Social and Emotional Learning

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November 17, 2017
SEL: What does the research have to say? Part I

I. What we planned to do and what we did

II. Some highlights/general points from the issue

• What is it...(SEL I mean)?
• What is the state of the evidence?
• What is next – opportunities and challenges?
A volume designed for a broad audience that provides:

I. Clear view of definition and operationalization, and positions SEL in a broader landscape;

II. Concrete and distilled summary of evidence from interventions in early education, elementary, middle/high school, and OST; and

III. Connections between research and practice in SEL and key policy areas in education.
1. Greenberg et al. locate SEL in the broader landscape of public health and education;

2. McClelland, Jones, Yeager, Hurd (and co-authors) summarize evidence from interventions across developmental periods and settings;

3. Gregory, Schonert-Reichl, and McKown (and co-authors) link SEL to key policy areas including school discipline; teacher preparation and support; and standards, assessment and accountability.
“...different disciplines have produced a great many frameworks and organizational systems that describe and define social and emotional skills. ... Frameworks also vary in the type of construct they aim to describe— from skills, behaviors, and attitudes to traits, strengths, and abilities...” (Jones & Doolittle).
So, what are the skills specifically?
Specific skills and competencies...

Skills/Competencies

Cognitive
- E.g., managing & shifting attention, controlling impulses, planning & goal setting, critical thinking.

Emotion
- E.g., emotion knowledge and expression, emotion & behavioral regulation, empathy
- E.g., understanding social cues, social perspective taking, prosocial behavior, conflict resolution, social problem solving

Social
- E.g., understanding social cues, social perspective taking, prosocial behavior, conflict resolution, social problem solving
...and beliefs, values etc.

Skills/Competencies
- Cognitive
- Emotion
- Social

Belief Ecology (attitudes, habits of mind)
- Beliefs/Knowledge of Self & Identity
  - E.g., self-efficacy, growth mindset, agency, self-esteem, self-knowledge, purpose
- Character/Values
  - E.g., ethical, performance, intellectual, and civic values
- Personality
  - E.g., optimism, gratitude, openness, enthusiasm/zest
What do we know about them?

They are intertwined.

Personality

Beliefs

Cognitive

Emotional

Social and Interpersonal

Values

Personality
They are malleable...

Skills and competencies emerge, grow, and change over time from infancy and throughout childhood and adolescence.
Naming Your Own Emotions

Communicating Your Emotions to Others

Self-Regulating “Big Emotions”

Persevering Through Challenging Cognitive Tasks

Working on Teams to Solve Complex Problems

Social Domain

Cognitive Domain

Emotion Domain

Emotion Domain

Emotion Domain

Emotion Domain
They are closely linked to context and experience.

Skills and competencies develop in a complex system of contexts, interactions, and relationships and are particularly vulnerable to stress and adversity.
Some highlights: What is the evidence?

Types of Evidence:
1. Long-term correlational studies
2. Large multi-program studies & trials of specific interventions in preschool, school and afterschool contexts
3. Meta-analyses; cost-benefit analyses

Bottom Line:
• Solid and accumulating evidence (practices & settings)
• Strongest evidence for individual interventions (intervention target aligned with practice aligned with measurement; meta-analytic studies confirm)
• Important developmental & implementation considerations
Do SEL *interventions* work?

**YES**: 2011 meta analysis says...

- Social-Emotional skills = .57
- Academic outcomes = .27

*(Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011)*
Some highlights: What’s next?

1. Integration into the structures and practices of schools and schooling (e.g., discipline practices).

2. Focus on teachers (e.g., teacher training, wellness/competencies, supports)...actually all school adults.

3. Addressing standards and assessment.
Children’s Well-Being & Behavior

- One in Five
- 17%-30%
- A #1 Challenge, but no training/support

Responses in Practice

- **Reactive:** Zero-Tolerance, No Excuses, No Nonsense, Hands-Off (little evidence)
- **Preventive/Promotive:** Social-Emotional Learning (growing evidence)
END, thank you