Video Summary and Discussion Guide

SEL PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

Developmental psychologist Dr. Stephanie Jones has spent her career connecting **what we know** about the science and practice of SEL, to **what we can do** to support the development of social and emotional skills in children and youth. Building on decades of research on evidence-based SEL programs, she noticed two things:

1. that SEL programs can be implemented effectively, and

2. there is a need for other options (in addition to programs) that would enable educators to integrate SEL into their daily teaching practice.

AREAS OF SEL COMPETENCY

Dr. Jones and her research team systematically reviewed the evidence for 25 popular SEL programs that have been shown to be effective at improving the SEL skills, attitudes, and behaviour of students to identify the "common denominators" that were common across all programs. They identified common practices that could be categorized into five common areas of SEL competency:

1. Emotions/Feelings,

2. Social/Interpersonal,

3. Cognitive
   (e.g., executive functions, self-regulation),

4. Beliefs and Attitudes
   (e.g., self-efficacy, mindset), and

5. Character
   (e.g., values, civic responsibility).

'KERNELS' OF SEL PRACTICE – THE CURRENT RESEARCH

The SEL practices that were common among all the evidence-based programs were identified as effective SEL practices. Once they identified the practices that worked, they got to work designing activities for each SEL competency area (the "kernels"), organized by grade level, that teachers can use in their classrooms throughout the day. In current research, the kernels are being implemented by educators that are provided with a small set of 4-5 "core kernels". Educators also receive a menu of 20 "additional kernels" that they have the option of using at their own pace, based on the specific student needs and classroom context.

Video Discussion Questions

1 What are SEL "kernels" and when are they used?

2 Although there are many effective, evidence-based SEL programs, they do not meet the needs of every school. What are some of the needs that SEL kernels can meet that existing SEL programs may not?

3 What are some of the ways that Dr. Jones and her team have used research evidence in the identification and design of SEL kernels? How have educators been involved in this process?

4 Review the attached resources on the kernels and identify 1 SEL kernel that you would like to try in your classroom, and 1 that you would recommend to your school team leader for schoolwide implementation.

Video Discussion Question Answer Key

1   What are SEL "kernels" and when are they used?

   A: Kernels are evidence-based practices that are used by being integrated into the everyday practices of teachers.

2   Although there are many effective, evidence-based SEL programs, they do not meet the needs of every school. What are some of the needs that SEL kernels can meet that existing SEL programs may not?

   A: The kernels are short, easy to use strategies that can be integrated into any curriculum and doesn't require a lot of funds or time for training and implementation.

3   What are some of the ways that Dr. Jones and her team have used research evidence in the identification and design of SEL kernels? How have educators been involved in this process?

   A: Dr. Jones used evidence based SEL programs to identify SEL practices that each of the programs had in common. These practices were developed into age appropriate activities in each of the areas of SEL competency. The kernels were provided to educators in a research context in which they were given choice what kernels and when they implement on a daily basis.

4   Review the attached resources on the kernels and identify 1 SEL kernel that you would like to try in your classroom, and 1 that you would recommend to your school team leader for schoolwide implementation.

   A: Answers will vary.