

## The 21st Century Curriculum: The Arts, The Sciences and The Emotions

Fortunately, we don't have to choose between our kids getting good grades and becoming responsible, caring, honest, productive members of society. Research as shown that we can have both when "Social and Emotional Learning" (SEL) is ranked up there with academics as an educational priority.

Kids from K-12 do have a lot to learn academically. More than facts, the arts and sciences are the building blocks of every kid's future. As every parent and teacher knows, kids also have a lot to learn about social skills and handling their emotions. Intelligence quotient (**IQ**) assesses knowledge. Emotional quotient (**EQ**), also called emotional intelligence, is about the ability to identify, assess and control emotions — our own and those of others.

**SEL's focus is EQ.** According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning ([CASEL.org](http://CASEL.org)), SEL aims to help children develop competencies in five areas:

- Self-awareness, like knowing your strengths and limitations
- Self-management, like being able to stay in control and persevere through challenges
- Social awareness, like understanding and empathizing with others
- Relationship skills, being able to work in teams and resolve conflicts

- Responsible decision-making, like making ethical and safe choices.

Just as schools help kids develop academic competency, they can also teach the social and emotional skills that leads to high EQs, which helps ensure success both in school and "out in the world." In fact, a candidate's EQ has gained a lot of attention in business world too.



**IQ + EQ  
SUCCESS**

**The SEL Difference.** *How SEL Can Empower Children and Transform Schools, A National Teacher Survey reports*, "Teachers and administrators across the country explained that SEL transformed classrooms, schools, and districts by creating environments where both students and teachers wanted to come to school, build relationships, and learn together."

Statistics also show the value of SEL. According to CASEL, SEL programming significantly improves children's academic performance on standardized tests. Compared to control groups, kids in SEL programs perform better in school, have significantly better school attendance records, and exhibit less disruptive classroom behavior and less anti-social, violent, or drug-using behaviors.

**See SEL Grow!** Back in 1995 when Daniel Goleman first published "Emotional Intelligence," which was on the New York Times bestseller list for a year-and-a-half, there only a handful of programs teaching emotional intelligence skills to children. Now, tens of thousands of schools worldwide offer children SEL. "Just as students must attain a certain level of competence in math and language," Goleman said, "so too should they master these essential skills for living."

