



A Case for Emotional Intelligence in Our Schools



Executive Summary

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the ability to use emotions effectively and productively. Since the publication of the initial research in 1990, innovative schools and educational organizations have begun integrating emotional intelligence into their educational programs. It is becoming increasingly clear that these skills are one of the foundations for high-performing students and classrooms.

When emotional intelligence began to attract the public attention, there were few model programs. In his 1995 book, *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman described two of the preeminent programs, a class in some New Haven schools, and the Self-Science curriculum.[1] As the benefits of emotional intelligence have become more widely recognized and investigated, several implementation strategies have been designed. These include assessments, training programs, and educational curricula that assist educators to build emotional intelligence.

Current research in education, psychology, and related fields is accumulating to show the benefits of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs for children as young as preschoolers. Public awareness is catching up to the research. Recently a New York Times editorial reviewed key research findings and concluded, "...**social and emotional learning programs significantly improve students' academic performance.**"[2] Additional research also shows emotional intelligence is strongly linked to staying in school, avoiding risk behaviors, and improving health, happiness, and life success.

Several organizations have emerged to help schools and organizations implement emotional intelligence and social-emotional learning programs, including The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), The George Lucas Educational Foundation (GLEF), The Center for Social Emotional Learning, CSEE, and Six Seconds, The Emotional Intelligence Network.



Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EQ)[3] is emerging as a critical factor for sustaining high achievement, retention, and positive behavior as well as improving life success. Increasingly, schools and educational organizations are turning to EQ seeking a systemic solution to improve outcomes - both academic and social (such as school attrition, student satisfaction, peer relationships, and health).

What's driving this interest? Is emotional intelligence "just a fad," or does the science offer new insight and tools that genuinely affect performance? And if EQ is so important, how do educators find their way to the value amidst the hype?

American Psychologist, one of the most prestigious sources of peer reviewed psychological research, has released several articles on emotional intelligence. In



particular, these reports have demonstrated time-tested support for school-based emotional intelligence prevention and intervention programs leading researchers to conclude:

“There is a solid and growing empirical base concluding that well-designed, well-implemented school-based prevention and youth development programming can positively influence a diverse array of social, health, and academic outcomes.” [4]

In a time of budget cuts, intense societal pressures on youth, and national testing standards, the strain on educational funds to fulfill the diverse needs of our children is becoming increasingly apparent. This calls for innovative approaches to addressing the academic, social, psychological, and physical health needs of developing students. Because of its wide ranging impact, emotional intelligence prevention and intervention programming may be the key investment that secures a positive future for our children.

Why should schools and educational organizations be concerned with social-emotional learning? This e-book reviews dozens of research studies showing that emotional intelligence improves academic success, school retention, healthy decision-making, and other positive benefits for students - and educators.

† We are happy to have you share the document with up to 10 friends and colleagues; please ask for permission for other distribution.

Notes:

[1] Goleman, D (1995) *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York: Bantam.

[2] Shriver, T.P., & Weissberg, R.P. (2005, August 16). “No emotion left behind,” *The New York Times*.

[3] “EQ” is an abbreviation for “Emotional Quotient,” and is used in this document synonymously with emotional intelligence.

[4] Greenbert, M.T., Weissberg, R.P., O'Brien, M.U., Zins J.E., Fredericks, L., Resnick, H., & Elias, M.J. (2003). “Enhancing school-based prevention and youth development through coordinated social, emotional, and academic learning,” *American Psychologist* 58 (6/7), 466-474.

The Executive Summary and Introduction are presented online, and the full e-book is available for free.

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