

SEL Training Tips from *Michelle Carter*:

Icebreaker

Label index cards with names of famous couples such as cartoon, comedian, historic, actors, and political. Make sure you have enough for the whole group. Pass out the cards to the group and have participants find the other half of the famous couple. Couples should introduce themselves and find two to three interesting facts about each other. Allow 10 minutes for the activity depending on the size of the group. Once participants have returned to their seats ask them to introduce themselves to the group by their famous names, real names and tell the interesting facts about each other. (Some examples of famous names are: Sony & Cher, Tom & Jerry, Pebbles & Bam-Bam, George & Martha, Donald & Daisy, Mickey & Minnie.)

SEL Tool Kit

On day one of Social Emotional Learning, provide each participant with a folder and 15 index cards attached together with a metal ring, post-it-notes, pen and highlighter. This becomes their tool kit. The folder is labeled and decorated by the participant and used to keep SEL posters and any additional handouts. The index cards are labeled SEL Tool Kit on the front. The index cards are used to attach tips that are handed out by the trainer throughout the training and for the participant to write down tips shared by other participants.

Stop or Go?

On a SEL video used in class, the preschool teacher models using good behavior with stop and go signs attached to popsicle sticks. An idea to get your participants used to the idea of using the stop and go sticks is to use them in class. Make enough sticks so that you can put them on every table. After the trainer has covered a topic or talked on a topic for a lengthy amount of time he or she stops to ask the participants "Is that a stop or go?" Each participant has the opportunity to raise the GO sign if they feel confident in the subject and want to move forward or the participant can raise the STOP sign to signal that they may feel a need for more discussion on the subject. Also, the participants are encouraged to use the stop signs at anytime they need to have clarification or ask a question.

Arrival Mini Schedule

Use an arrival mini schedule on the first day of class. Use poster-board to label with pictures the arrival directions and expectations for the participants. Arrival time can be chaotic as participants ask questions and roam around the room. Label the poster with good morning, sign-in, get supplies, make name tent, etc... After the participants have settled, ask them how they liked the Arrival mini schedule. Talk with them about using a mini schedule to assist children with understanding teacher expectations around arrival in the classroom. Mini schedules can be used to direct children's behavior and assist children during busy times. The mini schedule will also work as a tool to reduce challenging behavior. The idea for this comes from the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention's (TACSEI) website: http://www.challengingbehavior.org/do/resources/teaching_tools/ttyc_toc.htm. (See the below for more information.)

TACSEI's Arrival Mini Schedule

The "Arrival Mini Schedule" assists children with understanding teacher expectations around arrival in the classroom. Arrival time can be chaotic, as children bottle neck at the door or roam around the room trying to figure out what to do or where to go. It is very helpful to have a routine established for children's arrival and an activity for children to do so that they have something to occupy their "wait time" as adults talk to parents and/or assist children who may need help during arrival. The visuals are not numbered to allow for user flexibility. The pictures can be arranged or omitted according to the teacher's needs.

For developmentally younger children a photograph version is easier to understand. Some teachers may want to use the version provided as a model to create their own personalized mini schedule by photographing "arrival" pictures in their environment. Cut pictures out, laminate, and place on a laminated file folder to form a horizontal sequence of steps for the child to follow. If a child needs extra cueing, use a "First-Then Board." Full instructions can be downloaded at Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention's (TACSEI) website: http://www.challengingbehavior.org/do/resources/teaching_tools/ttyc_toc.htm



More SEL Training Tips from *Michelle Carter*:

Beach Ball Ice Breaker Game

(To use with Topic 5 or after)

Supplies: One inflated beach ball and one poster labeled with a color on the beach ball and an emotion. (For example: blue-frustrated, orange-excited, and white-angry.) You can also write the emotion on the beach ball with a permanent marker.

Directions: Ask Participants to make a circle. Pass the beach ball to each other by participant name. The participant who has the ball has to call the name of the participant who they are passing it to and the recipient has to thank the receiver by name. The receiver then looks to see what color their right thumb landed on. The receiver will then share by color what frustrates, excites, angers, etc... them. After everyone has had one turn the trainer then takes the ball and has the group pass the ball exactly the same pattern, only faster. The goal is for the participants to express feelings quickly and to remember peer names.

Temperament Spices

(Topic 3)

Supplies: Clean spice jars (11), labels, one colored rocks for each participant, large quartz crystal (rough and beat up), bowl, shredded colored paper, and spoon.

Directions: Label the nine jars with temperaments. Label two jars as protective factors and risk factors. Label the bowl with large letters as resiliency. Put one colored marble in bowl and one at each participant's seat. Keep the crystal beside bowl. Fill spice jars with shredded paper for color if needed.

Presentation: I came up with this activity to be used during Topic 3 as a way to "hit home" with the participants how valuable protective factors are. I also wanted a way for them to remember that THEY were protective factors in the lives of many children they care for daily.

Ask participants, "How many of you have ever gone digging for crystals? Show the rough crystal. Let participants tell a few experiences. Geologists say that no two crystals are the same. You can go dig in a quarry and find two crystals side-by-side, but they will not be identical. Does this sound familiar? Does this sound like some children we know? Think of all those children you know that are siblings but have completely different temperaments. They come from the same quarry, so to say, but nothing is identical about them."

Put the crystal in the bowl, and tell participants, "I would like for you to think with me about this crystal and tell me how you think it became so beat up over time? (Hopefully participants will point to erosion or weather.) Sounds a little bit like Risk Factors doesn't it?"

Pick up the risk factor jar and sprinkle over the bowl and tell participants, "If this rock were a child it would be unique with his or her own set of temperament traits. I just put in RISK FACTORS for this child. Remember things like poverty, abuse and neglect put a child at risk. Well, I just poured those on in a big pile. So, now let's add the temperament traits. How about some high activity level?" (Take lid off and really shake the jar. Add several more for impact.)

Take the spoon and pretend to stir and tell participants, "Wow, I wonder what is in store for this parent. Oh yeah, I almost forgot to add the PROTECTIVE FACTOR. That's you isn't it? Let me add that in a big way. (Put the whole jar in and stir with a spoon.) Wow, did you see what is on the bowl? It say's RESILIENCY! Reach in the bowl and pull out the colored marble and show participants. THIS is what happens to that old rock when protective factors like you jump into the mix. It only takes ONE protective factor in a child's life to make a difference. Please take the colored stone at your seat home with you as a reminder that YOU can make a difference!"

Animal School Activity

Supplies: Colored pictures of animals on popsicle sticks (may need multiples depending on number of participants) and index cards

Directions: Label the back of each animal with personality according to video. For example, the zebra played hooky because the ponies made fun of his stripes and this mad him very sad. Add more to the scenario for participants as a vignette. Keep to a paragraph.

Group participants by two's. Give each set of participants an animal and index card. Set a timer for 8-10 minutes. Ask participants to write one high/low temperament trait on the index card and pass to the next group. Do this until all cards have been passed or until participants feel no more temperament traits can be added.

Read and discuss as group.

SEL Jeopardy

Directions: Divide the participants up into two teams. Provide each team with a bell. Select a team leader who will ring the bell. Read an answer and let the team that rings their bell first tell you the answer. Allow participants to look at their manuals--one manual per two participants. Tell them the glossary is off limits, but they can look elsewhere in the manual to find answers. (If participants use the glossary, the game goes too quickly.) Provide the winning team with chocolate kisses or some other small reward.

Temperament Traits: What are activity level, regularity, approach-withdrawal, sensitivity, adaptability, intensity, mood, distractibility and persistence-attention?

Quality classroom: what is warm relationships with children, positive climate, preventing challenging behaviors and teaching new skills?

Social Emotional Skills, Risk Factors and Early Warning Signs: What we pay attention to in the classroom.

30 second rule: What is no attacking with your yacking?

Easy, difficult and slow to warm up: What is the types of patterns the 9 temperaments often cluster into?

Individualize Response: What is understanding temperament as a tool to improve responses to individual children in the classroom.

Attachment: What is the emotional tie between a child and the caregiver?

Protective Factor: What is a buffer against risk factors in a child's life?

Self Regulation: What is the ability to control one's own emotions, behavior and attention.

Compliance: What is the child's willingness and ability to regulate his own behavior to meet the expectations of others.

Sensory Regulation: What is a response to physical and emotional stimulation?

Emotional Regulation: What is the cornerstone of SEL? Process of controlling the thoughts and responses to emotions?

Emotional Meltdown: What is an over-stimulated child with emotions that exceed their ability to cope?

Tantrum: What is a child resisting an adult request?

Social Competence: What is the ability to get along with others in a positive manner?

Prosocial Skills: What are skills or strategies used to develop and maintain relationships? I.e., sharing, using words, self control or self direction.

Attributions: What are a person's explanation about why things happen?

BONUS: name 4 steps for connecting with families:
Recitation, sensitization, learning principles and practicing.

Engagement: What is the time a child spends interacting with the environment?

Prevention: What is a teacher going beyond stopping a bad behavior to teaching a positive behavior to replace the challenging behavior?

Scaffolding: What is a peer or adult offering a child help he or she could not learn on their own?

Defiance: What is a child giving up a goal and focusing on resisting an adult?

BONUS: GUIDED COOPERATION VS CONTROL

Antecedent: What is the immediate event and condition right before the behavior occurs?

Cognitive Behavioral Intervention: What is helping children change the way they think?

Emotional Literacy: What is the ability to recognize, label and understand feelings?

Emotional Regulation: What is the ability to manage and regulate emotions and impulses?

Active Listening: What is restating, validating and exploring?

What does Social Play look like?

(Topic 7 - This builds on the Prosocial Pie activity.)

Materials: Baby doll, toy phone, small dramatic play props, sticky notes

Directions: Ask four participants to volunteer to role play for class. Give each pair of volunteers a set of toys and ask them to play like preschoolers. You can ask the volunteers to pretend they are in the dramatic play area and playing together with the toys. (No need for the volunteers to be overly dramatic.)

Give other participants self-stick notes to make observations. Participants are observing to see what Social Learning looks like in children's play. By watching and listening to children play, the preschool teacher can understand what prosocial skills a child has or what prosocial skills need to be practiced.

Ask participants to observe one or two children (volunteers) as they play and answer the following questions on their sticky notes:

1. WATCH: What is the child doing socially and emotionally?
2. THINK: What is he/she learning socially and emotionally?
3. PLAN: What can I plan that will give him/her practice?

Ask for volunteers to share answers and how this can be used in the classroom.

Looking at Classroom Environment Activity

(Topic 8)

Materials: Blank white poster board for each table, templates of preschool classroom furniture, magazine furniture can be used (Provide various pieces and good supply.)

Directions: Give each table of participants a blank poster board and supply of cut out furniture. Ask participants to work together to create a dream classroom with no limits. Allow about 15 minutes. After 15 minutes allow participants to see each other's dream classroom and allow a spokesman from each group to explain reasons behind design.

This activity will spark a desire in teachers to take a look at their classroom environment and evaluate it. I have had several teachers excited after this activity and return to their rooms to make changes. Part of the learning comes from all the ideas the teachers hear from each other in the activity.

Classroom Apron for Social Emotional Learning

(Make and show when discussing routines and rituals.)

Materials: One body size apron, one glove, Velcro, laminator/laminator sheets, emotion faces in both English and Spanish

Directions: Make emotion faces with words no larger than size of playing cards. Laminate each face separately. Attach to the apron with Velcro. Make a second set for a glove. Cards will be attached to the glove with Velcro as well. Also, make a strip that says "How do you feel today?" Laminate the strip and put with Velcro at the top of the apron.

Wear the apron to demonstrate to the participants how it or the glove can be used for social-emotional routines or rituals in the classroom. For example, when the children come in each morning, the teacher could greet them wearing the apron. Allow children to choose a face to let the teacher know how they feel that day. The children choose a face from the apron and put it on the glove (teacher has replacements in pocket). An alternative is to let the children choose a face off of the apron or glove and put on the board by their name.