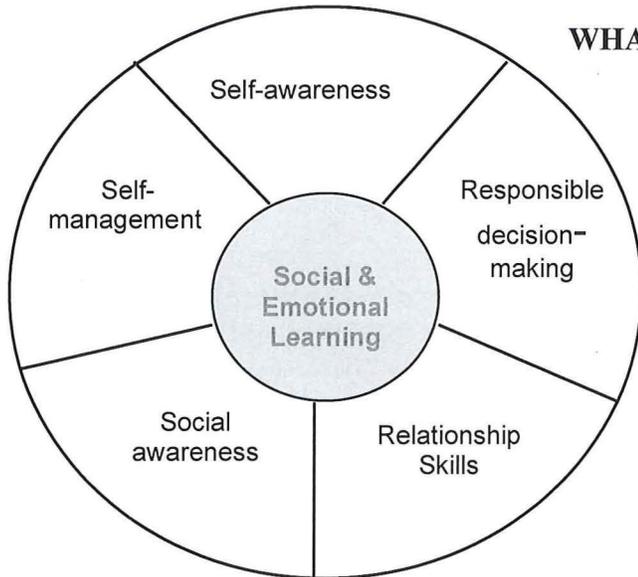


Social and Emotional Learning

Second Step, a Violence Prevention Curriculum



WHAT IS SOCIAL and EMOTIONAL LEARNING?

“Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process of developing social and emotional skills in the context of a safe, caring, well-managed, and engaging learning environment” (CASEL, 2010).

SEL is a framework for teaching students skills they need to put academic information to use. SEL programming includes things like prevention strategies for all students on bullying and cyberbullying, social skills curriculum and small group and one on one services for students who are in need of social and emotional support. SEL is a way to support positive behavior and strong self-esteem development.

Research shows us that children achieve greater academic success when schools teach more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. In schools where SEL Programming is in place, students’ standardized test scores in reading and math increase between 11%-17% (CASEL, 2010)!

As a part of SEL programming, Minneapolis Public Schools supports the Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum to teach social skills to PreK-8th grade students.

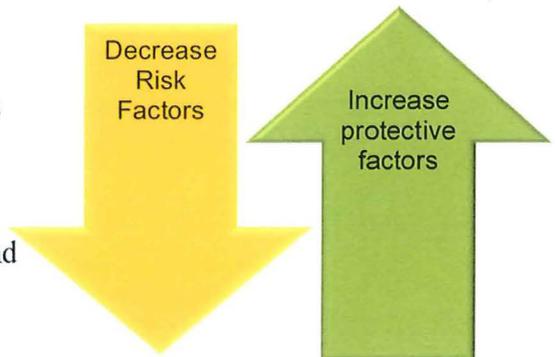


WHAT IS SECOND STEP?

Second Step is a research-based developmentally appropriate and comprehensive curriculum for PreK-8th grade. Second Step is the highest rated social skills curriculum, receiving the 5-star rating from the Federal Department of Education. It has been implemented in schools around the world for over 20 years.

HOW IS SECOND STEP DELIVERED?

Second Step is taught one lesson per week by the classroom teacher to all students in the class. The goal of Second Step is to decrease risk factors while increasing protective factors—focusing on building the strengths that students already have. The lessons are taught to every classroom in the school and reinforced throughout the school—with posters in hallways and the cafeteria and adults throughout the school fully trained in the program.



Second Step is broken down into three units in grades PreK-5 and five units in grades 6-8. The units are:

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten
Unit I: Empathy
Unit II: Emotion Management
Unit III: Problem Solving

Grades 1-5
Unit I: Empathy
Unit II: Problem Solving/
Impulse Control
Unit III: Anger Management

Grades 6-8
Unit I: Empathy and communication
Unit II: Bully Prevention
Unit III: Emotion Management
Unit IV: Problem Solving/Goal Setting
Unit V: Substance Abuse Prevention

HOW CAN PARENTS BE INVOLVED?

Second Step is a comprehensive program, so there are important elements that include parent, family, and community education and support. The Second Step curriculum includes letters that are sent home throughout the school year, informing parents and families of the topics that their students are learning in the lessons. Information is also sent home about skills that the students are taught: calming down strategies, problem-solving steps, anger management skills are just some examples.

Parents and families can use the information that is sent home to reinforce those same skills at home and in the community. For instance, when your children get into a fight at home, a parent can encourage them to take a deep breath and walk them through the problem-solving steps that are taught at school through second step and are sent home in parent letters or school newsletters.

Caregivers can also attend Second Step Family Nights, where the entire family can experience Second Step lessons designed specifically for family relationships.

WHO CAN I CONTACT TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT SEL AND SECOND STEP?

First you should contact your student's classroom teacher to find out when Second Step lessons are taught and if you can observe a lesson.

You can then find out who the school Second Step coordinator is and how you can be involved in Second Step Family Nights.

If you have a student who is at a school where Second Step is not taught, you can contact Kate Houghton (Kate.Houghton@mpls.k12.mn.us), Social Emotional Learning District Program Facilitator, or Julie Young Burns (JYB@mpls.k12.mn.us), Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator, for information on bringing Second Step to your school.

CASEL. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.casel.org>