SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN A CULTURAL CONTEXT

Antoinette Miranda, PhD
Kisha Radliff, PhD
The Ohio State University
School Psychology Program

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AGENDA

- Brief overview of SEL
- Challenges k-12 students are experiencing and why it matters
- Why cultural context matters
- Take away strategies and points

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HOW DO WE GET RACINE TO NOT GIVE UP AND KEEP COMING TO SCHOOL?

- Understand the cultural context
  - Pattern of parenting that was created for her Mom
  - Add to that bipolar disease and alcoholism
  - Exposure to the dysfunctional ways a family deals with the strife of poverty and struggle
- Racine searches for outward influences…..her parent can't provide it
- But Racine also challenges the staff
- She can be a time bomb ready to explode
- And yet, crying because she is wishing she wasn't behaving in destructive ways

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BRIEF OVERVIEW OF
SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

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2/26/20

SEL IS NOT NEW

- In the 90s it was "non-academic barriers"
- Mental health "crisis"
- Opioid epidemic
- Increase in suicide
- Increase in bullying
- Societal factors (e.g. poverty, racism,)
- Ohio's strategic plan
- Ohio SEL standards

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SEL AS DEFINED TODAY

- Social emotional learning (SEL) is a process by which children *and* adults...
  - identify and manage emotions,
  - set attainable goals,
  - maintain positive relationships,
  - demonstrate empathy for others, and
  - make responsible decisions

www.CASEL.org

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WHY SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCY IS CRITICAL

- Research demonstrates that students can build the capacity to regulate their emotions, behaviors, and cognitions through developing social emotional competencies.

- Research has found that when students improve their SEL skills, we also see improvement in attitudes, behaviors, and academic achievement!

- SEL skills help students meet challenges faced in school and overcome the demands of everyday life.

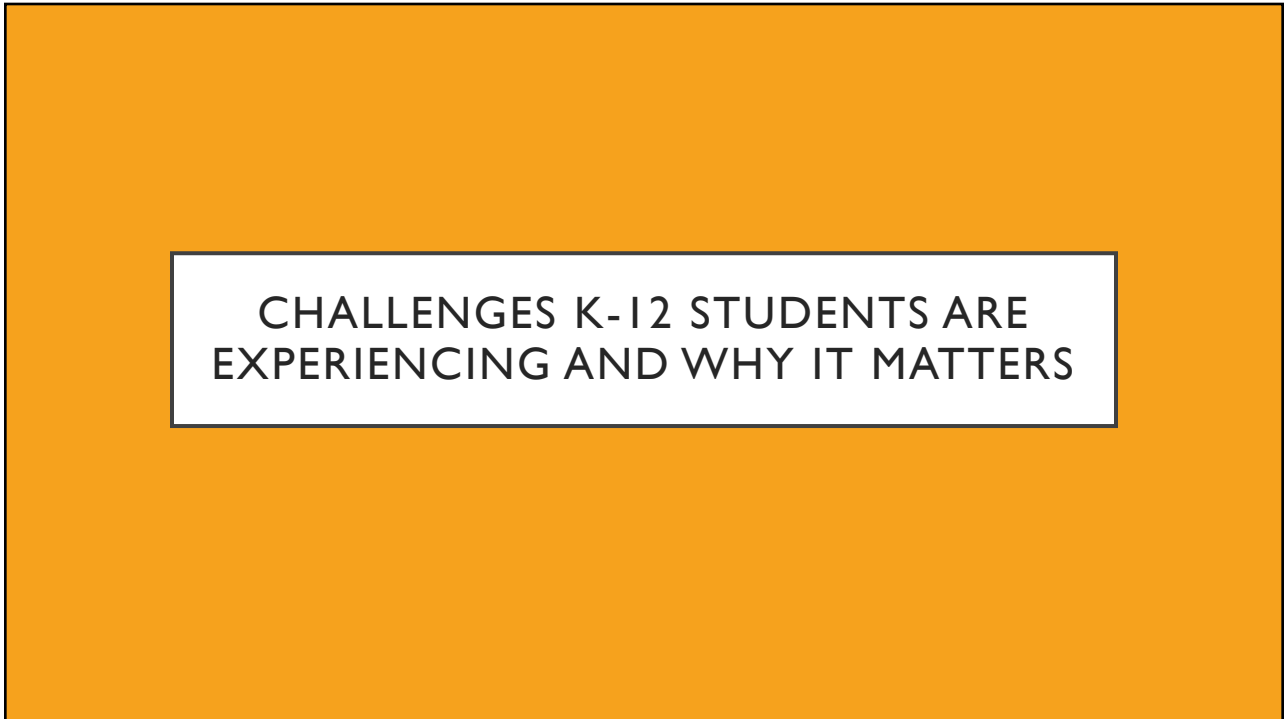- Social emotional learning, along with school climate, contribute to healthy schools.
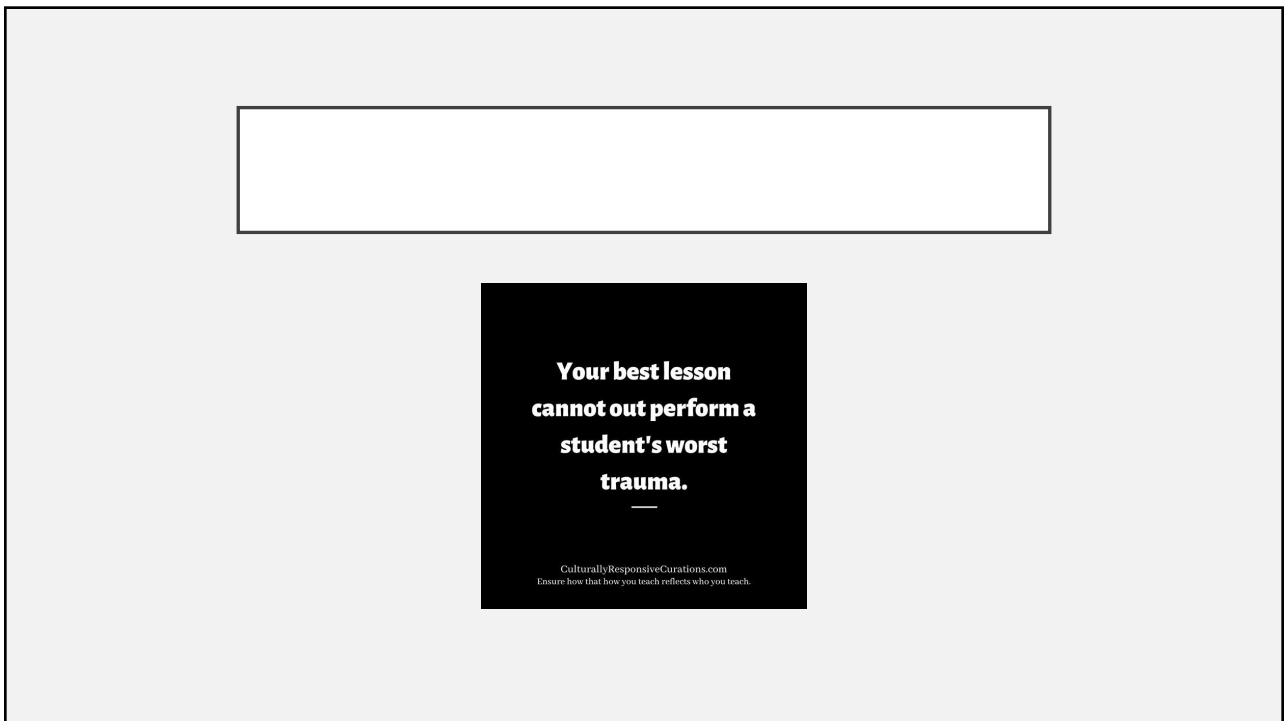
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Why do social-emotional skills matter?

Children who show **increased social—emotional competence** in Kindergarten are:

2x MORE LIKELY TO OBTAIN A COLLEGE DEGREE	**54%** MORE LIKELY TO EARN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	**46%** MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A FULL-TIME JOB BY THE AGE OF 25

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CHALLENGES K-12 STUDENTS ARE EXPERIENCING AND WHY IT MATTERS

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Your best lesson cannot out perform a student's worst trauma.

—

CulturallyResponsiveCurations.com
Ensure how that how you teach reflects who you teach.
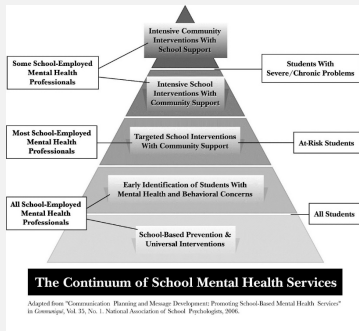
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HOW DOES IT PLAY OUT IN THE SCHOOLS

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ARE WE READY?

Overlooked

70% of students with a mental health disorder do not receive adequate treatment.

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WHAT SCHOOLS ARE LIKE TODAY

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CULTURAL CONTEXT MATTERS!

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AVOIDING THE ONE SIZE FITS ALL APPROACH TO SEL

- Culture is central to how we think, live, and see the world
- Understanding a student's cultural socialization is critical to understanding how identity can contribute to a sense of belonging
- A culturally responsive approach is important to bridging the gap

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SEL CAN BE A GAME CHANGER

- SEL has the potential to assist in mitigating the interrelated legacy of racial and class oppression in the U.S.
- It is not talked about as much
- Because of the positive effects, standards, programs, and policies are being adopted

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QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED

Do the "guiding frameworks, prominent programs, and assessments for SEL adequately reflect, cultivate, and leverage cultural assets and promote the well-being of youth of color and those from under-resourced backgrounds?"

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RECENT REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Results

SEL programs primarily assume interventions are neutral on issues of race and culture, and that the values and strategies purported by programs are universally relevant for all children.

Lack of recognition of important differences in the race-based and cultural experiences of students.

Example, individual self-control is at the heart of many SEL programs, but is a value that is not meaningful for many cultures (Hoffman, 2009).

Inadvertently, values of the dominant culture are prioritized in these SEL programs.

Examples of alternative strategies frame culture as difference, not deficit (Davis & Yang, 2006), use restorative rather than punitive responses to conflict (Morningside Center, 2015), or incorporate discussions of systems of oppression directly (Barr, 2010).

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TRANSFORMATIVE SEL

- Engage in a process whereby students and teachers:
  - build strong, respectful relationships founded on an appreciation of similarities and differences
  - learn to examine root causes of inequities and develop collaborative solutions to community and societal problems

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5 SEL COMPETENCIES THROUGH AN EQUITY LENS

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SELF-AWARENESS *WITH AN EQUITY LENS*
(SEL DISTRICT RESOURCE CENTER)

Self-awareness is foundational for equity.

- Understand the links between personal and sociocultural identities that are defined by cultural and/or family values, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender and other factors.

- Examine what it means to belong to a group or community, including how ethnicity and race impacts one's sense of self and beliefs

- Recognize biases and understand how thoughts, feelings, and actions are interconnected.

- Ground oneself in and affirm one's cultural heritage(s) or communities

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

Self-management includes regulating your emotions, stress management, self-control, self-motivation, and setting and achieving goals.

- We need to be cognizant of the following

  - Schools often prioritize middle-class American cultural values, norms, and practices.

  - Low-income or immigrant youth, who experience a cultural mismatch between school and home life may experience a type of stress that exhibits as behavior problems.

  - Students may also have experiences of discrimination and microaggressions that can lead to negative social and emotional outcomes and behaviors.

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SELF MANAGEMENT THAT PROMOTES EQUITY

- Cope with the stress of adapting to school culture.
- Cope with discrimination and prejudice.
- Develop a sense of agency, identify societal challenges and pursue individual and collective solutions.

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SOCIAL AWARENESS

The ability to take the perspective of those with the same and different backgrounds and cultures and to empathize and feel compassion.

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FOSTERING SOCIAL-AWARENESS THROUGH AN EQUITY LENS CAN HELP ADULTS AND STUDENTS TO:

- Understand social norms for behavior in diverse settings.
- Recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.
- Recognize and examine potentially competing cultural and race-related messages and expectations.
- Explore the importance of different types of diversity in classrooms, school, and community settings.
- Recognize cultural demands and opportunities across different settings
- Recognize issues of race and class across different settings.
- Assess power dynamics and how these dynamics can disadvantage others.
- Envision ways to co-create safe and constructive learning environments.

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RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Building relationships with diverse individuals and groups, communicating clearly, working cooperatively, resolving conflicts, and seeking help.

When cultivated with an equity lens, relationship skills can help students and adults:

- Develop cultural competency skills, which includes building relationships with those from different backgrounds in a way that values their culture and history.
- Learn about and navigate cultural differences (for example, by "code-switching").
- Collaboratively problem solve across differences in race, culture, gender, and social roles.

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RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

Responsible decision-making refers to considering the well-being of self and others; recognizing one's responsibility to behave ethically; basing decisions on safety, social, and ethical considerations; evaluating realistic consequences of various actions; and making constructive, safe choices for self, relationships, and school.

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FOSTERING EQUITY THROUGH SEL

- Engage in initiatives to co-create solutions that are inclusive, equitable, and mutually supportive.

- Develop an understanding of systemic or structural explanations for different treatment and outcomes.

- Assess the impact of personal beliefs and biases.

- Reflect on how actions taken by individuals, group and institutions impact equity.

- Make caring, constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse settings.

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How do we help and support Racine to want to do better and be better for her own future?

We understand her situation in a cultural context and how it influences her response to situations in school

- Provide to the family gently worn clothes rather than donating to Goodwill
- Provide her with an alarm clock so she can get herself up and to the bus
- Adopts the family for Thanksgiving
- Most importantly, a caring adult in her life will make a difference (e.g. principal, teacher, counselor)
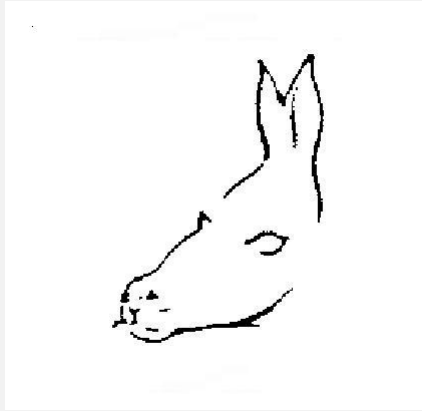
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SEL SKILLS

1. *Self-awareness*
2. *Self-management*
3. *Relationships*

Patience and Time

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CHANGE YOUR LENS

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CHALLENGE MICROAGGRESSIONS

- *"Do we really expect his behavior to get better? Have you met his mom. She's come to the school very demanding and loud."*
- Said about an elementary aged African American student struggling to control his behavior in a classroom where a security guard has been posted to help mitigate behaviors.
- When a team member is making statements that link a student's identity to performance, educators can explain that there is no research evidence indicating a causal relationship between identity and academic and/or behavioral performance. Therefore, the statements are untrue and should be corrected.

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- When a team member is making statements that focus the concerns on unalterable factors, educators can help the team member reframe their perspective. **[REFRAMING]**

- *Ex. Johnny's parents are incarcerated; therefore, there is not much we can do without support from home.*
- *Response: We cannot change the fact that Johnny's parent is incarcerated; however, we can focus on what we can do to support Johnny during this time.*

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OHIO'S K-12 SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS

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ALIGNED WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING—Life is a shared journey. Research shows that **being a part of a community improves life satisfaction and health**. Living as part of a community **involves understanding the importance of social interaction and personal feelings**.

Social-emotional learning includes competencies like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, collaboration, empathy, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

The elements of social-emotional learning give children the tools to become resilient and persistent in life.

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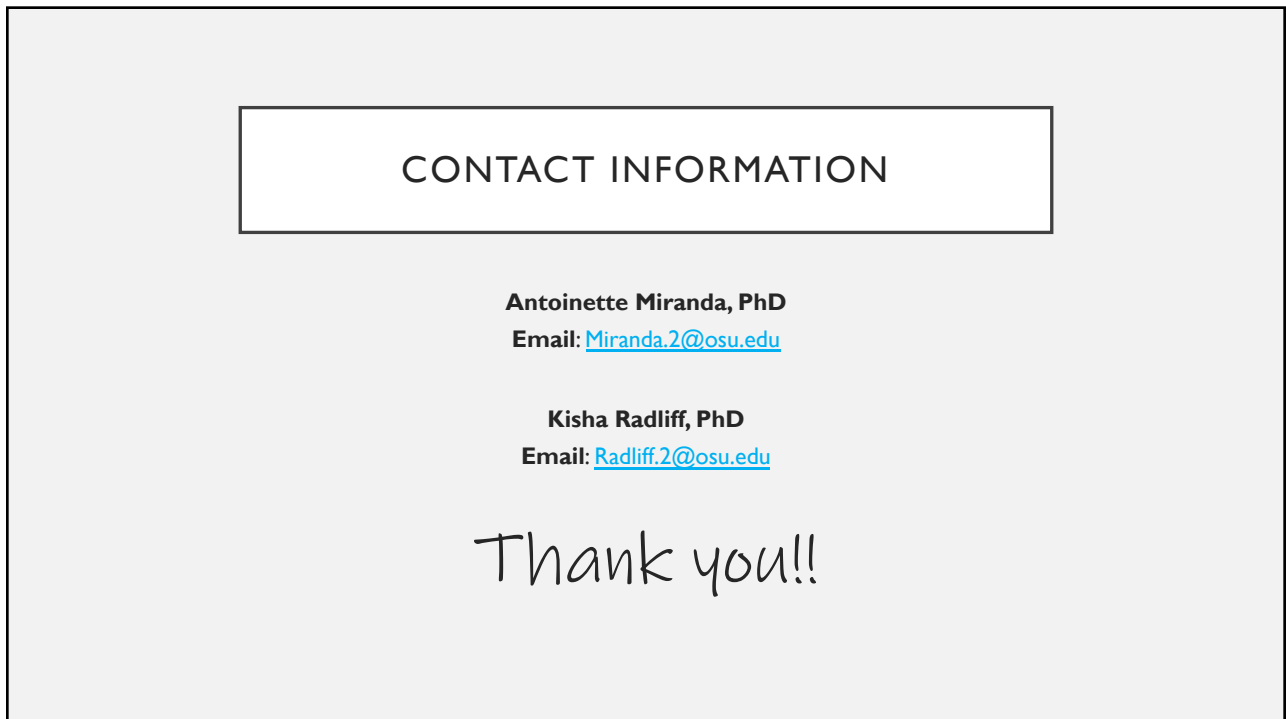## CREATE CONNECTIONS-DON'T WAIT FOR THEM TO COME TO YOU

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"Equity and SEL are the way to create the learning conditions needed for all children to be successful."
– Africa S. Fullove in Education Week Teacher

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Antoinette Miranda, PhD
Email: Miranda.2@osu.edu

Kisha Radliff, PhD
Email: Radliff.2@osu.edu

Thank you!!

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RESOURCES

Implicit Bias

- Website: http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/

Book: Hope in urban schools: Love Stories by Cara Churchich-Riggs

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