



SEL Connection Information Guide

What is Social Emotional Learning ...and why should I teach it?

What is Social Emotional Learning?

We work with the [CASEL](#) model of Social Emotional Learning. In that sense, Social Emotional Learning is a process where, both children and adults, learn to manage their emotions, build and maintain positive self-worth, show empathy and understanding for others, and make decisions based in our faith. We understand that all of these areas are rooted in a deep, personal relationship with God and His Word.

We have identified 6 core areas that we, as Catholic educators, want to instill in our students and in our community as a whole. The sixth area, Catholic Identity, is intertwined in all lessons and is not a stand alone competency. We ask our children, students, and fellow adults to understand that building these core areas of SEL is a process and cannot be done overnight. However, with reflection and daily practice we are able to grow as people and walk closer with God on our journey of self discovery.

Why Should I teach Social Emotional Learning?

The positive impacts of Social Emotional Learning has been widely researched and SEL is found to be a developmentally appropriate way to engage our students in lifelong learning skills that not only affect themselves, but the people who they will interact with in their lives.

We want to help our students grow as human beings as well as in their academic skills. Thus, it has been shown that teaching SEL skills lead to better academic performances and classroom behavior, which lends itself to less restrictive classroom management by the teacher.

When we teach our students to manage themselves and build a sense of trust through responsible decision making and empathy, we are then able to establish a positive classroom community where students feel safe emotionally and physically.

How can I fit this in to my already packed daily schedule?

Our SEL lessons were designed as mini-lessons and are ready to go for a quick boost of self love, social awareness, and Godly action. We have also incorporated extensions if you want to make it a full lesson. As fellow teachers, we have found the best way to teach Social Emotional Learning is through short and explicit mini-lessons. For example, our lessons can be used during carpet time to start your day, the beginning of a Religion lesson to kickstart your class, or during short breaks that we sometimes experience between electives or assemblies.

After a mini-lesson, you want to keep the verbiage going throughout your day and year. This keeps the themes alive and your students in the mindset that Social Emotional Learning can happen during all moments of the day and we are called to use those tools throughout our lives.

It is also important to read the SEL Teacher Guide to make sure that you are prepared to make a quick and meaningful impact on your students. Preparing in this way can also give you the time to tailor the content, if you wish, to your specific students and class. You can pick scenarios that you often see or use read-aloud books that have a special place in your class's heart.