



# **School Psychologists' Role in Physical Activity-Based Social Emotional Learning Instruction**

IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

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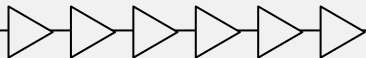


# **BACKGROUND & CONTEXT**



# Background & Context

- There are growing concerns over the increased prevalence of social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties for children
- Promotion of social and emotional competencies is critical to children's development
- Schools play an important role in the development of students' social and emotional competencies through prevention- and intervention-oriented supports



# Background & Context

- Students with lower levels of social and emotional competence are at a heightened risk for:
  - Chronic academic disengagement
  - Lower grades
  - Inconsistent attendance
  - Dropping out of school
  - Internalizing and externalizing behaviors
  - Special education referrals



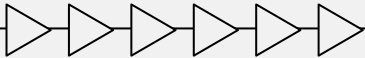
# Background & Context

- Sufficient social and emotional skills are important for:
  - Student well-being
  - Positive peer attitudes and relationships
  - Positive attitudes toward oneself
  - Greater engagement in prosocial behavior
  - Lower levels of emotional distress



# Background & Context

- Schools have begun implementing **social and emotional learning (SEL)** programming
- School psychologists in particular have been increasingly called upon to meet the social-emotional needs of students
- School psychologists are in a unique position to become **experts** in SEL!





# **SEL DEFINITION & COMPETENCIES**

**2**



# SEL Definition

“The process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.” (CASEL, 2020, p. 1)

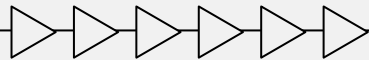
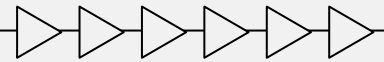
# SEL Competencies





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# SEL PROGRAMMING IN SCHOOLS



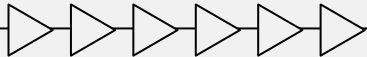
# SEL Programming in Schools

- Interventions in schools are one of the more common approaches to supporting students' SEL
- School programming often targets the development of specific skills and competencies
- The majority of SEL practices in schools take place within the classroom setting



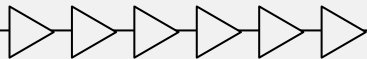
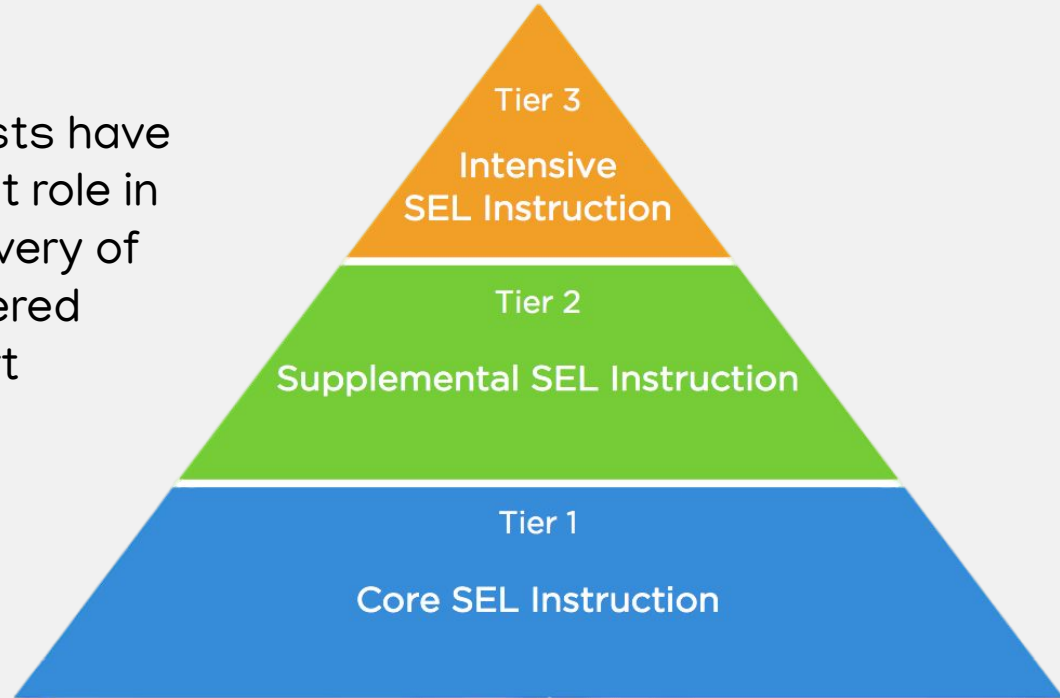
# Traditional Approaches

- Traditional SEL Instructional Approaches:
  - Integration of SEL into the context of core academic curricula
  - Discrete or free-standing lessons and instruction
  - General teaching strategies and practices



# Traditional Approaches

- School psychologists have played an important role in supporting the delivery of SEL within multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)



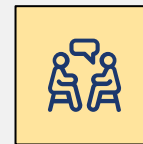
# What Are the Outcomes?



**SEL Skills**



**Attitudes**



**+ Social Behaviors**



**Conduct Problems**



**Emotional Distress**

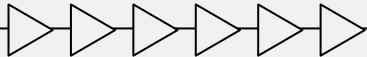


**Academic Performance**

# Expanding SEL Practices in Schools

- New SEL approaches are necessary to supplement existing ones
- Important to look for ways to:
  - Strengthen outcomes
  - Differentiate instructional approaches to meet students' diverse needs
  - Incorporate SEL into additional portions of the school day

Implementing SEL within the context of school-based physical activity is an innovative approach to teaching and reinforcing SEL skills





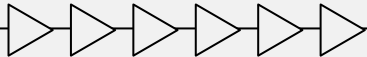


# **SEL & SCHOOL-BASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

**4**

# Physical Activity as a Method to Teach SEL

- Physical activity and sports participation has long been associated with a range of physical and mental health benefits
- Physical activity can be used to teach developmental skills within the **social and affective domains** (e.g., the SEL core competencies)
  - These domains have been historically neglected within school-based physical activity



# Physical Activity as a Method to Teach SEL

- Social and affective outcomes associated with physical activity:
  - Psychological and emotional development
  - Social development
    - Work ethic, control and management, goal-setting, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, leadership, cooperation, meeting people and making friends, communication, and prosocial behavior



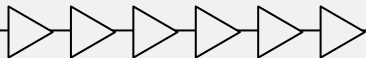
# SEL and School-Based Physical Activity

- Physical activity is seen as providing a natural opportunity to promote SEL
- Some argue that SEL competencies have always been aligned with school-based physical activity practices
  - This viewpoint takes an implicit approach to SEL instruction
    - Generally ineffective
- Many children struggle with the development of their SEL skills



# Physical Activity-Based SEL

- Best-practice recommendations call for explicit and intentional SEL instruction
- High-quality programming tends to utilize explicit approaches, such as scripted curricula or structured lessons
- SEL must be intentionally implemented into planned, structured school-based physical activity





# Physical Activity-Based SEL

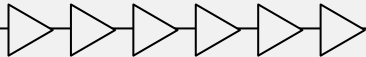
- SEL practices should follow SAFE instructional procedures

Sequenced	Active	Focused	Explicit
Utilizing a coordinated set of activities to achieve outlined objectives	Utilizing active forms of learning to promote the development of new skills	The inclusion of specific components devoted to developing students' skills	Directly targeting specific SEL skills (e.g., the CASEL 5 core competencies)



# Physical Activity-Based SEL

- No single comprehensive conceptual framework or approach currently exists
- Some best practices for intentionally implementing SEL content into physical activity can be adapted from several well-established pedagogical approaches
  - Sport Education
  - Adventure-Based Learning
  - Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility



# Sport Education Model

- Focus on building authentic and enjoyable sport experiences through the use of sports teams and students taking an active role in their experiences
- Can be adapted to align with an SEL framework
  - Cooperative games and learning
  - Student agency in game selection
  - Rotating roles



# Adventure-Based Learning

- A structured physical activity model for promoting personal and social development
- Like SEL, the focus is on the affective domain
- Core components:
  - Debrief
  - Cooperative activities

# Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR)

- Focuses on teaching life skills through physical activity
- Strategies align with the SEL framework

Awareness Talk	Physical Activity	Group Meeting	Reflection Time
SEL skills are introduced and discussed with students; occurs at the beginning of the lesson	Students engage in physical activities while also practicing the SEL skills discussed	Time for students to discuss the SEL topic, how it was used during physical activity, etc.	Allows students to reflect on their attitudes and behaviors during the lesson

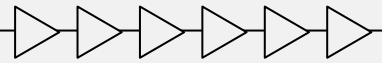
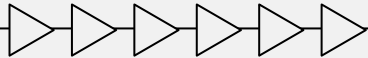
# Additional Strategies

- Fostering a student-centered learning environment
- Building quality student-teacher relationships
- Creating a safe and inclusive learning environment
- Adopting an asset-based developmental approach





# **THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

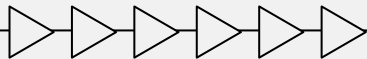


# The Role of School Psychologists

- School psychologists are well-situated to promote physical activity-based SEL instruction within the school setting
- School psychologists should play a prominent role in the selection and implementation of school-based interventions targeting students' psychological, social, and behavioral well-being

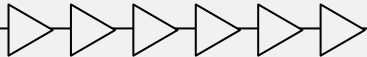


# NASP Practice Model



# Which Domains are Most Relevant?

- Domain 1: Data-Based Decision-Making
- Domain 2: Consultation and Collaboration
- Domain 4: Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions
- Domain 6: Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools
- Domain 9: Research and Evidence-Based Practice



# Data-Based Decision-Making

- School psychologists understand and utilize assessment methods for identifying strengths and needs; developing effective interventions, services, and programs; and measuring progress and outcomes within a multitiered system of supports. School psychologists use a problem-solving framework as the basis for all professional activities.





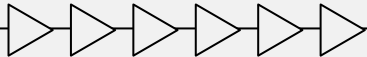
# Data-Based Decision-Making

- Using data to inform decisions about interventions and inform physical activity-based SEL practices
  - Identify school- or student-level SEL needs
- Data-driven decision making within a multi-tiered systems of support framework
  - Universal screening and progress monitoring
    - Ex: Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) SEL



# Consultation and Collaboration

- School psychologists understand varied models and strategies of consultation and collaboration applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems, as well as methods to promote effective implementation of services. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to consult, collaborate, and communicate effectively with others.



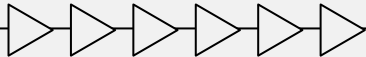
# Consultation and Collaboration

- Generate buy-in from administrators and other educators
  - Motivational interviewing
- Interdisciplinary team approach
  - Organize a team of diverse stakeholders to plan and support implementation of physical activity-based SEL
  - Allows stakeholders to tap into personal skill sets
- Teacher training and professional development



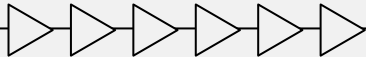
# Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions

- School psychologists understand the biological, cultural, developmental, and social influences on mental and behavioral health, behavioral and emotional impacts on learning, and evidence-based strategies to promote social-emotional functioning. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, design, implement, and evaluate services that promote resilience and positive behavior, support socialization and adaptive skills, and enhance mental and behavioral health.



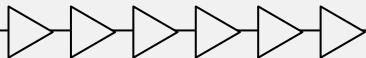
# Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions

- Utilize knowledge of evidence-based physical activity and SEL practices to support development and implementation
- Direct implementation of physical activity-based SEL instruction in the school setting to promote positive social-emotional functioning
  - May be more relevant for Tier II or Tier III implementation



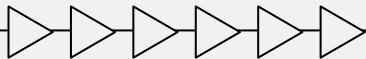
# Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools

- School psychologists understand principles and research related to social-emotional well-being, resilience and risk factors in learning, mental and behavioral health, services in schools and communities to support multi-tiered prevention and health promotion, and evidence-based strategies for creating safe and supportive schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, promote preventive and responsive services that enhance learning, mental and behavioral health, and psychological and physical safety and implement effective crisis prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery.



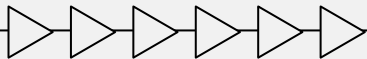
# Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools

- Prevention- and intervention-oriented support services
- Facilitate the adoption of physical activity-based SEL instruction within a multi-tiered systems of support framework
  - Tier I: universal programming
  - Tier II: targeted intervention
  - Tier III: intensive, individualized support



# Research and Evidence-Based Practice

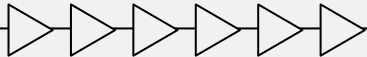
- School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, and varied data collection and analysis techniques sufficient for understanding research, interpreting data, and evaluating programs in applied settings. As scientist practitioners, school psychologists evaluate and apply research as a foundation for service delivery and, in collaboration with others, use various techniques and technology resources for data collection, measurement, and analysis to support effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.





# Research and Evidence-Based Practice

- Review current research, interventions, and best-practices
- Monitor fidelity of implementation
  - Ensure physical activity-based SEL practices are being implemented as intended
  - Provide feedback
- Evaluate physical activity-based SEL program effectiveness
  - Rating scales, assessment measures, social validity



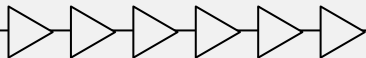


# **WRAP UP & QUESTIONS**

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# Wrap Up

- Schools play an important role in the development of students' social and emotional competencies
- SEL has become an integral part of education
- School psychologists in particular have been increasingly called upon to meet the social-emotional needs of students
- Physical activity can be used to teach developmental skills within the social and affective domains (e.g., the SEL core competencies)
- Best-practice recommendations call for explicit and intentional SEL instruction



# Wrap Up

- SEL must be intentionally implemented into planned, structured school-based physical activity
- School psychologists are well-situated to promote physical activity-based SEL instruction within the school setting
- School psychologists' can use their knowledge of data-based decision-making, consultation and collaboration, intervention development and implementation, service delivery, and research and evidence-based practices to support physical activity-based SEL in schools





**QUESTIONS?**





# THANK YOU

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