

Advances in SEL Research

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Welcome from the Chair and Chair-Elect Kimberly A. Schonert-Reichl & David Osher



Welcome to the annual fall newsletter of our SEL SIG. Our SEL SIG is now six years old and has continued to grow with over 220 current members – our highest number to date! Our membership is diverse, comprising scholars, researchers, and practitioners from academic, non-profit, private and public service sectors, and including both national and international representation. Please share this newsletter with your colleagues and students and invite them to join so that our SIG can continue to grow.

The growth of our SIG during the past six years mirrors the advances in the science and practice of SEL currently unfolding across the country and beyond. Indeed, advances toward the integration of SEL into everyday education are occurring at every level, from preschool to high school. Moreover, the past several years has seen a burgeoning increase in research on SEL, as illustrated in the rapid increase of publications on the topic of SEL. A search of Google Scholar illustrates this escalation. Using the search terms “Social-Emotional Learning” or “Social and Emotional Learning,” there were 431 citations from 1990 to 1999 and 2,041 citations from 2000 to 2006. From 2006 to present, the number of citations in Google Scholar has more than tripled to a total of 7,140 citations in only 7 years! It is the hard work of many of our SEL SIG members who have contributed to advancing the science of SEL and we believe that this rapid growth in SEL will continue.

In this fall edition of our newsletter, we feature reports of current research and practice in SEL conducted by members of our SIG as well as recent SEL-related policy updates.

We would like to thank our newsletter editors, Rebecca Bulotsky-Shearer and Elise Cappella for assembling and publishing this issue. We also thank the contributors to this issue who took the time to share their ongoing work, and we encourage all SIG members to submit their work for future editions of the newsletter.

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Other SIG News and Activities



Program at the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA April, 2014

Our SIG's reviewers have now finished their reviews of submitted proposals. We received very high quality submissions to our SIG this year, totaling 34 individual papers and 5 symposia. Following AERA's allocations for our SIG and a high standard of submissions, we were able to maximize acceptance of 14 papers and 4 symposium sessions, and expect another outstanding

schedule of symposia and roundtables at the conference this spring. We sincerely thank all SIG reviewers for their efforts in reviewing this year's submissions.

Elections: Call for nominations

We are currently accepting nominations for three positions on our SIG's Executive Committee, including Chair-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer-Elect, and Program Chair-Elect. Positions are held for three years. Please contact Kimberly A. Schonert-Reichl (kimberly.schonert-reichl@ubc.ca) as soon as possible if you wish to make a nomination for one of the positions above.

Website and Social Media Sub-Committee:

We are seeking SIG members with website and social media development and management experience to be part of a sub-committee in our SIG to assist with these activities. These forums will provide greater opportunities for sharing past and current information as well as for networking within our SIG. If you would be interested in joining this sub-committee, please contact our Communications Chair, Susan Stillman (susan.stillman@6seconds.org).

We hope you find this edition of the newsletter informative, and please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions about the SIG.

Sincerely,

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SEL SIG Chair

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Comments from Our Editors **Rebecca Bulotsky-Shearer & Elise Cappella**



Welcome to the fall 2013 issue of our SEL SIG newsletter!! We are excited to have received so many high quality submissions this year. They showcase the growing amount of innovative work in the SEL field – work that is being recognized at both national and international levels. As our SIG grows, this work reflects increasing momentum toward recognizing the contribution of social-emotional skills to the learning and well-being of children, teachers, administrators, and families alike.

As we read through all of the articles submitted by our members, we recognized a common theme of identifying opportunities to build upon the strengths of schools and communities to foster social-emotional skills that support the academic and life success of diverse learners. For example, Gwyne White's article with her colleagues highlights one approach to fostering SEL competencies in the Girls Learning Outward school-based program for girls facing risk. Models such as these implemented in school settings are increasingly being integrated into communities to reach more students. We include several examples of these efforts alongside recommendations by practitioners and researchers for broadening the reach of SEL programs through integration of models into programmatic practices and existing assessments. In fact, the CASTL meeting highlighted by Bridget Hamre brought together practitioners, policymakers, and researchers to raise issues relevant to practical measurement of SEL and to move our field – and policy and practice – forward.

An exciting opportunity that we highlighted last year, the Researcher-Partnership Research Grant Mechanism, was expanded this year and re-issued by the Institute of Education Sciences. This recognizes the importance of building partnerships in order to establish the basis for mutually beneficial program development efforts. For more information, check out: http://ies.ed.gov/funding/comment_CIRE.asp. Congratulations to our CASEL colleague, Roger Weissberg, who received one of these awards for two years of funding to develop a programmatic SEL partnership with the Washoe County School District in Nevada, entitled

“Creating a Monitoring System for School Districts to Promote Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning: A Researcher-Practitioner Partnership.”

We are both community-based researchers who recognize the importance of working closely with community partners to develop and implement evidence-based SEL practices. We know how challenging it can be for teachers, administrators, and parents who are on the ground day-to-day educating our students. We appreciate our community of SEL educators, researchers, and policy-makers who are willing to come together to focus on a comprehensive, holistic approach to foster SEL and other skills in children and youth. Thank you for your contributions and your innovative work in the advancement of the SEL field. Enjoy!

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Awards Presented at AERA in 2013



Zins and O’Brien Awards were presented at the April 2013 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). CASEL presented awards for leaders in social emotional learning (SEL) to four individuals who have shown a deep understanding of SEL and to recognize the efforts of outstanding contributors who advance SEL research and expand evidence-based SEL practice. The awards honor the contributions to the SEL field of leaders Joseph E. Zins and Mary Utne O’Brien. Both were close, valued CASEL colleagues who died while still in their fifties. The Zins award recognizes contributions to action research; the O’Brien awards were established to honor contributions to effective SEL practice, including implementation and policy-making. The awardees were:

Joseph E. Zins Award for Action Research in Social and Emotional Learning- Early Career Research:

Stephanie Jones, Associate Professor,
Harvard Graduate School of Education

Joseph E. Zins Award for action Research in Social and Emotional Learning - Distinguished Scholar Award:

Joseph A. Durlak, Emeritus Professor of Psychology,
Loyola University Chicago.

Mary Utne O’Brien Award for Excellence in Expanding the Evidence-Based Practice of Social and Emotional Learning:

Jillian Ahrens, Teacher and Union Leader, Cleveland
Metropolitan School District

Linda DePriest, Executive Officer for Instructional
Support, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Koua Jacklyn Franz, Chief of Staff to the Superintendent,
Sacramento City Unified School District

Ed Graff, Superintendent of Schools, Anchorage School
District

Sherrie Raven, Director of social and emotional learning,
Austin Independent School District;

Trish Shaffer, Coordinator of multi-tiered systems of
support, Washoe County School District;

Kristina Tank-Crestetto, Director of Family, School
and Community Partnerships, Oakland Unified School
District;

Karen VanAusdal, Manager of youth development and
positive behavior supports, Chicago Public Schools.

Graduate Student Award for Excellence in SEL Research:

Jennifer Lynn Hanson-Peterson, The University of
British Columbia, received the 2013 Graduate Student
Award for Excellence in SEL Research.
Hanson-Peterson won the award for her paper entitled,
“*Teachers’ Beliefs about Emotions: Relations to Teacher
Characteristics and Social and Emotional Learning
Program Implementation*” presented at the 2013 AERA
Meeting in San Francisco.

Did you know that...

By simply submitting a presentation or paper to AERA, all graduate students become automatically eligible for consideration to win an award? The Executive Committee of the SEL SIG select the highest reviewed student paper based on the evaluation of an appointed review panel of AERA with experience in this regard. One student is selected to win the Graduate Student Award for Excellence in SEL Research. The award is based on a number of criteria including: Choice of topic/contribution to the field of social and emotional learning, background and methods of the research; theoretical framing, methods, data source(s), quality of writing and clarity of reporting findings/results, appropriateness of interpretation for theory, policy, practice, and future research.

Legislative Update



Illinois Aligns Standards for Social and Emotional Learning from Preschool through High School

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Collaboration on Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

Virtually all states now have comprehensive, free-standing SEL standards at the preschool level. Although there have been at least some efforts at the K-12 level to integrate some social and emotional competencies in to other academic standards, including, most recently, in the English Language Arts standards of the Common Core only three states have developed comprehensive, free-standing SEL standard with developmental benchmarks across the full K-12 span. The lack of alignment between preschool standards and

K-12 standards in how SEL is defined and emphasized is striking. Further, SEL standards vary drastically from state to state both in terms quality and inclusiveness.

Illinois has long been a national trail blazer, both in the development of learning standards and in the field of social and emotional learning. With a recent revision to the state's early learning standards, Illinois is once again moving the SEL field forward by fully aligning standards for children's social and emotional development from preschool through high school. While alignment is a critical characteristic of high quality learning standards, it is, unfortunately, rare nationwide.

Because of The Common Core State Standards Initiative, many states engaged in revising their standards, and are making strides to incorporate SEL, and states such as Illinois can serve as models for others with regards to setting expectations for SEL (for a fuller discussion of the status of SEL standards across the country, see Dusenbury et al., in press). Illinois was the first state in the nation to adopt and implement free-standing K-12 SEL standards in 2004, and with the recent revisions of the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS; available at http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/pdf/early_learning_standards.pdf, the state is a rare example of fully aligned SEL standards, preschool through high school. Illinois now uses the same overall goals for SEL across each grade-level cluster: preschool, grades K-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12 (the full standards are available at http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/social_emotional/standards.htm. Specifically, children in Illinois are expected to be working towards three SEL goals: (1) develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success; (2) use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships; and (3) demonstrate decision making-skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts. These three goals, while included in the 2004 K-12 standards, are also in the newly released IELDSs.

With the recent revision, the early learning standards now more tightly adhere to the three goal framework, making Illinois one of only a few states to fully align their SEL standards from preschool to 12th grade. Alignment was complex and necessitated collaboration both within and without the state Board of Education. However, Illinois has the advantage of having successfully implemented the K-12 standards already and thus

can serve as a strong model for other states engaged in standards work.

For more information and recent policy briefs on SEL state standards visit CASEL; www.casel.org and the Social Emotional Teaching and Learning Lab (SETL; <http://setl.psych.uic.edu>).

Recent SEL Meetings and Events!



CASTL Meeting: Using Measures to Leverage Research and Practice

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The Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education recently announced a new initiative to bring developmental science into the classroom. This initiative kicked off during a two-day working meeting on June 20th and 21st, 2013 that brought together teachers and administrators from around Virginia with educational researchers from across the country.

Educational measurements have the attention of every school leader nationwide, as assessments are used for accountability purposes and teacher evaluation systems. But these measures do not always reflect the latest research in developmental science.

The CASTL Meeting tackled these issues by discussing the opportunities and challenges in school-based measurement tools – with a focus on measures that go beyond academic and cognitive skills. “If we work together with our partners in schools we can develop and test new measures that may help teachers and administrators gather actionable data that can better support all types of development and learning,” said Bridget Hamre, Associate Director of CASTL and one of the meeting organizers.

Meeting participants were divided into three

workgroups focused on: self-regulation in early childhood, peer relationships in middle childhood and adolescent motivation. By the end of the meeting each workgroup identified next steps to move this work forward, with a clear focus on collaboration with partners in districts and schools.

- **The adolescence workgroup** is establishing partnerships with schools and will ask teachers to submit common dilemmas or challenges around student motivation and video recordings that can be used in a future online resource.

- **The middle childhood workgroup** will work with schools in the ASCD “Whole Child Initiative” to pilot measures of peer relationships that can inform teachers instruction and interactions. They are also collaborating to write a policy piece broadening language used in schools around social relationships.

- **The early childhood workgroup** is working to create a series of video resources centered on self-regulation that describe what these skills look like in classrooms, how they develop over the early childhood years, and how teachers can support them.

Dr. John Q. Easton, director of the Institute of Education Sciences, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education, delivered a public keynote address on “*Using Measurement as Leverage between Developmental Research and Educational Practice.*”

There was broad agreement among participants that the meeting was a success and will lead to meaningful work in the near and long term. One attendee reported that “participating in this working meeting was the single most amazing professional experience I have had to-date. I feel so incredibly inspired about my research and the possibilities that could emerge from the meeting.”

Kathy Glazer, president of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, a nonpartisan group whose mission is to advance school readiness in the commonwealth, said that “the CASTL Meeting solidly and practically linked research to practice to performance measurement – a loop that is necessary to make a sound case for the investment that yields lifelong dividends.”

Meeting attendees were from a variety of organizations including the Council of Chief State School Officers, Virginia Association of Supervision & Curriculum Development and the Harrisonburg City Public Schools. Researchers attended from Harvard University, Stanford University, the University of Michigan, Virginia Commonwealth University, James Madison University and others.

Check out highlights from the conference at:
www.curry.virginia.edu/castl

Innovative Research in SEL



The Responsive Classroom Approach and Teacher-Student Interactions

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Two studies examining elements of the association between the Responsive Classroom® (RC) approach and teacher-student interaction quality were published in the *Journal of School Psychology* in 2013. Also in 2013, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) SElect program designated the RC approach as a comprehensive evidence-based Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program with strong potential for widespread dissemination. This designation heightens the importance of considering the extent to which the RC approach produces changes in teacher-student interactions. By design, RC practices target teachers' classroom practice with the goal of enhancing the quality of students' relationships, behavior, and engagement. Therefore, it is quite plausible that the RC approach could enhance the quality of day-to-day interactions among teachers and students.

Both studies were conducted in the context of a larger longitudinal randomized controlled trial, the Re-

sponsive Classroom Efficacy Study (RCES), led by Sara Rimm-Kaufman at the University of Virginia. Schools were randomized into intervention and waitlist control groups. Teachers in the treatment group attended up to two one-week RC training institutes while teachers in the control group continued with "business as usual." Both studies used data from third and fourth grade teachers.

The first study (Abry, Rimm-Kaufman, Larsen, & Brewer 2013) examined the direct and indirect relations among RC training, teachers' implementation of RC practices, and improvements in teacher-student interaction quality. All teachers were assessed on their implementation of RC practices and the quality of their interactions with students during five observations spaced throughout the school year. In addition, teachers completed an online questionnaire on their implementation of RC practices at the end of the school year.

Results indicated that RC training had a direct and positive impact on teachers' implementation of RC practices, but did not have direct impact on teacher-student interaction quality. However, there was an indirect association between RC training and improved teacher-student interaction quality through teachers' implementation of RC practices. That is, teachers that received RC training were more likely to use RC practices and, in turn, had greater improvements in teacher-student interaction quality.

This study highlights the potential for SEL programs like the RC approach to improve the quality of teachers' interactions with students but suggests that SEL training alone may be insufficient to foster such changes. Rather, the extent to which teachers use SEL practices may determine classroom-level changes. Such findings underscore the importance of promoting teachers' buy-in to adopted SEL programs, providing teachers with pre- and post-training support, and the ongoing monitoring of teachers' use of adopted program practices as part of program evaluation. In addition, the study illustrates the importance of examining program implementation in both treatment and comparison groups.

The second study (Curby, Rimm-Kaufman, & Abry, 2013) examined the common notion that providing students with high-quality emotional and organizational interactions in the beginning of the year leads to teachers' greater instructional capacity later in the year. Teachers were observed on their emotional, organiza-

tional, and instructional interactions with students and their implementation of RC practices at five time points across the school year.

Results indicated a reciprocal relation between high-quality emotional and instructional interactions such that higher levels of emotional support earlier in the year predicted higher instructional support later in the year and higher levels of instructional support earlier in the year predicted higher subsequent levels of emotional support. Notably, no relations were found between organizational support and instructional support. In terms of the intervention, no differences in these patterns were found between RC and control teachers. However, teachers' with higher levels of implementation of RC practices demonstrated significantly higher levels of emotional and organizational supports throughout the year, extending findings reported in the first study.

These findings affirm the belief that creating a safe and supportive learning environment earlier in the year can promote instructional quality later in the year. Interestingly, this study also suggests that high quality instruction can facilitate more positive and emotionally supportive classroom environments. Furthermore, this study highlights the potential of the RC approach to foster teachers' development of those skills.

To read these complete studies, see:

Abry, T., Rimm-Kaufman, S. E., Larsen, R. A. & Brewer, A. J. (2013). The influence of fidelity of implementation on teacher-student interaction quality in the context of a randomized controlled trial of the Responsive Classroom approach. *Journal of School Psychology, 51*, 437-453. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2013.03.001>.

Curby, T. W., Rimm-Kaufman, S. E., & Abry, T. (2013). Do emotional support and classroom organization earlier in the year set the stage for higher quality instruction? *Journal of School Psychology, 51*, 557-569. doi: [10.1016/j.jsp.2013.06.001](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2013.06.001)

Other information about recent papers from the Responsive Classroom Efficacy Study can be found at www.socialdevelopmentlab.org

Targeting Teacher-Child Relationships to Improve Math Achievement

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A central tenet of social and emotional learning is that students' relationships with teachers are critical to their school adjustment, engagement in the classroom, and subsequent academic development. Empirical research linking close and non-conflictual teacher-child relationships to children's academic outcomes in elementary school is well documented. Studies are now needed to determine whether teacher-child relationship quality has differential effects on math and reading outcomes. Emerging work highlights the unique importance of early math achievement for future academic success and overall well-being (see Duncan et al., 2007). By using rigorous research to link high-quality teacher-child relationships to mathematical skill development, SEL investigators have an exciting opportunity to influence education policy in early schooling.

Why might teacher-child relationships benefit students' math achievement, more than reading achievement? Some theory suggests that because math and numeracy require complex, higher-order thinking skills, students need to feel supported and respected in the classroom when taking the academic risks necessary for learning math (e.g., Crosnoe et al., 2010). Building on this framework, colleagues and I used rigorous modeling strategies to test the role of teacher-child relationships on separate standardized measures of math and reading achievement in two recent studies. In the first, currently published in the *Journal of School Psychology* (see McCormick, O'Connor, Cappella, & McClowry, 2013), we used a propensity score matching approach and found that there was a significant and moderate to large effect of teacher-child relationship quality on math achievement but not reading achievement. Because this study was conducted in a within-group sample of low-income urban children in kindergarten and first grade, we then examined a similar question in a national sample of children in elementary school. Using the NICHD SEEYD, we found that effects of teacher-conflict predicted math achievement both within and across time from first to fifth grade, but only for girls. This finding was particularly interesting, given that girls

continue to linger behind boys in terms of standardized math achievement in elementary school. Moreover, elementary school is a key developmental period for helping girls gain confidence in math, critical to their future academic success in adolescence.

This preliminary work provides evidence that teacher-child relationship quality matters for elementary school students' mathematical skill development. Given links between early math skills and subsequent achievement, school completion, and college enrollment, over and above early reading skills (Duncan et al., 2007), SEL studies that examine effects on math achievement may provide critical policy-relevant evidence for integrating social and emotional skill development into early schooling.

The Other Side of the Report Card: Making Comments Relevant and Feasible for Educational Progress

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Common sense and systematic research identify the multitude of benefits associated with fostering SEL skills in students (Durlak et al., 2011). However, the success of a concept or approach, even if rigorously supported, depends on its delivery system. With more formal measures of SEL skills requiring "expert" personnel to score, interpret, and develop a separate feedback system to share results with parents and students, no feasible method for providing feedback on SEL skill development in schools appears available. As a result, the assessment of these behaviors remains in the periphery for many educators.

Report card comments are a primary avenue teachers have consistently used for providing feedback to parents and students on behavior. Examination by the Rutgers Social-Emotional Learning Lab, in combination with some of the only research to date on report card comment systems, shows that formats range from unstructured space for teachers to write comments

to computerized drop down menus of as many as 80 different possible comments (Friedman & Frisbee, 1995). Many comments examined by our Lab do not identify a specific observable behavior, skill, or skill set. This dilutes or misdirects the potential impact of the feedback and creates immense potential for different interpretations of the same comment among teachers, parents, and students. In order to maximize educational efforts and prepare students for both a life of academic tests as well as the tests of life, additional consideration should be given to the immense potential impact of well designed comment sections aligned with SEL research and theory.

Indeed, shifts in Common Core Curriculum Standards demand children possess a variety of critical thinking, emotion-regulation, self-control, and group participation skills. Therefore, it would make sense for districts to consider the following practical reasons for adapting report card comments to address SEL:

- Comments are often the only formal rating of student behavior conducted.
- Teachers already allocate time to assigning report card comments and report cards already feature a comments section.
- Finances are already allocated for the production and distribution of report cards.
- SEL and character ratings present a natural opportunity for emphasizing positive behaviors.
- Ratings of SEL skills and Character can be utilized as early indicators of students at-risk or who may be able to serve as positive role models and resources for their peers.
- Student progress toward skill development, including as a result of interventions, can be tracked in a meaningful way on an individual, school, and district level.
- The process and implementation of adapting comments could serve to advance knowledge of SEL among educators and promote ongoing dialogue between parents, teachers, and students regarding these essential skills.

Pragmatics and feasibility will determine ultimate modifications to current practices, as schools continually face seemingly endless pressures to promote academic achievement and implement reforms. Addressing behaviors that have systematically been found in research and practice to promote academic success, are linked to the Common Core, and predict risk of school problems and dropout can be done in a feasible way by modifying current report card comment systems to incorporate SEL.

Putting EQ to the Test

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There has been extensive study on the effectiveness of academic preparation and test-taking strategies in test preparation, but very little work has been done on the role of EQ strategies in test preparation. A study designed by Dr. Barbara Fatum at an independent lab school for gifted children in California assessed students' Emotional Intelligence (EQ) strengths, using the Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence Assessment for Youth (SEI-YV), to help them prepare for the Educational Records Bureau academic achievement assessment (ERB) in the Spring of 2012 and 2013.

The premise of this study, based on the work by many current Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) researchers, is that students who use EQ skills to reduce stress and manage emotions will increase their academic achievement on standardized tests. Students who manage stress and navigate their emotions are more able to successfully demonstrate learning (Elias & Bruene, 2005; Medina, 2008). The results of this study recommend the development of a multi-faceted approach when preparing students for standardized testing, utilizing both EQ and academic test-taking strategies. The curriculum from this study is designed to be implemented as a stand-alone method of test preparation or integrated with established academic strategies.

Study Background. The Synapse School (www.synapseschool.org) is a lab school specializing in gifted education and developed by the Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence Organization (www.6seconds.org). Synapse

was founded by Karen Stone McCown, Anabel Jensen, and Gigi Carunungan in 2008. At Synapse, educators believe that success depends on more than individual intellect. Successful people are able to work with others, to organize people and processes, to lead others, and believe in being good citizens who contribute positively to the world (Goleman, 1995; Durlak et al., 2005, 2011). To equip students to achieve both academically and socially, Synapse facilitates student learning through two pillars of achievement, Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement.

The Synapse faculty and administration were interested in thoroughly preparing the students to be successful on a standardized test, the Educational Records Bureau academic achievement test (ERB). In addition to the academic preparation by the classroom teachers, Dr. Barbara Fatum, the Director of Assessment and School Psychologist, designed a program building on the students' knowledge of their emotional intelligence (EQ) competencies. Students in grades 3 through 8 took the SEI-YV in December of 2012 and Dr. Fatum had debriefed them, individually and as a class about their individual and group EQ profiles. 43 students in grades 3-8 participated in the study.

Test Preparation. The study began in February of 2013 and utilized five group sessions with each class. The first session consisted of a review of the individual and class profiles from the December 2012 SEI-YV administration. The second session, conducted two weeks later, consisted of a discussion about using EQ strengths to help increase individual focus and the value of using EQ strengths as a class to help others improve performance on the upcoming ERB tests. During this session, students created an icon from materials provided by the researchers that depicted their EQ strengths. Each class member then wrote a commitment of one thing they would do to show EQ leadership for others on the upcoming ERB. Discussion of those commitments completed the session.

During the third session, Dr. Fatum presented students with story boards containing pictures of their individual icons. Students presented their icons to their classmates. The fourth session featured a video about empathy and a discussion about the ERB content. Students discussed the need for both EQ and IQ to be successful on the upcoming ERB exam and reported that they felt more able to use their EQ tools, and better

prepared and more confident about taking the upcoming ERB exams.

Implementation. During the ERB administration, students could use their icon images as a reminder that they needed to employ both EQ and IQ strategies to be successful during the exam. Following the exams, focus groups were formed with each class to measure the success of the program. Students reviewed their individual and group EQ strengths and were asked to reflect on the program through both written and oral focus questions. Dr. Fatum transcribed the qualitative data and sent the transcription for review to two other researchers for analysis. Consensual Qualitative Research was then conducted on the data by Dr. Fatum and her team.

Results. As a result of their preparation with EQ, Synapse School student comments supported the following theme: Students felt calmer and better-prepared while taking the ERB standardized achievement assessment.

- Students reported being able to proceed through the ERB questions at their own pace.
- Students were able to navigate their emotions and focus more clearly on questions in each section of the ERB.
- Students acted on their empathy for other students and, during preparation, helped their classmates remain calm, experience optimism, and feel confident in their abilities.
- Students utilized intrinsic motivation to complete ERB test sections.
- Students recognized patterns on the ERB assessment, especially in math, and this helped them complete the problems successfully.
- Students operated from a noble goal during the exam and remembered to remain quiet and decrease any distracting behavior.

In addition, researchers found:

- Pre- and post-analysis of the SEI-YV scores revealed improvement in each EQ competency in each academic level.

- Academic results were outstanding for each level on the ERB. Students tied or beat the Independent School Norms in almost all subject categories.

Sharing the Results. Emotions affect how and what children learn (Fatum, 2008). Unchecked emotions raise an individual's stress level, and stressed brains find it very difficult to learn or demonstrate learning (Medina, 2008). As Synapse founder, Karen Stone McCown observed, "If we don't help children to create a 'neural dialogue' between their emotional data and their cognitive processing, we are limiting their capacity to grow and learn in a healthy manner" (Stone McCown, 2005). Academically and socially, children who learn EQ skills are better prepared to deal with the adversities of life, to learn from mistakes, to reframe difficult situations, and to adapt to life's constantly changing circumstances (Durlak & Weissberg, 2011).

Dr. Fatum and a Six Seconds colleague who helped to design and analyze the data, Deborah Havert, were invited to present the results of the first year pilot study to two hundred participants at the Academic Summit at the 85th Annual ERB conference in San Diego in October of 2012. Dr. Fatum and Ms. Havert have been invited to present a workshop session about the two-year study at the 86th Annual ERB conference in Dallas/Fort Worth in October of 2013. A special thanks to Dr. Anabel Jensen and Deborah Havert for their collaboration in analyzing the results.

**Integrating Mindfulness and Reflection Practice
with Social and Emotional Learning:
A Feasibility Pilot**

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In January 2012, Courage & Renewal Northeast (an affiliate of the Center for Courage & Renewal) and Open Circle began a year-long collaboration to design

and pilot a mindfulness and reflective practice program for elementary school teachers that could be tightly integrated into Open Circle's evidence-based, comprehensive SEL program and into programs offered as part of the Courage in Schools Initiative of the Center for Courage & Renewal. This pilot study explored the integration of mindfulness and reflective practice into a comprehensive social and emotional learning (SEL) program in order to provide teachers and students with the benefits of both approaches while reducing the burden of incorporating multiple, distinct programs.

Evaluation of the feasibility pilot included investigation of (1) the ways in which training in reflective practice and mindfulness practices affected elementary school teachers' self-awareness and self-management; (2) reported use of reflective and mindfulness practices by the teachers personally and also implemented in their classrooms with students; and (3) how these practices enhance an existing SEL program.

The program training and professional development for teachers consisted of four 7-hour sessions spaced across the 2012 calendar year (January, April, July, September) incorporating the reflective practices of the Courage to Teach® program as well as mindfulness practices that promote attention, emotional balance, and stress reduction. Teachers were also provided with mindfulness and reflective practice curricula to pilot with their students in conjunction with their implementation of the Open Circle Curriculum.

Participants included seven school teams, each with two to five Kindergarten through Grade 5 teachers. At the beginning of study, all participants had been implementing the Open Circle Curriculum in their classrooms for at least one year. Eleven participants were from urban schools with 75% or greater low-income student populations.

A mixed-methods approach was used including pretest surveys, training reflection surveys, and posttest surveys. Surveys included a measure comprised of 21 subscales of social and emotional competencies measuring the domains of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision-making (based on Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2002) as well as other quantitative and qualitative items related to the training sessions.

Twenty-one teachers completed the pretest survey and 14 teachers completed the posttest survey.

(Although the posttest response rate was low, training attendance remained high and the trainers and evaluator observed that participants were engaged through the four training days.) At posttest teachers reported a large breadth of mindfulness practices used in the classroom including incorporation of children's literature, meditation on breath, listening to the end of a chime, program songs, and yoga; teachers also reported use of these practices for themselves. Tests for change in teachers' self-report assessments of SEL competency showed significant increases for the following five subscales: emotional self-awareness, optimism, inspirational leadership (related to SEL), influence (communication, advocacy), and situation analysis (identify, assess, reframe). Posttest ratings of the training overall found that 91% rated the mindfulness program as "very useful/useful" and 9% rated it as "somewhat useful"; 91% rated it as "very valuable/valuable" and 9% rated it as "somewhat valuable". All respondents reported that they would recommend the training to colleagues.

Results support the feasibility of integrating these practices into SEL programming, although the four full-day training commitment was challenging for participants. A revised schedule that spreads out training during after-school and for fewer hours is advised. Improving self-regulation strategies for both teachers and students are valuable to create optimal contexts for core content-area instruction. This pilot study lays a foundation for future research on the impact of SEL programming that is implemented with integrated mindfulness and reflective practice designed to decrease teacher stress and to increase non-cognitive skills (Farrington et al., 2012; Rosen et al., 2010) compared to SEL programs without such components.

New Initiatives, Interventions, & Practices



Girls Leading Outward (GLO)

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Girls Leading Outward (GLO) was developed as a school-based intervention for at-risk girls to build their Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies. Additionally, within the larger school context, GLO works to create an alternative setting within the school structure for youth to experience and evidence these skills. This program was developed to focus predominately on minority students from low-income communities who, while identified as at-risk for psychosocial adjustment, have not yet evidenced pathological levels of dysfunction. The childhood to adolescence transition can be especially challenging for at-risk youth, and those who struggle through this transitional period are more likely to experience academic failure, social-emotional deficits, and possibly more serious forms of psychopathology (Ellis, Marsh, & Craven, 2009); thus, GLO was created to promote resilience in such girls before their transition to high school turns risk into actuality.

GLO functions as a weekly after-school program throughout the school year in 7th grade, with girls returning again for 8th grade. Sessions are primarily after school with an additional weekly lunch period to promote visibility and generalizability of the program. Each after-school session is 60 minutes long and includes skills training and a skills reinforcing activity, with a goal of utilizing these skills for an end of year community service project. GLO groups are facilitated by a member of the school staff in collaboration with local undergraduate co-facilitators. The youth invited to participate in this program are identified by their teachers as having moderate externalizing or internalizing problems, with each GLO group designed to have a mix of girls. All the GLO skills modules are organized to target key SEL skills under the youth accessible headings of “Voice, Heart, Mind, & Team.” Components under the “Voice”

heading target leadership skills such as self-presentation and assertiveness. The “Heart” modules encourage emotion identification and regulation while the “Mind” sections emphasize effective problem solving skills. Finally, under the “Team” heading, the girls direct and participate in a service-learning project.

Effective mastery of social-emotional competencies is associated with greater well-being and better school performance, while the failure to achieve these skills can lead to various personal, social, and academic difficulties (Guerra & Bradshaw, 2008; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998). Therefore, GLO is designed to teach SEL skills and address problem behaviors through an empowerment approach which labels and supports these girls as leaders. The service-learning component increases student engagement in learning the SEL skills taught through the GLO program. Service-learning projects that are designed for a particular community need and require youth to plan, execute, reflect, and celebrate their accomplishments are typically more successful. Most studies attribute this to activating students’ sense of purpose, motivation, and changing the participating students’ relationships with the peers and adults in their community (Billig, 2000; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007).

GLO further intends to produce sustainable positive change in the life trajectory of at-risk middle school girls by drawing on ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Dalton, Elias, & Wandersman, 2007), a model in which an individual is embedded within multiple systems (e.g., school, family, neighborhood contexts). Each system thus uniquely and progressively impacts the individual’s mental health and behaviors. Specifically, GLO aims to be an ecologically-sensitive intervention that builds and supports SEL development by changing how these at-risk youth view themselves and their role in their school community. Because resilience is both an individual characteristic and a quality of an individual’s environment (Ungar et al., 2007), school-based preventive interventions must be of wide scope if they are to be maximally and generally effective.

GLO has been implemented in a number of schools over the past decade and preliminary research on its effectiveness is promising. Over the course of the program, the GLO girls who showed improvements in teacher-rated social emotional competence showed gains in self-rated optimism (Hamed, 2012). Addition-

ally, overall, the GLO girls showed increases in their self-concept and sense of mastery, with those who were more introverted/shy showing greater positive changes (Narkus, 2011). Future studies will examine the impact of GLO relative to grade-matched control peers. Furthermore, as after school programs often suffer attrition, our research team is interested in understanding what predicts retention. Initial research found that low levels of anxiety and greater self-rated perseverance at the beginning of the program predicted participants not dropping out (Stepney, White, Yerramilli, Zigelboym, & Elias, 2013). Therefore, encouragement and attention to anxiety may be important early on to bolster retention.

We believe that building students' skills in the context of being leaders provides them with a new perspective on themselves and their future. Further, doing so within a group fosters a sense of community, which may be sufficiently powerful to create positive individual trajectories as well as ultimately change the overall school environment. Being seen by both peers and teachers behaving in a leadership capacity, offers these youth an opportunity to change their role in the school setting from "at-risk" to "student leaders." This, in combination with enhanced SEL skills, has the potential to become internalized and integrated into their own identity, changing the trajectory of their lives. Finally, improving the SEL skills and the social role of a group of at-risk girls allows the school to improve as a community, positively impacting the lives of all the children therein.

Building on the Capacity of Community-Based Organizations to Meet the SEL Needs of Youth from Latino Immigrant Families

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The community mental health system continues to face significant challenges serving ethnic minority youth in urban poverty (Bringewatt & Gershoff, 2010; Huang et al., 2005), and reflects a lack of attention to issues of culture, context and diversity (Alegría, Atkins, Farmer, Slaton, & Stelk, 2010). For over a decade, researchers

have called attention to ongoing Latino mental health disparities (Vega & Lopez, 2001), with immigrant mental health surfacing as an urgent national priority (Flores et al., 2002; Pumariega & Rothe, 2010). There are over 16 million foreign-born in the U.S. from Latin America (Malone, Baluja, Costanzo, & Davis, 2003). Twenty percent of youth live in immigrant families (Haskins, Greenberg, & Fremstad, 2004), 62% of which are Latino (Hernandez, 2004). Described next is an approach we are developing in Chicago—home to the 3rd largest immigrant population in the U.S. (Malone et al., 2003)—that builds upon existing services provided by non-specialty community-based organizations (CBOs) serving Latino immigrant families.

Although non-specialty sector CBOs are not designed or expected to serve as mental health centers, they provide critical social and emotional learning (SEL) services to at-risk urban youth (McLaughlin, 2000), including immigrants (Roffman, Suárez-Orozco, & Rhodes, 2003). CBOs have a wealth of (often untapped) knowledge about strategies to engage, support, and empower immigrant families, as well as how to facilitate community collaboration in problem identification and innovation (Poole, Ferguson, DiNitto, & Schwab, 2002). CBOs respond to specific needs or concerns within the community by developing partnerships with schools (Adger & Locke, 2000; Hong, 2011; Osterling & Garza, 2004), health-related service learning programs (Cashman & Seifer, 2008; Seifer 1998), and federally-funded coalitions (Butterfoss, Goodman, & Wandersman, 1993). The organizational mission of CBOs often responds to serving the unique context of immigrant communities (Cordero-Guzmán, Martin, Quiroz-Becerra, & Theodore, 2008) through family-oriented social services (i.e., adult learning programs, youth after-school programs, legal aid) that are culturally responsive, capacity-building, and empowering (Foster-Fisherman, Berkowitz, Lounsbury, Jacobson, & Allen, 2001; Hardina, 2006). Families experience fewer access barriers due to the visible and credible presence of CBOs in the community (i.e., staff share cultural values, speak the language) and their non-stigmatizing service orientation. Unlike specialty sector care, services are not contingent on insurance status, proof of legal documentation, or language proficiency, thereby increasing help-seeking and program enrollment.

The range of services offered by CBOs represents a unique opportunity to weave SEL goals into existing programs that immigrant families naturally access. CBOs are well-positioned to activate their paraprofessional workforce, and leverage their access to and engagement with immigrant families toward supporting the dissemination of SEL goals and activities. There is a well-established role that paraprofessionals (i.e., health advisors, family advocates) play in the engagement process, including building Latino immigrant family-school partnerships (Callejas, Nesman, Mowery, & Garnache, 2006). Borrowing from existing family advocacy models within the specialty mental health sector (Olin et al. 2010a, 2010b; Rodriguez et al., 2011), there is an exciting opportunity to think creatively and collaboratively with community partners about how these activities can facilitate the SEL benefits derived from CBO program participation. Two common CBO programs are provided as exemplars to highlight opportunities for SEL: (1) Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs and (2) Youth After-School Programs (ASPs).

Adult ESL instruction is one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. educational system (Chisman & Candell, 2007) commonly offered by CBOs and community colleges. As of 2004, 1.14 million adults were enrolled in federally funded ESL programs, 43% of which were Latino (U.S. Department of Education, 2006a; 2006b). These programs serve as an important informal service setting, not only through individualized opportunities to improve English language proficiency, but also through linkages to classes related to computer skills/job training, health fairs, citizenship workshops, and immigration aid/legal advocacy. Participation in ESL programs can support the cultural adjustment and mental health of immigrants, and the ESL provider plays an important role in problem identification (Adkins, Birman, & Sample, 1999). Developing literacy and accruing positive educational experiences are inherently mental health promoting; however, ESL providers may not be well-equipped to identify opportunities within the curriculum to generalize these skills. This represents a potential role for Family Advocates who can provide support to ESL teachers around facilitating parental involvement in their child's education, as well as support to parents toward building self-efficacy in interactions with their child's teachers and health professionals around SEL goals.

Approximately 15% of K-12th graders participate in ASPs, and an estimated additional 18.5 million would participate if they had access to a program in their community (After School Alliance, 2009). ASPs provide positive youth development opportunities for low-income Latino students (e.g., Riggs, Bohnert, Guzman, & Davidson, 2010) who often have limited access to mental health services or other structured activities during out of school time. Typically, these programs are structured to provide monitored homework assistance and/or tutoring, along with a variety of sports, arts/cultural, and recreational activities. The activities and routines of ASPs are inherently mental health promoting in that they provide opportunities for youth to build positive peer relations and skill sets that aid in social-emotional development (Frazier, Atkins, & Cappella, 2007). Family Advocates can serve as a resource for the existing workforce in how to identify naturally-occurring opportunities that respond to the unique SEL needs of youth from immigrant families. For example, activities can target acculturative stress and positive ethnic identity, but also can capitalize on generalized "teachable moments" to support problem-solving, social skills, and emotion regulation.

Services innovation is born from using an ecological framework to promote a public health prevention-to-intervention approach that leverages indigenous resources toward sustainable services and seizes opportunities to support the inherent social-emotional learning goals of existing service settings. This model requires us to consider designing practices that are relevant to immigrant families and sustainable within the settings that routinely serve them. Collaboration with key stakeholders can help to ensure that service goals and activities align with the organizational mission of CBOs and highlight the inherent skill-building opportunities within existing programs.

Resilient Mindful Learner Intervention in Orange County, California

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Teachers and students are learning to reduce their stress and become more mindful in seven Title I elementary schools in Orange County, California. This year-long professional development pilot project is training fourteen teachers to first enhance their own resilience and then to integrate stress management, self-management, and mindful attentional strategies within their daily classroom routines. Implementation of the teaching toolkit is being monitored along with project outcomes. We learned that after participating for five months (16 contact hours), teachers reported significantly higher scores on the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale, lower scores on the Perceived Stress Scale, and lower scores on the CES-Depression Scale. The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (Brown & Ryan, 2003) is a 15-item scale designed to assess a core characteristic of dispositional mindfulness, namely, open or receptive awareness of an attention to what is taking place in the present. Higher scores reflect higher levels of dispositional mindfulness. Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, et al. 1988) is the most widely used psychological instrument for measuring the perception of stress. It is a measure of the degree to which situation in one's life are appraised as stressful. Higher scores reflect greater level of perceived stress. The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (1977) is designed to measure depressive symptomatology in the general population. Higher scores reflect greater amount of depressive symptoms.

New Approaches to Coaching: Coaches Academy

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Coaches Academy began in the fall of 2009 with the intent of building capacity and growing relationships with professionals serving as internal coaches for a school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) initiative in Central Indiana. The goal of these sessions was to provide a monthly training aimed at enhancing the knowledge base and skill levels of internal coaches for multiple buildings planning for or implementing SWPBS.

In the fall of 2008, a team connected to the local Special Services Cooperative developed a program to train and support schools across seven districts to the implement SWPBS. To better support these initial pilot schools and to ensure sustainability of the efforts, the team developed a monthly seminar/training to build coaching capacity within building personnel. Consistent with the literature, the focus of this project was to develop coaching relationships in schools with the ultimate goal of building capacity among individual schools in facilitating, assisting and maintaining practices associated with PBIS (Sugai et al., 2004). These trainings targeted school psychologists, counselors, administrators and/or special educators who did not require coverage for release time and who could serve as a building level coach and leader within each school. Individuals chosen to serve as coaches typically experienced one or more SWPBS trainings and were endorsed by the building administrator (Scott & Martinek, 2006).

Community Mental Health professionals were also included in the trainings to build collaboration and communication between these professionals and school personnel. The first year monthly sessions focused around a specific piece of SWPBS and participants were provided resources and readings related to the monthly theme. Also, monthly, representatives from community organizations and academic arenas were brought in as guest speakers and Tier II and Tier III Interventions were presented by participants. The main responsibilities of the coach were to assist schools in implementing the key components of SWPBS, such as rules, routines and procedures, in a consistent manner (Lewis & Sugai, 1999).

In the second year, to further develop coaching skills and to continue the growth of participants and the larger program, the team focused on specific skills associated with coaching in educational settings. A book study was also employed to help guide activities and discussions throughout the academic year. As the initiative grew, Coaches Academy needed to be restructured to accommodate the large number of new coaches joining the program.

In the third year, with the addition of 40 new schools and building level coaches the meetings became quarterly and were split into two separate groups, one elementary and one secondary group. This split allowed for coaches from across districts to discuss problems they were experiencing and to share successes they had witnessed.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the trainings a pre and post measure focusing on skills related to Coaches' Readiness was administered on a yearly basis. In addition, the team conducted two focus groups with Academy participants to gauge level of engagement and perceptions of training usefulness after the first year of training. Utilizing both qualitative and quantitative measures to gauge the change in perceptions and development of coaching skills throughout the year, facilitators were able to redesign the program from year to year.

New Brunswick Middle School Ambassadors Program

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All too often in schools, students feel disempowered and lack opportunities to feel connected and, as a result, miss opportunities for social and emotional growth (Blum & Libbey, 2004). This is particularly true in disadvantaged urban settings with significant immigrant populations. While it is clear that students who have well developed social and emotional competencies do better in school and in life (Eisenberg, 2006), educators, school psychologists and administrators are constantly searching for innovative strategies to present social and emotional learning opportunities for at-risk, disenfranchised students.

In New Jersey, a collaborative of teachers from New Brunswick Middle School (NBMS) and a team from the Rutgers Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Lab are developing such an intervention. In addition to piloting a school-wide SEL curriculum tailored for the school, the collaborative is creating a Student Ambassadors program. In the year preceding the program's development, the SEL Lab collected school climate data at NBMS that demonstrated an overall negative school climate, characterized by students' not feeling engaged in learning and teachers agreeing that this was so. One response to these data was creating the role of Student Ambassadors who will discuss the climate data with peers and engage in joint problem-solving with the goal of improving their school environment. This collaborative process is designed to empower students to take ownership of their school and increase school connectedness (Whitlock, 2006).

The NBMS Student Ambassadors program builds on prior research demonstrating climate improvements in schools where student leaders were trained in bullying and violence prevention (Pack, White, Raczyński, & Wang, 2011). However, the NBMS program has a unique focus on teaching Ambassadors to personally engage with empirical data and translate this information to their peers. Two Student Ambassadors from each homeroom will be selected by their peers. Once selected, the Ambassadors will participate in an all-day training to learn to model positive behavior, facilitate discussions with peers about climate data, and act as an agent of change.

Ongoing trainings will ensure that the Ambassadors increase their SEL competencies in key areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2005). The ultimate program goal is that all students will experience gains in these SEL competencies by engaging in frequent discussions about the climate of their school. They will learn self-awareness as they recognize the impact their own attitudes and behaviors have on their school environment. Through conversations about their school, students will develop relationship skills, such as taking the perspective of others, appreciating others' opinions, and developing empathy and mutual respect.

This year, the program's inaugural year, the 180 Ambassadors will comprise about 6% of the student

body but will touch all other students. Each year, a new delegation of Ambassadors will be elected, so that in three years approximately 20% of the student body will have been trained as Ambassadors. Research shows that social change happens when 10% of a population identifies with an idea and/or norm (Xie, Sreenivasan, Korniss, Zhang, Lim, & Szymanski, 2010). Thus, after three years of student Ambassadors, it is the expectation that a critical mass of students will increase their sense of engagement, empowerment, and social and emotional skill-set, and the school community at large will be improved.

EQ Coaching: The Pathway to SEL Sustainability

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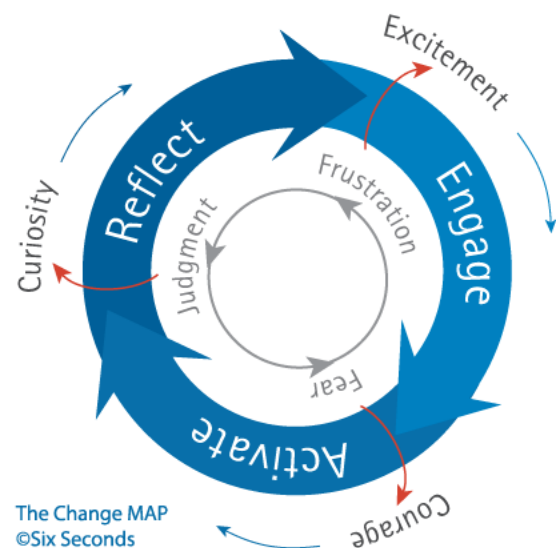
Coaching and mentoring are an integral part of successful SEL programs (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). Teachers may acquire knowledge and skills through training but follow-up coaching thoroughly develops teachers' implementation skills (Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2012). When training is combined with coaching, 95% of teachers acquired knowledge and developed skills for applying that knowledge in the classroom. In the absence of coaching, only 5% of teachers applied the skills in the classroom (Joyce & Showers, as cited in Reyes et al., 2012).

A variety of SEL coaching options exist. Many schools that successfully implement SEL use a full time dedicated SEL coach to work with teachers and staff (CASEL, Austin, TX), while other schools contract with educational consultants skilled in SEL. Six Seconds has trained teacher leaders, in-house SEL specialists, school counselors and social workers to help deliver SEL lessons to students and also to do follow-up coaching with teachers and other adults, such as parents, support staff, administrators, and even school board members.

In the Six Seconds' coaching process, SEL coaches help educators deepen their own EQ competencies, so that they can develop deeper insights and find the motivation needed for school transformational leadership (Freedman, 2013). Coaches help educators develop the

same EQ competencies, the same SEL skills, which they wish to develop in students. Coaches can help teachers to deepen their expertise and comfort in the delivery of SEL programs, and equally importantly, they can help all educators to become more aware, make better and more intentional choices, increase their empathy and reconnect with their purpose in teaching and serving youth.

Educators who receive coaching are better able to "see the impact they create is based not just on what they do but on how they do it" (Freedman, 2013). The Six Seconds Coaching process, as used in education as well as in business, is based on a carefully structured framework, called The Change Map.



Each coaching session includes:

Engage: Coaches help educators define the schools' SEL needs and how to measure success, set goals, and make a plan.

Activate: Coaches help educators develop new methods and strategies, innovate and experiment to create optimal results.

Reflect: Coaches help educators assess progress and integrate new learning, then decide how to move forward.

In the Six Seconds approach, coaching is integrated holistically with assessment. SEL assessments are available for students (SEI-YV), teachers, parents, and school leaders (SEI-AV). School climate is assessed using our research based climate tool, Educational Vital Signs

(EVS); school leadership with the Leadership Vital Signs (LVS). With assessments in hand, coaching follows the logical process described in the diagram above. School leaders are coached through a dialogue, grounded in data, about school needs. From the data, new goals are set and turned into an action plan. Coaching helps people to transition from frustration to excitement, from fear to courage, and from judgment to curiosity—all critical SEL attitudes and skills for life.

International Initiatives



Social-Emotional Learning, Global Education and Videoconferencing

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Students are participating in global education programs in schools today. The main objective for global programs include preparing children intellectually about global issues in the world, but in addition to the academic lessons, I have conducted research to demonstrate how students can grow social and emotionally when communicating with others from around the world. In April-May of 2012, as a practitioner researcher and doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania, I did research with one of the Saint Stephen Episcopal School's first period eighth grade English class to find out how middle school students demonstrate social and emotional learning (SEL), specifically empathy, when participating in eight cross-cultural, academic English lessons with ten students from DeZhi Foreign Language School in Guilin, China using the technology of Skype videoconferencing.

The 17 American students were not learning about social-emotional content but rather were actively involved in discussions during the lessons with the Chinese students about the book, *Of Mice and Men*, by John Steinbeck. The intent was to identify and recognize responses, reactions, and reflections through the words, behaviors, gestures, attitudes, and/or expressions of the

middle school students that showed empathy through an understanding of feelings within themselves and/or concerning others during/or related to the lessons. A variety of methods were used to collect data during the eight lessons including two different emotional intelligence assessment tools (Six Seconds SEI-Youth Version Assessment, 2007; and the Dr. Mark Davis Interpersonal Reactivity Index, 1980), an informal assessment, observations, interviews, and journal writing. Each helped determine how emotional intelligence, especially empathy was demonstrated by the students during this research project.

As one of the unique results of this study, empathy was demonstrated by actually doing the academic lessons as students cared about sharing ideas with one another to further their writing or giving opinions to enhance the understanding of the story. Even though the intention was not to focus on the academic lesson, in the end it was the academic lesson empathy came forth. The book itself generated some of the empathetic feelings—an appreciation for feedback made them feel connected “I liked today's lesson. I got to talk to them about my paper. Tom stated that the Chinese students gave me some feedback about my paper and it was nice to have someone else's feedback,” so although the idea of the study was to not look at empathy but to look at the academic lesson, in the end it was the academic lesson that caused us to look at empathy.

Another interesting outcome was that empathy seems to first be about self-understanding. An overarching theme was about recognizing and identifying empathy in one self. This became extremely apparent with the one and only Chinese student in the class: Lee. He had to figure out his own identity and his own feelings before he could connect empathetically with his classmates at Saint Stephen's let alone with the Chinese students. He struggled in the beginning to identify who to be accepted by and to show his feelings. Throughout the 8 lessons he grew empathetically, caring about his classmates and his native Chinese new friends. When asked if he learned anything new about himself in this experience, Lee said “no, because I am a Chinese student as well and we all know the same things.”

A third surprising outcome was a developing pattern for Empathy Awareness Progression—from the early coding, to finding the themes, there became a pattern of empathy with the students during these global vid-

eoconferencing lessons. The pattern began with identifying one's own, it was all about (I); → which led to recognizing the feelings and points of views of others (others); → which led to relationship building and making friends (appreciating similarities and recognizing differences); → which led to cultural awareness; → which finally led to the students having a real sense of global awareness, making comments such as Cal saying, "I am a part of a bigger picture" and Sue stating, "It opened my eyes to the world." Much like Martin's Hoffman's empathy and social emotional development or Erikson's eight stages of psycho-social development, this pattern may have possibilities about how empathy progresses during videoconferencing lessons. However, more research is needed, given the following limitations of this research: The small number of participants in the study, a limited number of lessons and non-consecutive timeframe for the lessons, lack of teaching experience with videoconferencing lessons by the teacher, and the technology itself due to poor connections during some of the lessons.

What did the Saint Stephen's students learn after participating in these videoconferencing lessons with the students from China?

- Empathy can emerge with students through content material
- With continued exposure to getting to know one another, empathy grows
- Getting to know another over Skype doesn't inhibit relationships to form
- Students felt this experience truly opened them up to be global citizens
- School programs using global videoconferencing provide the opportunity for students to learn about their own empathetic feelings and recognize it in others
- Videoconferencing is a vehicle in which empathy can be demonstrated

In the end, if teachers can help this generation of students learn in schools to show care and concern for one another, especially with "others" from another country, maybe we can help create a world that will be more peaceful than it is today. By providing a classroom environment, including one through videoconferencing, where empathy concern can be expressed, positive communication can take place, and meaningful relationships can form, the students will learn about themselves and also learn to care about others in the world, understanding the differences and celebrating the similarities that are revealed.

Promoting the Self-Development and Well-Being of Vocational Dance Students through Social and Emotional Learning

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Although there are physical and psychological development benefits to participation in dance, research evidence is mounting that such engagement can pose mental and physical challenges on dancers and may not always be conducive to good health (Ravaldi et al., 2006; Sharp, 2007; and Robson, 2002). Specifically, an emphasis on performance-orientation in dance has been linked to dancers' well-being and the development of potentially maladaptive dispositions such as low self-esteem, eating disorders, anxiety and perfectionism tendencies (Carr & Wyon, 2003; and Quested & Duda, 2011).

A research study recently published by Van Staden, Myburgh and Poggenpoel (2009) provided preliminary evidence of professional dancers' lack of self-awareness, self-responsibility and self-direction causing physical, psychological and social problems. To counteract these problems, a psycho-educational model was proposed with the aim to prepare pre-professional dancers in becoming increasingly self-aware, more self-responsible through effective choices and decision-making, and to exercise self-direction within the dance environment in order to optimize their psychological well-being.

These competencies are linked to models of emotional and social intelligence, as well as to social and

emotional learning (SEL) within a teaching and instructional context. For example, the shaping development of self-identity in dancers as they mature, not only impacts dancer performance, but also has a direct influence on dancers' mental and physical health and well-being. Conceptually it makes sense to find a natural and fitting home for dancer self-identity and related competencies in emotional and social intelligence theory. Yet, to date, no research has considered and explored the emotional intelligence profiles of dancers, let alone that the insights derived thereof has been empirically tied to their self-development and psychological well-being. Hence this study marks ground-breaking work in this area.

The first **objective** of the project was to study the emotional intelligence profiles of vocational dance students in order to identify and develop specific criteria for facilitating self-development. In doing so, the authors profiled the emotional and social intelligence of vocational dance students from Australia, Canada and South Africa (n=134) by standardizing the dancer EQ scores against that of a large, composite norm population of youth using the Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence Inventory Youth Version (SEI-YV). Secondly, dancers were also profiled according to different demographics to deepen understanding and enhance the interpretation of profiles in appropriate context.

An overarching **finding**

from the study indicated that dancers depend mostly on well-developed Intrinsic Motivation in establishing and maintaining all aspects of their

well-being (assessed as a combination of five Life Barometers, namely Health, Relationship Quality, Life Satisfaction, Personal Achievement and Self-Efficacy) in the presence of other less-developed EQ components.

Sometimes, dancers over-use their well-developed intrinsic motivation to the expense of other EQ attributes, risking the tendency that reliance on a single EQ competency may become the cure-all for all challenges.



One meaningful **study outcome** was that the EQ attributes identified as areas for opportunity and further development were fitted to the framework of the proposed psycho-educational model for vocational dance students (Van Staden et al., 2009). The development of targeted EQ attributes, for example Optimism, by way of SEL implementation aims to improve dancers' well-being, specifically:

- Cultivating a solid and reliable value system through increased optimism and its predictive power of satisfaction with life in general. This will aid in determining and sustaining dancers' optimal potential to participate physically and mentally.
- Developing self-management skills to establish and maintain positive and constructive relationships within the performance environment and elsewhere.
- Maximizing dancers' ability to make effective choices by again increasing optimism and its predictive power of personal achievement also.
- Utilizing dancers emotional literacy and optimism combined in order to be more self-efficacious within the dance environment.

In short, the development of an authentic value system among dancers, starting with self-awareness, will play a crucial role in supporting and establishing their crucial self-management to optimize not only their performance, but importantly, their overall well-being.

In **conclusion**, an investigation of EI among vocational dance students is timely and much needed to assist vocational dance students with their personal and interpersonal well-being and performance within the dance context. The project is ongoing, with next steps aimed at developing a two-pronged approach in putting the research findings into action. The research findings will be developed and implemented through pre-post program implementation and thereafter by disseminating protocols for teacher education.

The authors wish to express their gratitude to Dr Bonnie Robson, Lucinda Sharp, Nigel Hannah, Manual Norman and Michelle Naude for their invaluable support of the project and for their contribution with data collection.

Using Action Research to Develop Teachers' Educational Practices and Create a School-Wide Approach to Social and Emotional Learning

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In 2011, teachers at Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School (EPACS), a high performing charter school in East Palo Alto (California), engaged in an action research project, led by researcher Lorea Martinez from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, in an effort to identify students' needs and build a long-term system that would deepen students' social and emotional development.

Teachers and administrators at EPACS knew from first-hand experience that addressing students' social and emotional needs was especially important when working with students in a socioeconomically disadvantaged community. East Palo Alto had an unemployment rate of 9.6% in 2010, and a violent crime rate of 790 for each 100,000 residents. 96% of the school's students qualify for the National School Lunch Program, and 53% of its students are English Learners. Although the school realized that preparing students academically is not enough to ensure students' readiness for college and beyond, challenges such as time constraints, lack of money for non-academic resources and accountability demands made it hard for teachers to address students' social and emotional needs in a systematic way.

The action research was born from the school's desire to address students' social and emotional needs, and the researcher's interest in engaging teachers' in reflective processes about their practice, as they found ways to implement Social Emotional Learning (SEL) at the school. Action research has been recognized to be a powerful tool to develop teachers' educational practices through reiterative cycles of action and reflection (McNiff, 2013). When engaged in action research, teachers have the opportunity to systematically reflect about their teaching and introduce changes to their practice, so they can ultimately improve it. At the same time, the literature has shown the importance of teacher involvement in organizational change and innovative processes (Gather Thurler, 2004; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006).

The school used both quantitative data (the Assessment of School Climate by Six Seconds was administered to staff and students), and qualitative data from several focus groups to determine the school's needs and define priorities. Collaborative data analysis conducted by the staff at EPACS promoted insightful conversations amongst teachers about students' behaviors and their sense of belonging, the school's common expectations and teachers' well-being.

Based on analysis of the school's needs, teachers created a 2-week cycle to explicitly teach SEL standards and provide opportunities for guided practice to students. The school adopted the SEL standards from the Anchorage School District in Alaska (ASD SEL Steering Committee, 2004) and followed Six Seconds emotional intelligence framework of EQ competencies, Know Yourself, Choose Yourself, Give Yourself (Freedman, 2007). Teachers also integrated the language from the SEL standards into other activities, such as reading aloud and writing workshops. The 2-week cycle included: introduction of the standard, guided practice, problem of the week, buddy class, and student and teacher reflection.

Focus group interviews were used throughout the action research to walk teachers through the different stages of the process, but especially during implementation of the school-designed action plan. These sessions were part of weekly staff meetings, and allowed teachers to check in on the implementation of the SEL standards, reflect on the changes they were observing on their students and their practice, identify roadblocks and work together to overcome those challenges.

Analysis of the data collected through the focus groups revealed that implementation of the SEL standards as well as the school's engagement in a reflective, participatory process had positive outcomes at different levels in the organization. At the teacher level, teachers reported that this work impacted them personally because it helped them to learn about their own social and emotional competencies. From a professional perspective, teachers reported having a deeper understanding of what it meant to teach SEL standards, which translated into an improvement of the learning environment in the classroom, a strengthening of teacher-student relationships, and a promotion of student-led solutions. In addition, teachers also reported that this work impacted the school as a whole because it provided teachers with

a common language and vocabulary to address students' needs and behavior challenges. Teachers felt empowered to see that their colleagues were all involved and committed to do this work, and were energized by the prospects of continuous improvement, as they kept on addressing SEL school-wide.

Today, months after the completion of the action research project, EPACS continues to address students' social and emotional needs in a systematic way and SEL has become part of the school's core educational program.

This research is an example of how action research can be used as a powerful tool to help teachers reflect on their teaching and the challenges they face when trying to address students' social and emotional needs, so they can take action as a community and find ways to improve their educational practices to better serve their students. Action research can be a useful tool for schools and researchers to purposefully engage teachers in the design and development of practices that address students' social and emotional needs and a way to build ownership and sustainability for SEL interventions in educational settings.

The Development of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) in Young people in Cornwall, UK

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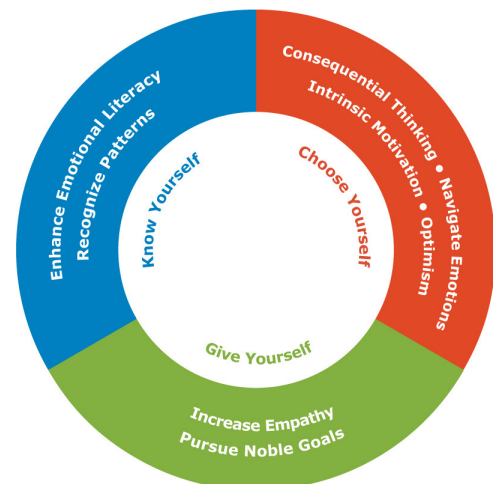
An inspirational group of young people in Cornwall, UK have taken part in an innovative project to develop their emotional intelligence, life skills and confidence. The young people were some of the first in the UK to take part in a SEL project of this kind. The young people, aged 18-24, live in an organization that supports them with housing, support and education to get their life on track after facing significant life challenges. The project was delivered by the Community Interest Company, Family Works and made possible from funding from The Big Lottery and the not-for-profit organization, Six Seconds. Six Seconds is a global emotional intelligence organization and network that supports people all over the world to gain the benefits of emotional intelligence.

The project aimed to support the young people to explore some of their individual problems and make positive changes so that they can go on to lead independent and fulfilling lives. One key aim of the project was to assist participants to develop the skills of Emotional Intelligence. Emotional Intelligence is the ability to integrate thinking and feeling to make the best decisions for ourselves and others.

The project design involved 6 weeks of 1:1 work with a Family Works practitioner and then 15 sessions of group work. Individuals had a choice of what type of 1:1 support they received ranging from psychotherapy, counselling, art therapy, life coaching and eco-psychology work.

Following the 1:1 work, 15 sessions of group work was provided. In these sessions the young people learnt about a variety of topics e.g. emotional literacy, self-awareness, relaxation skills, stress management, identifying their strengths, planning for goals, optimism, communication and relationship skills. Young people also learnt about The 6 Seconds model of Emotional Intelligence which is created by 6 Seconds, the global EQ organization.

The 6 Seconds Model of Emotional Intelligence



Pre and post-intervention data was collected using the SEI- EQ assessment which is an innovative assessment and development tool, based on the Six seconds model shown above. It measures 8 different emotional intelligence skills using self-report and provides a useful model and framework to understand ourselves.

What was the impact of the project on the young people?

The young people showed great courage and determination to come to the sessions each week to learn more about themselves and others and work towards their goals. Each week significant changes were observed in the young people.

Some of the young people's comments and feedback about the sessions:

'This is the first time in my life I have learnt anything that is going to help me have a life'
 'I find it easier to relate to others now'
 'I am looking at life more positively.'
 'I feel happier'
 'It's helping me to understand my emotions'
 'We support each other now'
 'I make better choices '
 'I gained more understanding of others and myself.'

There were also a number of positive changes seen in the social development of the young people. Observations showed great developments in social skills, communication skills and confidence. They also showed greater empathy towards each other and were able to support each other more. Some had an increased sense of feeling like they could contribute positively to the community. With one participant commenting "that they have been part of the problem in their community and they now want to be part of the solution to improve their community."

Many of the young people showed increased motivation in pursuing their career goals and had more optimism and hope for the future.

This was a project that was seen to bring around positive transformations in the young people in so many ways and it is hoped that the young people will go on to lead fulfilling and joyful lives.



The practitioners involved in the design and delivery of this Project were Ann Rogers, Hilde Mansfield, Louise Toft, Annabel Aguirre, Liz Norris and Claire Hinton.

To find out more about the services offered by Six Seconds or Family works go to:

www.Six Seconds.org

www.familyworkscornwall.wordpress



Inspiring and supporting positive change in children and families.

The Influence of EQ in Post Graduate Students

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Within one of our Masters Programs in our institution (Swiss Hotel Management School), we teach a module designed around the EQ competencies, we put a clear emphasis on the **interdependence between those skills and the various leadership capabilities** that make an employee become the star performer of his/her organization.

The module itself is a highly influential learning process, since it broadens decisively the students’ horizons, revealing to them the magnitude of their EI skills and the degree of correlation between those skills and the way to become a start performer in any organization.

The above-mentioned module, which is entitled “**Developing International Business Leadership Skills**”, has duration of nine weeks. The first part of it, which consists of the first five weeks, is dedicated to the analysis of the eight EI skills and the second part deals with the “close relatives” of EI, focusing on Social Intelligence and Resonant Leadership. There is also a lecture devoted to the Stress Effect and the reasons for which “Smart Leaders Make Dumb Decisions-And What To Do About It” (Thompson, 2010).

At the beginning of the teaching process, each student takes the SEI EQ test designed by Six Seconds, and subsequently there is an one-on-one debriefing that takes place. This way, the students get a concrete idea of their profile with regards to their EQ skills, focused on the Leadership spectrum. Apart from their SEI Leadership Report, the students are also required to write two individual assignments.

The first report is submitted one week after the beginning of the module and contains a five-year career plan they have to formulate, accompanied by a so-called **SWOT analysis**. By SWOT analysis we mean a detailed profile of their Strong and Weak Points, in terms of personality traits, as well as a depiction of the positive (Opportunities) and negative (Threats) factors of their surrounding environment. The second assignment, which is submitted in the last week (9th), consists of at least 3 sections of reflective writing in which students

reflect on the lectures given on Business Leadership skills in this course.

Within this last part of their assignment, they have to show with evidence, whether they have **applied the EI skills into their daily life** in school and how that influenced their behavioral reactions, providing them with “new tools” to deal effectively with various situations that are concerned with intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions.

One of the major benefits is **the direct connectivity** with the students’ professional objectives, since they need to explain how they could use those skills so as to support and enhance their career goals, in the next five years. **A quite high percentage of the students (50%-60%)** admit through their reports that as a result of the further knowledge of the EI skills, they **rearrange their career plans**, since they take under consideration the results from their EQ test, which acts as a catalyst in designing their steps that will bring them closer to their targets!

Announcements



iSEL Virtual Course!

Would you like to join a project to disseminate SEL research and practice to 25,000 teachers/educators?

An upcoming **iSEL** virtual course will introduce key concepts and practices for social emotional learning through an innovative virtual course. You are invited to participate in the pilot, and then to be part of this campaign.

Participants will have the option to join iSEL for free, guiding themselves through the content. Alternately, the low-cost version includes facilitated group discussions and assignment feedback. iSEL is sponsored by Six Seconds, the Emotional Intelligence Network, and Fielding Graduate University.

The content of iSEL is inclusive, focused on best practices, and not on any one program or resource. Topics will include: Increasing awareness of SEL and its value; identifying opportunities for bringing SEL into school structures and programs; identifying essential

SEL competencies for educators and students; learning how current neuroscience informs the practice of SEL; using SEL to improve the classroom learning environment; applying SEL to foster a positive and successful school community; and learning the key elements for a systemic, lasting, whole-school SEL implementation.

We will be starting with a pilot of the course in January; the official launch will be sometime early Spring 2014. We have many SEL SIG members and other SEL experts who have generously agreed to do short videotapes for the course and provide readings. If you're interested in knowing more about the course, or participating in a video, please contact Susan Stillman, Ed.D., susan.stillman@6seconds.org or sbstillman on Skype.

Masters Program in Educational-Psychology-Applied Developmental Science

Sara Rimm-Kaufman, serk@virginia.edu

The Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia is recruiting students for a new 12-month Masters program in Educational Psychology-Applied Development Science.

The program:

- Provides opportunities for students to learn about social and emotional learning in school and out-of-school contexts;
- Brings a strength-based approach to understanding contemporary challenges faced by children and youth;
- Teaches research design and statistics enabling students to solve practical problems in education. Graduates are prepared for careers in research organizations, positions in school districts and further graduate work. For more information, see: <http://curry.virginia.edu/academics/degrees/master-of-education/m.ed.-in-educational-psychology-applied-developmental-science>

Teaching the Whole Child: Instructional Practices that Support Social-Emotional Learning in Three Teacher Evaluation Frameworks.

Nicholas Yoder, Ph.D., Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, Washington, D.C., nyoder@air.org

The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) recently published a research-to-practice brief, *Teaching the Whole Child: Instructional Practices that Support Social-Emotional Learning in Three Teacher Evaluation Frameworks*. In the brief, they identified 10 instructional practices that promote SEL skills, and showcased how those practices were embedded within common professional teaching frameworks used for teacher evaluations (i.e., Danielson's Frameworks for Teaching, Classroom Assessment Scoring System [CLASS], and Marzano's Observation Protocol). The GTL Center is currently developing a teacher self-assessment tool that aligns to the 10 instructional practices, as well as a tool that will help districts and states align their professional teaching frameworks to instructional practices that promote SEL. Check out the website below: <http://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/TeachingtheWholeChild.pdf>





Education Forum

1 & 2 March 2014

Rondebosch Boys High School, Canigou Avenue, Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa

African Summit

3 - 5 March 2014

Cape Town International Convention Centre, Cape Town, South Africa

When Goleman said in his worldwide bestseller: “**Emotional Intelligence (EQ)** is the new Yardstick for success!” there was doubt in the minds of many people. Now research has firmly established that **EQ, not IQ, determines the success of the leader!** More importantly, it is vital for your wellbeing, relationships, health, teamwork, education, productivity, marriage - in fact YOUR WHOLE LIFE!

In 2007 South Africa hosted the 6th International Nexus EQ Summit and 1st African EQ Summit acclaimed by many overseas visitors as one of the best ever. We are now privileged to present our 2nd African EQ Summit and EQ Education Forum with over 15 international speakers plus many top South African specialists.

African Summit: will explore the latest scientific research, best practice and proven techniques in Emotional Intelligence and Positive Psychology including:

- **Business** - Unlocking Potential
- **Practitioners** - Increasing Practical Effectiveness
- **Education** - Laying Foundations for Success

Education Forum: will address the challenges that face our educators and encapsulate the latest scientific research and best practice within the African context and the mastering of critical life skills such as:

- **Positive Psychology** - cultivating a new mind-set
- **Resilience** - the ability to regain form despite adversities
- **Education** - Laying Foundations for Success

“Come and join us for these exciting events. Delegates will walk away with a better understanding of EQ and Positive Psychology, in a careful blend of theory, research, inspiration, experience and practical techniques. Plus having lots of FUN in the beautiful city of Cape Town voted Design Capital of the World for 2014.”

Dr Pieter van Jaarsveld, Chair EQ 2014.

NYUSteinhardt

Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

PhD in Psychology and Social intervention

The PSI program is housed in the Department of Applied Psychology at New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, & Human Development. Our mission is to train academics and applied researchers to work in a variety of settings to understand, transform, and improve the contexts and systems in which people develop from birth to adulthood.

Grounded in core psychological theories and methods, the PSI program places a strong emphasis on:

- Understanding and assessing social settings, systems, and policies;
- Building knowledge of various forms of diversity and structural inequality among individuals, groups, institutions, communities, and societies; and
- Creating, implementing, and evaluating individual- and setting-level prevention and intervention programs that address important social issues by improving the contexts and systems in which people develop.

With expertise in community, developmental, and social psychology, faculty members study a wide range of settings (e.g., families, schools, neighborhoods, media and policy contexts) and preventive and policy interventions (e.g., psychological, educational, health, media), locally, nationally and internationally. We conduct research on how cultural factors and identities influence and interact with experiences of these settings and interventions.

Ours is a research intensive program with a strong quantitative training component and exposure to a range of interdisciplinary research methods (e.g., qualitative, setting-level measurement and social networks, causal inference for observational studies).

Our doctoral degree in Psychology and Social Intervention offers:

- Competitive funding for 4 years: students are provided tuition remission, a competitive stipend, and benefits for years 1-3, and a stipend for year 4. There are many opportunities for continued funding thereafter;
- Unique mentoring system where students are admitted to the program as whole (rather than to work with one particular faculty member) and encouraged to work with multiple faculty and projects by the end of their graduate study;
- Study in New York City, an ideal setting for studying diverse individuals and family, school, neighborhood, ethnic groups, and other environments;
- Grounding in psychology, but inclusion of interdisciplinary theory and methods;
- Strong emphasis on global research in addition to local and national research; and,
- Preparation for research roles in academia and outside academia (e.g. research institutes, community-based organizations, governmental agencies) both locally and internationally.

To learn more, visit http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/appsyphd/psychology_social_intervention

More Information about the SEL SIG
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Go to www.aera.net for more information about the SEL SIG #170.