

CHARACTERSTRONG AND SEL CONNECTIONS

CharacterStrong's curriculum braids the core components of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into both the advisory curriculum and the leadership curriculum. The five components below are the components of Social Emotional Learning as defined by CASEL.¹ Here is how CharacterStrong meets each one of the components.

I. Self-Awareness - The ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mindset."

- Identifying emotions
- Accurate self-perception
- Recognizing strengths
- Self-confidence
- Self-efficacy

CharacterStrong accomplishes this component:

- Lessons on differences between personality and character to identify one's gifts and areas of needed improvement in regards to their personality type.
- The Weekly CharacterDare process helps students recognize their strengths, build self-confidence and self-efficacy, while receiving instruction on how emotions play a role in this process.
- Intentional lessons on what influence is and how to build influence in our relationships inside and outside of school.
- Lessons on growth mindset and neuroplasticity that help students develop a mindset focused on being a lifelong learner and finding opportunities for growth instead of brick walls when adversity hits.



II. Self-Management - The ability to successfully regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations – effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.

- Impulse control
- Stress management
- Self-discipline
- Self-motivation
- Goal-setting
- Organizational skills

¹"Core SEL Competencies." CASEL. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Feb. 2017.

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CharacterStrong accomplishes this component:

- Teaching the WOOP Goal Setting Process:
 - Wish - Something you really want to accomplish. A wish is exciting, challenging, and realistic. (ie. "I wish I turned my homework in on time more.")
 - Outcome - The best outcome that would result from accomplishing your goal. How would the outcome make you feel? Let your mind go and imagine this outcome. (ie. "I would feel good about myself.")
 - Obstacle - The personal obstacles that prevent you from accomplishing your goal. Let your mind go and imagine this obstacle. (ie. "When doing homework, I get distracted by my phone.")
 - Plan - What can you do to overcome your obstacle? Name one action you can take or thought you can have. Make an if/then plan and imagine it. If/When _____ (obstacle), then I will _____ (action to overcome obstacle). (ie. "When I am distracted by my phone, I will put it in the drawer.")
- The Weekly CharacterDare Process gives the daily reminder about choosing against our impulses, disciplining our self, self-motivating, stress management, and organizing one's life to put priorities first.
- Each week students focus on different character goals. They have opportunities to encourage one another as they take on these challenges, reflect on them and try again the following week. There is a CharacterStrong app where students can track their goals and reflect as well.

III. Social Awareness - The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

- Perspective-taking
- Empathy
- Appreciating diversity
- Respect for others

CharacterStrong accomplishes this component:

- The Weekly CharacterDare process specifically targets the skills of empathy through challenges related to engaging others different than me in conversations and meaningful question asking that leads to a deeper understanding, appreciating diversity, and respect for others.
- Respect is one of the eight intentional values taught within this curriculum and students would have the opportunity to not only learn about what it is and what it looks like, But also be challenged directly to learn what respect looks like in action and in specific situations.
- Through use of visual media clips and thoughtful discussion questions teachers and students talk about situations others have gone through to build empathy and realize other perspectives.



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IV. Relationship Skills - The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.

- Communication
- Social engagement
- Relationship-building
- Teamwork

CharacterStrong accomplishes this component:

- This is the primary focus of the curriculum. Each and everyday students are challenged to put values into action that improve their relationships with their peers, teachers, family members, and the community at large.
- Intentional lessons that breakdown even the most basic relational skills like how to introduce yourself to someone and engage them in conversation to a more advanced set of skills like active listening.
- Engaging community building activities are designed to start the year out in both the advisory curriculum and the leadership curriculum. These activities continue throughout the year.

V. Responsible Decision-Making - The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.

- Identifying problems
- Analyzing situations
- Solving problems
- Evaluating
- Reflecting
- Ethical responsibility

CharacterStrong accomplishes this component:

- The Weekly CharacterDare process puts students into regular situational dilemmas where they are identifying problems, analyzing situations, solving relational problems, evaluating, and reflecting on their ethical responsibility through weekly exercises.
- Weekly lessons on values clarification and character development that provide ongoing coaching and instruction on the weekly challenges that they are receiving.
- Students consistently reflect on their choices throughout different lessons. They also have a weekly reflection on the character challenge process. They identify how they did on the challenges, how that helped them improve relationships, and if they did not complete the challenges they reflect on why they didn't and what they heard from others.