

## Social-Emotional Learning

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**Abstract.** The article discusses the importance of social-emotional learning (SEL) in modern education. The authors analyze what SEL is, its main components and principles, and offer specific methods and exercises for developing social and emotional skills in children and adolescents. It is emphasized that SEL is a key factor in successful adaptation to society.

**Keywords:** social-emotional learning, emotional intelligence, social skills, emotional skills, self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, responsibility, relationships, well-being.

### INTRODUCTION

In today's world, where the pace of life is constantly accelerating and the amount of information is growing exponentially, social-emotional learning (SEL) is becoming an increasingly important aspect of education. SEL is a process through which children and adolescents learn to understand and manage their emotions, develop empathy, build positive relationships with others, and make responsible decisions. The development of social and emotional skills is no less important than mastering academic knowledge. After all, it is these skills that help children successfully adapt to society, build harmonious relationships with family, friends, and teachers, as well as achieve their goals. In this article, we will examine in detail what SEL is, its main components and principles, and offer specific methods and exercises for its development.

Social-emotional learning is not just a fad or an additional educational program. It is an urgent need dictated by the challenges of the modern world. In a constantly changing social environment, information overload, and high levels of stress, children need support and help in developing emotional intelligence and social skills. SEL helps

children not only better understand themselves and their emotions but also establish constructive relationships with others, communicate effectively, resolve conflicts, and make responsible decisions. These skills are key to successful adaptation to society, achieving personal well-being, and professional fulfillment. In this article, we will consider in detail what SEL is, its main components and principles, and offer specific methods and exercises for its development. We hope that this information will be useful for teachers, parents, and anyone interested in creating favorable conditions for the development of children and adolescents.

### MAIN PART

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is a process aimed at developing the following key competencies in children and adolescents:

Self-awareness: the ability to understand one's emotions, to be aware of one's strengths and weaknesses, values, and goals. A child with developed self-awareness can answer the questions: "What am I feeling right now? Why am I reacting this way? What is important to me?" For example, Masha understands that she feels sad when her friend leaves and can explain why this is happening. She knows that she draws well, but finds it difficult

to solve math problems, and values kindness and honesty in her friends.

**Self-regulation:** the ability to manage one's emotions, control impulses, and adapt to stressful situations. Developed self-regulation allows the child to cope with disappointment, not break down into screaming and tears over minor troubles, and also act effectively in difficult situations. For example, Petya can contain his anger when his brother accidentally breaks his favorite toy and offer to fix it together with his brother.

**Social awareness:** the ability to understand the emotions of other people, to show empathy and respect for differences. A child with social awareness may notice that his friend is sad and ask him what happened. He is also able to understand and accept that other people may think and feel differently than himself. For example, Anya sees that the new student in the class is feeling insecure and approaches her to get to know and support her.

**Relationship skills:** the ability to build and maintain positive relationships, communicate effectively, cooperate, and resolve conflicts. These skills help a child make friends, work in a team, avoid quarrels, or peacefully resolve disagreements that arise. For example, two classmates can agree on how they will work on a joint project, assigning responsibilities among themselves and setting deadlines.

**Responsible decision-making:** the ability to make informed decisions, taking into account the consequences of one's actions and the interests of others. A developed sense of responsibility helps the child make the right choice in various situations, realizing that his actions can affect not only himself, but also those around him. For example, a student faces a choice: go for a walk with friends or stay at home and prepare for a test. He assesses his capabilities, weighs all the pros and cons, and makes the decision that he considers the most correct in this situation.

Principles of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):

These are the foundations on which an effective process of developing social and emotional skills in children and adolescents is built.

**Integrity:** SEL should not be a separate subject or event at school. It should be integrated into all aspects of the educational process, permeating all lessons and extracurricular activities. For example, in a literature lesson, you can not only analyze the characters of the characters, but also discuss their emotional reactions, motives for actions, learn to understand and empathize. In a history lesson, one can consider historical events not only from the point of view of facts, but also from the point of view of the feelings and experiences of the people who participated in them.

**Systematic:** The development of social and emotional skills should be carried out consistently and systematically throughout the entire learning period. You can't limit yourself to individual events or trainings. It is important that SEL skills are formed and consolidated at each stage of learning, from preschool age to high school.

**Active participation:** of children and adolescents in the SEL process means that they should not be just passive listeners. They should be able to actively participate in various exercises, role-playing games, discussions, where they can practice the acquired skills in real situations. For example, children can participate in projects aimed at solving social problems of their class or school, where they can show their empathy, responsibility and ability to work in a team.

**Individual approach:** to SEL assumes that each child is unique and has their own needs and pace of development. Therefore, SEL programs should be flexible and adaptive, taking into account the individual characteristics of each child, their strengths and weaknesses. For example, for one child, participation in group trainings may be useful, and for another, individual consultations with a psychologist.

Cooperation: is an important condition for the successful implementation of SEL programs. The development of social and emotional skills is a common task for teachers, parents, and other specialists who work with children. Only in conditions of cooperation and coordination of actions can the best results be achieved. For example, parents can participate in parent meetings where SEL issues are discussed, as well as receive recommendations from teachers and psychologists on how to develop children's social and emotional skills at home.

Methods and exercises for the development of SEL: They are diverse and can be adapted to the age and individual characteristics of children.

Exercises for the development of self-awareness: help children better understand their emotions, strengths and weaknesses, as well as be aware of their values and goals. Keeping a diary of emotions, where the child writes down what he felt during the day and why, helps him learn to recognize and name his emotions. Reflection, or analysis of one's actions and their consequences, contributes to the development of introspection and responsibility for one's actions. For example, after a conflict with a friend, a child can analyze what he did wrong, what feelings he experienced, and how he could have acted differently.

Exercises for the development of self-regulation: teach children to manage their emotions, control impulses and adapt to stressful situations. Breathing exercises, such as deep breathing or counting to ten, help to calm down in stressful situations. Meditation and mindfulness practices teach you to focus on the present moment and reduce anxiety. Games for the development of impulse control, for example, the game "freeze", help children learn to restrain their impulses and make informed decisions.

Exercises for the development of social awareness: contribute to the development of

empathy, the ability to understand the emotions of other people and respect differences. Role-playing games, where children can "try on" the role of another person, help them better understand his point of view and feelings. Analysis of situations, for example, reading fiction and discussing the actions of heroes, contributes to the development of the ability to see the situation from different angles and understand the motives of other people.

Exercises for the development of relationship skills: teach children to build and maintain positive relationships, communicate effectively, cooperate, and resolve conflicts. Group projects, where children work together to achieve a common goal, contribute to the development of cooperation and teamwork skills. Team-building games, such as "rope course" or "treasure hunt", help children learn to trust each other and work in a team. Exercises for the development of communication skills, such as "active listening" or "I-statements", teach children to communicate effectively and express their thoughts and feelings.

Exercises for the development of responsible decision-making: teach children to analyze situations, evaluate the consequences of various solutions, and choose the best one. Analysis of situations, for example, discussing difficult life situations and finding possible solutions, helps children learn to see the problem from different angles and take into account the interests of all participants. Solving cases based on real situations contributes to the development of analysis and decision-making skills. Modeling the consequences of various solutions, for example, the game "if...", helps children understand what consequences their actions can lead to.

The development of social and emotional skills is not only the task of the school, but also the responsibility of parents.

It is important to create an atmosphere of support and understanding at home, to teach children to

express their emotions, to listen and understand other people, as well as to help them solve emerging problems. For example, parents can discuss with their children the books they read or the films they watch, ask them questions about the feelings of the characters and their actions. They can also teach children to resolve conflicts peacefully by offering them different solutions and helping them choose the best one.

Parents can create an atmosphere of support and understanding at home where children will feel safe and able to express their emotions openly. It is important to listen to children, show interest in their experiences, and help them understand difficult situations. For example, if a child is upset about a quarrel with a friend, parents can listen to him, sympathize, and offer help in resolving the conflict.

Teaching children to express emotions is an important aspect of social-emotional development. Parents can teach children to name their emotions, explain why they arise, and look for constructive ways to express them. For example, instead of saying "I'm angry", the child can say "I feel offended because my friend didn't want to play with me».

Developing listening and understanding skills is another important task for parents. It is important to teach children not only to listen, but also to hear other people, to show empathy and respect for their opinions. For example, during a family discussion, parents can ask each child to express their point of view, and then together try to understand why each of them thinks that way.

Helping children solve emerging problems is an important contribution to their social-emotional development. Parents can teach children to analyze the situation, identify possible solutions and choose the best one. For example, if a child cannot decide what to do in a difficult situation, parents can offer him a "brainstorming" by writing

down all possible solutions, and then discuss their pros and cons together.

It is important to remember that social-emotional development is a long process that requires patience and support from parents. By creating an atmosphere of love and understanding at home, teaching children to express their emotions, listen and understand other people, as well as helping them solve emerging problems, parents make an invaluable contribution to their future well-being and success.

### **CONCLUSION**

Social-emotional learning plays a key role in the successful development of children and adolescents. It helps them become self-confident, responsible, empathetic, and able to build harmonious relationships with others. The development of social and emotional skills is an important factor in achieving well-being and success in life. Investing in SEL is investing in the future, in a healthy and happy generation.

In the modern world, where social connections are becoming more complex and diverse, and the emotional burden is increasing, social-emotional learning is of particular importance. It helps children not only adapt to changes, but also actively participate in building their future. The development of emotional intelligence, the ability to understand and manage one's emotions, as well as empathy and the ability to cooperate, become key competitive advantages in any field of activity.

Social-emotional learning is not just a set of individual exercises or trainings. This is a holistic approach to education that permeates all aspects of the educational process. It includes creating a favorable psychological atmosphere in the classroom, developing self-regulation and communication skills in children, as well as support from teachers and parents.

It is important to note that social-emotional learning is not limited to the school setting. It continues at

home, in the family, where children receive their first experience of communication and interaction with other people. Parents play a key role in developing the social and emotional skills of their children, teaching them empathy, responsibility, and the ability to resolve conflicts.

Investing in social-emotional learning is not only an investment in the future of individual children, but also in the future of society as a whole. People with developed social and emotional skills are more successful in their careers, happy in their personal lives, and able to contribute to the development of their country.

In conclusion, we can say that social-emotional learning is an integral part of the modern educational process. It helps children become not only successful students, but also harmoniously developed individuals who are able to build a happy and fulfilling life.

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