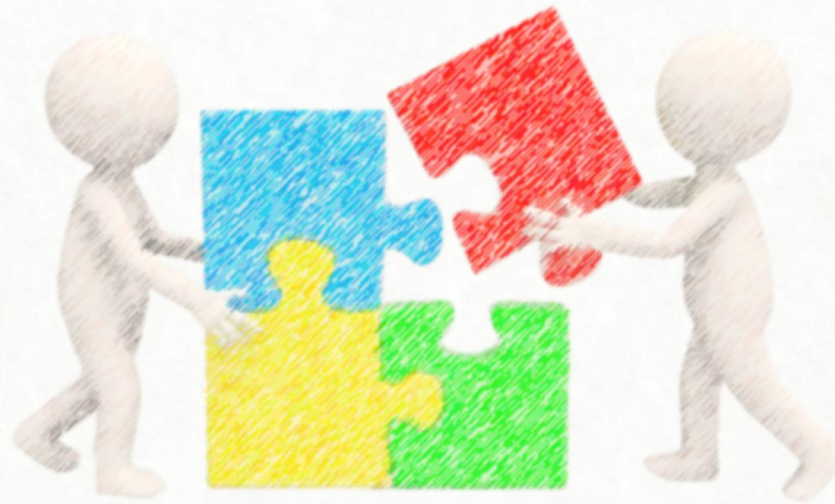


# SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOLS

## *A Guide to Program Selection*



1st Edition

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John C. LeBlanc, MD, MSc, Karisa Parkington, MSc, Nirupa Varasarathan,  
Adam Donato, BSc, & Tanya Bilsbury, MSc

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Social and Emotional Learning Programs for Schools: A Guide to Program Selection. – 1<sup>st</sup> ed.

ISBN (Print): 978-0-9940205-2-9

Printed in Canada by Dalhousie University Press

ISBN (PDF): 978-0-9940205-3-6

Last updated 21 May 2013

Published by CPSC Atlantic  
c/o Dr. John LeBlanc  
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## Acknowledgements

The Canadian Prevention Science Cluster (CPSC) Atlantic included representatives from the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Education, the Department of Health and Wellness, and Dalhousie University. The CPSC and this research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

We thank all principals and school officials from across Nova Scotia who participated in an environmental scan that provided us with a sample of school-based programs implemented across the province. We thank the regional directors of the CPSC for their input throughout the development process: David Wolfe, Ontario; Shelley Hymel, British Columbia; and Marie Battiste, Saskatchewan. Thanks are also extended to Kathryn Yuill, MA and Becky Clements, BSc Candidate, for their contributions to the preliminary work and development of this toolkit.



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada



## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	1
Social and Emotional Learning and Program Evaluation: An Introduction .....	2
What is Social and Emotional Learning? .....	2
Evaluation of Social and Emotional Learning .....	2
Selection of Programs .....	3
Evaluating the Strength of Evidence – The GRADE Approach.....	4
Information Provided for Evidence-Based Program Recommendations .....	6
Where to Find the Articles Reviewed and Additional Information .....	6
Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning Programs for Schools .....	7
Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS).....	8
Second Step .....	10
Caring School Community (CSC) .....	12
Roots of Empathy .....	14
The Fourth R .....	16
Non-Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning Programs for Schools.....	18
Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE).....	19
Lion’s Quest: Skills for Adolescence.....	20
Options to Anger.....	21
Room 14: A Social Language Program .....	22
Stop Now And Plan (SNAP) .....	23
Tribes.....	24
Noteworthy Programs.....	25
The Good Behavior Game.....	26
The Virtues Project .....	27
Programs to Consider for Future Review .....	28
References by SEL Program.....	30
Resource Information .....	36

## Executive Summary

This toolkit was created by the Canadian Prevention Science Cluster – Atlantic ([www.cpscatlantic.org](http://www.cpscatlantic.org)), an organization funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Our mission is to promote programs that help students develop healthy relationships and reduce various types of violence including bullying and cyberbullying. The toolkit is designed to help those who work with youth (especially staff from schools and school boards) choose effective and evidence-based programs that promote social and emotional skills.

### Importance of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

- SEL skills are: self-management, responsible decision-making, self-awareness, social-awareness and relationship skills
- Schools where SEL programs are implemented have healthier environments and better academic outcomes ([www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org))
- SEL is a key feature of effective anti-bullying programs

### Principal findings

- Programs for review were chosen based on a survey conducted in 135 schools in Nova Scotia, Canada in 2011 & 2012. *This list of programs is not meant to be exclusive.*
- Evidence-based programs: PATHS, Second Step, Caring School Community, Roots of Empathy, The Fourth R. At present, PATHS and Second Step have the strongest evidence of effectiveness.
- Programs without evidence of effectiveness in the school setting: DARE, Lion's Quest, Options to Anger, Room 14, SNAP (strong evidence in community settings), Tribes

### Recommendations

- Departments of Education and school boards should consider officially endorsing a small number of evidence-based programs. This would allow schools flexibility in choice while providing some opportunity for consistency and effectiveness across jurisdictions.
- Evaluation, whether basic or in depth, should be a formal part of implementation. This will promote consistency in program training and delivery and will help assess whether programs have the same effect in different settings.

## **Social and Emotional Learning and Program Evaluation: An Introduction**

### **What is Social and Emotional Learning?**

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) organization defines social and emotional learning (SEL) as: *“a process for helping children and even adults develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness. SEL teaches the skills we need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically.”* - CASEL, 2011.

#### SEL Skills:

- 1) Self-management, 2) Responsible decision-making, 3) Self-awareness,
- 4) Social-awareness and 5) Relationship skills.

SEL is increasingly discussed in education policies for children and youth and there are now many programs that promote themselves as teaching SEL skills. Many programs are marketed as ‘evidence-based’, although the quantity and quality of the evidence is not always clear from program websites or materials. This makes it difficult for school administrators and school-board staff to choose programs that are effective and feasible.

### **Evaluation of Social and Emotional Learning**

Several organizations have evaluated available SEL programs, and have created different recommendations depending on their standards (e.g., What Works Clearing House, CASEL). They have been comprehensive – a plus in that numerous programs have been evaluated – but have created a dilemma for the busy administrator who must sift through many programs to find a suitable one. They also have not been explicit in their criteria for assessing the quality of the evidence that shows whether programs work, making it difficult to assess whether one is likely to see a real change if implemented in one’s school.

We have taken a more focused approach and have deliberately restricted our toolkit to SEL programs that are used in Nova Scotia schools, as well as additional programs we believe should be considered because of the evidence showing that they work. We have explicitly and thoroughly evaluated the evidence for each program in this document. This toolkit summarizes evidence-based and non-evidence-based school programs, along with implementation recommendations to assist decision-makers in choosing programs that promote SEL for their schools.

For the purposes of this toolkit, the authors define ‘evidence-based programs’ as programs that were scientifically evaluated using a study method that includes a comparison or control group, with the evaluation findings published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal and reporting at least one SEL outcome. ‘Non-evidence-based’ programs include programs that, although based on SEL and psychological learning theories, have not had SEL outcomes formally evaluated with the findings published in recognized scientific journals, or are currently in the preliminary stages of evaluation. These programs are promising but have not yet been shown to work.

### **Selection of Programs**

The programs included in this toolkit came from two sources. The most important was a preliminary list of programs reported by 135 school officials from six of nine regional school boards across Nova Scotia as part of a larger survey conducted from 2010 to 2012. Principals identified over 300 initiatives designed to improve SEL outcomes. We defined 28 programs as having a structured curriculum delivered over more than one session.

For this toolkit we selected and extensively reviewed 11 programs based on the following criteria: 1) the program was identified by more than one survey respondent or was identified by the authors as being of potential relevance to Nova Scotia schools, 2) the program must have the capacity to be implemented at the classroom or school level (e.g., we excluded programs delivered solely in a community setting), and 3) the program must focus (or claim to focus) on at least some of the SEL characteristics listed above. Two noteworthy programs were also included because they show potential for indirect effects on the main components of SEL listed above. Although survey respondents identified Positive Effective Behaviour Support (PEBS) as an SEL program, it was not included in this toolkit. PEBS is a school-wide system of support that can incorporate SEL programs such as those reviewed in this toolkit.

For each program, the toolkit provides the following: a general overview, the specific outcomes evaluated, the strongest available evidence we were able to find (if any), required resources (i.e. money, curriculum materials, classroom and teacher time), as well as the targeted grade ranges and populations (i.e. universal programs vs. targeted programs). Universal programs are delivered to all children in a setting, whereas targeted programs are delivered only to children or adolescents who have been identified as having behavioural problems. Each evidence-based program also has a summary chart that shows how we arrived at our overall recommendation. For programs without evidence, we make suggestions to aid decision-makers in making informed decisions.

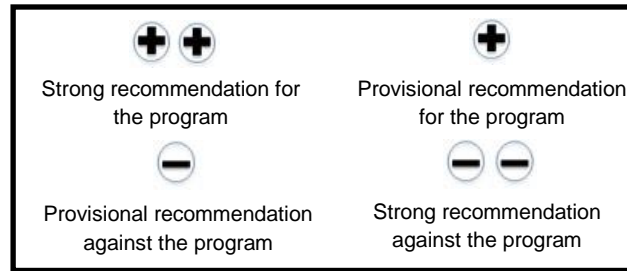
## **Evaluating the Strength of Evidence – The GRADE Approach**

Our recommendations were developed using a structured analysis of published evidence. After assessing a number of published tools and approaches to evaluating scientific evidence, we chose the Grading of Recommendations, Assessments, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) approach developed by international guideline developers (e.g., McMaster University, the World Health Organization, USA Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). The advantage of the GRADE approach is that it is commonly used, internationally endorsed, and outcome-based. The standard GRADE approach implements a systematic review of all articles available for the program or intervention of interest, followed by a qualitative and quantitative analysis of its main outcomes. GRADE was initially designed to help decision-makers choose specific interventions or treatments in a health care setting, and relies heavily on study quality to arrive at recommendations. It gives greater weight to randomized controlled trials (RCTs) than to observational studies, and almost no weight to expert opinion or anecdotal evidence.

Because of the nature of the evidence available for SEL outcomes, the authors made two changes to the GRADE approach. First, we emphasized a type of study design commonly used in program evaluations but only briefly mentioned in the GRADE literature: quasi-experimental designs. A quasi-experimental study is one in which researchers have partial control over the allocation of students or schools to intervention or control groups (to ensure maximum comparability between groups) in cases where randomization is impossible. Second, due to the limited number of studies for each program, we were not able to quantify the impact of programs on SEL outcomes (e.g., effect sizes). Therefore, all conclusions are solely descriptive in nature.

The modified GRADE approach was implemented as follows: 1) peer-reviewed journals were searched for any papers reporting evaluations of the program of interest and the highest quality studies (e.g., RCTs, quasi-experimental designs or longitudinal observational studies) were selected, 2) a list of main outcomes (i.e., SEL characteristics postulated to improve due to program implementation) was created for each program, 3) two reviewers independently evaluated each paper and abstracted information on the main outcomes, study design and execution, 4) the quality of evidence for each of the main outcomes was assessed, considering factors that could improve or degrade the evidence (e.g., risk of bias, blinding of participants or observers (i.e., participants and/or observers were not aware of group assignment), attrition rates, large or small effect sizes, etc.), and 5) a program recommendation was established based on the following scale used in the GRADE system:





Following independent evaluation of each program, the reviewers outlined discrepancies and agreed upon one of the four GRADE recommendations described above.

A strong recommendation in favour of the program implies that the reviewers feel confident that the benefits of a program outweigh the risks. A provisional recommendation implies that the benefits probably outweigh the risks, but the quantity or quality of evidence is insufficient to make a firm conclusion at this time. Note that a provisional recommendation for a program does not necessarily indicate that the program is less effective than one with a strong recommendation. The typical reasons for a provisional recommendation are that the program lacks evidence for the outcomes of interest (e.g., focusing on bullying rather than SEL outcomes), the program has not been tested in a carefully controlled experiment where alternative explanations for program effectiveness can be ruled out, or there is little research available evaluating the effectiveness of the program and further investigation is required before making a stronger recommendation. The implication for those choosing a program with a provisional recommendation is to consider carefully why the program will be effective in their setting (e.g., a school or school board) and to take special care to evaluate the program because its effectiveness is not assured given the available evidence.

Note that according to the GRADE approach, the quality of evidence is assessed for *each outcome* (e.g., social competence, relationship skills, responsible decision-making), *not* for the program as a whole or even each study in isolation. In accordance with the GRADE approach, ‘low quality evidence’ implies that few studies evaluated the outcome(s) of interest, and/or there were many important limitations to the evaluation of the outcome(s). ‘Moderate quality evidence’ implies that some evidence was available for the outcome(s), with limitations in study design (e.g., high attrition rates, study samples that aren’t representative of the schools from which they come) that *might* affect the conclusions. ‘High quality evidence’ implies that several studies evaluated the outcomes of interest, with positive (or negative) outcomes that are unlikely to be changed even if there are some limitations in how some studies were designed or implemented.

### **Information Provided for Evidence-Based Program Recommendations**

The main factors influencing the evidence-based program recommendation are detailed in a recommendation chart following the program's summary chart. These charts detail three specific areas that were influential in the program recommendation process: 'High or moderate quality evidence', 'Certainty about the balance of benefits versus downsides' and 'Resource implications'. 'High or moderate quality evidence' describes the basic findings from the articles reviewed and details the effects of the outcomes according to these studies. Small effect sizes indicate small and perhaps unimportant differences in SEL outcomes between schools that received and did not receive an SEL program whereas large effect sizes indicate large differences between the two groups of schools. 'Certainty about the balance of benefits versus downsides' includes information regarding how beneficial the program may be in improving aspects of SEL, as well as whether discrepancies between studies were found for the program outcomes. Finally, 'Resource implications' explains factors relating to time and economic costs in relation to the reported program effects.


### **Where to Find the Articles Reviewed and Additional Information**

All of the articles reviewed using the GRADE approach can be found in the 'References by SEL Program' section at the end of this toolkit. Additional articles are available for Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), Lion's Quest: Skills for Adolescence, Stop Now And Plan (SNAP) and the Good Behavior Game. The DARE and Lion's Quest: Skills for Adolescence programs are classified as non-evidence-based programs because no research is currently available evaluating SEL outcomes for these programs. However, research evaluating the effectiveness of DARE and Lion's Quest: Skills for Adolescence as substance use prevention programs has been included as supplementary articles. The SNAP program is classified as a non-evidence-based program because it has only been formally evaluated in a community setting, although research in the school setting is forthcoming. The Good Behavior Game (a well-established program that decreases disruptive classroom behaviour) is included as a noteworthy program because it is a potentially useful program that does not specifically target SEL outcomes, but could be combined with other programs that do, and has extensive evaluation research available.

# **Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning Programs for Schools**

## Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

<http://www.channing-bete.com/prevention-programs/paths/paths.html>


General Description & Outcomes	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Recommendation for SEL Outcomes
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on improving interpersonal behaviours and reducing disruptive behaviours</li> <li>• Lessons on emotion awareness, conflict resolution and self-control</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in problem solving skills, emotional awareness and social competence</li> <li>• Reductions in aggressive / disruptive behaviours and interpersonal disputes</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grades K – 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Universal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 – 52 lessons (dependent upon grade level)</li> <li>• Approximately 20 – 40 minutes per lesson</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$399 - \$700 for curriculum (dependent upon grade level)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led using available manuals and materials</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">High quality evidence for endorsing SEL behaviours and reducing disruptive or aggressive behaviours</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strong</b> recommendation <b>towards</b> the program for SEL outcomes</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>

### Recommendation for PATHS:

Factors:	Decision:	Explanation:
<p><b>High or moderate quality evidence</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>EVIDENCE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate to high quality evidence (see References 1 – 4).</li> <li>• Two RCTs and one quasi-experimental study based in the USA. One observational study conducted in the UK.</li> <li>• Studies evaluated children from preschool to grade 3 from predominantly low income families.</li> <li>• All of the SEL outcomes listed above were evaluated across the four studies.</li> </ul> <p><b>COMMENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shown to be effective in both general and special education classrooms.</li> <li>• Large program benefits were shown for most of the outcomes evaluated.</li> <li>• No studies conducted a follow-up evaluation beyond 6 months after the end of the program.</li> <li>• Teachers were not blinded to PATHS implementation. This may have influenced teacher-rated outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Certainty about the balance of benefits versus downsides</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is reasonable certainty that PATHS provides benefits and improvements in SEL in children from low or middle income families.</li> <li>• There were no reported downsides to the implementation of the PATHS program.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resource implications</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PATHS requires structured lessons and material costs are moderately high. However, evaluations have shown large improvements in SEL behaviours, and many of the materials can be re-used annually.</li> <li>• The program is teacher-led and does not require outside personnel except possibly for training and skills maintenance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Overall Strength:</b></p>	<p><b>STRONG</b> recommendation <b>TOWARDS</b> using the PATHS program as a school-based SEL program.</p>	

## Second Step

<http://www.cfchildren.org/second-step/early-learning.aspx>


General Description & Outcomes	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Recommendation for SEL Outcomes
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on promoting executive functioning and self-regulation skills</li> <li>• Lessons on empathy, communication, emotion management and problem solving</li> <li>• Middle school programs also include lessons on bullying and substance-abuse prevention</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in empathy, social competence, anger-management skills and impulse control</li> <li>• Reductions in aggressive or anti-social behaviours</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grades K - 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Universal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 – 25 lessons (dependent upon grade level)</li> <li>• Approximately 30 – 60 minutes per lesson</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$279 - \$339 each (dependent upon grade level)</li> <li>• \$1649 for K – 5 package</li> <li>• \$919 for Gr 7 – 9 package</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led using available materials and manuals</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <p>Moderate quality evidence for improving SEL behaviours and reducing aggressive or anti-social behaviours.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strong</b> recommendation <b>towards</b> the program for SEL outcomes</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>

**Recommendation for Second Step:**

Factors:	Decision:	Explanation:
<p><b>High or moderate quality evidence</b></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate quality evidence (see References 5 – 9).</li> <li>• One RCT, three quasi-experimental designs and one observational study conducted in the USA and Canada.</li> <li>• Studies evaluated students in Grades 2 – 8, predominantly from low income families.</li> <li>• All of the SEL outcomes mentioned above were evaluated across the five studies.</li> </ul> <p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many of the studies did not control for differences in school implementation rates and one of the studies did not have a control group (Reference 5).</li> <li>• Teachers were not blinded to Second Step implementation. This may have influenced teacher-rated outcomes.</li> <li>• Only one study was well designed with sufficient follow-up data of 6 months (Reference 7). This study showed minimal effect sizes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Certainty about the balance of benefits versus downsides</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regardless of study quality, all studies agreed that Second Step had a positive influence on students' behaviour</li> <li>• There were no reported downsides to Second Step program implementation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resource implications</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second Step requires dedicated in-class lessons and specific materials; however, many of the materials can be re-used annually.</li> <li>• The program is teacher-led and does not require outside personnel except possibly for training and skills maintenance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Overall Strength:</b></p>	<p><b>STRONG</b> recommendation <b>TOWARDS</b> using Second Step as a school-based SEL program.</p>	

## Caring School Community (CSC)


<http://www.devstu.org/caring-school-community>

General Description & Outcomes	Grade Range & Target Population	Program RESOURCES	Recommendation for SEL Outcomes
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on endorsing a sense of community in the school environment</li> <li>• Based on a universal school implementation with class meetings and cross-age buddy programs, as well as school-wide and home-based activities</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in a sense of school community, prosocial skills and academic motivation / achievement</li> <li>• Reductions in drug use, violence and delinquency</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grades K – 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Universal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One school year</li> <li>• The program can be flexibly integrated into the class curriculum</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$250 per grade</li> <li>• \$1605 for Grades K – 6 package</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led based on manuals and materials available</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Low quality evidence suggesting small positive effects on SEL behaviours</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Provisional</b> recommendation <b>towards</b> the program for SEL outcomes</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>



### Recommendation for Caring School Community:

Factors:	Decision:	Explanation:
<p><b>High or moderate quality evidence</b></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low quality evidence (see References 10 – 13).</li> <li>• Two RCTs, one follow-up to an RCT, and one quasi-experimental study, all conducted in the USA.</li> <li>• Studies evaluated students in Kindergarten – Grade 6, and one study followed up on students during middle school (Reference 11).</li> <li>• All SEL outcomes mentioned above were evaluated across the four studies.</li> </ul> <p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All studies demonstrated small effect sizes in favour of the program.</li> <li>• Teachers were not blinded to Caring School Community implementation. This may have influenced some teacher-rated outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Certainty about the balance of benefits versus downsides</b></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All studies showed similar certainty in the effects of program implementation, although all reported benefits were minimal.</li> <li>• No reported downsides to implementation of the Caring School Community program.</li> <li>• Program effectiveness was influenced by differing rates of implementation across schools included in the program evaluations (e.g., Reference 12).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resource implications</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of program implementation is moderate compared to other SEL programs.</li> <li>• Program can be incorporated into daily lessons or taught independently.</li> <li>• Most materials can be re-used annually with minimal teacher training costs.</li> <li>• The program is teacher-led and does not require outside personnel except possibly for training and skills maintenance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Overall Strength:</b></p>	<p><b>PROVISIONAL recommendation TOWARDS</b> using the Caring School Community program as a school-based SEL program.</p>	


<b>Roots of Empathy</b> <a href="http://www.rootsofempathy.org">http://www.rootsofempathy.org</a>			
<b>General Description &amp; Outcomes</b>	<b>Grade Range &amp; Target Population</b>	<b>Program Resources</b>	<b>Recommendation for SEL Outcomes</b>
<p><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on promoting social competence and increasing empathy</li> <li>• Based on an experiential learning approach by having students observe the relationship between a neighbourhood parent and infant who come into the classroom</li> <li>• Program implemented on a classroom by classroom basis</li> </ul> <p><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in prosocial behaviours</li> <li>• Reductions in aggressive or anti-social behaviours</li> </ul>	<p>Grades K - 8</p> <p>Universal</p>	<p><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27 weekly lessons implemented across the school year</li> </ul> <p><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For financial details, please contact the program administrators</li> </ul> <p><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led based on available materials and manuals</li> <li>• Additional visits from a neighbourhood infant and parent</li> </ul>	<p><u>Evidence:</u></p> <p>Moderate quality evidence demonstrating improvements in prosocial behaviours and decreases in aggressive or anti-social behaviours</p> <p><b>Provisional</b> recommendation <b>towards</b> the program for SEL outcomes</p> 

### Recommendation for Roots of Empathy:

Factors:	Decision:	Explanation:
<p><b>High or moderate quality evidence</b></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate quality evidence (see References 14 – 15).</li> <li>• One RCT and one quasi-experimental study, conducted in Canada.</li> <li>• Studies evaluated students in Kindergarten and Grades 4 – 8.</li> <li>• All SEL outcomes mentioned above were evaluated in both studies.</li> </ul> <p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 2 studies were available for review.</li> <li>• One of the studies (Reference 14) included a follow-up evaluation 3 years post-intervention.</li> <li>• Children in the intervention group were more likely to rate their peers as more prosocial than children from control schools.</li> <li>• Teachers were not blinded to Roots of Empathy implementation. This may have influenced some of the teacher-rated outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Certainty about the balance of benefits versus downsides</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both studies showed benefits for the Roots of Empathy program.</li> <li>• Effect sizes of student and teacher-rated outcomes ranged from insignificant to large. Most peer-rated prosocial behaviour outcomes were in the moderate to large range.</li> <li>• No reported downsides to the implementation of the Roots of Empathy program.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resource implications</b></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource information is not readily available on the program website.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Overall Strength:</b></p>	<p><b>PROVISIONAL</b> recommendation <b>TOWARDS</b> Roots of Empathy as a school-based SEL program.</p>	

## The Fourth R

<http://www.youthrelationships.org/>

General Description & Outcomes	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Recommendation for SEL Outcomes
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on improving relationship skills to prevent peer and dating violence and substance abuse</li> <li>• Lessons on assertiveness, communication and problem-solving</li> <li>• Promotion of healthy sexuality</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in negotiation skills and delayed responding to pressure</li> <li>• Reductions in peer and dating violence</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grades 7 - 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Universal</p>	<p><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21-30 lessons of 45- 75 minutes (dependent upon grade level)</li> </ul> <p><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$65 – \$200 for lesson unit packages</li> <li>• \$200 - \$695 for curriculum and comprehensive packages</li> <li>• All prices are dependent upon grade level and course</li> </ul> <p><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led using available materials and manuals</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <p>Moderate quality evidence that The Fourth R increases positive relationship skills and decreases peer and dating violence.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Provisional</b> recommendation <b>towards</b> the program for SEL outcomes</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>

**Recommendation for the Fourth R:**

Factors	Decision	Explanation
<p><b>High or moderate quality evidence</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate quality evidence (see References 16 - 17).</li> <li>• One RCT and one observational study, both based in Canada.</li> <li>• Study evaluated students in Grade 9.</li> <li>• Intervention students were more likely to show delay responses and negotiation skills, and were more likely to show lower rates of dating violence.</li> </ul> <p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The same overall sample was used for both studies.</li> <li>• Some results (e.g., reductions in dating violence) were found mainly for males with smaller effects for females.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Certainty about the balance of benefits versus downsides</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No reported downsides to the implementation of the Fourth R program.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resource implications</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program costs of training and materials are variable depending on the grade and lesson.</li> <li>• The program can be interwoven into daily lessons, and has demonstrated some positive benefits to implementation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Overall Strength:</b></p>	<p><b>PROVISIONAL</b> recommendation <b>TOWARDS</b> using The Fourth R as a school-based SEL program.</p>	

# **Non-Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning Programs for Schools**

## Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE)

<http://www.dare.com/home/default.asp>

General Description, Outcomes & Evidence	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Additional Comments
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on drug and violence prevention and creating interpersonal relationships with peers and police officers</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in drug knowledge, self-esteem and interpersonal relationships</li> <li>• Reductions in alcohol use, cigarette use and/or marijuana use, and violence</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate to high quality evidence that there are no short- or long-term effects on substance use prevention (see References 18 - 22)</li> <li>• No empirical evidence is currently available for SEL outcomes</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grades 5 - 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Universal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 weekly lessons</li> <li>• Approximately 45 – 60 minutes per lesson</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately \$173 - \$268 per student (American prices).</li> <li>• Accurate Canadian figures were not available.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police officers</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">The DARE program was revised after the cited studies were done. No new studies are available to assess the impact of these revisions.</p>

## Lion's Quest: Skills for Adolescence

<http://www.lionsquest.ca>

General Description, Outcomes & Evidence	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Additional Comments
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on promoting a supportive relationship between parents, school and community</li> <li>• Lessons on bullying, self-confidence, communication, emotion management, interpersonal relationships, healthy living and substance-abuse prevention</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in personal and social responsibility skills, service to others, problem solving skills, healthy living skills</li> <li>• Reductions in substance use</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low quality evidence for decreases in marijuana consumption (see References 23 - 24)</li> <li>• No empirical evidence is currently available for SEL outcomes</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grades 6 - 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Universal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80 lessons available</li> <li>• 22 additional sessions available for multi-year implementation</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$6300 - \$6500 for a 20-teacher training seminar</li> <li>• \$145.99 for the Teacher's Curriculum</li> <li>• \$7.90 per student for Student &amp; Parent Workbooks</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led using available materials and manuals</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Program originated in Ontario and has recently been expanded to other areas of Canada</p>



## Options to Anger

<http://vstreet.com/learnmore/curriculum/options.jsp?movie=/learnmore/flash/options.swf>

General Description, Outcomes & Evidence	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Additional Comments
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on understanding anger cycles and exploring alternatives to anger behaviours</li> <li>• Lessons on earning respect, calming down, self-talk and negotiation skills</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in anger-management strategies</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No empirical evidence is currently available for SEL outcomes</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Targeted to youth with anger-management difficulties</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 lessons in total</li> <li>• Approximately 1 hour of classroom instruction &amp; 10 -30 minutes of activity online per lesson</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$495 for the Curriculum Guide &amp; DVD</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led using available materials and manuals</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Low-cost program that is easy to implement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Modifiable according to class needs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Based on anger-management principles</p>

## Room 14: A Social Language Program

<http://www.linguisystems.com/products/product/display?itemid=10058>

General Description, Outcomes & Evidence	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Additional Comments
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on social language skills and social problem solving skills</li> <li>• Lessons taught through character vignettes, discussion, activity sheets and games</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in emotion recognition and regulation, responsible decision making and self-control</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No empirical evidence is currently available for SEL outcomes</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grades 1 – 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Universal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31 lessons</li> <li>• Flexible implementation into daily routine or independent lessons</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$ 61.95 for Instructor’s manual and additional materials</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led using available materials and manuals</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Low-cost program that is easy to implement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Modifiable according to class needs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Suited for general or special education classrooms</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Based on SEL and language theories</p>

## Stop Now And Plan (SNAP)

<http://www.stopnowandplan.com>

General Description, Outcomes & Evidence	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Additional Comments
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on reducing anti-social and aggressive behaviours and promoting social competence</li> <li>• Cognitive-behavioural strategy that emphasizes stopping, thinking and planning before acting</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in self-confidence, prosocial behaviours and anger management strategies</li> <li>• Reduction in aggressive and criminal behaviours</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No empirical evidence is currently available for SEL outcomes in a school-based setting</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grades K - 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Targeted to students with aggression problems</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 weekly lessons</li> <li>• Approximately 20 – 45 minutes per lesson</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$820 in set-up fees and \$250 - \$370 for annual fees per school</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator-led program with teacher and principal training available</li> </ul>	<p>Community-based program has shown positive benefits for SEL-related behaviours and reductions in aggressive behaviour (see References 25 - 30)</p> <p>The school-based program is in the preliminary evaluation stages (see Reference 31)</p> <p>Program originated in Ontario and has recently been expanded to other areas of Canada</p>

## Tribes

<http://www.tribes.com>

General Description, Outcomes & Evidence	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Additional Comments
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on creating a culture that maximizes learning and human development</li> <li>• Lessons incorporate helping others, setting and achieving goals, monitoring and assessing progress, and celebrating achievement</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in conflict management skills and academic achievement</li> <li>• Reductions in bullying and discipline</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No empirical evidence is currently available for SEL outcomes</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grades K - 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Universal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four key principles that can be flexibly integrated into daily classroom routines</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$183.95 per classroom</li> <li>• Additional materials also available</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led program using available materials and resources</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Promising program that has been implemented in Canada, USA and Australia</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chosen as one of CASEL's 22 <i>SElect</i> programs</p>

# Noteworthy Programs

## The Good Behavior Game

<http://www.paxis.org/content/goodbehavior.aspx>

General Description, Outcomes & Evidence	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Additional Comments
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on creating a more harmonious classroom environment</li> <li>• Game-like program based on reward for positive behaviours</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in productive behaviours</li> <li>• Decreases in disruptive behaviours and substance abuse</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate quality evidence for decreasing disruptive behaviours and long-term access to services, as well as increasing on-task behaviours</li> </ul>	<p>Grades K – 12</p> <p>Universal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible program that can be implemented at teacher discretion</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free resources available online</li> <li>• Only costs are for reward materials</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-led using available resources</li> </ul>	<p>Promising program that shows reductions in problematic behaviour (see References 32 – 35)</p> <p>Potential for indirect effects on components of SEL</p>

## The Virtues Project

<http://www.virtuesproject.com>

General Description, Outcomes & Evidence	Grade Range & Target Population	Program Resources	Additional Comments
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Description:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on promoting virtues (e.g., kindness, justice) in personal, family and academic environments</li> <li>• Mission to “inspire people... to remember who they really are and to live by our highest values”</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in acceptance of self and others</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No empirical evidence is currently available for SEL outcomes</li> </ul>	<p>Grades K - 12</p> <p>Universal</p>	<p><u>Duration of Program:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible program that can be integrated into daily routine or 15 – 20 minute sessions</li> </ul> <p><u>Financial Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free resources available online</li> <li>• Inexpensive pamphlets available</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher- or facilitator-led using available resources and materials</li> </ul>	<p>Promising program that has been implemented in 95 countries world-wide</p> <p>Recognized during the International Year of the Family by the United Nations</p> <p>Potential for indirect effects on components of SEL</p>

## Programs to Consider for Future Review

In addition to the programs mentioned throughout this toolkit, several other programs promoting SEL, healthy sexuality, drug prevention and/or mental health awareness were identified as part of the survey of Nova Scotia schools. Although not formally addressed in the current toolkit, we will consider some of these programs for inclusion in future versions.

These programs include:

- A Question of Influence <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/curriculum/Question-of-influence/CurriculumPRF5.pdf>
- Big Brothers Big Sisters <http://www.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca>
- Bucket Filling (<http://bucketfillers101.com>)
- Character Bound <http://www.fitnessfinders.net/Character-Education-s/6.htm>
- Free 2 B U <http://gashahealthconnections.ca/free2bu.htm>
- Go Girls <http://www.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/en/Home/Programs/GoGirls.aspx>
- Healthy Mind, Healthy Body <http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20091005001>
- I Care Cat <http://store.peaceeducation.org/helpingnohurtinglearningthei-carerulesthroughliterature.aspx>
- Living Values <http://www.livingvalues.net>
- MindUp <http://thehawnfoundation.org/mindup/>
- Project Wisdom <http://www.projectwisdom.com>
- RespectED <http://www.redcross.ca/article.asp?id=000294>
- Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) <http://www.nationalsave.org>
- Social Thinking <http://www.socialthinking.com>
- Strong Kids / Strong Teens <http://strongkids.uoregon.edu>
- WITS (Walk Away, Ignore, Talk It Out, Seek Help) <http://www.witsprogram.ca/>

Additional SEL programs that have been recognized by CASEL (a leading organization for SEL promotion) and that could be considered for future evaluation include:

- High Scope Educational Approach for Preschool and Primary Grades <http://www.highscope.org>
- I Can Problem Solve (ICPS) <http://www.researchpress.com>
- Know Your Body <http://www.kendalhunt.com>
- Learning for Life <http://www.learning-for-life.org>



Michigan Model for Comprehensive Health Education <http://www.emc.cmich.edu>  
Peace Works (Peace Education Foundation) <http://www.peaceeducation.com>  
Productive Conflict Resolution Program: A Whole School Approach <http://www.scholmediationcenter.org>  
Project ACHIEVE <http://www.coedu.usf.edu/projectachieve>  
Quest (Violence Prevention Series)  
Reach Out Schools: Social Competence Program (Open Circle Curriculum) <http://www.open-circle.org>  
Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP) <http://www.esrnational.org>  
Responsive Classroom <http://www.responsiveclassroom.org>  
Skills, Opportunities And Recognition (SOAR) <http://www.preventionscience.com>  
Social Decision Making and Problem Solving Program <http://www.umdj.edu/spsweb>  
Teenage Health Teaching Module <http://www.thtm.org>  
Voices: A Comprehensive Reading, Writing and Character Education Program <http://www.aboutwlf.com>

Several programs targeting violence prevention and bullying were also identified as part of the environmental survey, including:

Safe School Ambassadors <http://www.community-matters.org/safe-school-ambassadors>  
Bullies to Buddies <https://bullies2buddies.com>  
Bully SMART [http://www.hrmvideo.com/resources/696\\_Bully\\_Smart.pdf](http://www.hrmvideo.com/resources/696_Bully_Smart.pdf)  
Focus on Bullying <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/resourcedocs/bullying.pdf>  
Olweus Bullying Prevention Program <http://www.clemson.edu/olweus>  
Premier / School Specialty Sunburst Publications: Stop Bullying & Stand Up / Speak Out  
[http://he.premieragendas.com/index.php?option=com\\_ag\\_supplemental\\_programs&Itemid=47](http://he.premieragendas.com/index.php?option=com_ag_supplemental_programs&Itemid=47)  
X-Out Bullying <http://www.antigonishcrimeprevention.ca/our-programs/x-out-bullying/>  
KiVa <http://www.kivakoulu.fi>  
Friendly Schools Friendly Families <http://www.friendlyschools.com.au/>  
Imagine <http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/childfamilyhealth/bullyingprevention.asp>  
Steps to Respect <http://www.cfchildren.org/steps-to-respect.aspx>

In response to the large collection and demand of programs in this field, the CPSC Atlantic hub plans on developing and distributing a toolkit specifically designed for school-based bullying and violence prevention programs in the near future.

## References by SEL Program

### Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

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### **Stop Now and Plan (SNAP) – School-based Preliminary Findings**

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## The Good Behavior Game

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## Resource Information

### **The Canadian Prevention Science Cluster – Atlantic**

*Website:* <http://cpscatlantic.org/>

*Contact Email:* [cpscatlantic@gmail.com](mailto:cpscatlantic@gmail.com)

*Hub Director:* Dr. John C. LeBlanc, MD, MSc

IWK Health Centre, 5850 University Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3K 6R8

Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Community Health & Epidemiology, Dalhousie University

The Canadian Prevention Science Cluster (CPSC): Atlantic HUB is one of four regional hubs across Canada. The Atlantic hub focuses on bullying, cyberbullying and social and emotional learning in public schools across Nova Scotia.

### **The Canadian Prevention Science Cluster**

*Website:* [www.preventionsciencecluster.org](http://www.preventionsciencecluster.org)

*Coordinating HUB Contact Information:* (519) 858-5154; [thefourthr@uwo.ca](mailto:thefourthr@uwo.ca)

The CPSC is a Canadian organization with four regional hubs across Canada in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Nova Scotia. Students and professionals work together to organize programs, resources and ideas, as well as expanding research and general knowledge about violence prevention into the community. The aim of the CPSC is to increase awareness towards violence prevention and healthy strategies for youth, educators and the community.



## **Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)**

*Website:* <http://www.casel.org>

*Contact Email:* [info@casel.org](mailto:info@casel.org)

CASEL is an organization that aims to promote the scientific background of SEL as well as expanding SEL program practice to enhance the field and impact of SEL across the lifespan. CASEL has also evaluated several SEL programs (i.e., CASEL SElect programs), based on program instruction, evidence of effectiveness and professional development. 22 programs have been selected as CASEL SElect programs, some of which are evaluated throughout this toolkit.

## **Grading of Recommendations, Assessments, Development and Evaluations (GRADE)**

*Website:* <http://www.gradeworkinggroup.org>

The Grading of Recommendations, Assessments, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) approach is a widely recognized method used to evaluate the balance of outcomes for interventions (e.g., vaccinations, programs). GRADE was developed by international guideline developers (e.g., World Health Organization, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention) and uses a qualitative and quantitative approach to intervention evaluation.

## **What Works Clearinghouse**

*Website:* <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

What Works Clearing House is an organization developed in association with the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. The purpose of the What Works Clearinghouse is to be a trusted source for scientific evidence for education. What Works Clearinghouse has evaluated several SEL programs, some of which are included in this guide.