

SRBI Parent Guide for Social/Emotional Learning

What is Social/Emotional Learning?

According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Social and emotional skills are the tools both children and adults use in social interactions and to manage everyday emotional responses.

Why does Madison screen all students for Social/Emotional Health?

Universal screenings allow us to learn more about our students' strengths and areas for growth. It is an equitable and systematic way of identifying those who may need additional supports.

What universal screening tool is used?

In collaboration with the State Department of Education, Madison Public Schools will use the DESSA-mini. The DESSA is an empirical, standardized social and emotional competence (SEC) assessment with editions that support students K-12. The DESSA-mini is used to inform the delivery of SEL at every stage.

When is the DESSA-mini given?

Much like we screen for reading and math, the DESSA-mini will be administered to all students three times a year- Fall, Winter, and Spring.

Who will administer it?

In grades K-8, the homeroom teacher will administer the eight question assessment.

In grades 9-12, students will complete a 55 item self-assessment.

What areas of my child's social emotional health will be assessed?

The DESSA evaluates students in the following areas:

Self-Management
Goal-Directed Behavior
Responsible Decision-Making
Personal Responsibility

Relationship Skills
Social-Awareness
Self Awareness
Optimistic Thinking

These competency areas make it easier for educators to define and measure where students have strengths and where they have a need for instruction, or an opportunity to grow. It also provides a framework for specific social and emotional strategy development, so educators, students and families can work together to target a specific skill or set of skills to work on in a set time period.

Who will see the results? Will they be a part of my child's permanent record?

Only those staff members working directly with your child will be privy to the results of any assessments. As a parent, you will have the results as well. Results from universal screens are not part of a student's permanent record.

What if my child needs help?

Students who are identified as needing intervention may participate in whole class lessons, small group skill development, and/or individual counseling. These interventions may be implemented by the classroom teacher, a counseling staff member (i.e. school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers), or both. We may also collaborate with outside providers/agencies.

How can I support my child's Social/Emotional Learning at home?

Parents play a critical role in supporting what their children are learning in school. Research is clear that the more parents are involved in student learning, the higher the student achievement. Parents can be involved in the process by communicating any concerns to the child's teacher, providing insight into their child's learning and development and assisting with identified interventions at home.

For more ideas, click here: https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/CASELCaregiverGuide_English.pdf

What if I have questions or concerns?

At the elementary level, families should reach out to their child's classroom teacher if they have specific questions or concerns.

At the intermediate, middle, and high school levels, families should reach out to their child's school counselor.

Conversations may be had in collaboration with a member of the school's SEL team.