Social and Emotional Learning
for Traditionally Underserved Populations

December 4, 2017
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Today’s Presenters

**Framing Remarks**  
Logan Beyer, American Youth Policy Forum

**SEL for Students with Disabilities**  
Dr. David Lichtenstein, Psychologist and Classroom Team Leader, Bradley Schools (Rhode Island); Clinical Assistant Professor, Brown University

**SEL for English Language Learners**  
Dr. Sara Castro-Olivo, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, Texas A&M University

**SEL for Justice-Involved Youth**  
Melissa Svigelj-Smith, Teacher, Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center (Ohio)

**Discussant**  
Jennifer Brown Lerner, Assistant Director for Policy and Partnerships, National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, the Aspen Institute

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Melissa: @svme
Jennifer: @AspenSEAD

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Opening Remarks

Logan Beyer
Consultant
American Youth Policy Forum
@AYPF_Tweets
Social and Emotional Learning and Traditionally Underserved Populations

Policy Brief Overview  |  Logan Beyer
What were the goals in writing this brief?

1. Consider the impact of the growing SEL movement on our most vulnerable students

2. Capture the current state of research and practice to determine next steps
Why SEL?

Why “social and emotional learning”?

- **Proven efficacy**: SEL improves attendance, school climate, long-term health and employability outcomes, and test scores.
- **Building political will**: ESSA; state policy; Aspen National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development.
- **But generalizable?**: Goal of this AYPF Brief...
Why “traditionally underserved” students?
Why “traditionally underserved” students?

Negative Influences: trauma, abuse, neglect, instability, isolation, disability, discrimination, structural inequality, acculturation

Positive Influences: strong family bonds, safe environment, inclusive and accepting community, role-models, explicit SEL programming
Who?

**Youth with Disabilities:** youth with a qualifying diagnosis of intellectual disability, hearing/speech/language/visual/orthopedic/other health impairment, emotional disturbance, autism, traumatic brain injury, or specific learning disability under IDEA

**English Language Learners:** students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, and who require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses

**Justice-Involved Youth:** children in contact with the juvenile justice system, due to probation, detainment, or incarceration
How to obtain and organize the facts?

Research – what do we know?

Practice – what do we do?

Interviews
Key Points:

What are the key takeaways?

1. SEL has tremendous potential to make an impact for underserved students

2. Researchers and practitioners across the country are already working to making an impact through SEL

3. There is still much to learn, implement, and legislate before SEL is fully accessible to the students who need it most
SEL for Students with Disabilities

Dr. David Lichtenstein
Psychologist and Classroom Team Leader
Bradley Schools

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SEL AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

DAVID P. LICHTENSTEIN, PH.D.
LIFESPAN SCHOOL SOLUTIONS/BROWN UNIVERSITY
WHAT ARE THE BRADLEY SCHOOLS? WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS?

• Network of therapeutic day schools for children whose emotional, psychiatric, learning,and developmental needs prevent them from being able to access education in a public-school setting

• Children range in age from 5 to 21, spectrum of needs across most mental health diagnoses for children/early adulthood; typically students have multiple challenges, also including trauma, poverty, family mental health issues

• Kids need SEL skills to manage challenges regarding academic, emotional, social, communication difficulties;

• But kids also in some ways have more SEL skills in certain areas – so much adult attention/therapy time!
A BRIEF WORD ABOUT THE WORD DISABILITY

• Useful, descriptive, in accordance with language of special education law

• But: most of these factors really fall more on a continuum

• Social Emotional Learning helps to highlight/reinforce a skills-based approach rather than a disability approach
MULTIPLE LEVELS OF SEL IN SCHOOLS

• Whole school culture of SEL – using PBIS, Responsive Classroom, etc.; articulating school culture/values and intentionally teaching/supporting them

• Classroom level interventions – Incredible Years, PATHS, many other critical thinking/coping strategy programs and skills groups

• Individual level- bringing in key resources (school MSW, counselor, OT, S/L, teacher, behavior specialist) to address areas of difficulty and try to teach skills
HOW DO WE TEACH SEL AT THE BRADLEY SCHOOLS?

- **Whole school**: PBIS program (Bradley School North STARS – Students are Kind, Try their best, Act with Awareness, Ready to Cope, Stay Safe); incentive system and opportunities to reinforce

- **Classroom level**: skill groups (social, coping, S/L, OT); classroom incentives to target SEL (individualized as well as classroom-wide for effort in schoolwork, etc.)

- **Individual level**: 1:1 meetings with students, coaching in the moment to practice skills and assist in social/emotional processes; individual behavior programs provide incentives and tracking around small goals (e.g., handling transitions; trying things that are hard; basic social skills, etc.)

- IEPs reflect SEL goals for students – trying to track what we are teaching, and vice versa
DRILLING DEEPER: HOW DOES SEL DEVELOPMENT WORK FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS?

• It isn’t easy!

• **Opportunities to practice** – e.g., social skills in group, unstructured time, with staff coaching; lots of individual attention

• **Taking away avoidant behaviors** that have helped students miss non-preferred (e.g., anxiety, school/work refusal) – by not sending kids home or ending their day with behaviors, have to go back & confront challenges; new behaviors emerge

• **Reasonable consequences** that they don’t want (e.g., restricted privileges for unsafe behavior) mean they have to do something different

• Through incentives, coaching, and language, heavy emphasis on building coping skills and making them concrete

• **Setting goals around SEL skills** both for and with students

• Attempting to **incorporate families and outside providers** with regular phone calls, IEP goals around target areas
Audience Q&A

To submit live questions, please use the “Questions” box on the control panel.
SEL for English Language Learners

Dr. Sara Castro-Olivo
Associate Professor of Educational Psychology
Texas A&M University
@s_castro_olivo

#SEL4all
Social-Emotional Learning for English Language Learners

Sara Castro-Olivo, PhD, NCSP
Texas A&M University
Socio-Emotional Needs of ELLs

• Nearly 10% of the overall student population in the U.S. receives ELL services in public schools (NCES, 2016).

• Data from national samples suggests that ELLs are at higher risk for social-emotional and behavioral problems than mainstream student populations due to the many life challenges they usually face (Gonzales & Kim, 1997; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008).
  – Some of the challenges ELL students face at disproportionate rates are:
    • **Acculturative stress** (Castro-Olivo et al., 2013; Kulis et al., 2009).
    • **Familial acculturation gaps** (Martinez et al., 2005).
    • **Parents limited ability to be involved in school** activities due to language barriers and limited familiarity with the American school system (Baird, 2015).
    • In addition to rough neighborhoods, language barriers, perceived discrimination, low SES, etc. (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008).

• The research on the mental health needs of ELL students is limited (Alegria et al, 2008; Vega & Rumbaut, 1991)

• Lack of appropriate services, if any!
Models for making cultural adaptations/validations

1. Keep the Big Ideas of the existing intervention.

2. Adaptations must be based on sound theory.

3. Acknowledge protective and risk factors of target population.

4. Continually evaluate own worldviews and values.

5. Establish ongoing collaboration with students and community members.

6. Make culturally-responsive adaptations that include: language, examples, and assessments.
Cultural dimensions to consider when making/planning a cultural adaptation
(Bernal, Bonilla & Bellido, 1995)

- **Language**– Match target population’s dominant language
- **Persons**– Hire interventionists who are bilingual and bicultural
- **Metaphors**- Use examples that are part of the folk culture of the target population
- **Content**- Include additional theory-based content related to target population’s protective and risk factors
- **Concepts**- Include additional concepts that will help the target population link their risk and protective factors with the overall goal of the evidence-based program
- **Goals**- Make sure the goal of the program matches the goals and values of the target population
- **Methods**- Use instructional methods that are acceptable by the target population
- **Context**- Make sure to consider the context of implementation (i.e. legal climate) for intervention, assessment, etc.
Project F.U.E.R.S.A.S.

• **Facilitating Universal Emotional Resiliency for the Social and Academic Success of ELLs.**

  – Socio-cultural approach to:
    • School-based SEL training for youth
    • Culturally responsive SEL parent training
    • Culturally responsive SEL teacher preparation
Overview of Jóvenes Fuertes: Culturally adapted version of Strong Teens (for grades 6-12)

- About Jóvenes Fuertes and Ethnic Pride
- Understanding Your Feelings (Part 1)
- Understanding Your Feelings (Part 2)
- Dealing with Anger
- Understanding Other People’s Feelings
- Clear Thinking (Part 1)
- Clear Thinking (Part 2)
- Power of Positive Thinking
- Solving People Problems
- Letting Go of Stress
- Achieving Your Goals
- Finishing UP!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Name and Number</th>
<th>Skills Focus</th>
<th>Cultural Adaptation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Latino Roots (Lesson 1)</td>
<td>Overview of program, build rapport, behavior expectations during lessons</td>
<td>Latino ethnic pride Latino roots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Your Feelings (Lesson 2 and 3)</td>
<td>Increasing awareness of one’s own emotions and emotional variability</td>
<td>Learn new concepts of acculturation and acculturative stress. Learn to identify acculturative stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with Anger (Lesson 4)</td>
<td>Anger management, learning to steps to avoid overreacting to triggers</td>
<td>Learning to deal with discrimination and other anger-triggering situations related to culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding your Other’s (Lesson 5)</td>
<td>Empathy Training (understanding other’s perspectives)</td>
<td>Learning how to cope with familial/ and other acculturative gaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Thinking (Lesson 6 and 7)</td>
<td>Learning to recognize thinking errors</td>
<td>Ex amples related to English Proficiency and other cultural - specific situations</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Power of Positive Thinking (Lesson 8)</td>
<td>Replacing irrational thoughts with positive thinking</td>
<td>Examples related to English Proficiency and other cultural - specific situations</td>
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<td>So Iving People Problems (Lesson 9)</td>
<td>Conflict Resolution Model</td>
<td>Culture - specific examples and role plays in school and home settings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letting Go of Stress (Lesson 10)</td>
<td>Relaxation Training</td>
<td>Culture - specific examples and discussions related to letting go of acculturative stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Change (Lesson 11)</td>
<td>Learning to set and attain goals</td>
<td>Culture - specific examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finishing Up (Lesson 12)</td>
<td>Review of all main concepts</td>
<td>Emphasize the use of skills to reduce acculturative stress and other cultural conflicts in school and at home.</td>
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</tbody>
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Jóvenes Fuertes: Empirical Evidence

• Castro-Olivo & Merrell (2012). *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion.*
  – Results:
    • Strong effect sizes on SEL knowledge and social validity
    • Promising acculturative stress outcomes.

  – Results:
    • Strong effect sizes on SEL knowledge, resiliency, and social validity

  – Results:
    • Strong effect sizes on SEL knowledge, SEL resiliency and social validity
F.U.E.R.S.A.S.
Parent Component

1. Introductions and Overview of the US school system
2. Immigrant Families: Navigating multiple cultures
3. SEL Skills I: Self and social-awareness
4. SEL Skills II: Positive thinking/ Cognitive restructuring
5. SEL Skills II: Problem Solving
6. Establishing academic success from home: Involvement and Supervision
Implications for Research and Practice

• Parents, youth and teachers report high levels of social acceptability/validity of the program.

• School/community settings were found to be appropriate for the implementation of the F.U.E.R.S.A.S. youth and parent component.

• Interventions need to incorporate ways to elevate protective factors and neutralize risks.

• Need for more randomized research studies.
Selected References


Contact Information

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Audience Q&A

To submit live questions, please use the "Questions" box on the control panel.
SEL for Justice-Involved Youth

Melissa Svigelj-Smith
Teacher
Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center
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#SEL4all @AYPF_Tweets
It Takes a Community

SEL & PBIS at a Juvenile Detention Center

Melissa Marini Švigelj-Smith
I cannot be a teacher without exposing who I am.

Paulo Freire
Cleveland, Ohio, & the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center

My Classroom
I am thankful to be in school.

For a family that loves me

For life

For another day

Name ___________________________ Date _______________________

Write one thing that you are grateful (thankful) for today. Finding things to be thankful for helps improve our overall happiness. Happier people are more successful people.

I am thankful to have students back in class!

Remember to practice 4-7-8 breathing to help you stay focused and calm.

Watch the video and write what to do for each step of 4-7-8 breathing:

4

7

8

Growth Mindset (2 minutes)

1. What is growth mindset?

2. What happens in the brain when you learn new things?

3. What should people with a growth mindset do when something is hard?

CNN STUDENT NEWS (10 minute show) Write 5 things that you learned from the news today.

1. _____________________________

2. _____________________________

3. _____________________________

4. _____________________________

5. _____________________________

DAILY REFLECTION

Explain what you did well today in at least one complete sentence.

Explain how you would rate your performance in class today on a scale of 10 to 1, and explain why you ranked yourself that way. 10= I did my best. 5= I tried half the time. 1= I did not try at all

Write a complete sentence about one of your goals in school. It could be that you would like to improve

and explain why.

______________________________

Choose to complete ONE of the writing prompts below. Circle which one you are completing.

1. I wish that you would have known today that I...

2. I am really proud that today I...

3. My favorite part of today was...

4. I wonder if today I could...

1. ___________miss my little brother

2. ___________kept to myself

3. ___________drawing

4. ___________painting

5. ___________not cursing so much

How we start each class...
I will help others. I will stay positive. I will stay away from negativity.

I will earn my credits. I will graduate. I won’t try to finesse Ms. Smith.

I will make my grandma proud. I will practice 4-7-8 breathing.
SEL & Art Grant from the NoVo Foundation
Schools can teach about living, not just about how to make a living.

...super happy to come to this class...

Thank you... having an overall positive vibration in a pretty negative environment.

Dear Ms. Smith,

Thank you for helping me get through my first couple of days in school.

Sincerely,

[Name]

I enjoy coming to school every day.

...focusing on graduating...
I’m in 4 groups to keep a growth mindset & trying to strive for better.

I really appreciate the Harry Potter books.

I never would have been able to do the things I did & display great work ethic and I did that from having a positive growth mindset...

I tried to stay up & keep a smile on my face...

Compassionate Classrooms to help students succeed

Oh!! I’m writing a book... I’m gonna try to prevent other young males from cities...
My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.
~Desmond Tutu
Audience Q&A

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Discussion

Jennifer Brown Lerner
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National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development
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Overview of the National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development

Jennifer Brown Lerner

December 4, 2017
<table>
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<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shared Understanding</td>
<td>A clear and shared understanding of what integrated social, emotional, and academic development in K-12 education means and looks like as well as why it is important</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community-Driven Movement</td>
<td>A movement that acknowledges the central role of communities in social, emotional and academic development integration and galvanizes support among educators, families, out-of-school providers, and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Agenda</td>
<td>A comprehensive change agenda that provides clear and compelling recommendations in research, policy, and practice to help achieve the full integration of social, emotional, and academic development</td>
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aspensead.org
• Social, Emotional, and Academic Development matters

• Social and Emotional Skills are malleable

• Schools play a central role in Social, Emotional, and Academic Development

• Focusing on Social and Emotional Development is worth it

K-12 Education Ecosystem
Opportunities Moving Forward

• **Robust research agenda** leveraging what we know and what we still need to know inclusive of the needs of vulnerable populations

• **Practice change agenda** focused on developing environments for all students to be engaged, supported, and engaged

• **Policy recommendations** to embrace & encourage integrated approach to learning

• **A sustained movement** across research, practice, and policy to ensure each student experiences learning environments to prepare them for success in education, the workforce, and civic society
To submit live questions, please use the “Questions” box on the control panel.

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Key Resource

Policy Brief:
Social and Emotional Learning and Traditionally Underserved Populations


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- Materials and recording will be posted on our website: www.aypf.org

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