



Developing Resilience-Based SEL Programs in Schools

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RESILIENCE:

The Fourth '**R**' in Education

Reading,

w**R**iting,

a**R**ithmetic

&

Resilience



RESILIENCE:

What is it??

The ability to set a positive, productive, fulfilling, and goal-oriented direction in one's life while also being equipped to handle life's inevitable adversity, stress, rejection, failures, and setbacks in stride.

It is the ability to “*bounce back up*” after adverse experiences and to continue onward moving forward in that same positive, socially useful, productive, and contributive direction in life.

Resilience is BOTH:

“A Social Vaccine”

Immunizing against the adverse effects of trauma, loss, stress and life's social ills (depression, substance abuse, anxiety, loss, trauma, etc.)

At the 35th anniversary celebration of his discovery of the polio vaccine, Dr. Jonas Salk was asked on what he would be working today if he were a young research scientist.

His Response:

“I'd still do immunization, but I'd do it psychologically rather than biologically”.

&

“An Antidote”

For the adverse effects of stress, loss, trauma, abuse, maltreatment, failure, emotional pain, etc..



The History of SEL Initiatives:

“Those who don’t know their history are doomed to repeat it” G. Santayana

SEL is NOT a new idea!!

“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all” **Aristotle**

“Above all it is expected that the attention of the instructors to the disposition of the minds and morals of the youth under their charge will exceed every other care; well considering that though goodness without knowledge is weak and feeble, yet knowledge without goodness is dangerous, and that both united form the noblest character and lay the sweet foundation of usefulness to mankind.”

John Smith, founder Phillips Exeter Academy, 1781

“The teacher who takes time to work on students’ social development will find [his/her] job simultaneously amplified and simplified. It is far easier and more effective to teach a cooperative, responsible and well-adjusted child than it is to drag, threaten and prod along the uncooperative, irresponsible and discouraged child”.

Alfred Adler, 1927

1888-1940 Progressive Education Movement

John Dewey (USA)

Cecil Reddick (UK)

Alfred Adler (Austria)

John Bosco (Italy)

Maria Montessori (Italy)

Horace Mann (USA)

1905 Teacher Education texts: Public School Methods, Chapter 8: Moral Training

1906 School Counseling origins: Jessie Davis @ Grand Rapids, MI

1922 Character Education Institution: A national competition of states

The Post WW2 & Cold War Derailment!

1958 Conant Report & NDEA Act (USA)

1960's DUSO (Developing Understanding of Self & Others)

1970's Tribes Learning Community program & Values Clarification

1983 – 2008 Derailment Again!

A Nation at Risk, Blueprint 2000, No Child Left Behind & High Stakes Testing Movements!

1984 Quest Program (Lions Club International)

1994 Collaborative for Academic, Social & Emotional Learning (CASEL, USA)

2006 European Network for Social Emotional Competence (ENSEC, Europe)



So, What Has Gone Wrong???

1. ***Authoritarian* Methods: Control/Compliance Focused**
2. ***Limited* in scope: Emotions? Behaviors? Values?**
3. **“One size fits all”, adopting a pre-packaged program!**
4. **Failure to *Integrate Academics* with SEL**
5. **Failure to involve *Parents*!**
6. **Failure to address *Teacher SEL*; it comes first! (Classroom Climate!)**
7. **Conflicting SEL *Content* vs. *School Culture*!**
“Culture eats strategy for breakfast” (J. Collins, From Good to Great)
8. **Lack of *Staff Ownership & Engagement* “”!**
I.E., The “*Inside the Black Box* of the Classroom” effect (L. Cuban)
9. **Failure to collect *meaningful data* for evaluation & support**



Developing Resilient Youth:

The 4 Building Blocks of Resilience

1. Availability of Supportive, Nurturing Social Ecosystems

For healthy growth & development to occur, all living organisms require, the availability of supportive, nurturing ecosystems!!

Children's Primary Social Ecosystems? = Family, School, & Community

2. Development of Essential Social-Emotional Competencies

- **Understanding/Respecting Self & Others**
- **Empathy** (*aka: the “meta” SEL competency!!*)
- **Communication** (*receptive & expressive; verbal & non-verbal*)
- **Cooperation** (*“ability to work & play well with others”*)
- **Responsible Contribution** (*for oneself and to the community*)

3. An Optimistic ‘Growth Mindset’

- Develops out of **Adult-Child** communication patterns!!
[i.e., Teacher training in “how to” skills of **Growth Mindset** communication]
- Focus is on **Effort, Improvement, Optimism & Progress**
- Rejection of the “**Fixed Mindset**” perspective
[i.e., assuming biologically predetermined degree of “*Abilities & Talents*” or “*Disabilities, Dysfunctions, or Disorders*”]

4. Opportunities to Develop a Positive Self-Identity

- **Social Connection/Recognition** (*the sense of belonging!*)
- **Personal Autonomy**
- **Equality/Respect**
- **Meaningful Contribution** (“*worthwhile-ness*”)
- **Competence/Mastery**



Supportive, Nurturing Social Ecosystems:

The 5 Maintenance Tasks

1. SAFETY MAINTENANCE

- Personal safety needs are met; everyone feels **Physically, Emotionally, Verbally, Psychologically, and Sexually Safe** here.
Failure here is termed Abuse, Neglect, or Maltreatment.

4. LIFE SKILLS MAINTENANCE

- Developing the academic skills and knowledge base members will need in their lives & careers
- Developing the social-emotional competencies members will need for social wellbeing
-

2. COHESION MAINTENANCE

- Actively seeking to develop a deep sense of **belonging, caring and mutual support** among all members.
- Positive, supportive, direct and encouraging communication among all members.
- Positive & affirming **Rituals & Traditions** are established and honored.
- Regularly engage in fun, shared activities together; i.e., “**Play & Fun!**”.
- Minimum **5:1 ratio** of positive interactions to negative/corrective interactions exists.

3. BEHAVIORAL MAINTENANCE

- Behavioral expectations are established and maintained in a firm, fair, and appropriate manner.
- Discipline is understood as an educational, not punitive, process; based in the “*authoritative*” leadership style

5. BOUNDARY MAINTENANCE

- Individual’s privacy, autonomy, and interests are respected.
- Subsystem boundaries (parents/siblings; extended family, teacher/parent, professional, etc.) are respected.
- Roles & responsibilities are assigned appropriately by age, generation, expertise, professional roles, etc.

Most Common Boundary Violation = School calling home to report behavior problems at school



Developing Social-Emotional Competencies

STAGE 1: An **INNATE APTITUDE** for positive mental health possessed by all children; a potential that can be developed through training in the essential social-emotional competencies of resilience.

STAGE 2: A set of **OBJECTIVE, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES** to be taught in the *Family* & in the *School*.

- **Understanding & Respecting Oneself**
[e.g., emotional self-regulation skills, cultural awareness, “Knowing Thyself “
- **Empathy: Understanding & Respecting Others**
[e.g. recognizing emotions, thoughts and perceptions of others]
- **Positive/Constructive Communication**
[e.g., receptive, expressive and non-verbal]
- **Cooperation**
[e.g., team building, collaborative problem solving, etc.]
- **Responsible Contribution**
[e.g., helping others, interpersonal problem resolution, bullying & social justice, etc.]

STAGE 3: **A SUBJECTIVE ATTITUDE** toward self, life and others from which one attaches meaning to life events and, based on which, one makes behavioral choices.



SEL Programs:

What Outcome Research Indicates

There is now considerable empirical support for establishing comprehensive Social-Emotional Learning programs in schools.

Research findings indicate outcomes as:

- INCREASES of 11 – 17% in academic achievement
 - INCREASES in positive social behaviors interactions among students and with staff
 - INCREASES in school graduation rates
 - INCREASES in student preparedness for college & workplace expectations
 - INCREASES in student motivation and the overall positive school culture/climate
-
- DECREASES in behavioral problems (aggressive behavior & classroom disruptions)
 - DECREASES in bullying incidents
 - DECREASES in absences & drop-out rates
 - DECREASES in student mental health concerns (e.g., depression & anxiety)
 - DECREASES in substance abuse



International Schools:

Special Issues for SEL Program Development

International schools often mistakenly assume that “*We’re a great school, with great students & parents thus, SEL is not a major priority in our school*”. In actual fact, research indicates that High Achieving/High Performing Schools present unique concerns for the social-emotional wellbeing of its student population.

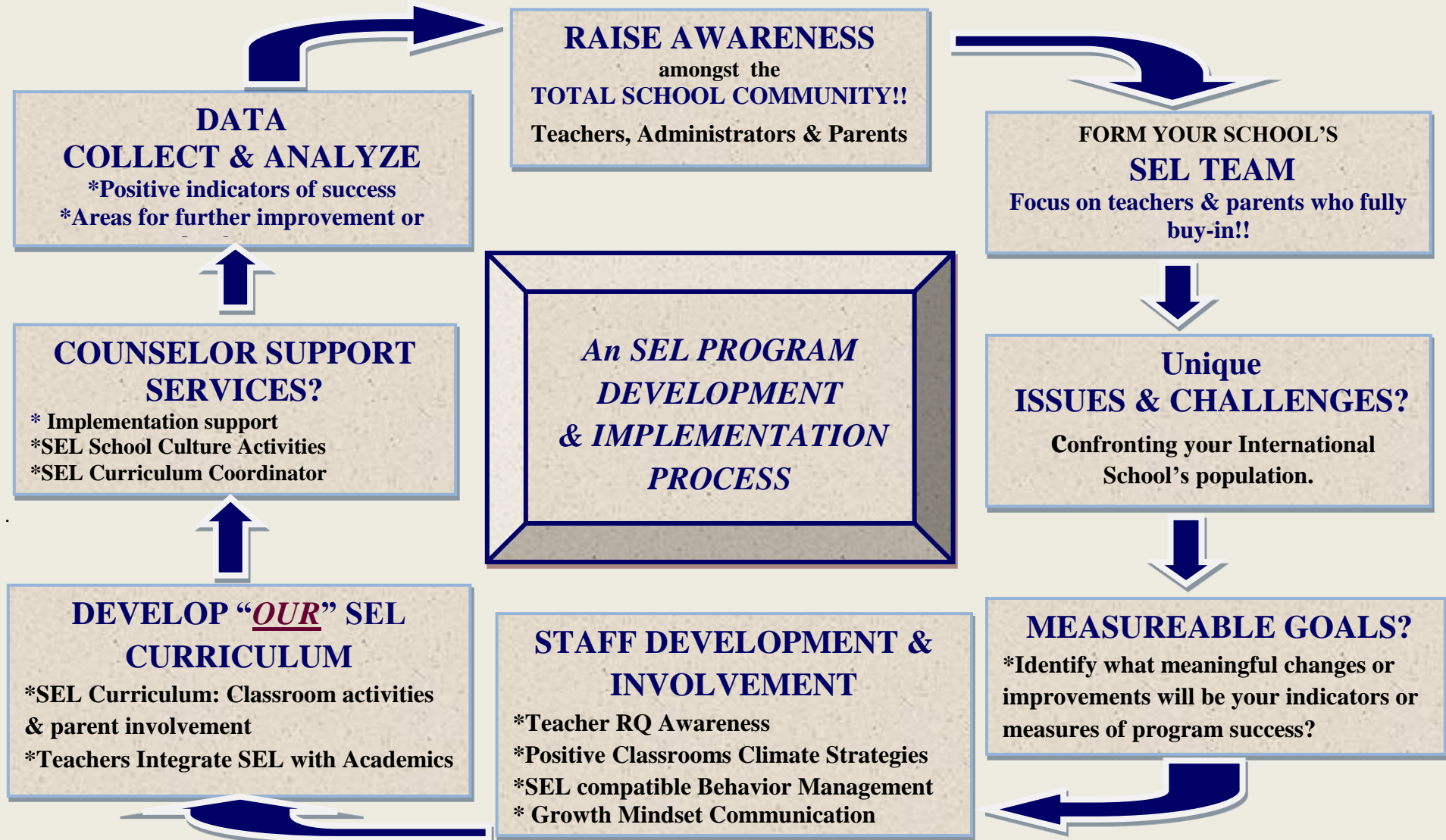
Risk Issues Confronting International Schools:

1. High performing schools (academic, athletic, and extra-curricular) are found to be at increased risk for bullying & social aggression.
2. Student marginalization increases with diverse student population demographics: E.G., nationality, ethnicity, religion, cultural and/or racial backgrounds, etc..
3. Large host national populations create greater risk for social exclusion /non-inclusive school cultures for TCK’s .
4. Large Non-English but Shared Common First Language student populations create increased risks for social exclusion: i.e., the “*social*” language vs. the “*instructional*” language.

5. High SES families may unwittingly model non-empathic attitudes or discrimination via interactions with household support staff (drivers, housekeepers, nannies). This can occur at the school also!!
6. Existing international tensions and political strife can foster an uncomfortable school climate for those with home nation conflicts.
7. The “**permissive disengaged**” parenting style disproportionately occurs among very low AND very high SES families. This style is associated with worst child development outcomes and psychosocial wellbeing.
8. Teachers and administrators can be prone to unwittingly marginalize transient, international parents via culturally in-sensitive school practices.
9. High achieving/High expectation parents can become verbally/psychologically/emotionally abusive via pressuring children to “look good/achieve” to enhance the parent’s image in the community, *AKA: Projective narcissism!*
10. High Risk Environments for Adolescent Wellness found to include: poverty, trauma/ACEs, discrimination, & high pressure to achieve (3 of 4 occur in international school populations!)
11. Levels of stress are found to be higher than the national norm in high performance school populations. Results in increased rates of: Anxiety, Depression, Substance Abuse, rule breaking, somatic issues and aggressive behavior.



Developing Social-Emotional Programs: Step by Step



Divergent Paradigms in Education: “Taking the Education Road Less Traveled”



Two paradigms diverged in a little red schoolhouse
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the empirical research

Then took the transformative, **Resilience-Based path**,
Less traveled but much more fair
And having perhaps the better claim
Because it was optimistic, affirming and wanted wear.
Although as for that, the passing there
Had worn the first far beyond its claims and fame

And both this morning equally lay
The first in strategies Educators had long trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet, knowing how way leads onto way
I doubted if I would ever come back

I shall be telling this to teachers and counselors with a sigh
Somewhere in a school ages and ages hence.
Two paradigms diverged in a little red schoolhouse
And I took the one less traveled by
And that has made all the difference!

[With apologies to the poet, Robert Frost and his poem, “*The Road Not Taken*”]



Download our [FREE](#) Resilience Building SEL activities booklet at:
[Resilience-Based-SEL-for-Parents-Teachers.pdf \(resiliencecounselingcenter.com\)](#)

***RESILIENCE BASED
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING:
ACTIVITIES for PARENTS & TEACHERS***



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SEL Competency Area: _____

ACTIVITY TITLE: _____

Learning Objectives: _____

Materials: _____

SEL Classroom Activity: _____

Introduction:

Activity (step-by-step):

Closure:

Possible Follow-Up Academic Lessons

Possible Parent/Family “Homework“ Activities:



**Resilience
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*Providing counseling, training and
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