



FOR EXCELLENCE IN MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2021-2022

Ideas With **IMPACT**



idea packet

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Student's Social
Emotional
Growth in the COVID Era

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Goals and Objectives

The source of my idea came from the need to help my students cope with anxiety by providing Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) strategies to ease their minds and provide continuity of instruction during Covid-19 lockdown back in March 2020. At the time, my class was one of the pilot classes introducing the SEL strategies designed by Triumph Steps. The proactive, preemptive, and pioneering principal at Kendale Lakes Elementary, Ms. Martha T. Jaureguizar, had already implemented an SEL plan which began with the instructional staff. The founder, Ms. Beatriz Martinez-Peñalver, a licensed psychotherapist with over twenty-five years of experience in the mental health field came to Kendale Lakes Elementary and provided a full day workshop before the opening of schools in August 2019, on using cognitive behavioral approaches and meditation to help teachers deal with their emotional psyche. She supplied simple and effortless steps that everyone needs in life to be triumphant, from kindergarten to adulthood. It was not until the pandemic hit us that these SEL strategies became a priority in my daily virtual instruction with my students.

According to an article published by NEA (National Education Association), Walker (2020) states that, “Experts say teaching and learning during closures is unrealistic if SEL for students and educators is left out of the conversation.” The article prioritizes the SEL component as part of the everyday curriculum in schools. Now more than ever, everyone has come to realize the importance of providing SEL to teachers and their students. The article goes on to mention that, “the worst thing we can do for our teachers, students, and families is de-prioritize SEL during the pandemic.”



Florida Special Skills Standards

The following standards are the Unique Skills Social and Emotional covering my SEL project found in [CPalms](#).

SP.PK12.US.19.3: Express a range of personal emotions and feelings in a socially acceptable manner.

SP.PK12.US.19.6: Self-advocate for personal needs in a socially appropriate manner.

SP.PK12.US.19.1b: Identify personal emotions and feelings and their impact on physical and mental well-being.

SP.PK12.US.19.2b: Identify ways that personal strengths can compensate for areas of need.

SP.PK12.US.19.5b: Use a systematic approach for making decisions about personal needs, including identifying need or problem, determining possible solutions, selecting the best option, accepting consequences and responsibility, and evaluating the effectiveness of the decision.

SP.PK12.US.19.7b: Demonstrate self-esteem, self-confidence, and pride, such as through self-affirmations, persistence, and self-monitoring.

SP.PK12.US.20.1: Identify a range of emotions and feelings of others.

SP.PK12.US.20.2: Respond in a socially appropriate manner to emotions and feelings of others.

SP.PK12.US.20.3: Identify and maintain behaviors that build positive relationships with peers and adults, including friendships, family relations, and cooperating with peers.

SP.PK12.US.20.4: Use basic social communication skills to build positive relationships with peers and adults, such as eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, posture, proximity, touch, appearance, and listening.

SP.PK12.US.20.5: Maintain positive relationships with peers and adults using basic social skills, such as greetings, turn-taking, sharing materials, and giving and accepting assistance.

SP.PK12.US.20.6: Work cooperatively in small groups to achieve common outcomes.

SP.PK12.US.20.7b: Use conflict resolution strategies to resolve differences, such as communicate, negotiate, or mediate.

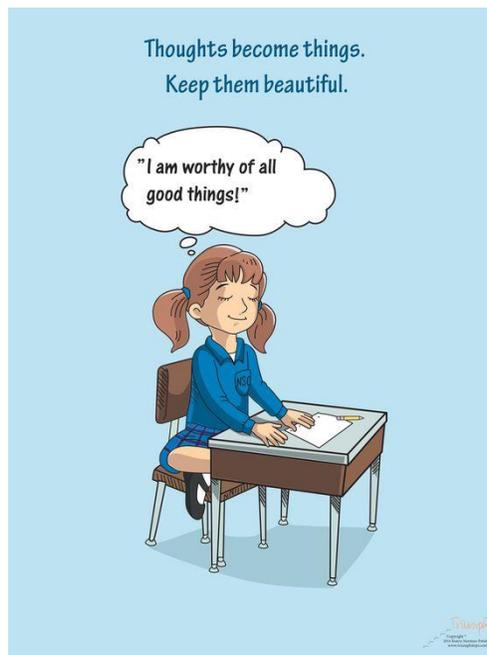
SP.PK12.US.21.3: Use behaviors and social skills based on setting demands and rules when accessing and using resources in the school and community.

SP.PK12.US.21.4: Use a systematic approach for problem solving and decision making to resolve problems in school, community, and work settings.

SP.PK12.US.21.5: Use behaviors and skills, such as self-monitoring, accepting feedback, adjusting own actions, and self-reflection to maintain appropriate conduct in school, community, and employment settings.

SP.PK12.US.21.2b: Identify explicit and implicit behaviors that are based on setting demands and social norms, such as acceptable tone of voice and volume, use of turn-taking behaviors, and movement.

ELD.K12.ELL.SI.1: English language learners communicate for social and instructional purposes within the school setting.



Introduction

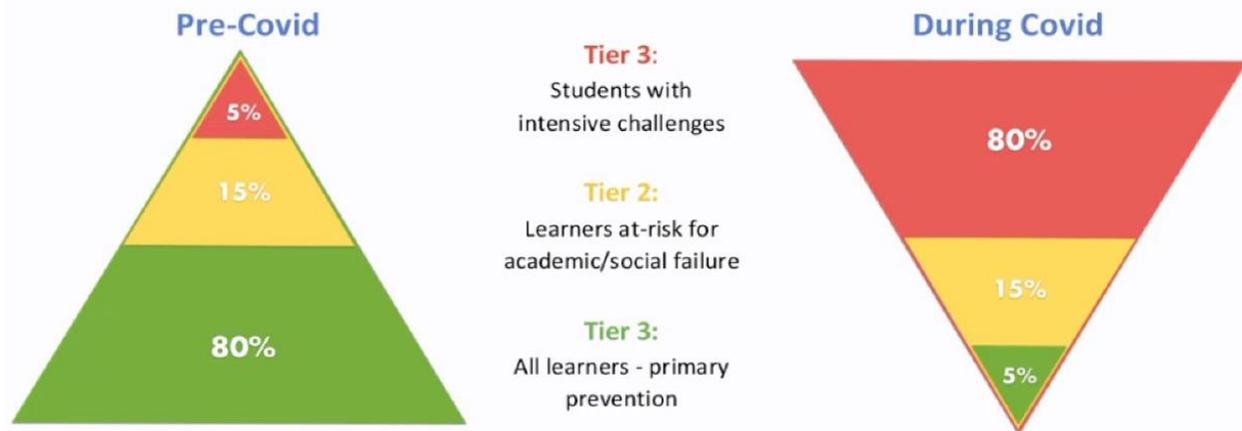
COVID-19 has not discriminated from spreading its devastating and global effects. People everywhere are trying to cope with all the repercussions associated with COVID-19; whether it is losing a loved one, personal illness, loss of income, to the mental and emotional stress it has infused in our lives. Social and Emotional well-being needs to be the priority for all educational institutions all the time. SEL is not something to visit when things get difficult, it is about changing your mindset and including it as a daily practice in our lives so that when stress and hardship surface, we are better armed to cope and manage with our emotional state of mind.

What exactly is SEL? The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2021), defines SEL as “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.”

As educators we prioritize the academic content areas of our profession. Yet, this pandemic has made us realize that “the worst thing we can do for our teachers, students, and families is de-prioritize SEL” according to Christina Cipriano, director of research at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence (Walker, 2020). According to Rosanbalm (2021), the research and facts prove that SEL is the “cornerstone necessary for both academic and career success.” Students from as early as kindergarten have a higher probability to graduate, go to college, have a job, are less likely to resort to public aid, less criminal involvement, less substance abuse, and fewer mental health issues, when their social-emotional skills were addressed at an early age (Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley, 2015). It becomes clear that if we are to truly prepare our students to succeed, not only academically but as productive members of society, SEL needs to be at the forefront of education.

Course Outline and Overview

Multi-tiered Systems of Support



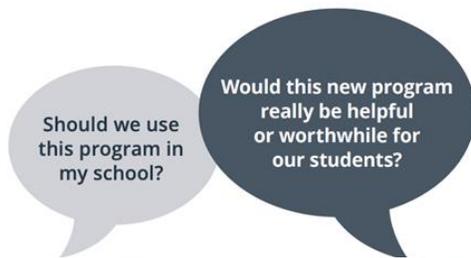
Take a close look at the infographic image above. What does this data reveal and what are the implications it has for you as a teacher? Before COVID-19 we were faced with 5% of students with intensive challenges. Now, that pyramid has flipped, and we find ourselves looking at a separate set of percentages focusing our energy on helping 80% of our students with intensive/chronic behavior challenges.

The purpose of my project was to address the anxiety and stress level of students while on lockdown. I had started using the SEL strategies before March of 2020, and I wanted my students to feel a sense of normalcy even during our remote learning sessions. I continued our daily routine which was very needed and asked for by my students. Since our morning announcements were taped and on YouTube, even before the lockdown, I continued to follow the same routines we used in class, and I realized how important and beneficial those first ten minutes of the day were for me and my students.

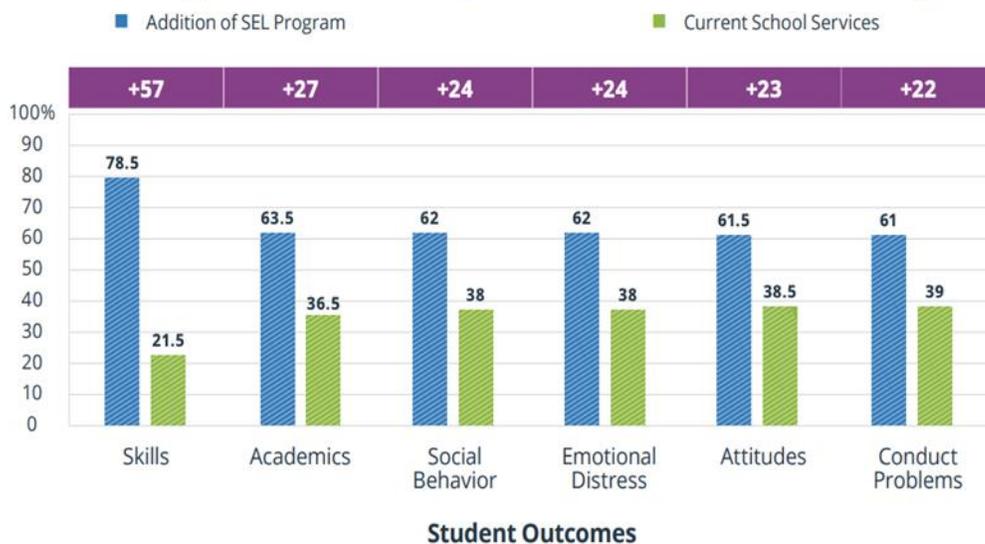
The Triumph Step lessons were divided into twelve weeks, with a theme for each week. The first lesson was on Thoughts and Emotions. Then, for each day of that week we would concentrate on a different aspect of thoughts and emotions. For example: Monday: Confidence, Tuesday: Joy, Wednesday: Kindness, Thursday: Silence in General, Friday: Gratitude. The Triumph

Steps program combined relaxing audio recording with a positive social emotional message of well-being and confidence. I had agreed to do it with my class, but little did I know that it would supply a very needed sense of comfort and a source of positive emotional well-being for both my students and me. The project has been enormously successful and effective in improving my student’s overall social emotional well-being as evidenced by the attendance log, class participation, engagement, and classwork completion rate.

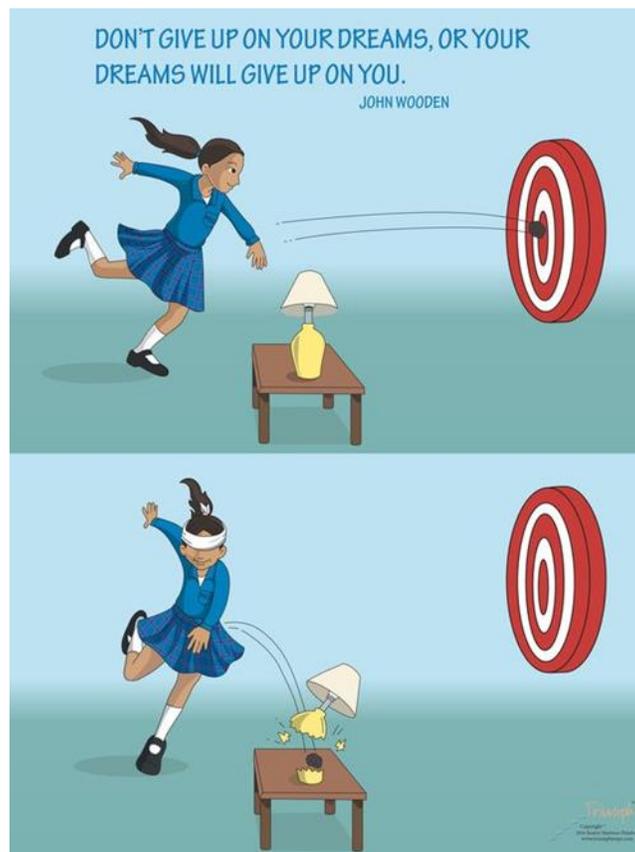
When researching SEL, I was confronted with an overwhelming argument for its presence, not just in my classroom, but in every single school house throughout the world. “As more attention is paid to "educating the whole child," SEL practices have been embedded in a growing number of classrooms across the country.” (“Social-Emotional Learning Should Be Priority During COVID-19 Crisis | NEA”) Educators need to be aware that these skills play a vital role in determining how well-equipped children will be to meet the demands of the classroom and their future academic success. The research is clear: SEL is key to successful student performance, especially in preschool and elementary school (Walker, 2020).



Percentage of Students Who Improve with the Addition of an SEL Program



Triumph Steps consists of a systematic, consistent, and simple program that was designed with students and teachers in mind. Triumph takes into consideration the many responsibilities educators have, and gives an effortless, easy to use program with endless benefits for the students and teachers. The program helps students become goal oriented, empowered, centered, creative, and socially responsible members of society. It includes a set of tools and strategies to help students reach their unlimited potential to create the extraordinary life they deserve.



Sample Triumph Steps Lesson

Lesson #1: Relationship between Thoughts and Emotions



Relationship between Thoughts and Emotions

LESSON #1



Materials:

Poster of one head with flowers and one blank head for the students to draw



Teacher's Note:

Make copies of head posters for each student. Emphasize the connection between thoughts and feelings. Reinforce new words at the end of the lesson.



Objective:

To help the student understand how the way they think is connected with their feelings. For example, getting them to understand that if they think of "happy thoughts", they will feel happy. This lesson will also lead the student to understand that no one can think for them but themselves. It will also teach them that they are "The Gardener of Their Mind".



Learning Experience: Audio (5 to 6 minutes)

Lesson and Activity (20 minutes)

Teacher will show two heads. One with flowers which represents happy thoughts and one blank where students will draw a picture showing a happy thought, for example, pictures of rainbows, or flying a kite or eating ice cream.

Students will think of positive thoughts as they look at the head with the flowers, and the teacher helps them to see the flowers blooming as those positive thoughts and emotions.



Evaluation: (5 minutes)

Teacher will ask students to raise their hands and clap when he/she says a positive thought that brings them happy feelings. Students will end clapping knowing and feeling that happy thoughts cause happiness.

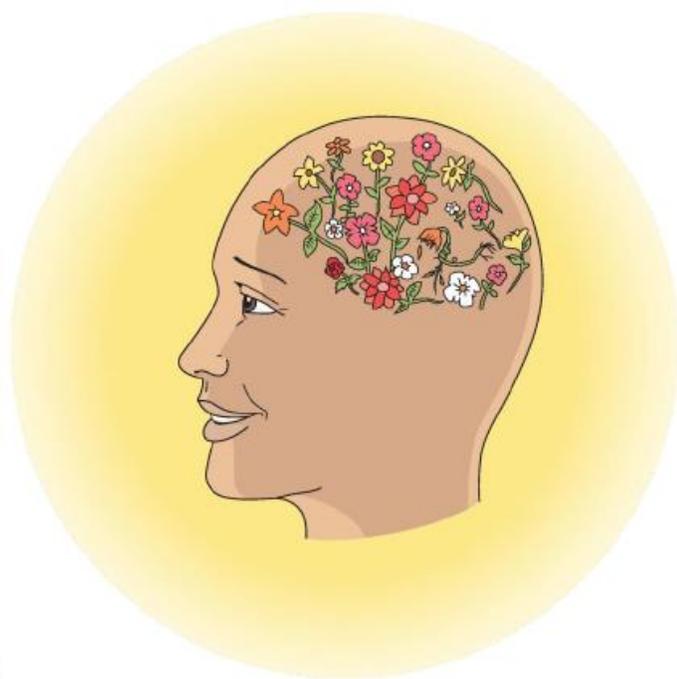


WORDS TO REMEMBER:

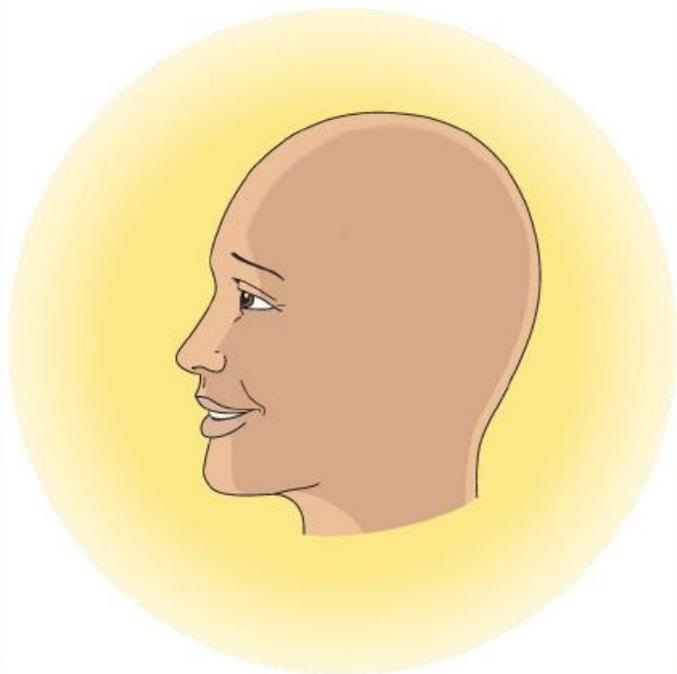
Review Truth or Dare for the week.

Thoughts. Happiness. Connections. Feelings.

Happy thoughts



Draw a picture showing a happy thought.



>> TODAY'S TRIUMPHANT TASKS

TRUTH: There is a connection between how you feel and what you think.

DARE: Learn this phrase: Thoughts become things; keep them beautiful.



"Thoughts become things... keep them beautiful."

Additional Teacher Resources

STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE IN PRESCHOOLERS

Resilience is the ability to overcome serious hardship. Helping young children build resilience serves them in this difficult time as well as preparing them for the changes and challenges of adulthood. Resilient children grow into resilient adults. The following strategies will help you develop resilient preschoolers.

The following strategies develop social-emotional skills to BUILD RESILIENCE IN PRESCHOOLERS:

- **Help children develop empathy.** Empathy involves understanding and recognizing another person's perspective or sharing the feelings of another as though they are your own. While reading a story, foster the development of empathy by asking children how characters might be feeling.
- **Help children help each other.** Helping others empowers children who feel helpless in other areas of their lives.
- **Maintain consistent routines and schedules.** Preschool children crave routines and right now there's a lot of uncertainty. Keeping daily schedules consistent helps ease their minds so that they can focus on play and learning.
- **Make connections by building community.** Engage children so no one feels isolated. Connecting with others strengthens resilience. Spend time with others through video chatting, sending text messages, or making phone calls.
- **Model that it's okay to make mistakes.** If you spill water when pouring a drink, say, "That's okay. I'll just clean this up now."
- **Nurture positive self-view.** Reminding a child of the ways they handled difficulties in the past helps them see that they are capable. Help children see how their individual strengths contribute to the whole group.
- **Provide plenty of opportunities for children to make choices.** Young children who feel little control benefit from making choices.
- **Reflect with children on their experiences.** Once a child recovers from a heightened emotional moment, it helps to talk them through what they experienced.
- **Teach self-care.** Model the importance of taking a break when you need it. Teach calming methods, such as taking deep belly breaths and counting to 10, to deal with frustrations.
- **Teach that it's okay to ask for help.** Always be open to a child's request for help. It's important to build compassion and confidence by responding to their requests.

American Psychological Association (APA). (n.d.). Resilience guide for parents & teachers. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/resilience.aspx>

Internet Resources Sites:

Here are more useful sites and videos to help implement SEL in your classroom:

- 25 Simple Ways to Integrate Social-Emotional Learning Throughout the Day: <https://www.weareteachers.com/21-simple-ways-to-integrate-social-emotional-learning-throughout-the-day/>
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) offers free webinars and workshops: <https://casel.org/>
- Five Ways To Implement Social-Emotional Learning In The Classroom: <https://www.weareteachers.com/21-simple-ways-to-integrate-social-emotional-learning-throughout-the-day/>
- Getting and Keeping Your Groove: Building Resilience in Adults: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/ccic/pdf/articles/getting-and-keeping-your-groove.pdf>
- How are the Children YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dg_tlwk0Uww
- SEL 101: What are the core competencies and key setting? https://youtu.be/ouXhi_CfBVg
- Triumph Steps Website: <https://triumphsteps.com/>
- Triumph Steps YouTube Playlist: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRVjTZbjRNcZcivPeD1_ixw
- What Are the Core Competence Areas and Where Are They Promoted? <https://casel.org/casel-sel-framework-11-2020/?download=true>

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- Rosanbalm, K. (2021). *Social and Emotional Learning During COVID-19 and Beyond: Why It Matters and How to Support It*. Hunt Institute. Published. <https://hunt-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/HI-Duke-Brief-SEL-Learning-During-COVID-19-Rosanbalm.pdf>