

A path to creating wholehearted learners
in a time of exceptional disruption.



Pilot Evaluation of the **bettertogether³** SEL Curriculum

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What is SEL - or Social Emotional Learning?

01

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines SEL as "the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation. SEL can help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities."



SEL Core Competencies + Objectives: What Do We Measure and Why?

SEL learning is measured using the five core competencies listed below. In the pilot evaluation of BetterTogether³'s curriculum, each competency was measured before and after the curriculum was used. Significant growth was seen across all five areas.

Improvement across core SEL competencies is linked to outcomes including improved academic performance, relationships, stress management, classroom behavior, and attitudes, in addition to decreases in depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.



CORE COMPETENCIES MEASURED WITH SEL CURRICULUM



Self-Awareness



Self-Management



Social Awareness



Relationship Skills



Responsible Decision Making

The BetterTogether³ Approach: SEL Curriculum Designed for the Whole Community

03

BetterTogether³ is a K-12 responsive SEL program consisting of 80 teacher friendly lessons that support the emerging SEL needs. Each lesson is aligned to the CASEL competencies and newest priorities. It is a fully integrative program that provides structure yet allows for teacher autonomy in meeting the needs of their students, based on real time data and what they are noticing in the classroom.

Lessons can be integrated into the day, within any schedule and do not require “SEL Class.” The curriculum is designed to integrate into the school day with educators using it in 15–30-minute segments at various points. Grade-banded curriculum offers critical skills and strategies for improved SEL function in urban, suburban, and rural districts engaged in in-person, hybrid, or distance learning.



To meet the newest CASEL priority of creating SEL opportunities for adults, BetterTogether³ also includes an Educator Self Care Toolbox and an online repository of the newest resources for mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.

Conclusions: Proven Results in Unforeseen Contexts

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The pilot findings of **Better Together³**'s curriculum during the 2021-2022 school year, provided by an outside evaluator found statistically significant progress in SEL across diverse school populations. Successful results were shown in spite of the many obstacles students and educators have faced throughout the pandemic. Findings were significant between intervention and control groups, as well as for nearly all areas of SEL in the examination of pre and post-tests. The success of this pilot program emphasizes its applicability in multiple learning modalities, with diverse student populations and school settings.



While pandemic distress may not disrupt future school years, the improvements seen in this study translate to proven success in a multitude of learning environments. The study also highlights the importance of instituting an SEL curriculum while in pandemic recovery.

Additional Findings in 2021-2022 + Future Implications



Evidence of Success Continues

The 2022 mid-year student self-assessment findings show of the students who started the year responding that "working with others is hard for them", after 4 months of consistent programming, 42% of them "reported "it is no longer hard or sometimes hard for them to work with others."

Of the students who started the 2021-2022 school year reporting that it is "hard to get along with others who are different or have different perspectives" 46% of respondents reported that it is no longer "hard or sometimes hard to get along with others who are different than me or have different perspectives" after 4 months of Better Together³ programming.

NEW FINDINGS

05

- 55% of students surveyed at mid-year 2021-2022 reported growth in being "able to calm myself when I am worried, lonely or overwhelmed".
- Of the students who reported "it is hard to disagree with others without starting an argument at the start of 2021 school year, 45% reported that "it is no longer hard to disagree with others without starting an argument" at the Mid-Year Assessment after 4 months of consistent programming.

Using ten assessment questions that correlate to the CASEL Core Competencies, this study of the use of the [bettertogether³](#) curriculum found:

- Student growth in 9 of 10 areas
- Statistically significant student growth in 6 of 10 areas
- Student growth in all five CASEL competencies



Students and Educators: What They Have to Say

06

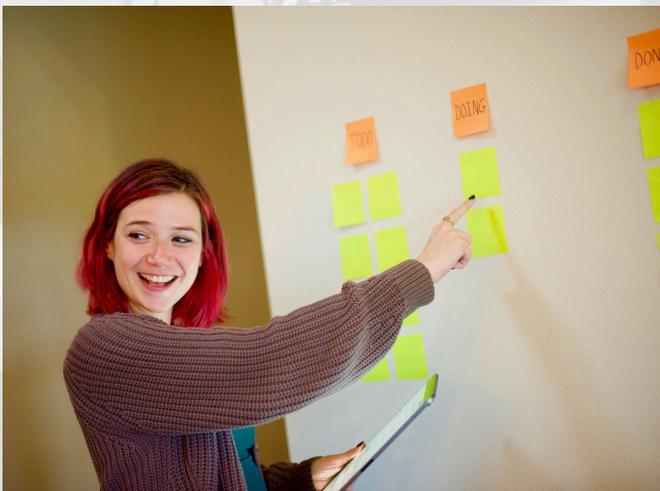
Melissa H.
Teacher

"My students are engaged in the lessons that are provided with the *bettertogether* curriculum. They openly participate and we have had great discussions both in our in-person learning and in distance learning too. As a teacher, I have discovered the importance of implementing these effective and well-thought-out lessons in my daily schedule. I appreciate the organization of each activity, and how they can be completed in a timely manner, and still provide outstanding results. BetterTogether is making a difference not only for my students but for me as well."

Louis
Student

"I like this - it's another part of myself that I am uncovering. I'm finding out more about myself and how my values and beliefs affect me and how I do things."

- Louis, 18, MN





“The most important finding of this pilot study was statistically significant progress in SEL across diverse school populations and amid a pandemic. Findings were significant between intervention and control groups, as well as for nearly all areas of SEL in the examination of pre and post tests. While pandemic distress may not disrupt future school years, the improvements seen in this study translate to likely success in a multitude of learning environments. The success of this pilot program emphasizes its applicability in multiple learning modalities, with diverse student populations and school settings. The study also highlights the importance of instituting an SEL curriculum while in pandemic recovery. This pilot study clearly indicated student progress in all of the following major CASEL areas of SEL (CASEL, “What is SEL?”, 2017):

- *Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation*
- *Social Awareness*
- *Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation*
- *Relationship Skills*
- *Responsible Decision Making”*



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