SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS

Social-emotional skills provide the foundation upon which all developmental, academic and other skills are built (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg & Walberg, 2007). Being able to attend, engage, follow directions, interact with others, and communicate are all needed components of school life that are at least partly affected by social-emotional skill mastery (McClelland et al., 2017; Hemmeter, Ostrosky & Fox, 2006). Nearly all inappropriate behaviors exhibited in the classroom extend back to a missing link in social-emotional development or the need for intentional teaching of social-emotional skills (Whitted, 2010).
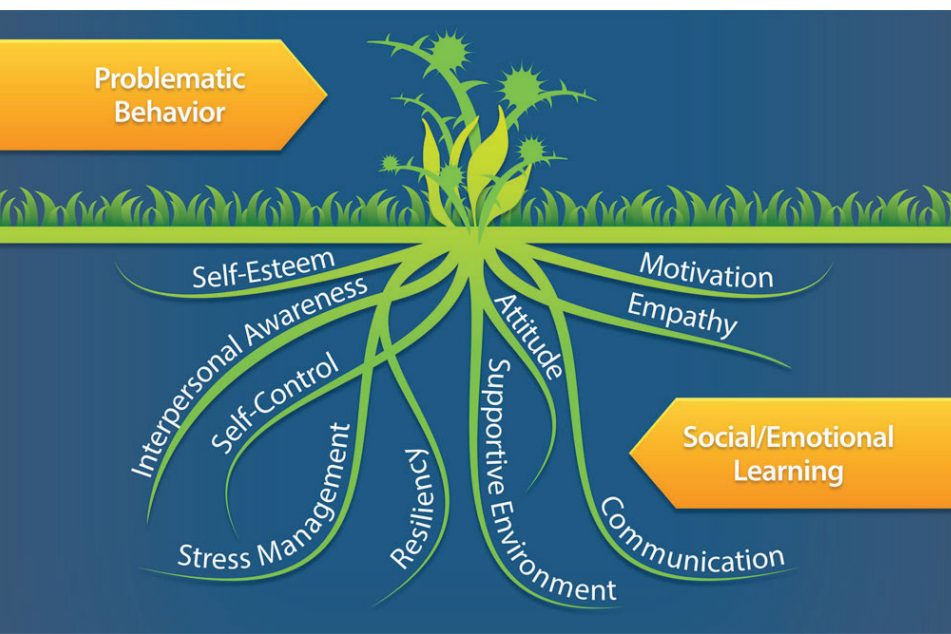
Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2018).

With the growing focus on social-emotional skills at both the national and state levels, and with the inclusion of early childhood positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) into the REACH MS initiatives, REACH MS began embedding social-emotional content into its training and support last school year. Every state now has pre-K social-

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emotional standards. Eight states have social-emotional standards that extend from preschool into early elementary, and eight additional states have developed K-12 social-emotional standards (CASEL, 2018). Mississippi included pre-K social-emotional standards in the most recent version of its pre-K standards in 2013 and is in its beginning phases of developing K-12 social-emotional standards.

In light of the recent emphasis placed on social-emotional skills, as well as its importance in day-to-day living, staff at REACH MS decided to develop a series of newsletters to highlight social-emotional learning. This newsletter provides an introduction to and overview of SEL based on the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Future newsletters will focus on one specific competency, providing information, alignment, implementation and strategies educators can utilize in teaching social-emotional competencies.

COLLABORATIVE FOR ACADEMIC, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (CASEL) CASEL.ORG

Founded in 1997 to help establish evidence-based SEL as an essential part of preschool through high school education, CASEL's goals are to **advance the science of SEL**, **expand effective SEL practice** and **improve federal and state SEL policies**.

CASEL'S FIVE COMPETENCE DOMAINS
COMPETENCE IN SELF-AWARENESS
COMPETENCE IN SELF-MANAGEMENT
COMPETENCE IN SOCIAL AWARENESS
RELATIONSHIP SKILLS
RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

SELF-AWARENESS DOMAIN

Competence in self-awareness involves the understanding of one's emotions, personal goals and values.

(a) accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations

(b) having positive mindsets

(c) possessing a well-grounded sense of efficacy and optimism

SELF-MANAGEMENT DOMAIN

Competence in self-management requires skills and attitudes that facilitate the ability to regulate emotions and behaviors.

(a) delay gratification

(b) manage stress

(c) control impulses

(d) persevere through challenges to achieve personal and educational goals

SOCIAL AWARENESS DOMAIN

Competence in social awareness involves the ability to take the perspective of those with different backgrounds or cultures to empathize and feel compassion.

(a) understanding social norms for behavior

(b) recognizing family, school and community resources and supports

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS DOMAIN

Relationship skills provide children with the tools they need to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships. Competence in this domain involves the following:

(a) communicating clearly

(b) listening actively

(c) cooperating

(d) resisting inappropriate social pressure

(e) negotiating conflict constructively

(f) seeking help when it is needed

DECISION-MAKING DOMAIN

Responsible decision-making requires the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse settings. It also requires the ability to do the following:

(a) consider ethical standards and safety concerns

(b) make realistic evaluation of consequence

(c) take the health and well-being of self and others into consideration prior to engaging in actions