

Mental Health Literacy Learning Units & Competencies Crosswalk with Social Emotional Learning Standards & Benchmarks

There is a shared understanding that all settings (home, school, and community) can provide conditions that support each person's social emotional development. The relationship between Mental Health Literacy (MHL) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is an important one to connect and incorporate into learning because nurturing every dimension of a student's development enables students to thrive while empowering them with knowledge and skills related to mental health.

SEL, along with MHL, helps build adult capacity to support a school climate and culture that recognizes, respects and supports differences in abilities, experiences, and cultural connections. They are separate components, though both have a shared goal to promote emotional well-being. SEL is a foundation and MHL is an education to extend social emotional development. SEL and MHL have complementary skillsets. SEL develops social and emotional skills and builds emotional resilience, like empathy, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills; MHL emphasizes understanding mental health, recognizing symptoms of mental health challenges, challenging stigma, and knowing when and how to seek help.

An educator may use this document to recognize the interlinking but separate relationship between SEL and MHL. It is meant to help make that connection to help educators refer to SEL skills that are currently practiced and build on those skills to fully create a supportive, engaging, and empowering learning environment.

When MHL is integrated with SEL skills, students are able to comprehend the effects of mental health on their behaviors and emotions, begin to enhance their ability to communicate with trusted adults, and understand the steps to take when experiencing distress.

To get started, please visit the OSPI webpage to find the [SEL standards, benchmarks and indicators](#) document. For each MHL learning unit, there are aligned SEL and benchmarks to the MHL health learning standard. It will help identify how MHL aligns with SEL and present the interlinking relationship. Please use the link above to view the six Social Emotional Learning standards and accompanying benchmarks.

Learning Unit 1: Mental Health Competency – It is to develop an understanding of common mental health challenges, symptoms, and how to identify risk factors and the impact of stressors.

Mental Health Competency Competencies	Social Emotional Learning Standard & Benchmark Alignment	
Understand the stress response system (regulation and dysregulation, what environments and experiences activate those responses, and how to manage responses.	Benchmark 3B: Demonstrates problem-solving skills to engage responsibly in a variety of situations.	Benchmark 5A: Demonstrates a range of communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.
Analyze physical and psychological effects of stress, anxiety, depression, social isolation, and individual collective trauma.	Benchmark 1A: Demonstrate awareness and understanding of one's own emotions and emotions' influence on behavior.	Benchmark 2A: Demonstrates the skills to manage one's emotions, thoughts, impulses, and stress in constructive ways.

Describe the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges (e.g. suicide, self-harm, eating disorders and disordered eating).	Benchmark 1B: Demonstrates awareness of personal and collective identity encompassing strengths, areas for growth, aspirations, and cultural and linguistic assets.	Benchmark 4B: Demonstrates an awareness and respect for similarities and differences among community, cultural and social groups.
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Learning Unit 2: Mental Health Promotion – It is to foster positive mental health and overall well-being by building resilience through protective factors and emotion management strategies and skills.

Mental Health Promotion Competencies	Social Emotional Learning Standard & Benchmark Alignment	
Analyze the personal and social identities and how they relate to one's interests, purpose, and sense of belonging	Benchmark 1B: Demonstrates awareness of personal and collective identity encompassing strengths, areas for growth, aspirations, and cultural and linguistic assets.	Benchmark 4B: Demonstrates an awareness and respect for similarities and differences among community, cultural and social groups.
Reflect and evaluate the impacts of one's choices and contributions in promoting personal, family and community well-being.	Benchmark 2A: Demonstrates the skills to manage one's emotions, thoughts, impulses, and stress in constructive ways.	Benchmark 6C: Contributes productively to one's school, workplace, and community.
Create and develop a personalized plan to identify activities and strategies that support positive, social, emotional and mental well-being.	Benchmark 2A: Demonstrates the skills to manage one's emotions, thoughts, impulses, and stress in constructive ways.	Benchmark 4C: Demonstrates an understanding of the variation within and across cultures.
Demonstrate ways to manage or resolve interpersonal conflict using assertive communication skills.	Benchmark 1C: Demonstrates self-awareness and understanding of external influences, e.g., culture, family, school, and community resources and supports.	Benchmark 3B: Demonstrates problem-solving skills to engage responsibly in a variety of situations.
Discuss the impact of social media use on our social, emotional, and mental health for individuals and the community.	Benchmark 1A: Demonstrates awareness and understanding of one's own emotions and emotions' influence on behavior.	Benchmark 3A: Demonstrates the skills to set, monitor, adapt, persevere, achieve, and evaluate goals.
Analyze the impact of media, marketing, social media, internet use, and other technologies on social, mental, and emotional health.	Benchmark 1A: Demonstrates awareness and understanding of one's own emotions and emotions' influence on behavior.	Benchmark 3A: Demonstrates the skills to set, monitor, adapt, persevere, achieve, and evaluate goals.
Manage and express thoughts, emotions, impulses, and stressors in ways that affirm one's identity.	Benchmark 1C: Demonstrates self-awareness and understanding of external influences, e.g., culture, family, school, and community resources and supports.	Benchmark 2A: Demonstrates the skills to manage one's emotions, thoughts, impulses, and stress in constructive ways.

Learning Unit 3: Mental Health Stigma – It is to reduce stigma through identifying how social factors impact mental health promotion and introduce ways to increase empathy.

Mental Health Stigma Competencies	Social Emotional Learning Standard & Benchmark Alignment	
Recognize the influence of stigma as it relates to emotional, mental, and behavioral health of self and others.	Benchmark 4A: Demonstrates awareness of other people's emotions, perspectives, cultures, languages, histories, identities, and abilities.	Benchmark 5A: Demonstrates a range of communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.
Demonstrate curiosity and open-mindedness while using critical thinking skills across various situations and environments, including cultural inclusivity.	Benchmark 4B: Demonstrates an awareness and respect for similarities and differences among community, cultural and social groups.	Benchmark 5C: Demonstrates the ability to engage in respectful and healthy relationships with individuals of diverse perspectives, cultures, language, history, identity, and ability.
Analyze how inequitable social systems and discrimination impact mental health and well-being and reflect on relation to self and others.	Benchmark 4B: Demonstrates an awareness and respect for similarities and differences among community, cultural and social groups.	Benchmark 5C: Demonstrates the ability to engage in respectful and healthy relationships with individuals of diverse perspectives, cultures, language, history, identity, and ability.
Advocate for reducing stigma associated with emotional and mental and behavioral health.	Benchmark 4A: Demonstrates awareness of other people's emotions, perspectives, cultures, languages, histories, identities, and abilities.	Benchmark 6C: Contributes productively to one's school, workplace, and community.

Learning Unit 4: Mental Health Advocacy and Help Seeking – It is to empower mental health promotion and well-being through ensuring access to resources and care when needed.

Mental Health Advocacy and Help Seeking Competencies	Social Emotional Learning Standard & Benchmark Alignment	
Recognize when professional services are needed for self and others experiencing chronic or serious mental health concerns and traumatic stress, including self-harm, eating disorders and disordered eating, substance use disorder and suicidal ideation.	Benchmark 2B: Demonstrates responsible decision-making and problem solving skills.	Benchmark 3C: Demonstrates awareness and ability to speak on behalf of personal rights and advocacy.
Compare the validity, reliability, and accessibility of mental, social and emotional health information, products, and services in the home, at school, and in the community.	Benchmark 5A: Demonstrates a range of communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.	Benchmark 6A: Demonstrates a sense of school and community responsibility.
Discuss how state and federal laws and policies can influence access to mental health and protections for students.	Benchmark 5A: Demonstrates a range of communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.	Benchmark 6A: Demonstrates a sense of school and community responsibility.

Demonstrate asking for help and offering support and empathy to peers.	Benchmark 4A: Demonstrates awareness of other people's emotions, perspectives, cultures, languages, histories, identities, and abilities.	Benchmark 5A: Demonstrates a range of communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.
Support a peer through loss, such as responding with kindness and compassion.	Benchmark 4A: Demonstrates awareness of other people's emotions, perspectives, cultures, languages, histories, identities, and abilities.	Benchmark 5A: Demonstrates a range of communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.