

Care, Wellness, and Mindful Movement: Supporting the Needs of Educators and Students During Challenging Times

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Introduction

- This research investigates how social and emotional wellness can help pre-service and practicing teachers manage stress through mindfulness, yoga, and other wellness practices.
- Social and Emotional Learning fundamentals: "SEL can help all young people and adults thrive personally and academically, develop and maintain positive relationships, become lifelong learners, and contribute to a more caring, just world" (CASEL.org, 2022).
- With increased stressors due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the rate of teacher burnout has only increased.
- As teachers take care of themselves, they are better able to take care of their students.

Research Questions

1. How do wellness and care practices influence your teaching and/or personal well-being?
2. Do these practices influence student learning and social emotional well-being?

Methods

Action Research with Pre-service and Practicing Teachers

1. Participants were asked to complete two surveys and three interviews.
2. The participants were sent different interventions including journal prompts, mindfulness meditations, self-care tips, and yoga.
3. Participants chose the practices they wished to participate in, and discussed how these interventions influenced their wellness.

Discussion

Teachers who participate in social emotional learning (SEL):

1. Have improved attitudes
2. Show more engagement with colleagues and families
3. Demonstrate increased educational efficacy

Significance

1. Promote Teacher Retention
2. Reduce Stress and Burnout
3. Build Kind and Caring Classrooms

Figure 2- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Framework

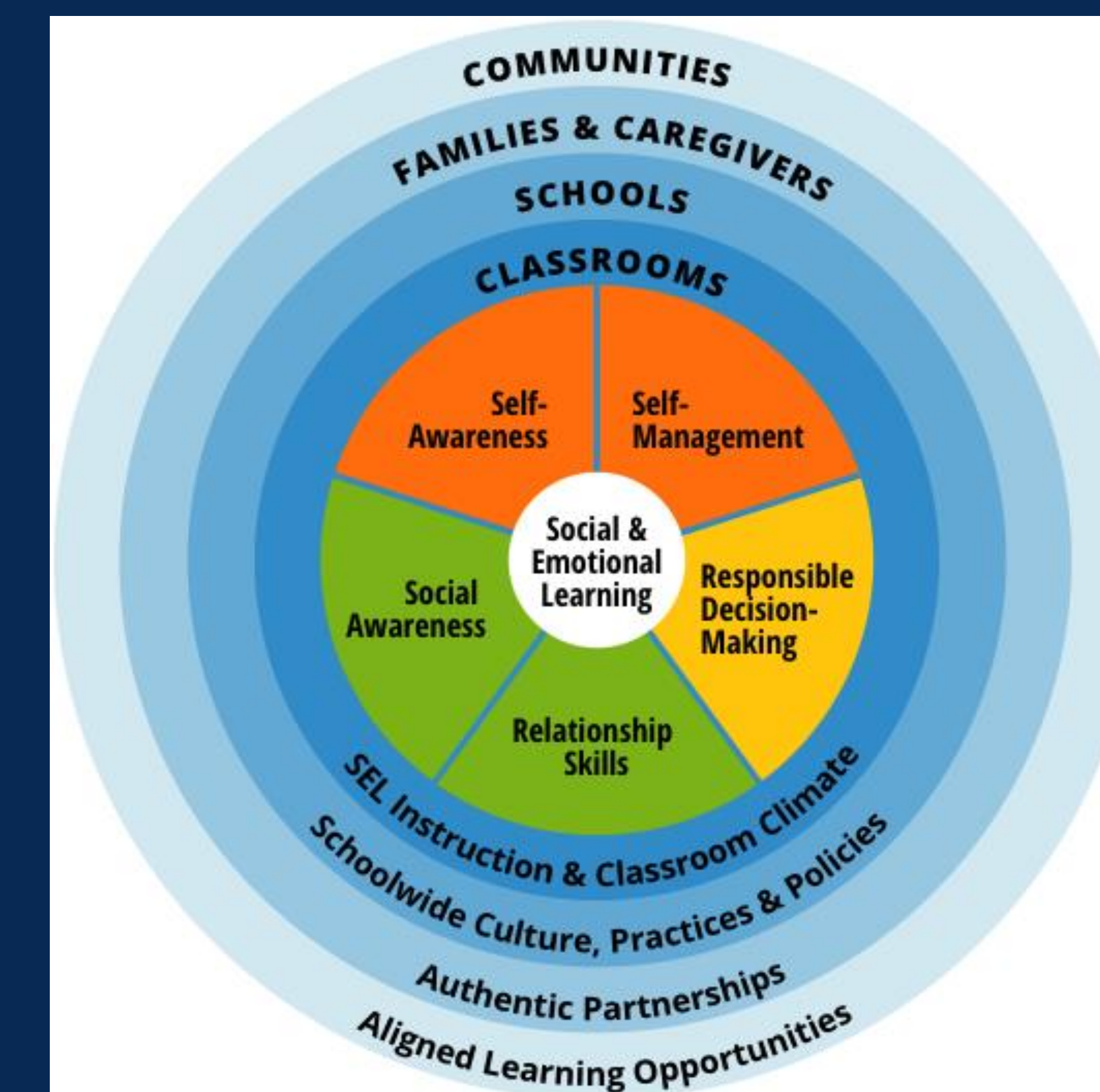


Figure 1- Participants doing some Mindful Movement at the CARE Workshop



Key Takeaways:

- Wellness interventions don't have to take a lot of time to be impactful
- If teachers have strong SEL skills they'll be better able to recognize the needs of their students
- Wellness interventions decrease feelings of burnout and promote teacher effectiveness

Figure 3 – Participants feelings after completing a mindfulness or wellness practice



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Figure 4 – Testimonials for this wellness work

Participant	Testimonial
Pre-service Teacher	I believe teacher wellness programs can benefit both teachers and students. When teachers learn to breathe and become mindful, they won't let the small things get to them as much. They will be able to manage disruptive behavior in a calm way. However, if teachers are stressed, their students are more likely to pick up on the tension/stress.
Para-professional	I truly believe that students can have a 6th sense about how a person is feeling, whether that's happy, sad, frustrated, tired, or just burned out. I have seen it first-hand. When the teacher is burned out, the students feel that negative energy. By participating in this program, I have felt and seen a change in myself and my students. I have more energy, I'm happier, and in return, so are my students.

References

- CASEL.org
- Gupta (2020)
- Hartigen (2017)
- Thierry, Vincent, Bryant, Kinder, & Wise (2018)

Try a quick mindfulness practice



SCAN ME

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