GSN SEL Research

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What is Social-Emotional Learning?

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.
What is Social-Emotional Learning?
Why Research SEL?

The Claims

**BETTER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:** achievement scores an average of 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive SEL instruction

**IMPROVED ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS:** greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behavior

**FEWER NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS:** decreased disruptive class behavior, noncompliance, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals

**REDUCED EMOTIONAL DISTRESS:** fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal.

(Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011)
Theoretical Framework

Substantial Research on School Climate

- Data-driven strategy that promotes healthy relationships, school connectedness, and dropout prevention. (CDC & P, 2009)
- Students with SEL skills have deeper understanding of the content, higher student engagement, reduced behavioral interruption, and improved pedagogy (Elias, Zins, Weissburg, Frey, Greenberg, Haynes, Kessler, Schwab-Stone, & Shriver, 1997; Zins, Elias, & Greenberg, 2007).
- Students use mental energy on learning rather than processing emotions (Brackett, Rivers, Reyes, & Salovey, 2012).
- Students are able to interact with their teachers and their peers in prosocial ways (McTigue & Rimm-Kaufman, 2011).
Systems View of School Climate

(Rudasill, et al. 2017, p. 38)
Colorado Rural Context

• Determination - rural based on the size of the district, the distance from the nearest large urban area, and a student enrollment of 6,500 students or less.
• As of December 2019, 147 of Colorado’s 178 districts are classified as rural.
• Though each rural district is unique, these districts share similar challenges:
  • geographic isolation
  • lack of access
  • inadequate funding
  • aging facilities
  • teacher attrition/shortages
  • and overextended staff.
Three Research Questions

(1) Does the *GSN Advocacy* curriculum significantly increase social and emotional competency in elementary students as measured by the DESSA?

(2) Does the *GSN Advocacy Program* significantly improve how secondary students perceive their internal and external worlds as measured by the Indigo Project Social Emotional Health Assessment?

(3) Does the *GSN Advocacy Program* significantly improve indicators of student engagement and well-being such as school attendance, behavior referrals, and sense of connectedness to teachers and peers?
Measures

K-5th Grade

• Devereux Student Strengths Assessment Mini
  • Designed to overcome practical obstacles to universal prevention screening.
  • The DESSA-Mini is entirely strength-based, assessing only protective factors rather than risk factors or negative behaviors.
  • Eight-question universal screener that purports to require a 1-minute teacher completion rate per child.
Measures

6th - 12th Grade

• Indigo Social Emotional Competency Assessment
  • DISC scores indicate natural responses to everyday circumstances.
  • Motivators describe why people do things: the internal desires that drive behaviors.
  • The top 5 skills point toward areas of talent that may or may not already be known

DISC Behaviors 6 Motivators 23 Skills

100 DATA POINTS
DESSA Pre-Post by SEL Competency

- Relationship skills: Pre Test = 2.79, Post Test = 2.89
- Social Awareness: Pre Test = 2.7, Post Test = 2.88
- Responsible Decision Making: Pre Test = 2.77, Post Test = 2.87
DESSA Pre-Post

by Rating Group

- Strength
- Typical
- Needs Support
DESSA Pre-Post

by Rating Group

Needs Support
- Needs Instruction: 4.8%
- Typical: 52.3%
- Strength: 42.9%

Typical
- Needs Instruction: 9.7%
- Typical: 67.3%

Strength
- Needs Instruction: 1.4%
- Typical: 26.5%
- Strength: 72.0%
Indigo Pre-Post

Middle School

- Self-Awareness: Pre-Test 4.93, Post-Test 4.9
- Self-Management: Pre-Test 4.82, Post-Test 4.88
- Social Awareness: Pre-Test 5.46, Post-Test 5.72
- Relationship Skills: Pre-Test 5.44, Post-Test 5.7
- Responsible Decision Making: Pre-Test 4.86, Post-Test 5.08
- Aggregate Score: Pre-Test 5.11, Post-Test 5.25

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Indigo Pre-Post

Middle School ~ High School Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>5.38</td>
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<td>4.82</td>
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<td>5.46</td>
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<td>5.44</td>
<td>6.24</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5.70</td>
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<td>5.11</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Indigo Quartile by Grade

Highest Quartile:
- Under 2.5 GPA: 5.10%
- 2.5 - 3.5 GPA: 23.50%
- 3.5 - 4.0 GPA: 67.30%
- Above 4.0 GPA: 4.10%

Mid-High Quartile:
- Under 2.5 GPA: 4.20%
- 2.5 - 3.5 GPA: 33.00%
- 3.5 - 4.0 GPA: 58.60%
- Above 4.0 GPA: 4.20%

Mid-Low Quartile:
- Under 2.5 GPA: 6.50%
- 2.5 - 3.5 GPA: 40.50%
- 3.5 - 4.0 GPA: 47.00%
- Above 4.0 GPA: 6.00%

Lowest Quartile:
- Under 2.5 GPA: 10.30%
- 2.5 - 3.5 GPA: 51.50%
- 3.5 - 4.0 GPA: 33.00%
- Above 4.0 GPA: 5.20%
Grade Expectations by Quartile

- Students in the lowest quartile of SEL competence underperform expectations for the group as well as other groups.
- Students in the highest quartile of SEL competence outperform expectations for the group as well as other groups.
Students overall growth in Social Emotional Competence is a significantly positive predictor of their connectedness to teachers at the end of the year.
So What?

Primary students increased relationship skills, social awareness & responsible decision making.

There is a sobering effect of teacher ratings of students between the beginning of the year and the end of the year.

The majority of the primary students were at typical or strength by the end of the year.

Approximately 1 in 4 typical students demonstrated SEL as an area of strength by the end of the year.

Approximately 1 in 4 students that were strong were most likely miscategorized at the beginning of the year or had a life event.

Primary students attending schools utilizing the GSN curriculum demonstrate significant growth on indicators of social emotional learning.
High school students perceive themselves as being highly competent at the beginning of the year and through participation are more likely to have a more accurate rating.

All secondary students in the lowest quartile demonstrated the most significant amount of growth by the end of the year. The majority of the lowest quartile students moved up by the end of the year.

Students in the lowest quartile of SEL competence underperform academic expectations while students in the highest quartile of SEL competence outperform academic expectations for the group.

Students overall growth in Social Emotional Competence is a significantly positive predictor of their connectedness to teachers at the end of the year.

Secondary students attending schools utilizing the GSN curriculum demonstrate significant growth on indicators of social emotional learning.
So What?

Taken Together

- Students demonstrate improvement in Social Emotional Competency when attending a school using the GSN curriculum.

- There is a sobering effect in both teacher and student rating between the beginning and end of the year. This is most likely due to a better understanding of the social emotional competencies.

- Students significantly improve in the indicators that have been shown by research to increase outcomes including grades and adult-student connectedness.
Now What?

There is a need to continue to assess the impact of the GSN curriculum and isolate its effect through use of intervention and control groups.
Thank You & Questions

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