



Issue #4: Monday, February 6, 2023

Understanding Differences

SEL lessons to teach your students social awareness and relationship building 😊

SEL Day
Uplifting Hearts, Connecting Minds
March 10, 2023

There's only **ONE MONTH** until SEL Day!!
Sign up today! It will be here before we know it!
Make sure to share your SEL artifacts to social media with #SELday and tag @SEL4NJ

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

#SEL
day

Read below for SEL Day inspiration! 😊

Welcome to our weekly newsletter!

As SEL Day is quickly approaching, we wanted to provide you with inspiration for SEL artifacts! Our goal is to have **#SELday** trending on **March 10th** on social media. To do this we ask for your participation by creating a SEL artifact and sharing it through a picture or video online. An SEL artifact can be anything you do to promote, teach, or advocate for SEL in your classroom or school. 😊 What's included in our newsletter:

- A song of the week that will build into a playlist accessible to you! 🎵
- A new theme every week! This week- *Understanding Differences*
- Examples of fun SEL activities 😊
- Past SEL Day features ✨
- Research and resources! 📖

*Make sure to keep an eye on your inboxes **every Monday** for our newsletter!*

"Be yourself because an original is worth more than a copy"
-Unknown

Song of the Week:

Scars to you Beautiful by Alessia Cara

[Click here to listen to our playlist!](#)

Take a step forward if...



For this SEL activity you're going to want to head outside or to the school gym, you'll need a lot of space! Have your students line up next to one another. You will then ask the students a series of questions and have them take a step forward if the question applies to them. The questions should get more serious as the game goes on. Questions can also be modified for grade level, with deeper questions for older students. See below for examples of questions to ask, you should ask students 15-20. At the end of the game, students will be at all different places. This game emphasizes that we all have different life experiences and builds respect amongst your students! Make sure to ask reflection questions at the end too!

Questions to ask

Take a step forward if...

1. Your favorite color is blue
2. Your favorite food is pizza
3. You are wearing jeans today
4. You are the oldest sibling
5. You are left handed
6. You have ever felt embarrassed
7. You have ever felt you don't belong
8. You are confident about something
9. You have trouble expressing feelings
10. You had trouble making friends

Reflection Questions

1. What have you noticed while doing this activity?
2. What can you take away from this activity?
3. What does this activity say about you?
4. What does it say about your classmates?
5. How did this activity make you feel?

Social-Emotional Learning Information Briefs

Located on the SEL4NJ website homepage are a series of SEL information sheets to show how integral SEL is to the education process and ways to incorporate it in schools. Two information sheets related to understanding differences are [Building a Positive School Climate to Help Students Feel Welcome](#) and [Create Classrooms That Celebrate Who Students Are](#).

Building a positive school environment makes learning more likely to happen. Adults in the school can be a model for positivity in the way they interact with students. For instance, greeting students and using their name when talking to them. This creates a positive relationship between teachers and students, which has a positive impact on academic achievement. It is also important to give students a voice. One way to do this is by allowing them to come up with classroom rules.

Students learning is advanced when teachers reinforce and respect cultures of all students. It is also important for teachers to help students apply their cultural experiences to the classroom. While teachers create a culture of caring, kindness, and helping by recognizing students' differences students learn to accept and love themselves for who they are, as well as their classmates.

For more information on these two information briefs click the links above and head over to the SEL4NJ homepage for more information sheets on different topics! 😊

"Sometimes You're A Caterpillar" 🐌 🎥

[Watch the video by clicking here!](#)

"Sometimes You're A Caterpillar" is a short video animated video written by Chescaleigh and animated by Kat Blaque. Chescaleigh tells a story of a snail and caterpillar who are on their way to a party. She uses this story to teach the audiences about how no one is the same and how we all experience life differently. In doing this, Chescaleigh explains privilege. There is some language in this story that may not be suitable for younger students, so use your discretion in deciding if it is appropriate for your students. After showing the video, hold a discussion with your students. Ask them their reactions, what they have learned, and for their experiences having or not having privilege. This story paired with discussion will teach students about the acceptance of differences and help them build social awareness. 😊

A Full Bucket 😊

Thank you Carolyn Kauffman from Little Egg Harbor Township School District for sharing your class SEL Day activity! 💖



To celebrate last SEL Day Carolyn Kauffman read the story "Have You Filled a Bucket Today?" by Carol McCloud. This story teaches kids about acts of kindness. It also teaches students not to be mean to or bully others. Carolyn Kauffman's class wrote letters to a classmate with compliments as an act to fill others' buckets. The story "Have You Filled a Bucket Today?" is about being kind to everyone regardless of differences. To access an audio recording of the story [click here!](#)

❖ Looking for more SEL Day Inspiration? ❖

Check out the NJEA article "Uplifting Hearts, Connecting Minds"
Written by SEL4NJ Social Media Intern, Jennifer Ly, and Maurice J. Elias

[Click here to access the article!](#)

In "Uplifting Hearts, Connecting Minds," Ly and Elias prepare readers for the fast approaching SEL Day. They explain what SEL is and why it is important for educators to implement SEL in their classrooms. To prove SEL's importance, they explain research studies that have shown how much students need SEL skills. The rest of the article highlights what other schools across New Jersey have done in their classrooms for past SEL Days. All of the SEL activities provided in the article are great sources of inspiration across multiple subjects such as English/language arts, physical education, and visual and performing arts. Overall "Uplifting Hearts, and Connecting Minds" is a great resource to prepare for SEL Day 2023! Make sure to share it with your colleagues! 😊

Don't forget to sign up for SEL Day! 🗣️

[SIGN UP HERE!](#)

**#SEL
day**

Check out www.selday.org to learn more about SEL Day, resources, and toolkits! We would greatly appreciate you sharing our newsletter with your colleagues! ❤️

We hope you have a wonderful week 😊❤️😊