

VASCD Top Picks: Social Emotional Learning

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning is an authority and a terrific resource. Visit their website (www.casel.org) to understand the research on SEL and for a host of resources.

An emerging body of research indicates the benefits of instruction in mindfulness, which can impact the brain in ways that increase students' attention, emotion regulation, compassion, and calming. For more information on this research and mindfulness in education in general, visit www.mindfordschools.org.

ASCD's *Whole Child Initiative* is broader than SEL, but contains useful perspective and information on SEL, including a school improvement tool that schools may find helpful. Visit wholechileducation.org.

We recommend Susan Craig's book, *Trauma-Sensitive Schools: Learning Communities Transforming Students' Lives*, K-5. Susan describes the effects of childhood trauma on students' brain and language development, and recommends approaches schools can use to help children build resilience and grow their social-emotional skills.

For a practical set of classroom activities, see the book *Social and Emotional Learning in Action: Experiential Activities to Positively Impact School Climate*, by Tara Flippo. This book provides lessons for middle and secondary classrooms that support development of SEL skills.