

THE RAND CENTER FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING RESEARCH

The skills people need to thrive in their workplaces and communities extend well beyond academic achievement. Interpersonal skills, such as the ability to work in teams, and intrapersonal skills, such as the ability to recognize and manage emotions, enable individuals to succeed in and out of school and become engaged, contributing members of society. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which people develop these competencies.

WHAT WE DO

The RAND Center for Social and Emotional Learning Research provides new evidence about the implementation and effectiveness of SEL programs, practices, and assessments. We also translate that evidence into concrete guidance to inform policy and practice at all levels of the education system. We focus on the following topics:

Evaluating SEL program implementation and effectiveness. The SEL field is growing, and educators are bombarded with new materials and approaches. How do they know which programs will meet their goals and the needs of their students and schools? How can they ensure that they implement programs in ways that will benefit students? The Center helps educators make the right choices by conducting rigorous evaluations and reviews.

Promoting effective use of SEL assessments. In addition to choosing an SEL instructional approach, educators need to find SEL assessments that best meet their needs. The Center applies several decades of RAND experience in student assessment to the subject of SEL. We examine how assessments promote higher-quality instruction, and we provide guidance on how to use data from assessments to improve policy and practice.

Integrating SEL into school and out-of-school activities. Making SEL integral to both the school day and to out-of-school activities provides students with intensive, cohesive support. The Center assesses SEL programs and practices that are implemented during and beyond the school day. We help educational stakeholders understand the conditions that hinder or support SEL implementation in different contexts, as well as how SEL practices can benefit both adults and children.





ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Laura Hamilton is a senior behavioral scientist and distinguished chair in learning and assessment at the RAND Corporation. She directs the RAND Center for Social and Emotional Learning Research and co-directs the American Educator Panels, RAND's nationally representative survey panels of teachers and principals. She regularly serves as an expert adviser to states, districts, and other organizations on topics related to accountability, assessment, instruction, and learning. She also leads RAND's work at the Center to Improve Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety. She has a Ph.D. in educational psychology and an M.S. in statistics from Stanford University.

For more information on this publication, visit www.rand.org/t/CP929-2019.

PHOTO CREDITS
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Improving climate and discipline policies. Supportive learning environments and positive relationships contribute to students' social and emotional development. Our research explores ways to promote healthy school and classroom climates, along with approaches to assessing climate quality. A related strand of work examines the effectiveness of strategies for promoting positive student behavior change and the effectiveness of disciplinary policies.

Supporting students' civic development. Social and emotional competencies are not only important for promoting college and career readiness; they also enable students to contribute to their communities and exercise their civic responsibilities. RAND's work investigates ways in which schools can promote media literacy, critical thinking, and other civic skills.

Featured Tools

RAND Education Assessment Finder. This interactive database allows users to identify SEL-related assessments that meet their local needs and to determine what evidence about reliability and validity has been collected for each assessment.

Visit the Finder at www.rand.org/education-and-labor/projects/assessments.

American Educator Panels. RAND is home to the American Teacher Panel and the American School Leader Panel—survey panels that enable us to gather nationally representative data on teacher and principal practices, knowledge, opinions, and working conditions. The Center uses these panels to incorporate teachers' and principals' voices into our research and to help policymakers, program developers, and education leaders respond effectively to educators' SEL-related needs and goals.

More information about the panels is available at www.rand.org/aep.

THE RAND ADVANTAGE

The RAND Corporation provides a unique and ideal context for the Center for Social and Emotional Research by

- assembling multidisciplinary teams with extensive experience on a variety of relevant topics
- applying cutting-edge methods and state-of-the-art dissemination tools
- bringing together experts in RAND Education and Labor, which seeks to strengthen the connection between pre-K–12 schooling and preparation for postsecondary education, the workplace, and community life.

For more information

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The RAND Corporation is a research organization that develops solutions to public policy challenges to help make communities throughout the world safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous. RAND is nonprofit, nonpartisan, and committed to the public interest.



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