



CASEL CARES INITIATIVE
Connecting the SEL Community



March 25, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

This is a moment none of us has experienced and none foresaw. For me personally, it's been a daily emotional roller-coaster ride. With this immense challenge comes an equally enormous opportunity for all of us to learn from what has happened and to pave a stronger path forward, both as individuals and as a society.

Our interconnectedness has never been more clearly on display. We are united in this situation not as a moral imperative, but as a survival imperative. And now is the time to fully express the depths of our social and emotional competence on all fronts. When we apply everything we've learned from the science and practice of SEL, we can support our communities and the most vulnerable among us, as well as ourselves.

Like most Americans and people around the globe, I've been in seclusion and limiting my physical interaction with others. I do not consider this "social distancing." In this time of crisis, we need physical distancing, of course. But that doesn't mean we must be islands unto ourselves. When physical distancing is deemed necessary, social and emotional connectedness is even more critical.

This is a defining moment in history. The path forward will rely on SEL competencies as we take stock of what we have lost, shed tears for the departed, honor the heroes, and build our infrastructures, our societies, our economies, and our sense of place in the world anew. It will test our compassion and empathy. It will challenge our ability to collaborate and share resources. And it will afford us the opportunity to rethink our educational systems, our governmental policies, and our workplaces in a way that may have been unimaginable just a few months ago.

In response to the need for a radical and sudden transformation in everything we do, CASEL is mobilizing to provide social and emotional support to our communities and share best practices through a new initiative called "CASEL CARES." Every week, we will offer practical guidance and information on topics that are sourced from the field and relevant to the needs of today.

[Our first CASEL CARES offering is this Friday, March 27, at 12:00 pm CDT, featuring Dr. Marc Brackett](#), CASEL Board member and Director of Yale's Center for Emotional Intelligence. Dr. Brackett will focus this live webinar on evidence-based strategies to support us all in leading, teaching, and parenting with our best selves forward. Stay tuned to our social media channels for information on registration for this unique and timely webinar.

Through CASEL CARES, we look forward to convening with you often in the coming weeks. We will bring you thought leadership, helpful resources, and access to key leaders in the SEL field.

Our team joins with you in solidarity and hope. We are all in this together—human relationships are the source code for a healthy society and the vital ingredient for world peace. Applying what we've learned from SEL can help us bond, heal, and discover the creative solutions that will make our homes, schools, workplaces, and communities healthier and happier places for everyone to thrive.

Sincerely,

Karen Niemi
President & CEO
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

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