SEL Kernels: Turning Social-Emotional Learning Into Components

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Plan

• Framing
• Background: Science & Practice of SEL
• Innovation in SEL → Kernels
  – Projects
  – Implementation
  – Partnerships
FRAMING
Developmental & Prevention Science:
Knowledge $\leftrightarrow$ Action
Developmental & Prevention Science: Knowledge ↔ Action

- What we know: Research
  - What did we learn?
  - What should we focus on, and how?
- What we expect to change: Assessment and Evaluation
  - Did it have an effect?
- What we do: Strategies and Programs
Partnerships in Intervention Development, Implementation, Testing & Expansion

Field Building: Defining and Increasing Transparency & Access

Developmental and Evaluation Research

EASEL Lab Areas of Work
BACKGROUND:
SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF SEL
SEL skills and competencies include...

What does SEL work typically look like?

1. Programs: multi-component, complex, largely inflexible
2. They are “effective”
   - multi-program studies, trials of individual programs, meta-analyses
3. Buy-in is limited, resources are constrained → implementation varies

Educators report they want simpler, tailored options, as well as choice and control over what they do in their setting.
INNOVATION IN SEL → KERNELS
Improving SEL Interventions

High FLEXIBILITY

Low RESOURCES (time, cost, staff, etc.)

1. Strategies/practices common to effective programs; active ingredients?
2. Targeted to specific skills
3. Designed to be choosable, doable, integrate-able, efficient, scalable
4. “Rigid” structure that allows for adaptation
5. Hypothesis = greater uptake and implementation & => impact
Example Sequence for One Kernel: BG
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- 2012-2013
- 2014-2015
- 2015-2016
- 2017-2018
- 2019+
Example Sequence for One Kernel: BG

SECURE trial in AZ. (K-3)

SECURE K-3:
- SECURE group higher average attention skills, lower impulsivity, steeper growth in literacy skills across the year, especially among the lowest-achieving students in the sample.
- Over 75% of the teachers reported playing BGs at least 2x week; Over 25% played 4 or more times a week.
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Teachers said they did not want to do the lessons. They did want to do the routines and games – partly because they were simple and they could choose what, and when to do them.
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SECURe trial in AZ. (K-3)

- Teachers provided feedback on the cards and games.
- Teachers were able to implement BGs in their classrooms many times a week and found them useful and fun to play.
- Across the school year, teachers played 4,790 Brain Games.

BG Redesign w/ HopeLab

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- Classroom RCT showed improvement in multiple domains of EF and SR

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**Classroom RCT in Lawrence, MA & Adaptations + RCT for EiE/Brazil**
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- Test...
Kernel Design and Structure

US, Canada, Lebanon, Brazil, Nigeria...
Visual and text tags easily identify target grade

The Big Idea provides language you can share with students about why it’s important

Simplified theory of change to understand impact of kernel

Must do vs. adaptable components
Post-activity discussion to support metacognition and skill transfer

Tips for success for students with diverse learning needs

Developmental progression with support for adapting and extending the activity throughout the year
Training & Support

• Simple
  – 2 hours;
  – in person/Zoom
  – Focused on practice & feedback

• Online, web-based support; implementation tracker + advice; additional materials and resources
Core Set

![Bar Chart](chart.png)

- **Brain Games**: 442
- **Feelings Circle**: 442
- **Dear Abby**: 314
- **Cool Kid**: 442
- **Notes to Self**: 222

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Brain Games</th>
<th>Feelings Circle</th>
<th>Dear Abby</th>
<th>Cool Kid</th>
<th>Notes to Self</th>
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<td>29</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**: 220, 243, 264, 232, 219, 242, 234, 208
Implementation, Spring 2020 BC

Additional

SET A

Week 8
Week 7
Week 6
Week 5
Week 4
Week 3
Week 2
Week 1

Feelings Tree
Yoga
Friday Feedback
Thankful Thoughts
I Messages
Lineup Challenge
Cooldown Process
Steps to Success
Steps to Resolution
Human Scavenger Hunt
A Cold Wind Blows
Response Remix
Looks/Sounds/Feels Like
My Ideal Year
Reflections/responses from the field...
“In speaking with my teachers about how it is going using the Kernels in classrooms, the consensus is very positive. They love many things - Feeling Circle, Cool Kid, Dear Abby, and many other elements. During [our] staff meeting, one teacher mentioned that it is the best SEL resource she has ever used. Needless to say, it has been very well received here.” – Principal
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Reflections/responses from the field...

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Outcomes? Coming soon...

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Thank you! (jonesst@gse.harvard.edu)