BRIEF #2:

Intervention Simplified

Teaching Children to Stay Calm with Others

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Teaching *social–emotional learning (SEL) skills* to an entire class of children is becoming increasingly recommended by educational leaders, but it can be very challenging without the right tools and training (Grant et al., 2017; Jones et al., 2017). The SSIS™ SEL Edition Classwide Intervention Program (CIP; Elliott & Gresham, 2017) includes tools and resources that address the recognized challenges of limited time, cost, and teacher training and are designed explicitly to assist teachers to develop their students' social–emotional learning (SEL) skills. This intervention brief provides an overview of the SSIS SEL Edition CIP and illustrates how to effectively teach a self-management skill.

Overview of the SSIS SEL Edition CIP

The SSIS SEL Edition CIP is used by educators and mental health professionals to develop and improve social–emotional skills for children ages 4 to 14. Specifically, this multitiered intervention program provides interventionists with a *SAFER—Sequenced, Active, Focused, Explicit, Responsive*—way to teach children social–emotional skills that represent core social–emotional learning (SEL) competencies. These competencies, based on the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2012) framework, are defined as *self-awareness* (recognizing one's emotions, values, and the ability to assess one's strengths and weaknesses); *self-management* (the ability to handle one's own emotions and behavior so that they do not interfere with accomplishing social tasks); *social awareness* (demonstrating understanding and empathy for others' feelings); *relationship skills* (establishing and maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships in groups and dealing effectively with conflict); and *responsible decision making* (making ethical and constructive choices about one's personal and interpersonal behaviors).

To develop the SSIS SEL Edition CIP, Elliott and Gresham (2007, 2017) identified six components to efficiently and effectively teach social–emotional skills.
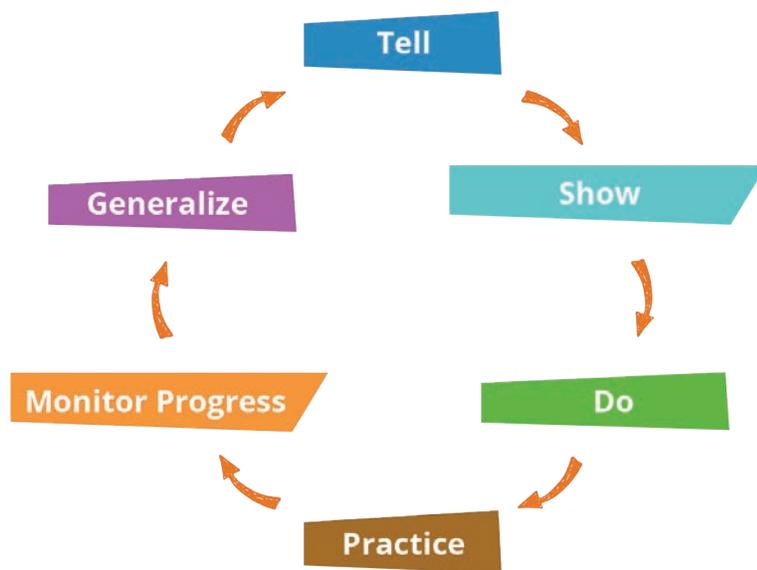
These components have become the practical instructional phases of *Tell, Show, Do, Practice, Monitor Progress, and Generalize.*

DiPerna and colleagues (2015, 2016, 2017), in a randomized control trial in six elementary schools funded by the U.S. Department of Education, provided strong evidence to support the SSIS SEL Edition CIP's six-phase program. Specifically, they found that using the six-phase process resulted in students learning social–emotional skills (e.g., listens to others, takes turns in conversation, asks for help, stays calm when hit or pushed, does nice things for others) and performing these desired behaviors more frequently, concurrently reducing the frequency of many common externalizing problem behaviors, and increasing academic engagement and achievement test scores. This research documenting the *triple positive impact* of the SSIS SEL Edition CIP resulted in CASEL designating it a *SELect* program for elementary students (https://casel.org/guideprogramssocial-skills/)

Teaching a self-management skill: staying calm with others

Staying calm with others is a *self-management skill* that teachers and parents alike agree is critical for successful functioning at school and home. In the SSIS SEL Edition CIP, it is defined as *not getting mad or losing our temper with others; instead, think about our feelings, stay relaxed, and talk things out so everybody can work or play well together.*

The steps for this skill are illustrated on the *Unit 8: Stay Calm With Others Skill Steps Cue Card*. Because school involves interacting and working with many other children and a number of adults in dozens of social situations daily, this skill is expected and valued in virtually all children.

Unit 8:
Stay Calm With Others

SSIS SEL

Skill Steps

Step 1: Feel
Step 2: Think
Step 3: Talk
Step 4: Do

Using the six-step SSIS SEL Edition CIP instructional process, the key actions and activities for both the teacher and his/her students are listed in the table below.

Instructional Phase	Teacher Actions	Student Actions
Tell	*Introduce* & *Define* skill; *Ask* about importance of skill; *Define* specific Skill Steps	*Listen* to skill definition & steps; *Respond* to questions about using skill
Show	*Show* video models of skill; *Model* each Skill Step; *Make* faces to show emotions	*Evaluate* modeled examples; *Identify* emotions; *Participate* in discussion of skill use
Do	*Ask* students to define skill & emotions; *Ask* students to write Skill Steps; *Ask* students to role-play with you	*Write* Skill Steps; *Identify* emotions that are part of skill; *Participate* in role-play or feedback
Practice	*Review* Skill Steps; *Ask* students to practice with role-plays; *Reinforce* & provide *Feedback*	*Role-play* social situations with peers
Monitor Progress	*Ask* students to rate skill progress; *Ask* students to discuss improvements	*Reflect* & *Rate* skill performance; *Identify* steps to improve
Generalize	*Present* situations outside of class where skill can be used; *Ask* students to discuss how they can use skill in new situations	*Brainstorm* & *Discuss* uses of skill at home, in the community, and at work

By following this instructional process, most teachers can teach a skill lesson in 25 to 30 minutes and provide a **SAFER** intervention program that students enjoy and learn from. With the additions of **SSIS SEL Edition CIP resource materials**—PowerPoint™ lesson presentations, video clips, Emotions Cue Cards, Student Engagement Records—all students will be engaged and the **intervention is simplified for teachers!**

More Information on SEL programs

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2012). *Effective social and emotional learning programs.* Retrieved from https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2013-casel-guide-1.pdf

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Jones, S. M., Brush, K., Bailey, R., Brion-Meisels, G., McIntyre, J., Kahn, J., Stickle, L. (2017, March). Navigating SEL from the inside out: *Looking inside & across 25 leading SEL programs: A practical resource for schools and OST providers.* Retrieved from http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Navigating-Social-and-Emotional-Learning-from-the-Inside-Out.pdf

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To learn more about the SSIS SEL Edition assessments and intervention products, visit PearsonAssessments.com/SSISSEL.

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