



BROADER MEASURES OF SUCCESS: SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL LEARNING

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MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

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1. THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We have seen a revolution – or perhaps evolution would be a more appropriate term – in educational thinking over the past twenty years. The seeds for this transformation were laid in the 1960s and '70s, in the seminal works of thinkers such as Sylvan Tomkins (1962, 1963), John Bowlby (1965, 1969), Erik Erikson (1968), and Margaret Mahler (1975). Instead of seeing reason and emotion as belonging to separate and independent faculties (the former controlling the latter), they argued that social, emotional and cognitive processes are all bound together in a seamless web.

The scientists who followed in their footsteps have greatly deepened our understanding of the complex interrelationships that develop between these processes (e.g., Fogel, 1993; Gottlieb, 1997; Greenspan, 1997; Frijda, 2000; Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004; Fogel, King, & Shanker, 2007). Neuroscientists have now shown that the systems in the prefrontal cortex subserving social and cognitive processes are inextricably tied to the sub-cortical systems subserving emotional functioning (Damasio, 1996; Schore, 1996; LeDoux, 1998; Tucker, 2007; Davidson, 2012; Siegel, 2014).

This 'dynamic systems' view of the mind and brain (Ridley, 2003; Lewis, 2005; Shenk, 2010) has inspired an equally profound revolution in educational thinking. The Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) movement emerged at a conference hosted by the Fetzer Institute in 1994, giving birth to the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). An article that appeared in the October 2, 1995 issue of TIME magazine epitomized the speed at which this new way of thinking was taking hold. In bold letters on the front cover they raised the question, "What's Your EQ," and below this the answer: "It's not your IQ. It's not even a number. But emotional intelligence may be the best predictor of success in life, redefining what it means to be smart."

Developmental psychologists began looking carefully at the role of social and emotional functioning on children's psychological wellbeing (e.g., Izard *et al.*, 2001; Eisenberg *et al.*, 2004; Denham, Ji, & Hamre, 2010). Meanwhile, educational theorists were pursuing the idea that emotional intelligence is more important than IQ as far as academic attainment is concerned (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1995; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Denham, Wyatt, Bassett, Echeverria, & Know, 2009) and arguing that it is equally important to understand those aspects of the school experience that enhance social and emotional development (Darling, Caldwell, & Smith, 2005; Feldman & Matjasko, 2005).

Two decades of research have now settled on five core aspects of social-emotional functioning that are thought to be critical for a child's wellbeing and educational attainment. These are:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-management
3. Social awareness
4. Interpersonal relations
5. Decision-making

This paper explains why these five core competencies are so important for success in life and school; considers the many ways in which schools promote the development of these core competencies; and reflects on how measuring Social and Emotional Learning in schools can further enhance this critical benefit of the educational experience.

2. THE FIVE 'CORE COMPETENCIES'

2.1 SELF-AWARENESS

Self-awareness refers to students' ability to identify and describe their own emotions; to understand why they feel the way they do; to recognize what others are feeling and why; to maintain an accurate sense of their capacity to succeed in a variety of situations; and to understand their own needs and values (Yoder, 2014). It is also important that students develop an accurate understanding of themselves, such as their learning styles, strengths, and areas that need improvement (Zimmerman, 1990).

Study after study has shown that when this core competence is higher students score higher on life satisfaction measures; stay in school longer; and have higher levels of social and professional success (Berk & Shanker, 2005). Students who do not possess this core competence are more likely to experience increased mental health problems and lower academic achievement (Cicchetti, Ackerman, & Izard, 1995; Eisenberg *et al.*, 1995; Zimmerman, 1995; Eisenberg *et al.*, 1997; Saarni, 1999; Blair, 2002; Southam-Gerow & Kendall, 2002; Denham, von Salisch, Olthof, Kochanoff, & Caverly, 2002-2004; Pollatos, Gramann, & Schandry, 2007). Furthermore, students with poor self-awareness show markedly higher levels of externalizing disorders, such as aggression, bullying, oppositional defiance, and conduct disorder (Zahn-Waxler, Iannotti, Cummings, & Denham, 1990; Factor, Rosen, & Reyes, 2013).

2.2 SELF-MANAGEMENT

Meta-cognitive skills – skills for managing one's own learning and emotions – are often included in this competence. These include such skills as being able to monitor and manage academic goals and develop personalized learning strategies to master academic material. Students need to know how to form strategies for setting short and long-term goals; plan thoughtfully and thoroughly; stay on task; manage their personal and interpersonal stresses; and develop positive motivation and a sense of hope and optimism.

More generally, this competence refers to the student's ability to deal with stress and manage emotions. It is particularly important that they learn how to verbalize and develop strategies to manage their anxiety, anger, and depression. They need to acquire skills for controlling their impulses, and where needed, their aggressive or antisocial tendencies. Moreover, as important as it is for some students to develop 'down-regulating' strategies to help themselves calm down when they are agitated or angry, it is no less important to help them acquire constructive 'up-regulating' strategies for addressing their feelings of listlessness or lethargy.

Numerous studies have established that the better a student masters this competence the higher their levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Students who do not develop this core competence are at a significantly greater risk of emotional problems, internalizing and externalizing disorders, attentional problems, and

poor academic outcomes (Mischel, Shoda, & Rodriguez, 1989; Kochanska, Murray, & Coy, 1997; Saarni, 1999; Tremblay, 2000; Vitaro, Brendgen, & Tremblay, 2002; Silk, Steinberg, & Morris, 2003; McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007; Caprara *et al.* 2008; Moffitt *et al.* 2011; Spoon, Cicchetti, & Rogosch, 2013). Students who do not develop this core competency are also at a heightened risk of physical health problems as Ferguson notes in his paper on physical and mental health.

2.3 SOCIAL AWARENESS

Students must be able to take others' perspectives into account and to empathize with others. They need to be able to predict others' feelings and reactions, as well as recognize emotional cues to their own actions or utterances (Loverland, 2005). They also need to learn how to adapt to the mood of a group and understand – and respect – other points of view. Especially important in this regard is to recognize and appreciate diversity.

The recent review by Eisenberg, Spinrad, & Morris (2014) reveals that well-developed social awareness is associated with positive social adjustment, reduced bullying, better prosocial tendencies, and enhanced emotion regulation. Schonert-Reichl, Smith, Zaidman-Zait, & Hertzman (2012) have shown that fostering this core competence results in more prosocial behaviour. Lovett & Sheffield (2007) also showed that low levels of this core competence are associated with higher levels of aggression in adolescents.

2.4 INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Competence in interpersonal relationships involves students' ability to develop and maintain healthy friendships; to address interpersonal conflict; to be aware of their own communication skills; to manage and express their emotions effectively; and to build relationships with those who can be resources when help is needed. These attributes are vital for students' long-term success. Students need to learn how to engage in cooperative learning and work toward group goals, how to develop leadership skills, and how to resist inappropriate social pressures. The abilities to resist negative social pressures, resolve interpersonal conflict, seek help when needed, and work well with others are important dimensions of interpersonal relationships.

Children who score low on this competence have been shown to have: poor interpersonal skills, generally low levels of self-esteem and lower levels of happiness (Rigby & Slee, 1993); higher levels of persistent antisocial behaviour and aggression (Zafarakis, 2013); trouble building strong relationships and managing inter-personal problems (Dunn & Herrera, 1997; Denham, 1998; Dunn & Hughes, 1998); and difficulty functioning effectively as part of a team (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Larson, 2000; Cherniss, 2000; Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000). Children who score high on this competence tend to be more prosocial and cooperative with higher levels of self-esteem, happiness, and an increased liking for school (Sroufe, Schork, Motti, Lawroski, & LaFreniere, 1984; Tinto, 1993; Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999; Denham et al. 2001; Lemerise & Harper, 2014).

2.5 DECISION MAKING

Decision making refers to the ability to develop appropriate strategies to solve problems, whether academic, personal, or social. Students need to learn how to identify problems when making decisions and to generate alternatives. There is a strong personal and prosocial dimension to this competence: students need to become more self-reflective and self-evaluative; learn how to make decisions

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Students who develop this competence have been shown to have clear and motivating goals (Wyman, Cowan, Work, & Kerley, 1993; Tinto, 1993; Anderman & Midgley, 1997; Heckhausen, Wrosch, & Schulz, 2010), and rely on ethical standards when making their decisions. (Dienstbier, 1984; Colby & Damon, 1992; Kurtines & Gewirtz, 1996; Saarni, 1999). Students who score low on this competence have less capacity to manage stressful events and to develop effective strategies for addressing interpersonal and academic challenge (Compas, Malcarne, & Fondacaro, 1988). They also tend to engage in higher levels of antisocial, self-destructive, and socially disordered behaviour (Elias, Gara, Schuyler, Branden-Muller, & Sayette, 1991).

3. HOW SCHOOLS CAN FURTHER PROMOTE SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL LEARNING

3.1 SCHOOLS ARE A NATURAL SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Canadian schools are responding vigorously to both the need and the opportunity to enrich the core competencies of Social and Emotional Learning. The Mental Health Strategy for Canada, released in 2012, has resulted in a number of important developments, such as the appointment of School Mental Health Professionals, Mental Health Literacy programs, and Caring and Safe School initiatives. These advances, together with formal SEL instruction are highly effective at enhancing students' self-awareness and self-management. Efforts to promote safe, caring and inclusive school environments, together with anti-bullying and restorative justice practices are having an important impact on students' social awareness and interpersonal relationships.

These recent innovations augment the many ways in which schools naturally enhance the development of students' core social and emotional competencies. So much more is involved here than, for example, mastering the rules for appropriate classroom behavior. When students are asked to assess their effort or reflect on how they might have made an argument stronger they are being coached in self-awareness. When they must address the consequences of failing to prepare properly for a test or complete an assignment they are learning an important lesson in self-management. Listening to other students answer questions or working with classmates on a project develops social awareness and interpersonal skills. Academic material itself develops such core competencies as learning how to retain information. Literature, for example, teaches important lessons about ethical standards and decision-making. Extracurricular activities – sports, music, drama, community service – are important for learning to work cooperatively with others as well as for experiencing team spirit.

3.2 THE RISE OF SEL

In order to augment these natural benefits of the educational experience, more and more schools have introduced Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs into their curriculum. The two fundamental principles underlying these programs are:

1. Social and emotional competencies are as important as more formal academic skills
2. Students can learn social and emotional competencies in the same ways that they learn formal academic skills.

These programs have resulted in significant psychological and academic benefits, and have enabled us to develop a much clearer picture of the social and emotional benefits of school and how to enhance these effects. There are a number of ways in which the most salient features of these programs can be incorporated into the normal operations of schools.

3.2.1. Child Development Project (CDP)

The Child Development Project (CDP) is a comprehensive elementary-school based (K - Gr. 6) program that emphasizes social awareness, interpersonal relationships, and positive development. It was originally developed with the San Ramon and Hayward school districts in California by the Developmental Studies Center in Oakland. There is promising evidence that the program is effective in terms of reducing anti-social behavior, drug and alcohol consumption, while enhancing reading comprehension and academic achievement test scores. In those schools where it is effective (approximately half) the effect sizes range from 0.41 to 1.10. In those schools where it was not effective, effect sizes ranged from -0.06 to 0.20. This disparity enabled researchers to look for the critical mediating variable. Further analysis showed that the program produced positive effects to the degree that it was successful in establishing a caring community in the school (Solomon, Watson, Delucchi, Schaps, & Battistich, 1996; Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000; Battistich, Schaps, Watson, Solomon, & Lewis, 2000; Battistich, Schaps, & Wilson, 2004).

One of the most important lessons that we can take from CDP is the importance of having class meetings to talk about goals; learning activities for partners and small groups; and open-ended discussions on literature that are designed to enhance students' social, ethical, and intellectual development. CDP demonstrates the importance of schools striving to become "caring communities" where children feel valued, connected, and responsible to others. The project teaches us that schools can achieve this goal with classroom and school-wide community-building activities, an engaging curriculum, cooperative learning approaches, and an emphasis on literacy development.

3.2.2. Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) is a multi-year, universal research-based SEL program for children in pre-kindergarten to Grade 6. The program promotes self and social awareness, self-management, interpersonal and decision-making skills.

Children receive lessons three times per week for a minimum of 20-30 minutes per session. These lessons teach children how to identify, label, express, assess, manage, and understand the difference between feelings and behaviours. PATHS also teaches children about controlling impulses, delaying gratification, managing stress, self-monitoring, understanding the perspective of others, problem-solving, decision-making, and developing a positive attitude towards life.

Evaluated in several large randomized control trials (Greenberg et al. 1995), PATHS is effective in increasing academic performance and positive social

behaviour, improving school climate and emotional attitudes and skills, and decreasing conduct problems and emotional distress. Effect sizes range in the small to moderate .15 - .24 range (Crean & Johnson, 2013). Where PATHS has been implemented, there have been significant improvements in social problem-solving skills, emotional recognition skills, reading achievement and non-verbal planning skills, and teacher and parent-rated social competence. Teacher ratings of behavior indicate significant improvements in social competence and in frustration tolerance (Greenberg & Kusche, 1998). Significant improvement for 5 to 7 year olds has been observed on all five subscales of the SDQ: emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems, and consideration, for the treatment schools but not for the comparison schools (Curtis & Norgate, 2007). Two-year follow-up results indicate significant benefits in the PATHS intervention group on teacher-reported aggression and ADHD (Malti, Ribeaud, & Eisner, 2011; Malti, Ribeaud, & Eisner, 2012).

One of the most important lessons we can learn from PATHS is how beneficial it is to embed activities that are designed to improve children's range of emotional vocabulary, their ability to provide appropriate personal examples of the experience of basic feelings, their beliefs that they can regulate their feelings, and their understanding of cues for recognizing feelings in others into the day-to-day operations of the classroom. There are countless opportunities for teachers to assign materials and engage in discussions that promote the development of empathy, peaceful conflict resolution, and responsible decision-making.

PATHS also has much to teach us about the importance of including special needs students in all of these activities. Special needs children who began PATHS with high rates of self-reported conduct problems and depressive symptoms had significant reductions at post-test and maintained these reductions for two years post-intervention. At a three-year follow-up, the trajectories for internalizing and externalizing behavior and depression continued to decline for intervention students, whereas control students' trajectories increased (internalizing/externalizing) or declined at a lower rate (depression) (Kam, Greenberg, & Kusche, 2004).

3.2.3. Positive Action Program

The Positive Action Program (PAP) uses an asset-building approach to intervention and prevention. It is designed to focus on and enhance student character and behaviour. It was developed in 1977 by Carol Gerber Allred and has undergone frequent additions over the years (Washburn et al. 2011). PAP teaches children how to engage in health promoting behaviours for all areas of the self (physical, intellectual, social, and emotional). There are approximately 140 15-minute lessons per grade, provided by teachers. In addition, there are school-climate, counsellor, community, and family member kits that encourage and reinforce the core competencies outlined in this paper.

Teachers report that children are highly engaged with the material (Schmidt, Flay, & Lewis, 2014). A recent study reported that PAP contributed to improving elementary school quality in terms of school safety; teacher, student and parent involvement; quality student support; and standards based learning (Snyder, Vuchnich, Acock, Washburn, & Flay, 2012). Recent randomized control studies support the effectiveness of the program. In a study conducted in 20 racially and ethnically diverse schools in Hawaii (half of the schools employed PAP while the other 10 acted as controls), beneficial effects were observed in school-level achievement and student achievement in math, reading and science. There was also a decrease in behaviours such as bullying, conduct problems, and absentee-

ism (Snyder *et al.*, 2010; Snyder *et al.*, 2012); and in substance use, violence, and sexual activity (Beets *et al.*, 2009). In a cluster-randomized trial of predominantly low-income and minority urban elementary schools, positive affect and life satisfaction both improved, and there was a significant reduction in depression and anxiety (Lewis *et al.*, 2013).

In general, PAP has been shown to be successful in increasing a variety of positive child outcomes including academic achievement, prosocial behaviour trajectories, and emotional and mental health. Effect sizes have ranged from 0.34 – 0.72 (Flay, 2012).

The lesson from the success of PAP is that schools should seek ways to develop in their students the following:

1. Self-concept (i.e. relationship of thoughts, feelings, and actions)
2. Physical and intellectual actions (i.e. hygiene, nutrition, avoidance of harmful substances, decision-making skills, creativity)
3. Responsible self-management
4. Getting along with others
5. Being honest with yourself and others
6. Self-improvement (i.e. goal setting, persistence, problem-solving, acquiring the courage to try new things).

4. HOW SCHOOLS CULTIVATE THESE COMPETENCIES

4.1 THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Schools play a vital role in the development of the five core social and emotional competencies (Weissberg & Cascardino 2013). The very social nature of school plays a vital role in a child and youth's social and emotional development (Lewis, 1992).

Students need to engage with peers and teachers in order to develop their social and emotional competencies (Greenspan, 1994). They need to be exposed to new and more complex emotions and emotional conflicts (Saarni, 1999). It is also beneficial for them to read and think about the experiences of literary characters. Most important, however, are the interactions that take place in the classroom, in the halls, on the playground, and in the cafeteria. The rivalries that students experience, the alliances that they form, the shared interests and working together on a common goal are life experiences that lay the foundation for success and happiness in the adult years (Denham *et al.*, 2009).

Acquiring new thinking skills is essential for the student's self-management and decision-making, while being exposed to new ideas enhances those positive emotions that are vital for self-awareness: not just curiosity and interest, but also satisfaction and the feelings of self-efficacy that come from mastering a difficult task (Harter, 2006). Learning how to deal with the frustration and disappointment that comes from struggling with, and even failing at, an assignment are an important part of this process—an essential aspect of the ability to stay on task

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By breaking a problem down into manageable chunks, drawing attention to salient details, helping a student organize his thoughts, teachers not only help students plan and sequence their thoughts, but also enhance their ability to stay focused on a problem and ignore distractions.

is being able to cope with the negative emotions that arise as one confronts a challenge. Even the anxiety of studying for an exam is beneficial, provided this does not become excessive, for it has long been known that a moderate amount of anxiety promotes cognitive processes (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908).

The importance of a warm and nurturing teacher in the development of these five core competencies cannot be emphasized too strongly. A teacher's constructive feedback is a constant source of development. A teacher's own positive affect state profoundly influences that of her students: a phenomenon known as 'limbic resonance' (Goleman, 2006). Their passion for the material and for helping students maximize their potential has a profound impact on their self-evaluation, self-monitoring, and self-esteem (Wentzel, 1997). Moreover, a teacher's responses to a student's struggles and achievements are pivotal for that student's executive functions and meta-cognitive skills (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). By breaking a problem down into manageable chunks, drawing attention to salient details, helping a student organize his thoughts, teachers not only help students plan and sequence their thoughts, but also enhance their ability to stay focused on a problem and ignore distractions (Schunk & Zimmerman 1998).

Research based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth has shown that participating in afterschool activities – sports, playing in the orchestra, being part of a drama or science club – is especially important for academic outcomes and prosocial development. These activities provide students with opportunities to explore their identity, develop their self-initiative, learn how to manage their emotions in real-life situations, develop positive peer relationships, and acquire social skills. The data clearly show that the more students engage in such activities the less likely they are to smoke or be drawn to alcohol or marijuana (Guévremont, Findlay, & Kohen, 2014).

4.2 THE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

The quality of the student-teacher relationship and the emotional support that students receive from their teachers are very important for student wellbeing and academic achievement (Perry, 1998; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). It is thus imperative that we understand the factors that lead to strong student-teacher relationships.

Several educational theorists have looked at the parallels between parenting and teaching styles (Barnas, 2000; Wolfgang, 2001; Pellerin, 2005). The research that has been done in this area has been strongly informed by Diana Baumrind's seminal study, which, drawing on Kurt Lewin's classic leadership study (Lewin, Lippitt & White 1939) showed that different parenting styles are associated with different outcomes in children's behaviors (Baumrind 1968, 1971). Baumrind identified three main styles of parenting: what she called Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive.

Authoritative parenting is warm, responsive, attentive, and sensitive to children's needs. It involves setting clear boundaries, but without imposing excessive limits; using supportive rather than punitive methods of intervention and being consistent in how demands are enforced. Authoritative parenting encourages the child's sense of autonomy by encouraging them to express their own thoughts, feelings, feelings, and desires; engaging in joint decision-making; and showing sensitivity and responsiveness to the child's emotional needs. Research shows that, overall, the children of authoritative parents have the highest levels of social and emotional development (Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989).

Authoritarian parenting is disciplinarian. The child is presented with strict rules and punished for failing to comply with those rules. In Baumrind's words, authoritarian parents are "obedience-oriented and expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation." They make many demands on their child and use forceful, even coercive measures to shape and control the child's behaviour. Far from encouraging the child's sense of autonomy, they make decisions unilaterally.

Research shows that authoritarian parenting styles tend to lead to children that are obedient but can have psychological problems. Unfortunately, these children tend to have low self-esteem and rank lower in terms of happiness and social competence. More worrying is the fact that harsh punishment is a significant predictor of aggression in adolescents. Authoritarian parenting is linked to increased internalizing and externalizing problems (Robinson, Mandlco, Olsen, & Hart, 2001). Worst of all are harsh behavior and neglect, which are significant predictors of aggression (Maura O'Keefe, 2005).

Permissive parenting is warm but overindulgent. Permissive parenting makes few demands on the child and readily ignores the child's failure to comply with the few demands that are made. Permissive parents avoid confrontation and seek to be their child's friend rather than their parent. The children of permissive parents tend to rank low in terms of happiness and high in terms of behavioral problems. They tend to have problems with authority and significant problems in school. Permissive parenting is associated with poor impulse control and increased aggression (Lewis, Granic & Lamm, 2006).

Macoby and Marting (1983) added a fourth parenting style to Baumrind's taxonomy: the Uninvolved parent, who is emotionally detached and uncommunicative. Uninvolved parenting makes few or no demands on the child and is essentially indifferent to child's needs and points-of-view. Uninvolved parenting is associated with behaviour problems, poor psychosocial development, internalized distress and low achievement in school (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1990).

Findings on the effects of different styles of teaching are remarkably similar to those on the effects of parenting styles, and show how we help teachers in their quest to develop strong relationships with their students. Authoritative teaching is highly responsive and supportive by treating students as responsible individuals. To be sure, authoritative teachers place limits on their students, but also encourage their independence. They are careful to explain the reasons behind rules and often have the students themselves take an active role in designing these rules. These teachers tend to be much more tolerant when students disagree with what they are saying or interject during classroom discussions. They pay attention to discipline, but are careful to mete consequences for violations of classroom rules in a fair and consistent manner.

Like authoritative parenting, authoritative teaching boosts students' social and emotional development. Research has shown that this is effective at producing students that are socially competent and responsible, and, in general, more mature. Authoritative teaching has also been shown to promote positive classroom and school environments (Mugny, Chatard & Quiamzade, 2006; Mullen & Tallent-Runnels, 2006; Quiamzade, Mugny & Falomir-Pichastor, 2009; Snyder & Bassett, 2011; Buskist & Benassi, 2012).

Authoritarian teaching is preoccupied with enforcing strict discipline in the classroom. It offers students little opportunity for discussion or argument,

which may challenge the teacher's authority. Authoritarian teaching is highly intolerant of rule-infractions or failures to meet deadlines, and uses reward and punishment as the primary tools for managing classroom behaviour. Students who fail to abide by their authoritarian rules are seen as failing to make the necessary effort to control their impulses and as having only themselves to blame should they fail.

Authoritarian teaching appears to have a damaging effect on students' self-esteem, motivation, and self-efficacy, and few of the social/emotional benefits associated with a trusting student-teacher relationship and positive classroom climate. Significantly, it also appears to be extremely taxing on the teachers themselves (Wentzel, 2002; Mugny, Chatard & Quiamzade 2006; Pellerin, 2004; Quiamzade, Mugny & Falomir-Pichastor, 2009; Snyder & Bassett, 2011).

Permissive teachers make little effort to enforce discipline in the classroom and, when students do misbehave, tend to ignore this for as long as possible. Far from trying to build trusting relationships, they may disregard and even distrust their students. They put the minimum effort into their teaching, which they regard as more of a burden than a calling.

Permissive teaching is associated with the same sorts of social and emotional problems that we see with permissive parenting. Students tend to display heightened impulsivity, lack of motivation and persistence, chronic anxiety, and poor academic outcomes (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006; Ginsburg, Durbin, García- España, Kalicka, & Winston, 2009; Parke & Buriel, 2006; Paulussen-Hoogbeem, Stams, Hermanns, Peetsma, & van den Wittenboer, 2008; Thompson, 2006; Bernstein, 2013).

Indulgent teachers tend to go out of their way to avoid conflicts with their students, and may be almost too involved in supporting their students. They give their students too much latitude and, because of their reluctance to make any demands on them, may actually undermine their students' motivation (Daniel, 2009). One of the more interesting aspects of the research that has been done on this style of teaching is the finding that avoiding the kinds of conflicts that arise over grades may actually weaken student-teacher relationships (Greenwald & Gillmore, 1997; Marsh & Roche, 2000; Johnson, 2002; Griffin, 2004; Love & Kotchen, 2010).

4.3 POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Students learn best in classroom environments in which they feel safe, both physically and emotionally. When students feel safe they develop relationship skills and engage with peers and teachers much more positively and productively (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Newman, Rutter & Smith, 1989; Sutherland, 1994). That means that they have to be protected from bullying and violence (deLara, 2006; Rothson, Head, Klineberg, & Stansfeld, 2011) and feel safe in expressing what they are thinking or feeling and not afraid of being seen to fail in front of their peers (Lewis, 2001; Bucher & Manning, 2005). Knowing that discipline problems will be dealt with fairly and consistently has been shown to have a dramatic impact on student well-being and achievement (Kees, 2003).

The meta-analysis done by John Hattie on the factors that promote effective learning is especially helpful for teachers and administrators who seek to improve their classroom environments. The most important factors that Hattie identified are: students receive constructive feedback from their teachers; teachers have high expectations as to the material that students are capable of mastering; teachers set appropriate goals and challenges for their students; there

are strategies in place for helping students to develop a sense of independence and self-efficacy; students see themselves as part of a cohesive and supportive group of peers (Hattie, 2009).

A number of elements have been identified as essential for making students feel safe (Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Warren *et al.* 2006). A strict discipline code will not suffice; for students need to feel safe socially and emotionally as well as physically (Lewis, 2001; Bucher & Manning, 2005). The key factor in this regard is the student-teacher relationship (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Students need to develop a personal relationship with their teachers (Voelkl, 1995; Woolley & Bowen, 2007) that is grounded in mutual trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). The type of emotional and academic support that students receive from their teachers is pivotal (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Baker, 2006; Bernstein-Yamashiro, 2013) as is the support that they receive from their fellow students (Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997; Wentzel, 1998, 2005; Dennis, Phinney, & Chuateco, 2005).

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The more positive the learning environment, the more this promotes student engagement that, in turn, is critical for creating a positive learning environment (Tinto, 1993; Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Teachers and administrators need to understand and seriously promote a positive learning environment.

5. REVIEW OF OUTCOMES

There have been hundreds of studies evaluating the outcomes of programs designed to foster SEL. (A full listing, with reviews, can be found at <http://www.casel.org/guide>.) Several meta-reviews have been published, enabling us to summarize the findings (see Appendix 1). There are a number of specific lessons schools can learn from these meta-reviews as they seek to engage in activities to cultivate their students' core social/emotional competencies.

- SEL programs should be universal because they are effective at reducing behavioral and emotional problems and beneficial for students without such problems.
- Teachers, rather than outside professionals are the most effective resource for cultivating the five core competencies
- School initiatives designed to enhance self- and social-awareness so as to promote prosocial development and reduce anti-social behavior have their greatest impact when they have a well-defined focus (e.g., general violence; disruptive or antisocial behavior; bullying; gang activity; dating violence).
- Academic performance improves as a direct consequence of cultivating the core competencies
- To be effective, an SEL initiative needs teachers to have:
 - A sound understanding of the theoretical base
 - Well defined goals
 - A strong focus on explicit guidelines
 - PD to support the work

- Opportunities to discuss their activities with other teachers
- Feedback from administrators
- Consistent staffing.

6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In general, positive outcomes of SEL programs have been demonstrated in the following key areas:

- Improved academic achievement
- Improved attitudes towards school and education
- Increased social-emotional skills
- Improved attitudes toward self and others
- Improved mental health (reduction of anxiety, depression and emotional distress)
- Improved social behaviors
- Decreased conduct problems
- Improved classroom and school environment

7. MEASURING SEL

The evidence is clear that it is very important to measure how students are progressing in the development of their core social/emotional competencies, and how classroom and school conditions are contributing to this vital aspect of their education. This is not just a vital aspect of their wellbeing, but a critical factor in their long-term academic attainment as well.

Fortunately, we now possess a number of effective tools to measure ‘what really matters’. These tools provide us with a battery of methods for assessing students’ social and emotional strengths and the areas that need to be strengthened. There are also a number of tools that enable teachers and schools to assess the effectiveness of what they’re doing and build on the strengths of what they have initiated.

7.1 STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

A number of scales have been created and tested to assess the five core competencies. We can begin measuring these competencies in preschool, which not only enables us to promote social/emotional learning at a time when the brain is at its most plastic, but also to intervene early if and when problems are identified. A particularly useful measurement tool in this regard is the Preschool Self-Regulation Assessment (PSRA), which is designed to assess self-regulation in emotional, attentional, and behavioral domains using a brief, structured battery of tasks. What is especially useful is how it captures children’s emotion regulation and attention/impulsivity. For children in kindergarten, the Early

Development Index measures five areas of early child development that are known to be good predictors of adult health, education and social outcomes. These areas include social competence (Does the child share with others? Is the child self-confident? Will he/she invite bystanders to join in a game?) and emotional maturity (Is the child able to concentrate? Is the child aggressive or angry? Is the child impulsive?).

For primary school-aged children, the Emotion Regulation Checklist is used to measure students' self-awareness of emotion, appropriateness of emotional displays, and empathy. Also useful is how it looks at students' positive emotion strategies (e.g., can they recover from stress; are they empathetic) and negative emotion strategies (do they fall to pieces under stress; are they easily irritated).

For children of all ages, one of the standard tools is the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). The SDQ is designed for students 3-16 year olds. It identifies emotional problems; conduct problems; hyperactivity/inattention; problems in peer relationships; and problems in prosocial behavior.

Equally important is the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL), which is a standard tool for detecting emotional and behavioural problems. It focuses on eight areas: anxious/depressed; depressed; somatic complaints; social problems; thought problems; attention problems; rule-breaking behaviour; aggressive behaviour.

The Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS) is another standard tool, used to assess a student's personal strengths and the areas that need to be strengthened in regards to interpersonal relations, intrapersonal resources, school functioning, and emotion regulation.

Finally, the Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC) measures behavioral and emotional strengths and weaknesses. The BASC is particularly useful for identifying adaptive and problem behaviors in classroom settings.

For teens, the Youth Rating Scale component of the BERS provides a strength-based assessment of the emotional and behavioral skills that are important for having a sense of personal accomplishment, good interpersonal skills, and the ability to deal with stress. Also useful is the Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale (MSCS) that assesses global self-concept and six sub-domains for youth and adolescents (social, competence, affect, academic, family, and physical).

The MSCS has been found to be very useful for identifying students who have low self-esteem. It is also important to get a sense of their resilience. In that regard, the Resilience Factory Inventory was designed to help students understand and work on their own thoughts and behaviors. The key domains covered are emotion regulation, looking at how well students can manage their emotions, attention and behavior under pressure; impulse control and delay of gratification; ability to identify the causes of stress; self-efficacy; realistic optimism; empathy; and the student's ability to reach out to others for help when needed.

7.2 CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL CONDITIONS

In addition to measuring student progress in Social and Emotional Learning, it is important to assess the effectiveness of classroom and school activities that enhance students' development of these core competencies. For younger students, a standard measurement tool is the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS). This was designed to assess process quality in an early

childhood or school age care group. It looks at the interactions between teachers and children, staff, parents, and other adults; interactions among the children themselves; and the interactions children have with the materials and activities in the classroom.

Another very useful tool is the Assessment Profile for Early Childhood Programs (APECP). This provides a global assessment of preschool classroom environment. The scales include (1) learning environment; (2) scheduling; (3) curriculum (4) teacher-child interaction; and (5) support for individualized learning experiences.

Robert Pianta's CLASS is an exceptionally powerful set of observational tools designed to assess and enhance effective teaching and classroom climate in primary, middle and secondary school (with additional scales for infants, toddlers and Pre-K students). It looks at such things as teacher sensitivity and responsiveness; classroom organization; productivity; behavior management; concept development; instructional feedback; language modeling; quality of feedback; and instructional dialogue.

The Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI) is extremely useful for measuring a school's social/emotional climate. After extensive study, six key factors were identified that go into creating a positive school climate: physical order and safety; social order and safety; collaboration and communication; quality of instruction; parent/guardian and community involvement; expectations for student achievement.

In addition to the above types of global SEL scales, there are also a number of tools that enable us to investigate the core competencies in greater detail such as the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS); the Social Competence and Behavior Evaluation; and the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA).

What they all have in common is that they have been designed in such a way that they can be easily administered; they provide us with a sensitive appraisal of a student's core competencies; they help teachers promote the development of these core competencies; and they guide efforts to enhance a school's social and emotional climate.

Two more 'Rs' must now be added to the classic three: Regulated and Related. The better students can identify and describe their feelings, deal with stress and manage their emotions, empathize with others, develop strong friendships, and have good problem-solving strategies, the better their outcomes in all respects.

8. INTEGRATING SEL WITH THE OTHER AREAS BEING REVIEWED

The findings reviewed in this paper bring into sharp relief a crucial aspect of education that we need to embrace and enrich. When Egerton Ryerson championed the cause of universal education in 1846, it was in order to provide children and youth with the personal as well as academic skills needed for healthy, productive, and meaningful lives. Schools have been dedicated to this goal from the start. We are now much further advanced in our appreciation of the core competencies involved and how to enhance their development.

These findings make it is clear that schooling involves so much more than instruction in formal subjects. Two more 'Rs' must now be added to the classic three: Regulated and Related. The better students can identify and describe their feelings, deal with stress and manage their emotions, empathize with others, develop strong friendships, and have good problem-solving strategies, the better

their outcomes in all respects (Raver & Knitzer 2002). Schooling has an absolutely crucial, and indeed, irreplaceable role to play here.

What needs to be underscored, however, is that there is no single recipe for cultivating the five core competencies. Nor, for that matter, is there a standard method for incorporating SEL ideas and techniques from other successful programs; every school presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities. For this reason, schools need to regularly measure and review the effectiveness of what they are doing and modify their strategies accordingly.

As important as the three Rs are, today's students must develop the social and emotional capacities necessary for healthy and productive living. Schools play an important part in that developmental process, a process that must be assessed as seriously as the other dimensions of learning. *Measuring What Matters* marks a major step forward in how we understand and meet students' complex needs.

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