

Brainbridge

The Newsletter

Community Brain Injury Program for Children and Youth in BC



Special Issue –March 2016

3rd Special Edition Newsletter on: **Social Emotional Development and Learning**

This is the third and final special edition newsletter of Brainbridge on social emotional development and learning. The December and January editions provided an understanding of what social emotional development and learning is and why it is important. It also provided an introduction about the BC Ministry of Education's new curriculum that is being implemented in the 2017/18 school year. This final newsletter will go into more detail about the curriculum, the connection with social emotional learning, and how to implement a SEL goal into your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

In addition to the three newsletters, a booklet was also created, 'Transitioning to High School: A Guide for Parents of Children with Extra Needs'. Parents tell us that transitioning to high school is both an exciting and challenging time because their child is entering the next phase of their life toward adulthood. They wonder how their child with extra needs will do in a bigger school with new peers and how they will be supported in their academic goals. The guide is meant to help prepare you as a parent for the transition so that you feel equipped to support yourself and your child through this process. It includes information about preparing yourself and your child, the school process, protective factors, a child profile tool, and resources and references.

This booklet will be made available to all parents of children entering high school that are in the Community Brain Injury Program for Children and Youth in BC. For more information on the guide please contact the Program.



BC Ministry of Education New Curriculum

As discussed in the December Brainbridge newsletter the BC Ministry of Education is implementing a new curriculum in the 2017/18 school year. BC's curriculum was redesigned to respond to the demanding world that students are entering today. The new curriculum is learner-centred, flexible, and supports further learning through concept-based and competency-driven approaches. With the new curriculum being student-centred this means personalized learning for every student. With the increased flexibility of the updated curriculum, your child's strengths, interests, and unique ways of learning are brought to the forefront. As mentioned in the December newsletter, the curriculum includes three new core competencies that are at the centre of the redesign:

- ◇ **Communication-** encompasses the set of abilities that students use to impart and exchange information, experiences and ideas, to explore the world around them, and to understand and effectively engage in the use of digital media.
- ◇ **Thinking-** encompasses the knowledge, skills and processes we associate with intellectual development. It is through their competency as thinkers that students take subject-specific concepts and content and transform them into a new understanding.
- ◇ **Personal and Social-** the set of abilities that relate to students' identity in the world, both as individuals and as members of their community and society. Personal and social competency encompasses the abilities students need to thrive as individuals, to understand and care about themselves and others, and to find and achieve their purposes in the world.

Within the Personal and Social competency there are three parts related to the broader area of social and emotional learning: 1) Positive personal and cultural identity, 2) Personal awareness and responsibility, and 3) Social responsibility. These are connected to social emotional learning and the concepts discussed in the December and January Brainbridge newsletters. For information about how to implement SEL goals into your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) please see the following page.



For further information on the new curriculum, please visit: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>

SEL Goals for Individual Education Plans

Setting goals for Individual Education Plans (IEPs) should be a collaborative process involving the school, parent/caregiver, and whenever possible the young person. There are a few points to consider when developing social emotional learning (SEL) goals:

- ◇ Identify the child's social emotional needs. Sometimes a social emotional competencies assessment such as the DESSA (Devereux Student Strengths Assessment) can be helpful.
- ◇ Prioritize the child's social emotional needs. Some children have a number of social emotional needs and it can be difficult to know where to start. Regardless of the child's age, labelling and expressing emotions in self and others and self-management should be the priority. These social emotional competencies are foundational to social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making.
- ◇ Develop goals that are clear and concrete for everyone. A common framework to come up with a goal that is not vague is to follow the S.M.A.R.T. goal guidelines:

Specific: Define the goal as much as possible. Answer 'who', 'what', 'where', 'when and 'why'.

Measurable: Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress towards the goal.

Achievable: Is the goal reasonable enough to be accomplished?

Realistic: If the goal is too big, break it down into smaller steps.

Timely: Your goal should have a time limit. Will your child accomplish this goal by the end of the month/term/year?



Protective Factors

This section is about safeguarding/maximizing your child’s emotional wellbeing. ‘Protective Factors’ are conditions or attributes that lessen risk or negative effects while increasing emotional and mental health and wellbeing of children and youth. The main factor we have been focusing on in the newsletters and guide is social emotional development and learning, and how this can be a protective factor for children with extra needs.

There are other protective factors that are important to take note of, in addition to developing social emotional competencies in children. These factors can reduce the risk of emotional distress and have a positive effect on your child and help to promote their resilience. Some protective factors include:

Family	School	Community	Peers
Being connected to a family	Being connected to a school	Being connected to a community	Have a circle of friends
Have adult in family to turn to for support	Have school staff who provide helpful support	Have professionals who provide helpful support	Prosocial peer group
Have family who provide helpful support	Feel safe at school	Feel safe in neighborhood	Have friends who provide helpful support
Parent present at meal time	Have a sense of belonging at school	Involved in extra-curricular activities, e.g. Join a pottery class or a drama club at a Community Centre	A feeling of belonging with peers



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