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The Positive Impact of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):
Promoting Academic Achievement - April 2018

This resource guide, which is one of a series on this topic, includes research and other recent informative articles pulled from literature and the Library’s educational database service for schools, programs, service providers and families focusing on the reciprocal connection between social and emotional learning (SEL) and increased academic achievement for children and youth in diverse early care and classroom settings in ways that support and engage all learners to be successful. It should be noted that it does not represent the full scope of resources and information available on this topic nor serve as an endorsement of a particular resource.

Introductory Article:

The Positive Impact of Social and Emotional Learning for Kindergarten to Eighth-Grade Students: Findings from Three Scientific Reviews


This report summarizes results from three large-scale reviews of research on the impact of social and emotional learning (SEL) programs on elementary- and middle-school students -- that is, programs that seek to promote various social and emotional skills. Collectively the three reviews included 317 studies and involved 324,303 children. SEL programs yielded multiple benefits in each review and were effective in both school and after-school settings and for students with and without behavioral and emotional problems. They were also effective across the K-8 grade range and for racially and ethnically diverse students from urban, rural, and suburban settings. SEL programs improved students’ social-emotional skills, attitudes about self and others, connection to school, positive social behavior, and academic performance; they also reduced students’ conduct problems and emotional distress.

Given the positive findings outlined in this report, the authors recommend that federal, state, and local policies and practices encourage the broad implementation of well-designed, evidence-based SEL programs during and after school.

To learn more:

For access to additional educational resources available through the SERC Library from its electronic journal database service and topical research LibGuides as well as in-person from the various instructional, assessment and other collections, please consider becoming a Library member. Membership is free and you can join online by following the link provided below.

SERC Library Topical Literature Search:
The Positive Impact of Social and Emotional Learning: Academic Achievement - April 2018

List of Sources:


Links to Information

Academic learning + social-emotional learning = national priority

Aligning Preschool through High School Social and Emotional Learning Standards: A Critical and Doable Next Step

Coaching, Not Correcting...Model for Minority Students

Differential Effect of Social-emotional Behaviors on Academic Achievement of Language-Minority Students

ESSA opens school door to social-emotional learning

Implementation, Sustainability, and Scaling Up of Social-Emotional and Academic Innovations in Public School

Patterns of Early Reading and Social Skills Associated With Academic Success in Elementary School

Reviving Oral Reading Practices with English Learners by Integrating Social-Emotional Learning

Social-Emotional Factors and Academic Outcomes among Elementary-Aged Children

Social-Emotional Learning...Promote Prosocial and Academic Skills Among Middle School Students With Disabilities

Social-emotional skills Can Boost Common Core Implementation

The Connection Between Social-emotional Learning and Learning Disabilities: Implications for Intervention

The Role of Social-Emotional Mediators on Middle School Students’ Academic Growth...an Evidence-Based Intervention

Using Social and Emotional Learning to Foster Academic Achievement in Secondary Mathematics