BACKGROUND

What are SEL Kernels?
SEL Kernels are strategies used by effective prevention programs that have been shown to effect specific behavior changes. These SEL Kernels, or kernels of practice, represent a smaller scale, personalized approach to SEL, and ultimately aim to provide educators and other adults with a menu of needs and preference-based strategies that are quick, low lift, and easily integrated into team practice.

Where did these SEL Kernels come from?
Drawing from a content analysis of 25 leading SEL curricula, we pulled strategies and practices commonly existing across programs and developed these further to fit the Kernels model. While comprehensive, packaged curricula/programs are currently the most common approach to building social and emotional skills, this type of high burden approach is not always feasible for all schools or organizations. Our team is looking to test a new approach to building SEL, breaking down programs into individual activities and strategies that are feasible for educators and other adults to implement given common constraints of time, resources, and energy.
TIPS FOR SUCCESS
*Note: These are general tips for high quality instruction for all Kernels and can be applied when relevant.

INSTRUCTION...
Model behaviors, procedures, strategies, and language. Demonstrate thought processes and appropriate responses in a variety of situations and settings.
Use clear, simple language to explain the purpose for rules and expectations.
Incorporate youth interests into activities and examples.
Include information in instructions that answers the following questions:
  - How much do I need to do?
  - What exactly do I need to do?
  - When do I need to do it?
  - What is the reason for doing it?

Contextualize activities by explicitly connecting new concepts to previous learnings and activities in children’s daily lives:
  - Ask youth to brainstorm what they already know about a topic.
  - Use activities that are relevant to children’s cultural experiences.

SETTING...
Establish a positive team culture characterized by support, safety, belonging and respect where all participants are valued as decisionmakers:
  - Engage all youth athletes in co-creating and setting positive norms, rules and routines for practices and games and work with them to consistently reinforce the structure.
  - Ensure all youth are included, with equitable access to activities, being sensitive to different learning styles.

Incorporate teamwork into activities to provide opportunities for peer modeling and use of comprehension clues:
  - Prepare young athletes for teamwork by role-playing appropriate behaviors.
  - Assign partners with specific tasks, and pair youth who struggle with partners who can model positive prosocial and communication skills.
**YOUNG ATHLETE RESPONSE...**

Provide children with options to demonstrate their learning. Offer a variety of methods for youth to receive and express information:
- Allow flexible scheduling for youth who need more time to complete tasks, practice, etc.
- Ensure all youth are included in activities, being sensitive to different learning styles.
- Allow additional opportunities for questions.
- Encourage and celebrate effort.

**FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CONNECTION...**

Engage with families, schools, and community members whenever possible. Seek opportunities to share what you are working on with parents and other community members:
- Encourage participants to practice skills at home, school, and in the community, and to share with their families and teachers what they are learning and working on.
- Connect with parents, teachers, or other coaches to collaborate and connect learning, or to share ideas, resources, and activities.
THE BIG IDEA
This game is about remembering what motions accompany each phrase, and doing them correctly and quickly.

WHY DO THIS?
IF WE practice memory and attention...
THEN WE will keep track of and use important information...
SO WE can engage deeply in learning and playing with each other.

MATERIALS:
• None required.

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Say THE BIG IDEA.
2. Introduce the game, and review directions with youth before getting started (see back of card for direction list).
3. As you call out directions, athletes will be out of the game if they don’t follow them or do them quickly enough.
4. For some directions (*marked with an asterisk), athletes will have to form a group and work with others. If they don’t form a group, they will also be out of the game.
5. The game is played until two people are left standing.
6. Coaches or youth can lead the game.

MUST DO: Must require youth to remember specific movements associated with specific phrases.
CAN ADAPT: Change the commands and/or the accompanying motions.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY, DEBRIEF:
• Was Shipwreck easy or hard to play? Were some directions easier/harder to follow than others (e.g., group tasks)?
• What skills did you use to play Shipwreck? Did you use any tricks to help you remember your actions? Did you use any strategies to form a group and work together?
**LEADER SHOUTS OUT:**  
**ACTION OF PARTICIPANTS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEADER SHOUTS OUT</th>
<th>ACTION OF PARTICIPANTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Swab the deck”</td>
<td>Pretend you are sweeping with a broom (Sweep up into the air)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Port”</td>
<td>Run to the left (Run to the right)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Starboard”</td>
<td>Run to the right (Run to the left)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Bow”</td>
<td>Run forward (Run backward)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Stern”</td>
<td>Run backward (Run forward)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Jellyfish”</td>
<td>Lay down on the floor on your back, jiggle your arms and legs (Hands and knees and shake)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“First mate”</td>
<td>Pretend to steer a wheel by holding hands out front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Seasick”</td>
<td>Pretend to get sick to your stomach (Walk around smiling and giving thumbs up)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Stormy weather”</td>
<td>Rock from side to side standing (Squat up and down)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Life jacket”</td>
<td>2 people link arms back to back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Captain’s ball”</td>
<td>2 people link one arm and dance around in a circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Mealtime”</td>
<td>1 person makes a table by getting on their hands and knees, and 2 other people sit across from each other and pretend to scoop food into their mouths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Rowboat”</td>
<td>4 people sit in a line with their knees up and pretend to row</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Starfish”</td>
<td>5 people link arms and form a circle, with each person bending one leg at the knee so their five legs spread out like a starfish</td>
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</tbody>
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**TIPS FOR SUCCESS:**

- For youth who may need additional support, start with three directions only. Provide visuals for each direction, if possible.
- Incorporate sports themes into this game by creating different themes from your lessons, such as the different soccer skills (e.g., when you call out “dribble down the field,” youth have to make the motion of dribbling a soccer ball; when you call out “pass up field,” two athletes team up and one pretend to pass to the other)