

Best Practices to Promote Social-Emotional and Character Development and Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Best Practices consist of approaches/tools, programs, and resources, that have been reviewed as effective ways to promote Social, Emotional, and Character Development (SECD) and to support Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) and violence prevention activities in schools and communities. These best practices have been consolidated by the Rutgers Center for Social and Character Development (www.rucharacter.org), The Rutgers Developing Safe and Civil Schools (DSACS) Project (www.teachsecd.com), and the Rutgers Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) Project (<http://sdfsc.rutgers.edu>) at the Center for Applied Psychology at Rutgers.

Each Best Practice is listed with a description, the source where the practice has been evaluated or reviewed, and the direct web link to the practice.

Approaches/Tools

Best Practice	Description	Source	Web Link
Character Education/Citizenship best practice awards winning New Jersey Schools	Lesson plans and project activities from New Jersey schools recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education	New Jersey Department of Education	http://www.rucharakter.org/BestPractices/
National Schools of Character Program: Promising Practices	Lesson plans and project activities from National Schools of Character winners and from Promising Practices winners. New Jersey school Promising Practice award winners can also be found at http://www.rucharakter.org/BestPractices/	Character Education Partnership (CEP)	http://www.character.org/bestpractices
Character Education English-Language Arts Project	The Character Education English-Language Arts Project is a set of sample classroom lesson plans that infuse character education and social-emotional learning into the English-Language Arts curriculum.	Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center	http://charactered.ocde.us/ICE/Lessons/index.asp
Reporting the Results of Your Study: A User-Friendly Guide for Evaluators of Educational Programs and Practices	To provide clear, practical advice on reporting the results of an evaluation of an educational program or practice(“intervention”).	Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center	www.cetac.org/OtherResources.cfm

Best Practice	Description	Source	Web Link
Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide	This Guide seeks to provide educational practitioners with user-friendly tools to distinguish practices supported by rigorous evidence from those that are not.	Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center	www.cetac.org/OtherResources.cfm
Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen (Available in both English and Spanish versions)	This booklet provides information about the values and skills that make up character and good citizenship and what you can do to help your child develop strong character.	Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center	http://www.cetac.org/publications.cfm
SEL School Self-Assessment Guide	The intent of this guide is to encourage you to think about what you are doing with respect to SEL, and to help you see how broad the scope of these activities is.	Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL)	http://www.casel.org/pub/safeandso und.php
SECD Coordinators Tool Kit	Contains a series of worksheets and guidelines for school personnel and Leadership Teams attempting to coordinate SECD efforts within their schools	Developing Safe and Civil Schools Project, Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning	www.teachSECD.com

Programs

Best Practice	Description	Source	Web Link
Searchable Database of the Colorado Blueprints Matrix of Effective Programs	This consolidated list (~300 programs) of evidence-based practices includes all programs that may be supported with Title IV-A funds in NJ, without the use of a waiver. A searchable database of these programs is available on the Rutgers SDFSC Project website.	Blueprints for Violence Prevention	http://sdfsc.rutgers.edu/page/program
Programs to Help Youth	The Program Tool provides you with information about program designs that successfully deal with at-risk behaviors. You can replicate these strategies to meet your local needs. The Program Tool database contains risk factors, protective factors, and programs that have been evaluated and found to work.	FindYouthInfo.gov	www.findyouthinfo.gov/cf_pages/programtool.cfm
What Works Clearinghouse	The WWC identified programs that deliberately attempt to develop students' character by teaching core values and that had most if not all of their lesson plans or prescribed activities directly related to instilling those values.	Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center	http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/character%5Feducation/topic/

Best Practice	Description	Source	Web Link
<p>Safe and Sound An Educational Leader's Guide to Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs</p>	<p>Safe and Sound: An Educational Leader's Guide to Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs is an informative new tool for helping educators achieve this vision for schools. Based on a detailed, comprehensive, and timely analysis of programs that teach core social and emotional competencies, the guide was funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS).</p>	<p>Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL)</p>	<p>http://www.casel.org/pub/safeandsound.php</p>
<p>National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices</p>	<p>NREPP is a searchable database of interventions for the prevention and treatment of mental and substance use disorders.</p>	<p>Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA)</p>	<p>http://www.samhsa.gov/Campaigns_programs/campaigns_alpha.aspx</p>
<p>OJJDP Model Programs Guide</p>	<p>The OJJDP Model Programs Guide is a user-friendly, online portal to scientifically tested and proven programs that address a range of issues across the juvenile justice spectrum</p>	<p>Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice</p>	<p>http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/index.html</p>
<p>Exemplary & Promising <i>Safe, Disciplined and Drug-Free Schools</i> 2001 programs</p>	<p>This publication provides descriptions of the 9 exemplary and 33 promising programs selected by the Expert Panel in 2001.</p>	<p>United States Department of Education</p>	<p>www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/exemplary01/exemplary01.pdf</p>

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Data Base of Effective Social-Emotional Learning Programs	84 programs are evaluated using a Consumer Reports format, including detailed information about populations and impact on behavior and academics	Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning	www.casel.org
Program Provider Directory	Information on more than 125 programs, publishers, presenters, consultants and evaluation resources are listed (including self-reported evaluations) in a common format, but without quality review.	Center for Social and Character Development @ Rutgers University	http://www.rucharakter.org/page/providers.php

Resources

Best Practice	Description	Source	Web Link
Mobilizing for Evidence-Based Character Education	This evaluation guide is presented as a resource primarily for project directors who are federal grantees embarking on an evaluation of a character education intervention, although it contains useful information that can benefit other education administrators who also are providing these interventions. It offers strategies for working with external evaluators and key stakeholders in planning and implementing a scientifically sound evaluation.	Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center	www.cetac.org/OtherResources.cfm

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The Positive Impact of SEL for K-8th Grade Students	The purpose of this report is to summarize the primary findings and implications of three large-scale reviews of research evaluating the impact of SEL programs for school children in kindergarten through eighth grade.	Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL)	http://www.casel.org/
Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Student Benefits: Implications for the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Core Elements	This brief shares the latest research on the effects of social and emotional learning (SEL) on students and includes strategies for implementing SEL. It explains how SEL works, elaborates on how SEL can be an integrative prevention framework that addresses the Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) core elements, and spells out implications of the research for SS/HS grantees.	Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL)	http://www.casel.org/

Best Practice	Description	Source	Web Link
Partnerships in Character Education State Pilot Projects, 1995-2001 Lessons Learned	This report summarizes the results of the projects as reported to the U.S. Department of Education by the grantees through a variety of sources.	United States Department of Education	http://www.ed.gov/programs/charactered/lessons.html
Resource Manual for Intervention and Referral Services (I & RS)	The Department of Education has a broad-based, statewide initiative to address the problem of violence and disruption in New Jersey's public schools. The initiative is geared toward assisting local school district officials and parents deal with a range of issues, such as bullying and drugs.	New Jersey Department of Education	http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/irs/

Best Practice	Description	Source	Web Link
<p>Model Policy and Guidance for Prohibiting Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying on School Property, at School-Sponsored Functions and on School Buses</p>	<p>This model and guidance are designed to assist school districts in developing the required policies and procedures (pursuant to <i>N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq.</i> and <i>N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9</i>, Intimidation, harassment, and bullying) prohibiting harassment, intimidation and bullying on school property, at school-sponsored functions and on school buses for grades kindergarten through 12.</p>	<p>New Jersey Department of Education</p>	<p>http://www.nj.gov/education/parents/bully.htm</p>

Best Practice	Description	Source	Web Link
<p>Commissioner's Annual Report to the Education Committees of the Senate and General Assembly On Violence, Vandalism and Substance Abuse</p>	<p>The Commissioner of Education's Report on Violence, Vandalism and Substance Abuse in New Jersey Public Schools, submitted annually to the education committees of the Senate and Assembly, provides the Legislature with data in four broad incident categories: violence, vandalism, weapons, and substance abuse. The report also summarizes initiatives implemented by the New Jersey Department of Education to assist schools in addressing problems of school violence, safety and climate, student conduct, and the use of substances.</p>	<p>New Jersey Department of Education</p>	<p>http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/vandv/0607/</p>

Best Practice	Description	Source	Web Link
National Schools of Character Award Books	Describes the SECD efforts of schools who were winners or semifinalists of the National Schools of Character Awards and Promising Practices Awards	Character Education Partnership	www.character.org
Journal of Research in Character Education	Leading peer-reviewed journal with research and descriptive studies of SECD efforts	Center for Character and Citizenship, University of Missouri	http://www.characterandcitizenship.org/services/testjournal.htm

The following sources (sorted alphabetically) have been utilized in building this best practice list:

- *Blueprints for Violence Prevention (University of Colorado)* www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints
- *Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center (CETAC)* www.cetac.org
- *Character Education Partnership (CEP)* www.character.org
- *Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL)* www.casel.org
- *FindYouthInfo.gov* www.findyouthinfo.gov

- *NJ Department of Education (NJDOE)* www.state.nj.us/education
- *NJ Department of State (NJDOS)* www.state.nj.us/state
- *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice* www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/index.html
- *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA)* www.samhsa.gov
- *United States Department of Education (USDE)* www.ed.gov