

# Building a K-12 SEL Curriculum A Tool Kit

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# What is an SEL Curriculum?

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A ***Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)*** curriculum is a structured framework designed to foster the development of social and emotional competencies. Although designed for educational settings like schools, the curriculum can be adapted for other environments such as community programs or counseling agencies.

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The purpose of the SEL curriculum is to help students develop the attitudes, knowledge and competencies/skills necessary to be successful in social-emotional development.

School Counselors play an important role in the development/implementation of an SEL curriculum as it is a component of the Comprehensive School Counseling Program.

What's the Difference Between  
Developing a SEL Curriculum and a  
Mental Health Literacy Curriculum?

# Similarities and Differences

## Similarities

- Focus on Emotional Well being
- Skill Development
- Positive Behavior
- Integration into Educational Programs

## Differences

**SEL:** Primarily focuses on social and emotional skills development, such as managing emotions, building relationships, and making responsible decisions

**Mental Health Literacy:** Focuses specifically on understanding mental health, recognizing symptoms of mental health issues, reducing stigma, and knowing when and how to seek help.

# SEL and MH Literacy Can Include:

Strategy	Approach
Increase Students' Mental Health Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver classroom-based mental health education curricula</li><li>• Implement peer modeling programs</li></ul>
Promote Mindfulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver classroom-based mindfulness education</li><li>• Dedicate time for students to independently practice mindfulness</li><li>• Offer small group mindfulness activities</li></ul>
Promote Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide classroom instruction focused on building social skills and emotional development</li><li>• Offer targeted education focused on teaching social skills and emotional development</li></ul>
Enhance Connectedness Among Students, Staff, and Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide relationship-building programs</li></ul>
Provide Psychosocial Skills Training and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote acceptance and commitment to change</li><li>• Provide cognitive behavioral interventions</li><li>• Engage students in coping skills training groups</li></ul>
Support School Staff Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offer mindfulness-based training programs</li><li>• Provide therapeutic resources</li></ul>

# SEL Goals

The goals of implementing SEL curricula include enhancing students' academic success, improving behavior and social interactions, reducing emotional distress, and preparing individuals to navigate challenges in school, work, and life effectively.

What do your students need? How do you know?

# SEL Curriculum Components Include:

- 1. Self-Awareness:** Helping individuals recognize and understand their emotions, strengths, and areas for growth.
- 2. Self-Management:** Teaching skills to regulate emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively. This can include techniques for stress management, impulse control, and goal-setting.
- 3. Social Awareness:** Promoting empathy and understanding of others' perspectives and emotions. This involves recognizing and appreciating diversity.
- 4. Relationship Skills:** Providing strategies for building and maintaining healthy relationships, including communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution.
- 5. Responsible Decision-Making:** Teaching individuals to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions, considering ethical standards and consequences.



# Where Do We Begin?

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## What informs the development of a SEL curriculum?

- ASCA Mindsets and Behavior Standards
- International School Counseling Standards
- School Improvement Goals
- School data: School Survey, etc
- Faculty and Staff Feedback
- Student Needs
- Family/Community Needs

# Gather Information

Teacher/staff input

Student input

Surveys

Attendance data

Behavior data

Other data sources?

What do I do with all of this information?

# Curriculum Design

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SEL curriculum is a school wide effort that includes school counselors in consultation and collaboration with teachers, admins, and other school staff.

SEL component is one of the 3 domains: AC, CCR, and SEL

School counselors may have SEL lessons in place, including programs delivered school-wide.

Include all of these in the school wide SEL curriculum!

# Curriculum Design

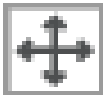
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**How do you prioritize what lessons should be delivered to each grade level?**

Consider the **attitudes, knowledge, and skills do we want our students to acquire** as a result of participating in the SEL curriculum

- What does your school data tell you?
- What gaps do you see in behavior? relationships? Problem solving?
- What do your students, teachers, and families tell us?

# Building a Scope and Sequence



SAMPLE Activity	ASCA Student Standard(s)	Grade Level	DOMAIN(s)	TIER (1-2-3)	Goals / Measurable Outcome
Classroom Lesson Making New Friends		K	SEL	1	Each Kindergarten student will talk with a classmate they have not met before.
Classroom Lesson: Empathy & Anti-bullying (Harmony)	<i>8.SS.4: Demonstrate empathy.</i>	5	SEL	1	Decrease number of behavioral infractions by 5%.
Classroom Lesson: Cool Things I've Done	<i>8-LS.6 High-quality standards for tasks and activities</i>	8	SEL	1	Students journal interests & life experiences to develop a sense of accomplishment.
Classroom Lesson: My Possible Self	<i>SMS 5. Perseverance to achieve long and short-term</i>	10	SEL	1	Each student creates a develop visual representations of their dreams and goals to promote the hoped- for self. This can be used later on as part of the personal statement.

# Curriculum Delivery

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- SEL curricula are often structured around lessons, activities, and discussions that encourage reflection, role-playing, and collaborative learning. They can be integrated into various subjects and activities throughout the school day to ensure comprehensive development.
- The curriculum is delivered by school counselors, teachers and other school personnel.
- School counseling curriculum is delivered through classroom instruction and small group activities.

# Delivery Tips

**WHEN:** the curriculum can be delivered monthly or weekly depending upon the lessons/topics selected

**HOW:** School counselors can collaborate with teachers at their grade level or department meetings to develop a plan to deliver a curriculum.

**WHO:** the school counseling curriculum is delivered by school counselors, classroom teachers, school social workers, school psychologists, and other school-based professionals.

# Instructional Strategies

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- Role playing
- Interviews
- Integrating music, art, drama, or poetry
- Journal writing
- Debate
- Discussions
- Software
- Manipulatives



# Checking In

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- 1) What do you already have in place to support SEL activities and lessons at your school?
- 2) What challenges might get in the way of delivering an SEL curriculum for all students?
- 3) What supports does your school need to implement a SEL curriculum?

# Tools to Design and Deliver your School Counseling Curriculum

SCOPE AND  
SEQUENCE  
SAMPLE -  
handout

[NYSSCA  
Curriculum  
Lessons  
Repository](#)

[2021 ASCA  
Lesson Plan  
Template.](#)

# FREE: NYSSCA K-12 School Counseling Lesson Repository

- Gates Foundation funded and vetted to provide NYS school counselors (and others) with resource to meet this regulation.
- The lessons were identified by utilizing publicly available curriculum adapted to utilize the [2021 ASCA Lesson Plan Template](#).
- 312 lessons developed to date in grades K-12
  - Eight lessons per grade in each ASCA domain (Academic , CCR, SEL)

# NYSSCA lessons plans include the details:

- Aligned with the Mindset and Behavior Standards
- How to deliver this lesson - script
- The activities the students will complete
- The materials I need
- How to assess success

# ASCA Lesson Plan Sample



## Lesson Plan

School Counselor:	
Lesson Plan Title:	GrK-AC-Lesson 1 - Introductions – 1st Day of School
	<input type="checkbox"/> X Single Classroom Lesson <input type="checkbox"/> Unit of Classroom Lessons: Lesson _____ of _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Small-Group Session Lessons: Lesson _____ of _____
Target Audience:	Kindergarten

Evidence Base: select one

- Best Practice (*commonly used and believed to be of high quality*)
- X Action Research (*individual investigates own practice to improve content/delivery*)
- Research-Informed (*a review of research provides foundation for content/delivery*)
- Evidence-Based (*highest level of evidence, results published in peer-reviewed journal*)

<b>ASCA Student Standards Targeted:</b>		<b>Student Learning Objectives:</b>
Identify 1–2 student standards relevant for this targeted group and goal: <i>(Best practice = select one) focus</i>		For each of the selected student standards, write or select 1–2 learning objectives
<i>M&amp;B#</i>	<i>Mindsets &amp; Behaviors Statement</i>	<i>Student Learning Objectives</i>
B-SS 2	Positive, respectful and supportive relationships with students who are similar to and different from them.	Student(s) will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students will be able to introduce themselves to others.</li> <li>- Students will be able to work together to complete their game.</li> </ul>
B-LS 4.	Self-motivation and self- direction for learning.	

Check one:

Academic Development     College & Career Readiness     Social-Emotional Development

# Closing: Emotional Check-out

Super  
overwhelmed

Stressed

It is what it is

Chillaxed

Super excited!



1

2

3

4

5



On a scale of 1 to 5, how are you feeling developing and delivering the school counseling curriculum?

# RECAP: SEL Curriculum

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- Is developmentally appropriate and reflects the needs of students in your school
- Aligns with OR is a component of your school counseling curriculum
- Creates opportunities for students to achieve the ASCA Mindset and Behavior standards OR ISCA standards
- Ensures that all students benefit from wellness and life growth experiences for increasing student success
- Allows the counselor, in collaboration with teachers and staff, to interact with students in a proactive, preventative manner

# My Next Step

Identify one action step you can take to help you build your curriculum



# Key Resources

- NYSSCA Counseling Curriculum Lesson Repository: <http://nyssca.org/curriculum/>
- Harmony (formerly Sanford Harmony) <https://harmony-academy.org/>
- Overcoming Obstacles <https://www.overcomingobstacles.org/>
- Student Success Skills <https://studentsuccessskills.com/>
- Missouri Department of Education – school counseling lessons in revision <https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/school-counseling/curriculum>
- Erika's lighthouse school- [Erikaslighthouse.org](http://Erikaslighthouse.org)
- Casel- <https://casel.org>