



# ***THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE (TWAICB)*** **HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**"Social Emotional Learning  
& Its Connection to Human Rights Education"  
(Excerpt)**

**CURRICULUM AND RESOURCE GUIDE  
FOR TEACHERS & ORGANIZATION LEADERS**

***The World As It Could Be* Human Rights Education Program**  
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**PART IV. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND ITS CONNECTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION**

**A. Definition of Social Emotional Learning (SEL)**

- CASAL, the Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning (<http://www.casal.org>) defines Social and emotional learning (SEL) as 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. The following are the core competencies associated with SEL:
  - Self-awareness: Accurately assessing one’s feelings, interests, values, and strengths; maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-confidence;
  - Self-management: Regulating one’s emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles; setting and monitoring progress toward personal and academic goals; expressing emotions appropriately;
  - Social awareness: Taking the perspective of and empathizing with others; recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences; recognizing and using family, school, and community resources;
  - Relationship management: Establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding cooperative relationships; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed;
  - Responsible decision making: Making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and probable consequences of various actions; applying decision-making skills to academic and social situations; contributing to the well-being of one’s school and community.

**B. How SEL is connected with the UDHR and Human Rights Education**

- There are two primary aspects of how SEL is connected:
  - The lesson plans that follow involve students and their teachers engaging in exercises and discussions that can stir up emotional reactions. For example, in Lesson Plan 3, students are asked to write, relate and then discuss stories involving their experiences with human rights being respected and disrespected. One student’s story may cause other students to feel uncomfortable, sad or angry. It is vital to create a safe environment for students, as well as teachers, to exchange their opinions and feelings so that empathy and learning can result from the exchanges. Awareness and nurturing of SEL competencies will help encourage respectful dialogue, while honoring the emotions likely to manifest.
  - Realizing the rights called for in each UDHR Article is a complex process. After all, one person’s right to free expression may impinge on that same right of another. Developing and nurturing SEL competencies enables youth and adults to appreciate and value different perspectives, and be more open to shifting their own positions so as to foster mutual respect, understanding, and peaceful, constructive problem solving.
- We have found that learning about the UDHR through the arts has encouraged students to act more respectfully toward others, in part because they are now aware of the internationally agreed-upon framework that defines every person’s human rights in a way that supports their embodiment of the UDHR principles. Being aware of and then integrating the available tools to nurture SEL competencies is likely to enhance the results of learning about the UDHR, while also advancing the overall healthy development of students so as to fully realize the following benefits of SEL as identified through research studies:

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- *The research clearly demonstrates that SEL programming significantly improves children’s academic performance on standardized tests. Moreover, compared to control groups, children who have participated in SEL programs have significantly better school attendance records, less disruptive classroom behavior, like school more, and perform better in school. The research also indicates that children who have participated in SEL programs are less likely than children in control groups to be suspended or otherwise disciplined. These outcomes have been achieved through SEL’s impact on important mental health variables that improve children’s social relationships, increase their attachment to school and motivation to learn, and reduce anti-social, violent, and drug-using behaviors. The research also indicates that SEL programs with the best outcomes are multi-year in duration, use interactive rather than purely knowledge-based instructional methods, and are integrated into the life of the school rather than being implemented as marginal add-ons. (CASEL, Safe and Sound, 2005)*

**Sources:**

Brackett, Marc A. & Rivers, Susan E., *Transforming Students’ Lives with Social and Emotional Learning*, Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, Yale University, <http://ei.yale.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Transforming-Students’-Lives-with-Social-and-Emotional-Learning.pdf>

CASAL, the Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning (<http://www.casal.org>)

Goleman, Daniel, <http://danielgoleman.info>

**C. Resources for SEL**

**Berkeley Public Schools Toolbox: A Social-emotional Learning Curriculum for K-6 Students**

<https://www.berkeleyschools.net/teaching-and-learning/toolbox/>

Berkley Public Schools created Toolbox: A Social-emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum to provide a research-based SEL learning curriculum that teaches critical social competencies necessary for academic and life success such as: resiliency, self-management, and responsible decision-making skills.

**CASEL, the Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning <http://www.casel.org>**

CASEL is an organization that has identified five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies. CASEL’s mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education from preschool through high school.

**Center for Responsive Schools/Responsive Classroom <http://www.responsiveclassroom.org>**

Responsive Classroom is a research- and evidence-based approach to education, recognized by CASEL as one of the most well-designed, evidence-based social and emotional learning programs.

**Goleman, Daniel, (1995) *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, Bantam Books.**

In this book, Daniel Goleman clearly explains Emotional Intelligence (EQ), that being the ability to recognize one’s own and other people’s emotions, to discriminate between different feelings and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior, and why EQ matters.

**Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility <http://morningsidecenter.org>**

This organization provides resources for educators to learn more about the ‘4 Rs’ of Social Emotional Learning that include: Reading, Writing, Respect, and Resolution.