

CONNECTING HEARTS AND MINDS: HANDS-ON SEL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Enhance social skills and emotional well-being for educators and children using evidence-based strategies to create a positive learning environment.

Professional Development Agenda

- **Why SEL Matters at School:** Explore the benefits of SEL for students and how it enhances the school experience by promoting a supportive learning environment.
- **Integrating SEL into Daily School Activities:** Learn how to seamlessly incorporate SEL into classroom routines, group activities, and transitions.
- **Building Emotional Skills and Resilience:** Provide students with tools to manage emotions, resolve conflicts, and foster resilience through activities encouraging empathy, connection, and community spirit.
- **How to Promote a Positive Classroom Culture:** Integrate kindness, mindfulness, and growth mindset practices into daily routines, helping students stay calm, embrace challenges, and support one another.
- **Dog Therapy in the Classroom:** Explore the benefits of dog therapy for supporting students' social and emotional well-being.
- **Engaging Families:** Effective strategies for involving parents and caregivers in students' SEL growth, sharing progress, and supporting SEL at home.



Outcomes

- Gain a solid understanding of SEL principles and their role in student growth.
- Learn strategies to weave SEL into everyday classroom activities.
- Develop skills to create an inclusive, emotionally supportive classroom.
- Discover ways to engage families in SEL, extending learning and support between home and school.



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Cara Zelas is an early childhood educator with a passion for helping young children thrive. She holds a Bachelor of Media Communications and a Bachelor of Elementary Education from Macquarie University in Sydney. Additionally, she is a certified Early Childhood Montessori teacher from West Side Montessori School in New York City. Cara is an active volunteer with The Good Dog Foundation they visit hospitals and schools, where they deliver kindness and support to those in need. Little Dude has taught Cara and countless children that being kind to others is contagious.

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