

## Lesson Plan: Social-emotional Health and Development

This set of activities is designed to introduce teachers to the work of developing the social-emotional health of students. It could be integrated into courses on elementary methods, child development, or teaching Multilingual Learners (MLs), or used for school-based professional development.

In this two-hour sequence of activities, teachers:

- Reflect on the particular stressors that newcomer students and families may experience in school settings.
  - Determine and share examples of developing empathy and building a warm and inclusive classroom for multilingual children and their families.
  - Consider the grouping strategies that are used during instruction and brainstorm.

In an optional extension activity, teachers participate in a gallery walk of resources related to social-emotional health and development on the Multilingual Learning Toolkit, and share learnings with colleagues.

<p><b>Learning Goals</b></p>	<p>Teachers will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ways to build empathy and teach in a warm, inclusive way that makes both students and families feel safe and welcome in school settings.</li> <li>• Understand strategies to promote the social-emotional health and development of MLs.</li> <li>• Determine small groups that support the social-emotional health and development of students.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pre-Work</b></p>	<p>Before the session, teachers can begin to reflect on their own teaching practice by reading the short article, "<u>Developing Empathy to Build Warm, Inclusive Classrooms</u>" by NAEYC. They will engage in an activity based on the 8 tips shared in this article during the session.</p>
<p><b>Materials</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copies of the <u>Note Catcher</u> and pre-cut copies of the <u>Developing Empathy Conversation Cards</u> (see templates below)</li> <li>• SEAL's "<u>Affirming Language, Culture &amp; Identity</u>" video</li> <li>• Copies of pages 13–14 from the U.S. Department of Education's Newcomer Toolkit - "<u>Chapter 4: How Do We Support Newcomers' Social Emotional Needs?</u>" (these are optional, as you may choose to display the pages)</li> <li>• Copies of "<u>Brainstorm: Collaborations to Support the Social-emotional Health and Development of Students</u>" (see template below)</li> <li>• Optional: SEAL's "<u>Strategy Overview: Collaborative Practice</u>" if participants are not currently placed in a classroom with children</li> </ul>

## Suggested Activities

Time & Activity	Notes
<p><b>Introduction to Engaging with Families</b></p> <p>(15 mins)</p>	<p>Tell teachers: Today’s session will focus on the social-emotional health and development of Multilingual Learners (MLs).</p> <p>To begin discussion and further activate teachers’ prior knowledge about the topic, distribute the attached <a href="#">Note Catcher</a>, and invite teachers to work in pairs to generate responses to the prompts. Let teachers know that they will be using the Note Catcher to capture learnings throughout today’s session (so they should leave room for notes).</p> <p>Then, give teachers a brief introduction to the practice of promoting social-emotional health of MLs, highlighting key points from the <a href="#">Starter Guide</a> and inviting teachers to add to their Note Catcher as they go. (If helpful, teachers can reference the paragraph following “How can I foster the social-emotional health and development of Multilingual Learners?” on the <a href="#">Multilingual Learning Toolkit</a>.) Suggested points to highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children who speak a language other than English may need additional support from teachers to make sure they feel comfortable and included in the classroom and access all learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Engaging with MLs and their families in a warm, friendly way helps convey a message of care and respect.</li> <li>• Partnering with families promotes social-emotional development and includes learning about the home languages, cultures, hopes, and needs of children.</li> <li>• Teachers provide MLs space to express themselves verbally and non-verbally, and use the languages of their choice. Children need rich opportunities to interact and build relationships with peers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Developing Empathy Conversation Cards</b></p> <p>(20 mins)</p>	<p>Remind teachers: For the pre-work you read the article “<a href="#">Developing Empathy to Build Warm, Inclusive Classrooms</a>” by NAEYC. You read about 8 tips for teachers to build empathy and create safe, welcoming environments for Multilingual Learners (MLs). Demonstrating a concern for students’ feelings and experiences is a key component to promoting their social-emotional health and development.</p> <p>Tell teachers: You will now have the opportunity to discuss the 8 tips with colleagues. It is likely that you already implement some of the ideas from the article, and can now share your personal ideas and experiences across a small group.</p> <p>Ask teachers to break up into groups of 3–4. Pass out a set of the <a href="#">Developing Empathy Conversation Cards</a> and place them in the center of each small group. On a given turn, a teacher will draw a card from the pile and provide a response. After the conversation begins, other group members can add on or comment with their own thoughts about the prompt. Teachers will continue to draw cards around the circle, and discuss the prompts until they have gone through all eight conversation cards, or the time is called.</p>

	<p>(Note: If working with pre-service teachers that are not in classrooms or working with children, the conversation cards can be used to help teachers make plans and consider the work of developing social-emotional skills with MLs when they are in schools, with children and families.)</p> <p>Debrief information shared during the small group conversations. Teachers can add any ideas that came up in the conversations to their <a href="#">Note Catcher</a>.</p> <p>Transition by saying: This activity has hopefully demonstrated that there are many day-to-day actions that a teacher can take to engage with MLs and families in a warm, inclusive way. We are now going to get a chance to watch a short video and observe this work in action in a preschool setting. There are many moves and habits of mind that the teachers in the video exhibit that transfer to all grade levels.</p>
<p><b>Video: Affirming Language, Culture &amp; Identity</b></p> <p><b>(20 mins)</b></p>	<p>As we watch the 9 minute video, "<a href="#">Affirming Language, Culture &amp; Identity</a>" from SEAL, keep in mind the prompts on the <a href="#">Note Catcher</a>. Be ready to take some notes and debrief with your colleagues about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the <b>teacher does</b> to build relationships with Multilingual Learners (MLs) and engage with them in a warm, inclusive way;</li> <li>• how the <b>students</b> are encouraged to do this with one another;</li> <li>• and particular considerations for <b>newcomer students</b>.</li> </ul> <p>This video is from a bilingual setting, so we see the teachers using students' home language (Spanish). After this video viewing, we will also discuss how teachers engage with newcomers when they do not share a common language.</p> <p>When the video is done, allow teachers time to debrief first in small groups, then as a whole group. Make sure to name and note what teachers were able to observe based on the three categories above.</p> <p>Transition by saying: As mentioned previously, promoting the social-emotional health and development of newcomer students with whom you do not share a language is critical but challenging work. In this next activity, we will consider some of the common stressors of newcomer students.</p>
<p><b>Focus: Newcomer Students</b></p> <p><b>(20 mins)</b></p>	<p>Tell teachers: Let's consider all that we are asking of newcomer students and families as they enter school spaces for the first time. The school environment may be totally unknown or different for many Multilingual Learners (MLs) and their families. They may encounter few people with whom they can fully express themselves in a home language.</p> <p>Stop and think: <i>What are the stressors that newcomer students and families experience in school environments?</i></p> <p>Distribute 2–3 sticky notes (e.g. Post-it) to each teacher. Tell them to write down one stressor per sticky note. When they are done, small groups of 3–4 teachers will lay out the sticky notes to create a collection of stressors in the center of the table. Prompt teachers to review all of the different stressors that are visible. Ask them to consolidate any responses that are duplicates.</p>

	<p>Now give them 5 minutes to manipulate and sort the sticky note stressors into various groups. Invite them to discuss: <i>Which stressors “belong together?” Why? What might be a header for this group of stressors?</i></p> <p>Debrief the small group activity and then hand out individual copies or display page 13 from the U.S. Department of Education’s Newcomer Toolkit - <a href="#">“Chapter 4: How Do We Support Newcomers’ Social Emotional Needs?”</a></p> <p>This graphic organizer web shows categories and examples of the stressors that newcomer students and families often experience. Prompt participants to discuss and comment on how this visual compares and contrasts to the sticky note sort that they created in small groups. Invite them to read the description of all of the stressors on page 14. Remind them that awareness of the stressors that many students and families experience helps teachers build empathy and caring, respectful relationships with those who have often had life experiences and identities different from their own.</p> <p>Transition by saying: As a last activity we will consider a powerful tool that teachers can rely on to help develop the social-emotional health of newcomers and MLs: implementing routines for intentional pairs and groupings to support peer interactions and relationship building.</p>
<p><b>Brainstorm: Strategic Grouping of Students to Encourage Social- emotional Health and Development</b>  <b>(30 mins)</b></p>	<p>Tell teachers: One of the most powerful moves that teachers can make to support the social-emotional health and development of students is to intentionally prepare small groups and pairs to meet students’ individual needs. Students work together for a variety of reasons in the classroom, including: academic skills, social skills, language proficiency (in both their primary and secondary language), students’ interests, learning style, culture, and gender. For the purpose of developing students’ social-emotional health, teachers consider groupings that allow students to: take on a specific group role, interact with a variety of peers to build relationships and make friends, and partner with others who share a same language and/or culture.</p> <p>For this last activity, you are going to brainstorm possible student groupings which support the social-emotional health and development of students. Having access to a current class list is helpful for this activity.</p> <p>(Note: This activity is adapted from content in the <a href="#">“Strategy Overview: Collaborative Practice”</a> from SEAL. If you are working with pre-service teachers that are not working with students, this time can be used to review and discuss the overview document.)</p> <p>Pass out copies of the <a href="#">“Brainstorm: Collaborations to Support the Social-emotional Health and Development of Students.”</a></p> <p>Give teachers time to fill out the brainstorm template using their own class list.</p> <p>Debrief the process and invite teachers to comment on how the groups they made compare and contrast to grouping structures they currently employ. Allow teachers to reflect on when they can use the grouping brainstorm in actual teaching practice.</p>

<p><b>Optional Extension: Resource Gallery Walk</b></p> <p><b>(60 mins)</b></p>	<p>If you have time, engage teachers in a <a href="#">Resource Walk</a> to give them a chance to explore resources on the Multilingual Learning Toolkit focused on social-emotional health and development.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p><b>(15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Invite teachers to reflect on and consolidate their learning by engaging in a 10 minute quick write in response to the following prompt, using their <a href="#">Note Catcher</a> as reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Why is it important for me to focus on the social-emotional health and development of Multilingual Learners (MLs)? What are three strategies I can try out this month?</i></li> </ul> <p>Then summarize key learnings about social-emotional health and development and close the session. Key learnings to highlight might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children who speak a language other than English may need additional support from teachers to make sure they feel comfortable and included in the classroom and access all learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Engaging with MLs and their families in a warm, friendly way helps convey a message of care and respect.</li> <li>• Partnering with families promotes social-emotional development and includes learning about the home languages, cultures, hopes, and needs of children.</li> <li>• Teachers provide MLs space to express themselves verbally and non-verbally, and use the languages of their choice. Children need rich opportunities to interact and build relationships with peers.</li> </ul>

## Note Catcher

What strategies do teachers use to build relationships with Multilingual Learners and engage with them in a warm, inclusive way?

What strategies do teachers use to help Multilingual Learners connect with peers and feel safe and comfortable in the classroom?

What special considerations can teachers make to develop the social-emotional health of newcomer students with whom they do not share a language?

## Developing Empathy Conversation Cards

Print and cut out a set of cards for each small group of 3-4 teachers. These cards are adapted from the article "[Developing Empathy to Build Warm, Inclusive Classrooms](#)" by NAEYC.

### Think about it.

Describe a time you have caught yourself having an unfavorable perception about a child or family member with an identity that is different from your own.

OR

Discuss your own process to manage less positive feelings that have come up about a child or family member with whom you work.

### Highlight respect, kindness, compassion, and responsibility.

Give an example of the way you highlight respect, kindness, compassion, and responsibility in the classroom.

OR

Give an example of how you prepare children to highlight respect, kindness, compassion, and responsibility in the classroom.

### Make a difference.

Describe a time you have uncovered a personal bias or assumption that you were holding about a child or family member with whom you work.

OR

Discuss your own process for how you bridge understanding across different cultural groups with whom you work.

### Build a classroom library that features diversity.

Give some examples of books in the classroom library that specifically connect to the diverse identities of children in the classroom.

OR

Give an example of a book about a diverse identity that you wish you had more of in the classroom library.

### Ask yourself hard questions.

Give an example of a hard question that you regularly ask yourself to reflect on your own personal beliefs and assumptions about children or family members with whom you work.

Examples:

- What are my initial reactions to this child and their family?
- What can I do to build children's and families' trust?
- How can I connect with them in meaningful ways?

### Invite guests to share their cultures, traditions, and talents.

Give an example of how you invite guests to share their cultures, traditions, and talents in the classroom. To what content learning does this connect?

OR

Give an example of how you would like to invite guests to share their cultures, traditions, and talents in the classroom. To what content learning could this connect?

**Model warm and responsive actions.**

Discuss the ways you engage with children or family members to model warm, inclusive, and responsive actions.

OR

Describe a moment or activity from the instructional day where you are easily able to model warm, inclusive, and responsive actions with children.

**Acknowledge your progress.**

Name steps that you have taken to be a more culturally relevant teacher.

OR

Share an instance that exemplifies your work as a deeply empathetic teacher.



## Brainstorm: Collaborations to Support the Social-emotional Health and Development of Students

Adapted from SEAL's [Strategy Overview: Collaborative Practice](#)

Brainstorm possible collaborative groups with your own class list. Use the template to formulate examples of groupings that support social-emotional health and development goals for students.

<b>Social-emotional Connection Across Group:</b>	<b>Notes on Possible Student Groups:</b>
<i>Share a common interest</i>	
<i>Share a common home language or culture</i>	
<i>Compatible for cooperative group roles</i>	
<i>Other connection</i>	