consider beginning with a recorded monologue from the mediator.
- Provide each side in the conflict an opportunity to express their perceptions and/or concerns related to the conflict through a virtual recording or through Flip.
- Remotely, use chat, emojis, GIFs, etc. to help express the thoughts, feelings, and opinions of both sides, facilitated by the mediator. In a hybrid model, begin the peer mediation in person.
- Continue the mediation remotely after relationships and intentions are established. Organize and/or plan for additional asynchronous check-ins in an ongoing manner (e.g., recordings, email exchanges, etc.).

Portable SEL Strategies at the Family Level

- Engage in **perspective-taking** and put effort toward understanding the experiences and feelings of students' families. In Module 5 - Session 4, we explore how teachers can engage in a 'Funds of Knowledge' approach to student and family engagement. This approach recognizes, values, and integrates the family's cultural practices, experiences, skills, ways of interacting, and perspectives.
- **Include families** — particularly those from historically marginalized groups — in your plans to integrate SEL in the classroom.
- **Extend learning activities** and discussions to homes.
- **Show empathy and express compassion.**
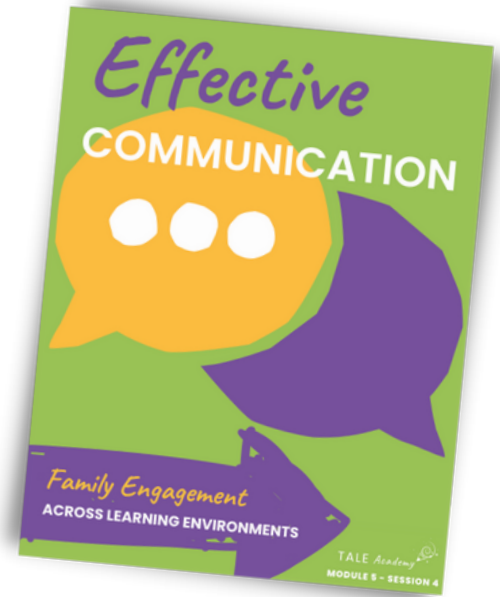
Example: Show empathy and express compassion.

How is this a portable SEL practice?

- Model and demonstrate empathy for your students' families with statements and questions such as the following:
  - What can I do to help?
  - I am sorry you are experiencing this.
  - How can our school community support you?
- Express compassion through the online materials you share with families by ensuring they are accessible to all families and speak to the needs of all students. Offer families multiple ways to communicate with you.
- Send notes of appreciation for contributions that families make to the school community.
- In a virtual model, hold space at the beginning and/or ending of an online meeting to allow participants to express their thoughts.

Portable SEL Strategies at the Community Level

- Learn how **discrimination, bias, and racism** shape lives.
- Have **conversations about challenging topics** with students so that they can come to the adults around them and learn about skills needed to navigate adversity.
- **Discuss the challenges facing the larger school community.**

A school's culture is created through the interplay and impact of values, beliefs, and behavior of all members of a school community, including the influence of the broader community in which the school is located (NYSED, 2019).

Example: Discuss the challenges facing the larger school community.

How is this a portable SEL practice?

- First, collect feedback (e.g., a thought-exchange platform, survey via hard copies, or digitally, such as through Google Forms, etc.). Compile that feedback into themes for consideration and conversation, whether in person, online, or both.
- Chat features are a necessity in large, remote convenings, as is time for Q & A.
- Follow up on outstanding questions and topics with a video recording to be viewed asynchronously.

A Moment of Motivation

Integrating SEL across the key settings is no small task! To keep you inspired on your learning journey, here's a fact: Implementing SEL in the class has far-reaching impacts, extending well beyond a student's school experience.

SEL interventions in the classroom that address the CASEL 5 competencies result in improved academic performance.

In another study, SEL interventions resulted in well-being up to 18 years after a program concluded.

GO for IT!

Now It's Your Turn!

As you explore additional resources and complete activities in this session, you will have the opportunity to more deeply consider the five core SEL competencies and the most effective entry points to teach students these SEL skills across multiple learning environments.

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About Us

The TALE Academy

The TALE Academy is a series of virtual learning experiences available to all New York State educators and offers a rich array of resources on topics related to teaching across learning environments (TALE). The TALE Academy is built upon the work New York State educators carried out during emergency remote teaching (ERT) throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and extends it toward the future. TALE invites educators to think beyond online learning to consider a broader perspective on teaching and learning that encompasses teaching across multiple environments (in-person, remote, and hybrid).

The Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments (TRLE) Project

The TALE Academy is part of a broader New York State Education Department (NYSED) initiative known as Teaching in Remote/Hybrid Learning Environments (TRLE). In July 2020, NYSED was awarded funding through the United States Department of Education's Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models Grant to implement TRLE – a three-year project to build the capacity of teachers and educational leaders to effectively implement remote/hybrid learning for all students. Launched in the depths of the pandemic, the first phase of the TRLE project focused on getting resources to the field through partnerships with Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and school districts across the state. The second phase, which began in February 2022, focused on aggregating lessons learned and emerging teaching and learning strategies to address a broader field of practice: teaching across learning environments.

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