

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING FOR EDUCATORS

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ABSTRACT

Teacher quality has become a top priority of the global agenda to improve student academic achievement and behaviour (MacBeath, 2012), and to prepare the world's children for a global economy (Schleicher, 2016). Education is an essential human right recognised by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which emphasises that *“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding,*

tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace” (Article 26(2)). It is noteworthy that – despite vast differences in goals, resources, and educational system infrastructure – all U.N.

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UNIVERSAL DECLARATION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS**



Nations recognise the vital role that schools play in supporting the development of key social-emotional competencies such as tolerance, respect and understanding. Teachers play a vital role in shaping if, and how, this international vision for education is to be achieved.

KEY MESSAGES

- 5.1 Children learn social and emotional skills by observing and interacting with adults, and teachers are primary exemplars in the school context. Teachers foster the development of prosocial behaviours by modelling social and emotional competencies in their interactions with their students, their students' parents and other adults.
- 5.2 Stress can have a negative impact on teachers' social and emotional competence. When teachers lack the ability to manage their negative emotional reactions in response to troublesome student behaviours, their performance can be impaired. Teacher emotional reactivity can result in further student disruption and teacher burnout.
- 5.3 Mindfulness-based teacher professional development programmes specifically designed to address teacher stress and social and emotional competence in the classroom context have been found effective in promoting teacher well-being, reducing psychological distress and improving the quality of classroom interactions.

**STRESS CAN HAVE A MAJOR
NEGATIVE IMPACT ON TEACHERS'
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL
COMPETENCIES**

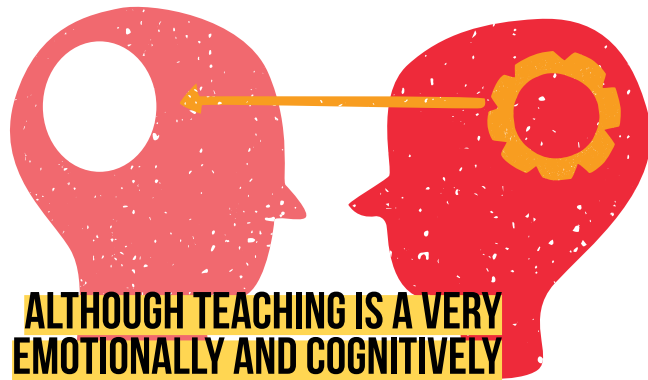


TEACHERS ARE EXEMPLARS OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Teachers are primary exemplars for social and emotional learning (SEL); they are central figures in the socialisation of children and serve as important role models, guiding the development of their students' social and emotional competence and learning (Denham, Bassett, & Wyatt, 2007). Above and beyond delivering curriculum content, effective teachers foster the development of prosocial behaviours by modelling their own social and emotional competencies as they interact with their students, their students' parents and other adults. They provide examples of emotional awareness and self-management for their students. They teach relationship skills and social awareness by building supportive relationships with their students, fostering positive peer relationships, and establishing safe and effective learning environments. Effective teachers recognise students' strengths and abilities, individualise instruction to maximise student learning, use diverse strategies to foster student intrinsic motivation, enforce fair and effective classroom rules, and help students learn to manage conflict and work together cooperatively.

To promote learning, teachers must find ways to meet the immediate social and learning needs of individual students in complex, frequently under-resourced, educational environments. The educational disparities among students who represent vulnerable and marginalised groups (students with disabilities, female students, those exposed to adverse experiences or those displaced due to conflict) are heavily influenced by their teachers' abilities to navigate these complexities. Moreover, as the diversity of classrooms increases around the world, the complexity of the dynamics also increases due to factors such as diverse races and ethnicities, economic disparity, variable learning abilities and linguistic differences, which requires teachers to respond to individual students' needs with higher understanding and sensitivity. These factors increase the difficulty of addressing both social-emotional and academic learning (Downer, Maier & Jamil, 2011). Although teaching is a very emotionally and cognitively challenging profession, teachers receive little training to prepare them for these demands.

Worldwide, over 150 million children ages 3 to 5 do not have access to any form of preschool education, and less than 20 per cent of children in low-income countries have access to any form of preschool preparation (UNESCO, 2016). Thus, the demands on early-primary school



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teachers in countries with limited or no early education and socialisation opportunities is particularly pronounced. Increasing levels of disruptive student behaviour in the classroom compounds these demands (Gilliam, 2005; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000). A 2014 study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on effective teaching and learning worldwide found that a quarter of the teachers in over half of the participating countries reported losing at least 30 per cent of their classroom time to disruptions. Almost one third of teachers surveyed reported losing time to behavioural problems and 26 per cent reported that their classrooms have a great deal of disruptive noise. Schools serving high concentrations of children exposed to risk factors such as poverty, community violence and other stressors experience higher levels of classroom disruption, placing a greater demand on their teachers (Hauts, Caspi, Pianta, Arseneault & Moffitt, 2010; Oliver & Reschly, 2007).

EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Due to a lack of resources, teachers in many countries lack adequate professional learning opportunities (OECD, 2014). As a result, professional learning (PL) practices often do not comply with best-practice standards. Research has identified three core components of PL that improve teachers' knowledge, skills and classroom instruction: (a) focus on content knowledge, (b) active learning opportunities and (c) alignment with other PL activities (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). In addition, this research identified three structural features of PL that impact the core components: (a) the format of the PL (e.g., workshop vs. ongoing reform projects), (b) the extent of the PL activities (e.g., short, 'one-shot' training vs. systematic and ongoing training and technical assistance) and (c) the PL activities (didactic lecture vs. cooperative learning opportunities). PL opportunities presented systematically over an extended period of time that involve active learning are more effective than the 'one-shot' workshop approach that most teachers experience (Garet et al., 2001).

SEL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Over the past several decades, SEL concepts have spread internationally through the efforts of organisations such as the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) in the United States, the European Network for Social and Emotional Competence (ENSEC), KidsMatter in Australia and the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) initiative in the United Kingdom. Over the past two decades, SEL has been introduced in various frameworks. As one of the founding organisations in this international movement, CASEL has defined SEL competencies as skills needed to "recognise and manage emotions, demonstrate caring and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions and handle challenging situations effectively" (CASEL, 2019). These skills are organised into five competency area domains of Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Social Management and

Responsible Decision-Making. Combined, these skills are thought to work synergistically to help promote academic achievement, well-being, resilience and social responsibility.¹

Teachers must recognise how their own behaviour models SEL concepts and competencies through their students' observational learning, which may be more powerful than the curriculum delivery itself. Consequently, they must carefully monitor their behaviour to assure it aligns with their teaching aims and objectives (Jennings & Frank, 2015; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). In order to prepare teachers to effectively teach SEL to their students, effective PL must deepen teachers' content knowledge of the SEL theories and concepts upon which SEL programme activities are based. Effective PL must also provide opportunities for teachers to apply this knowledge to actual classroom situations so they can generalise and transfer this knowledge to classroom interactions. Effective SEL PL can also help teachers understand how the learning objectives of SEL programmes fit within the goals of the broader community. Classroom teachers can help students develop social and emotional competencies through direct instruction and cultivation activities such as informal social interactions, establishment of classroom norms and classroom management practices (Cohen, 2006; Durlak et al., 2011; January, Casey, & Paulson, 2011; Kress & Elias, 2006; Weare & Nind, 2011; Zins et al., 2004). Thus, teachers' understanding of SEL theory and concepts is key to ensuring the alignment of teacher behaviour, curricular objectives and classroom management practices.



CLASSROOM TEACHERS CAN HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES THROUGH ACTIVITIES SUCH AS INFORMAL SOCIAL INTERACTIONS, ESTABLISHMENT OF CLASSROOM NORMS AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

SEL PROGRAMME PL FEATURES

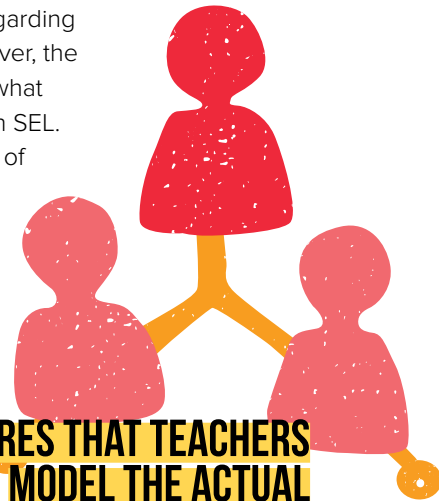
SEL programme effectiveness depends upon the provision of high-quality PL (Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998). However, very few teacher preparation programmes offer instruction in the social and emotional knowledge and skills required to effectively implement SEL content (Schonert-Reichl, Hanson-Peterson & Hymel, 2015; Schonert-Reichl, Kitiil & Hanson-Peterson, 2017). This leaves teachers unprepared to deliver SEL programme content and generalise

¹ The CASEL Framework includes components covered in other national SEL programmes. The UK SEAL programme has a high degree of overlap, but uses slightly different terminology recognising self-awareness, managing feelings and emotions and social skills and empathy as core SEL skills.

SEL concepts to classroom management and student interactions. However, when teachers receive training in the behavioural and emotional factors that impact teaching and learning in the classroom, they report feeling better prepared to implement positive classroom management and community building strategies to reduce aggressive behaviours and promote a more positive learning environment (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Therefore, there is a need for specialised PL to prepare teachers to teach and model SEL knowledge and skills at both the pre-service and in-service level (Jennings & Frank, 2015; Schonert-Reichl, Hanson-Peterson & Hymel, 2015). CASEL (2019) identified high-quality, evidence-based SEL programmes that include PL and ongoing training and technical assistance for teachers and administrators. However, the PL offered for these programmes varies widely in terms of what is required, recommended, or optional (Jennings & Frank, 2015), and little research has compared variations in PL quality and intensity with student outcomes.

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE CRITICAL FOR SEL INSTRUCTION


Pedagogical content knowledge – There is general agreement regarding the elements of effective PL (i.e., how and why it is delivered). However, the actual content of PL is necessarily linked to our assumptions about what pedagogical content knowledge educators need to effectively teach SEL. Pedagogical content knowledge has been defined as the “blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organised, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners” (Shulman, 1987, p.4). Existing PL designed to prepare teachers to deliver SEL curriculum tends to focus on fidelity to the programme model rather than cultivating teachers’ strong pedagogical content knowledge. Unlike other curricular content, SEL requires that teachers model the actual competencies and behaviours in the social interactions that they aim to teach. Otherwise, they may inadvertently model behaviours that contradict the content they are teaching. For example, if an objective of an SEL curriculum is for students to learn how to manage conflicts using problem-solving skills rather than aggression or rejection, but the teacher uses such tactics to manage disruptive student behaviour, students will tend to learn from observing the teacher’s behaviour rather than from the SEL curriculum. This points to the critical importance of authoritative and proactive classroom management strategies for effective SEL instruction (Jennings & Frank, 2015).



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Knowledge of learners – Teachers must have a good understanding of their students in order to deliver SEL programmes effectively and to apply the content knowledge to classroom interactions and events as they naturally occur in the classroom. This includes a general understanding of social and emotional development and, more specifically, what competencies are expected to be appropriate for students of any particular stage of development (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Teachers must also consider students’ cultural backgrounds because the way in which social and emotional skills and competencies are taught and displayed should adapt to varying cultural norms and expectations (Hecht & Shin, 2015). Teachers need to understand how risk and resilience factors may affect the development of certain social and emotional competencies and how classroom interactions between teachers and their students and peers may promote resilience or increase risk.

Knowledge of educational contexts – The above highlights the critical importance of an emotionally supportive classroom environment for promoting social and emotional competencies among students. Teachers model appropriate social behaviour and impact classroom dynamics directly and indirectly by taking actions to manage or modify the social networks emerging in their classroom such as peer norms, status hierarchies and social affiliation patterns that can have a powerful effect on classroom environments (Gest, Madill, Zadzora, Miller & Rodkin, 2014). Indeed, a teacher’s awareness of the classroom social networks can have a positive impact on the classroom. For example, peer norms against aggressive behaviour are more effective when teachers exhibit a clear understanding of their classroom peer networks (Neal, Cappella, Wagner, & Atkins, 2011).



**PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS CAN
BE REINFORCED THROUGH THE
PROCESS OF COACHING STUDENTS
THROUGH THE RESOLUTION OF
DAILY INTERPERSONAL CONFLICTS**

Knowledge of educational outcomes and pedagogical content – To effectively generalise social and emotional concepts to classroom interactions, teachers must possess knowledge of educational outcomes and pedagogical content. This includes an understanding of how to encourage prosocial behaviour and how to integrate this understanding into diverse curricular areas. For example, the humanities can provide multiple opportunities to promote and reinforce students’ understanding of core SEL competencies (Barr et al., 2015; Brown, Jones, LaRusso & Aber, 2010). Characters in literature or historical figures can act as exemplars or antitheses of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making if teachers explicitly link the content to SEL concepts. Further, problem-solving skills can be reinforced through the process of coaching students through the resolution of daily interpersonal conflicts.

HOW TEACHER DISPOSITIONS AND BELIEFS AFFECT SEL INSTRUCTION

Teachers' implicit beliefs, efficacy and values shape the instruction and learning environment in which SEL programmes occur (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy 2004). Indeed, teachers' dispositions and beliefs may have a more powerful impact on SEL than on other, more content-based instruction. Teachers deliver SEL more effectively when they hold a positive attitude toward SEL, are motivated to deliver it well and have the confidence that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to do so (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). In contrast, teachers are less likely to deliver SEL effectively when they do not believe that SEL aligns with their teaching philosophy, that they do not have the ability to effectively teach SEL, hold authoritarian beliefs about classroom management, and perceive a lack of support from the school leadership and climate (Collie, Shapka, Perry & Martin, 2015; Schonert-Reichl, 2017). The increasing social and emotional demands of the classroom may require teachers to deliver interventions to support SEL and mental health. This highlights the growing need for professional learning to help teachers build their SEC (Askill-Williams & Cefai, 2014).

Effective SEL PL must address common implicit beliefs that may impact the way SEL programmes are delivered. This can be challenging because these implicit beliefs may be based in cultural norms and expectations. For example, a teacher who believes that it is inappropriate to discuss emotions in class may find it very difficult to deliver a curriculum that involves naming and describing specific emotions or create a welcoming environment for students to talk about emotions. In addition, autocratic beliefs associated with classroom management may lead to teachers over-controlling interpersonal problem-solving among students, preventing students from learning these skills independently (Jennings & Frank, 2015).

THE IMPORTANCE OF ADULT SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

The previous section of this chapter examined how SEL PL might be further developed by extending the scope of professional learning beyond content and curriculum knowledge. However, effective SEL instruction also requires that teachers themselves possess a high degree of SEC. This aspect of SEL instruction is noteworthy, and too often overlooked in the design of SEL PL. However, just as it is important for a music teacher to be able



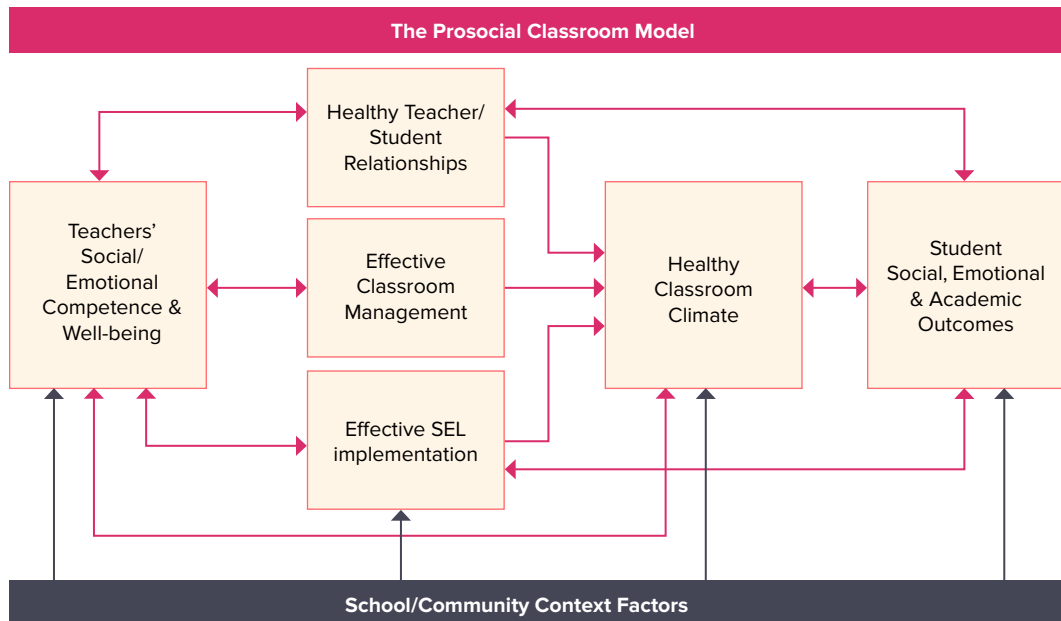
**EFFECTIVE SEL INSTRUCTION
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to demonstrate what ideal tone, pitch and rhythm sound like, so too is it important for teachers of SEL content to model self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, social management and responsible decision-making. In this next section, we consider the role that a teachers' own SEC plays in the successful delivery of SEL programmes, and the mechanisms of action linking teacher well-being to student social and emotional and learning outcomes.

THE PROSOCIAL CLASSROOM MODEL

The Prosocial Classroom theoretical model holds that teachers' SEC and well-being influence a classroom's emotional climate and student academic and behavioural outcomes (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). This relationship is mediated by supportive teacher-student relationships, quality classroom management, and effective SEL programme implementation (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1. A Model of Teacher Well-Being and Social and Emotional Competence, Support,



[Source: Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). Reprinted with permission from SAGE Publications, Inc.]

TEACHERS' SEC AND WELL-BEING

CASEL (2019) has identified five core dimensions of SEC: self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, self-management and relationship management. Depending on the framework upon which they are based, SEL programmes apply these or other dimensions to SEL curricular content and they can also be applied to adult development. SECs develop across one's lifespan in response to life challenges and are context-dependent. Therefore, teachers need specific social and emotional skills to manage the stressors of the classroom and to effectively cultivate SEL (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). For example, teachers with appropriate SEC will demonstrate high levels of self-awareness in a classroom context. Teachers with high SEC recognise their own emotions and emotional habits and patterns. They can manage their emotions, even during emotionally challenging classroom interactions. They do this in healthy ways that facilitate positive classroom social interactions without compromising their own well-being. They respectfully and firmly set limits and can tolerate some degree of ambiguity that can arise when students are allowed to solve problems independently. Teachers exhibiting high degrees of social awareness recognise how their expressions of emotions affect their classroom climate and student learning. They can intentionally generate positive emotions such as enthusiasm to motivate student learning. They know how to build a caring and supportive classroom social environment and engage students in cooperative learning.

Teachers with strong relationship skills demonstrate the ability to develop supportive relationships with their students. They practice cultural sensitivity, understand that others' perspectives may vary from their own, and take this into account during interactions with students, parents and colleagues. Teachers with high degrees of SEC demonstrate prosocial values by respecting their students and their families and by understanding how educational decisions may affect them. SEC is related to psychological well-being. When teachers experience mastery over socially and emotionally challenging classroom situations, they experience a greater sense of efficacy and enjoyment of teaching (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 2004). In contrast, when teachers experience



TEACHERS WITH STRONG RELATIONSHIP SKILLS DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO DEVELOP SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR STUDENTS.

psychological distress (or a lack of well-being), their ability to provide emotional and instructional support to their students is impaired (Jennings, 2015).

TEACHER STRESS AND SEC

Stress can have a negative impact on teachers' SEC. When they lack the ability to manage their negative emotional reactions in response to troublesome student behaviours, their performance can be impaired (Carson, Weiss & Templin, 2010). Constant emotional distress can eventually lead to a burnout cascade: deteriorating teacher performance, which leads to increased student misbehaviour (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Out of frustration, the teacher may resort to reactive and punitive responses, which may undermine student motivation and perpetuate a negative cycle of classroom disruption (Osher et al., 2007).

Stress contagion – Recent research shows that stress is contagious. A study examined the relationship between classroom environments and students' mental health in over 10,000 first grade students and their teachers. They found that in classrooms where teachers reported higher levels of stress due to a lack of resources, higher numbers of students experienced mental health problems (Milkie & Warner, 2011). More specifically, when teachers lacked the key ingredients for teaching — ranging from basic resources such as paper, pencils and heat, to child-friendly furnishings and computers — students experienced higher levels of externalising problems (e.g., arguing, fighting, impulsivity), interpersonal issues (e.g., expressing emotions, resolving conflicts) and internalising problems (e.g., anxiety, sadness, low self-esteem). Additionally, when teachers did not receive the support of colleagues, students also suffered.

More recent research also lends support for stress contagion in the classroom and the potential detrimental role of teacher stress in predicting student well-being. Drawing from the stress-contagion framework, Oberle and Schonert-Reichl (2016) examined the link between teacher burnout and student stress in a sample of 4th and 7th grade children in Canada. To assess teacher burnout, teachers completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory modified for Teachers (Maslach et al., 1996). To assess student stress, students' salivary cortisol was collected as a biological indicator of students' stress reactivity. Biological stress reactivity is frequently assessed via the reactivity of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, a homeostatic system that follows a circadian rhythm



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and is activated in response to cognitive (e.g., fear, excitement, anxiety) or non-cognitive (e.g., infections) stressors (Jessop & Turner-Cobb, 2008). Cortisol levels found in saliva or blood can be used as an indicator for HPA axis activity. Integrity of the HPA axis is essential to human health. In a typical diurnal HPA-axis regulation pattern, cortisol levels rise within 20-45 min after waking and then gradually decline throughout the day. Inappropriately low or elevated levels of cortisol can compromise HPA axis functioning (Jessop & Turner-Cobb, 2008). In one study, student's salivary cortisol was collected from children at 9 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. on one day in the classroom setting. Analyses revealed that, after adjusting for differences in cortisol levels due to age, gender and time of awaking, the variability in students' morning cortisol levels could be significantly predicted from higher levels of self-reported burnout of classroom teachers. Although these findings were correlational and the study utilised only one day of cortisol data, the research conducted by Oberle and Schonert-Reichl (2016) was the first to show that teachers' occupational stress is linked to students' physiological stress regulation. What is not yet known is the direction of the stress contagion. That is, does teachers' burnout lead to higher levels of stress in students or do students who enter the classroom with higher levels of stress lead to increased teacher burnout? Future research examining the causal pathway will lend further clarity to this relationship.

WORKING WITH STUDENTS EXPOSED TO ADVERSITY, CHRONIC STRESS & TRAUMA

Supporting teachers so they do not become overly stressed and suffer from burnout is especially important for those working with students exposed to trauma, chronic stress and adversity. This can impact social and emotional development in ways that are adaptive to the stressful environment (Ellis, Bianchi, Griskevicius & Frankenhuis, 2017), but that teachers may not understand or know how to respond to effectively (Jennings, 2019).

One example of this is the hostile attribution bias, which is the tendency to assume that others are acting in hostile ways. Children who live where there are high levels of violence and threat develop this bias as an adaptive strategy. However, in the classroom, they may over-react in aggressive ways to their peers or adults because they misapprehend the behaviour as hostile. They require additional support from their teachers to feel safe and adapt to the school setting, especially with regard to interpersonal conflicts (Crick & Dodge, 1996; Dodge & Price, 1994). SEL PL activities should include this knowledge to prepare teachers to respond



EARLY TRAUMA CAN AFFECT BOTH BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND EMOTIONAL AND RELATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

proactively rather than react in ways that may exacerbate the problem. Trauma-related difficulties include cognitive challenges such as developmental delays and learning disabilities, physical health problems and psychosocial problems such as mental illness, anti-social behaviour, difficulties building and maintaining healthy relationships and substance abuse, suicide risk and self-harm (Adams, 2010; Lamont, 2010).

Childhood trauma is a common and pervasive problem. International studies (American Psychological Association, 2015; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016) estimate that two-thirds of children have experienced a traumatic event before the age of 16, including life-threatening accidents, disasters, maltreatment, assault, and family and community violence. There is a clear and well-documented relationship between trauma, learning and behavioural problems in children and adolescents (Blodgett et al., 2013; Clarkson Freeman, 2014; Putnam, 2006). Early trauma can affect both brain development, and emotional and relational development of children (Cook et al., 2005; Perry, 2009). Heightened emotional activity in the limbic centers of the brain and reduced activity in the pre-frontal cortex inhibits a child's ability to control aggression and other impulses, establish appropriate boundaries and form positive peer and adult relationships (Cole et al., 2005; Siegel & Bryson, 2011). Trauma undermines a child's sense of safety, and affects regulation, attachment, trust, belonging and identity (Kinniburgh et al., 2005). Children with trauma often require more intensive support to understand, express and manage their own feelings and behaviours, solve problems effectively, empathise with others and develop healthy connections.

The significant risks associated with exposure to trauma can be mitigated when protective factors are present such as provision of a supportive environment and caring relationships (Oehlberg, 2008; Cole et al., 2005). Maintaining safety, supportive connections and management of emotions are three main objectives of trauma-informed care (Bath, 2008). These concepts have been found to be essential for creating an appropriate classroom environment for traumatised students (Cole et al., 2005).

Traumatised children and adolescents often lack role models and appropriate skills for developing healthy relationships, especially if they experienced mistreatment by caregivers. One of the most important actions educators can take is to build positive relationships with students and help students build positive relationships with other adults and peers (Jennings, 2019). Such relationships help reduce the impact of trauma (Maikoetter, 2011), improve mental health and well-being, and optimise academic and social outcomes (Mihalas, Morse, Allsopp & Alvarez McHatton, 2009). SEL provides an essential foundation for developing supportive relationships.

Trauma-informed or trauma-sensitive care recognises the essential role of adult regulation in effectively managing children's dysregulation. Responding effectively to children impacted by trauma requires well-developed social and emotional skills and effective professional support.

A trauma-informed approach to SEL includes training in: neurobiological and emotional impacts of trauma; potential trauma triggers; principles of attachment theory and social neuroscience of education and achievement; problematic traditional schoolwide and classroom management approaches that may exacerbate the effects of trauma; and trauma-responsive behaviour management practices, including relationship-based strategies.

Teachers' participation in professional development that focuses on positive teacher-student relationships has been found to reduce the negative impact of student problem behaviour on teacher attitudes (Hafen, Ruzek, Gregory, Allen & Mikami, 2015) and increase teacher self-efficacy to help their students (Jones, 2013). In their Attachment, Regulation and Competency (ARC) framework for trauma-informed care, Blaustein and Kinniburgh (2010) position staff development in SEL practices (including self-care and self-regulation of emotion in the face of stressors such as challenging student behaviour) as an essential precursor to any student interventions. When teachers explicitly learn, teach and employ SEL practices such as attunement and co-regulation, both staff and students learn to recognise and calm emotional responses. Such practices help teachers and students manage stress and behaviour positively and help students to build critical positive relationships with adults and peers (Jennings, 2019; Rose, McGuire-Snieckus & Gilbert, 2015).

Schools can meet the needs of children with trauma using a tiered approach to SEL instruction and support (Froiland, 2011). Universally, all students would ideally receive explicit and ongoing classroom SEL instruction that develops skills such as: attention and executive functioning; emotional literacy; self-regulation; empathy and perspective taking; and adaptive problem-solving. Small, group-targeted support includes pre-teaching of SEL lessons and additional support in emotion coaching, regulation and coping strategies. Intensive supports include individualised relational interventions and trauma-informed mental health planning and support. Whole-school behaviour management practices promote positive relationships and social and emotional skill development such as emotional regulation, problem-solving and healthy coping behaviours. Schools can use SEL to proactively respond to, mitigate and overcome the impact of trauma for vulnerable students. SEL helps to create supportive environments where children can develop healthy relationships, coping skills and the resilience to overcome the impacts of trauma, improving the experiences and outcomes for students and staff alike.




INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS TEACHER STRESS

It is clear that teacher stress must be addressed in order to promote SEL in school settings. While the research is in its early stages, several programmes and practices have been found to be effective for reducing teacher stress, promoting their well-being, and improving classroom and student outcomes. When new teachers receive mentoring, they report greater satisfaction and retention, and students' academic achievement shows gains (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Workplace wellness programmes for teachers are effective for reducing health risks, health care costs and absenteeism (Aldana, Merrill, Price, Hardy & Hager, 2005; Merrill & Sloan, 2014; Merrill & LeCheminant, 2016). Delivering SEL programmes has been found to have positive impacts on teachers' well-being (Domitrovich, Bradshaw, Berg, Pas, Becker, Musci & Jalongo, 2016). However, the most extensively developed and tested approach specifically designed to promote teachers' SEC and well-being are mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs). The next section will review these programmes and the research their impact on teachers' well-being and SEC, the quality of classroom interactions and student outcomes.

MINDFULNESS-BASED INTERVENTIONS FOR TEACHERS

What is mindfulness and how might MBIs help teachers reduce stress, cultivate SEC and teach SEL more effectively? Mindfulness can be described as a state involving two primary dimensions: self-regulated attention “so that it is maintained on immediate experience, thereby allowing for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment” (Bishop et al., 2004, p. 232), and an orientation toward experience “that is characterised by curiosity, openness, and acceptance” (p. 232). Years of research involving adults have concluded that MBIs promote attentional and emotional regulation skills (Chambers, Gullone & Allen, 2009; Lutz, Jha, Dunne & Saron, 2015). These skills promote stress management (calm), attentional focus and perceptual clarity (clear) and kindness towards oneself and others (kind; see Hofmann, Grossman & Hinton, 2011; Grossman et al., 2004).

A recent meta-analysis involving a total of 347 effect sizes from 29 studies (n = 1,493) was conducted to examine the overall treatment effect of MBIs with teachers, the specific impact on mindfulness and mechanisms of mindfulness, the specific



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impact on psychological well-being, psychological distress, psychological indicators, and classroom climate and instruction. Study inclusion criterion involved a sample of preK-12 teachers with mindfulness identified as a primary therapeutic component (Klingbeil & Renshaw, 2018). Of the 29 controlled studies, three were unpublished, four were published in Spanish and one was published in Persian. Eighteen of the studies were randomised-controlled trials, two studies were randomised at the school level and nine involved quasi-experimental designs. The results of the meta-analysis indicated that the MBIs had an overall significant positive treatment effect, similar to other MBIs studied with non-clinical samples of adults. The MBIs also had significant positive impacts on mindfulness, psychological well-being, psychological distress, classroom climate and instructional practices. While this meta-analysis was limited by the small number of rigorous studies, it suggests that MBIs designed for teachers have promise for reducing stress and improving classroom climate, providing preliminary support for the Prosocial Classroom model.

To better understand the role mindfulness plays in supporting teachers' SEC, scholars have proposed that MBIs for teachers offer a unique form of professional learning that helps teachers engage in more calm, clear and kind interactions with students (Taylor et al., 2019). The Calm, Clear, Kind framework proposes that MBIs promote teachers' embodied mindfulness in the classroom, which is defined as their capacity to be calm, clear and kind in their speech and interactions with students despite the emotional demands and challenges (Rickert, 2016; Rickert et al., 2016; Taylor, 2016). Thus, the skills teachers learn in MBIs become embodied such that they are observable in teachers' classroom behaviour and, in this way, may promote student academic learning and prosocial behaviour. Several qualitative studies of MBIs lend support to this theory (Schussler, Jennings, Sharp & Frank, 2016; Schussler et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2016; Taylor, Jennings, Harris, Schussler & Roeser, 2019).

Three programmes designed specifically to cultivate the Calm, Clear, Kind framework among teachers were adapted from the Cultivating Emotional Balance (CEB) programme (<http://cultivating-emotional-balance.org/>). This programme arose from a dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Dharamshala, India, sponsored by the Mind and Life Institute in 2000, entitled 'Destructive Emotions' (Goleman, 2003). A team of contemplative teachers and emotion researchers combined their expertise and designed a programme to promote prosocial behaviour and reduce hurtful behaviour that is associated with dysregulated negative emotions. CEB combines contemplative practice and emotion skills instruction, and was first evaluated with a sample of teachers in the United States. A large randomised controlled trial found that CEB was effective for promoting well-being and reducing negative emotions



**MBIs HAD AN OVERALL
SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE
TREATMENT EFFECT**

(Kemeny et al., 2012). A study to examine whether CEB would improve the quality of teachers' observed classroom interactions was conducted and found that it had no significant impact (Jennings, Foltz, Snowberg, Sim & Kemeny, 2011). However, CEB was not specifically designed to promote teachers' SEC and several teams began to adapt the elements of the programme to more specifically address their classroom challenges. Next, we introduce the three professional learning programmes that have been shown to be effective for helping teachers become more calm, clear and kind. We provide brief descriptions of each programme and their associated research findings.

MINDFULNESS-BASED EMOTIONAL BALANCE (MBEB) ²

Mindfulness-Based Emotional Balance (MBEB) is a programme for teachers based upon Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) (Cullen & Pons, 2015). It involves approximately 50 per cent of the mindful awareness and movement practices found in MBSR. An additional 30 per cent of the programme involves didactic instruction in emotion theory and mindful emotion regulation. Theory and practices of compassion and forgiveness make up the remaining 20 per cent of the programme. Similar to MBSR, MBEB is presented in evening sessions over eight weeks, plus one day-long retreat. In randomised, controlled studies of MBEB, results showed improvements in teachers' mindfulness (e.g., attentional awareness, non-reactivity) and emotion regulation, and reductions in occupational stress, burnout, anxiety and depression at post-programme and follow-up (Akiva, Arel, Benn, Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Roeser et al., 2013). One study also showed improved cognitive functions among teachers (e.g., sustained attention and working memory) (Roeser et al., 2013). Furthermore, these studies demonstrated that MBEB impacts teachers' specific skills and mindsets of focused attention, mindful awareness, self-compassion, forgiveness and reduced work rumination (Roeser et al., 2013, Taylor et al., 2015; Crain et al., 2016).

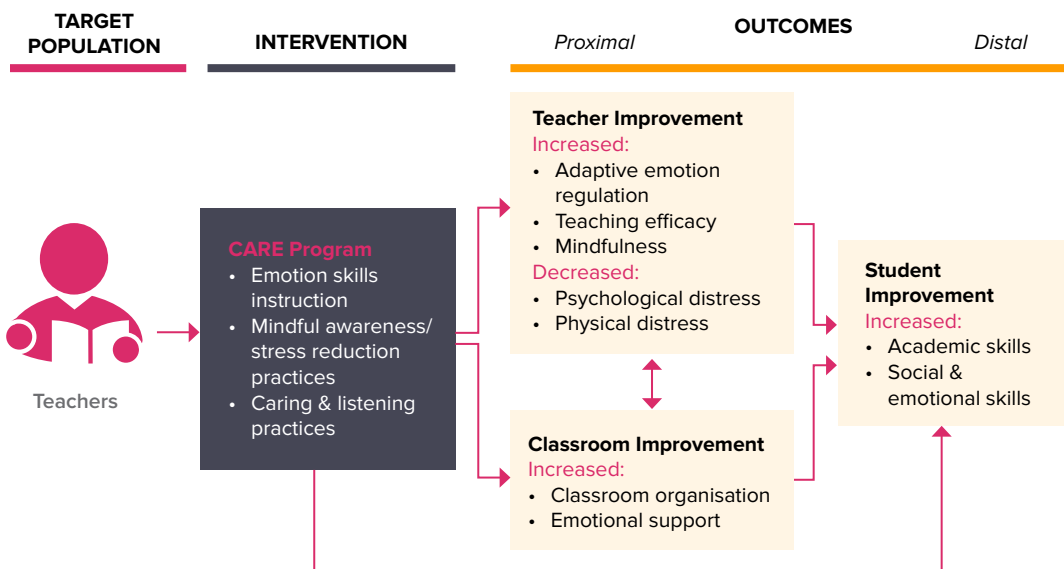
CULTIVATING AWARENESS AND RESILIENCE IN EDUCATION (CARE)

Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) is a professional learning programme designed to reduce teachers' psychological distress and to promote teachers' SEC over the course of a school year. CARE introduces instructional material sequentially, integrating didactic, experiential and interactive learning processes. Participants learn a structured set of mindful awareness and compassion practices, and didactic and experiential practices specifically designed to promote emotion awareness, emotion regulation and compassion in the classroom context. Typically, CARE is presented in 30 hours over five in-person training days (six hours each) over the course of several weeks. The breaks in between sessions give teachers an opportunity for home practice, reflection and application of the material to their teaching

experience. Teachers receive coaching via phone or internet between sessions to support this process.

Based upon the CARE Logic Model (Figure 5.2), CARE's efficacy was evaluated in a randomised controlled trial involving 36 urban elementary schools and 224 teachers (Jennings et al., 2017). Teachers were randomised within schools to receive CARE or assigned to a waitlist control group. All teachers completed self-report measures and assessments of their participating students before and after the intervention group received CARE. Teachers' classrooms were observed and coded using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Results showed that CARE had direct positive impacts on adaptive emotion regulation, mindfulness, psychological distress and time urgency. Significant decreases in psychological distress and significant increases in emotion regulation continued for 9.5 months after intervention (Jennings et al, 2019). CARE also had a positive impact on the emotional support domain of the CLASS; this was reflected in positive impacts on teacher sensitivity and a positive emotional climate. CARE also had a positive impact on classroom productivity (Jennings et al, 2017). Furthermore, CARE had a direct positive impact on student engagement. Students with low baseline social skills showed higher reading competence at the end of the year if they were in a classroom taught by CARE teachers compared to students taught by control teachers. Among students with teachers low in mindfulness at the beginning of the year, students of CARE teachers had higher motivation and reading competence at the end of the school year than students of low-mindfulness teachers in the control condition (Brown et al., 2017).


Figure 5.2 CARE for Teachers Logic Model



COMMUNITY APPROACH TO LEARNING MINDFULLY (CALM FOR EDUCATORS)

The Community Approach to Learning Mindfully (CALM) programme was specifically designed as a school-based programme to promote teachers' SEC. The programme is typically offered as an optional opportunity for self-care at the start of the school day and all school personnel are encouraged to attend as often as they wish. The programme is delivered by trained yoga instructors and includes many of the same mindful awareness practices found in the other two programmes, but also includes gentle yoga and intentional breathing practices. The brief 15-20 minute sessions are scripted and designed to be completed over 16 weeks. Each session begins with a few of minutes of grounding in the present moment by taking three mindful breaths together and setting an intention for the practice session. This is typically followed by a breathing practice and gentle yoga movements. The session ends with a few minutes of relaxation, caring and compassion, or gratitude practice, and with setting an intention for the teaching day. Participants receive personal practice cards containing instructions for a brief practice to try in the classroom or at home, and a reflection on the theme of the week.

CALM was evaluated in a quasi-experimental trial involving educators from two middle schools randomly assigned to receive CALM or serve as a waitlist control group (Harris et al., 2016). Sixty four educators participated in the study; those who participated in CALM showed improved mindfulness, distress tolerance and decreased burnout and physical symptoms compared to those in the control school. Furthermore, their efficacy for classroom management improved. Researchers also collected psychological data related to stress and well-being, including blood pressure and salivary cortisol. Results showed that educators in the CALM group displayed reduced blood pressure and better cortisol functioning compared to controls.



**THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED
IN CALM SHOWED
IMPROVED MINDFULNESS,
DISTRESS TOLERANCE
AND DECREASED BURNOUT**

CONCLUSIONS

Teachers play a critical role in SEL instruction as models of SEC and as implementers of SEL programmes. 'However, little work has been done to understand the SEC that teachers require to successfully fulfill this important role. While MBIs show promise for supporting teachers' well-being and promoting SEC, this research has also provided support for the Prosocial Classroom Model. While all the elements of the model have not been fully tested, CARE research has demonstrated that improvements in teachers' SEC and well-being are associated with improved classroom interactions and student engagement and learning. Further research is required to examine whether MBIs can improve the quality of SEL programme delivery and effectiveness.

KEY CHALLENGES

- 5.1 Many school districts do not provide adequate time for teacher professional learning nor do they recognise the critical importance of teachers' SEC to successfully promoting social and emotional learning in schools.
- 5.2 Growing numbers of students are exposed to trauma. This can impact social and emotional development in ways that are adaptive to the stressful environment, but that teachers may not understand or know how to respond to effectively. Supporting teachers so they do not become overly stressed and suffer from burnout is especially important for those working with students exposed to trauma, chronic stress and adversity.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 School districts should provide adequate time for teachers to develop the social and emotional competencies they need to manage the stress of the classroom and to intentionally model the social and emotional skills they aim to teach to their students.
- 5.2 Teachers need instruction on trauma-sensitive practices to support students exposed to trauma and adversity.

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