



Our District Coordinators

MRTQ PDN delivers many SEL supports for programs through our system of regionally-based District Early Childhood and Youth Coordinators (DCs). The DCs are professionals with extensive experience working in early childhood and out-of-school time settings.

The DCs receive training on relationship-based technical assistance, including mentoring, coaching, collaborative consultation, and peer-to-peer networks.

All of the DCs are trained to work with programs on SEL-related issues, including challenging behavior, adverse childhood experiences (ACES), trauma-informed approaches, and preventing expulsion. One DC is a clinically licensed early childhood mental health consultant who can offer specialized support both to programs and to the other DCs.

The DCs also work to collaborate with other community-based organizations to support SEL in all early childhood and out-of-school time programs in their region.





The Importance of SEL

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.¹ Children's SEL is a cornerstone of school readiness, health, and overall well-being.

SEL in early childhood and out-of-school time programs can help all children as they grow and learn and can also provide critical support in situations of challenging behavior and when working with children experiencing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES).

Challenging behavior refers to a **repeated pattern of behaviors that interfere with the child's ability to play, learn, and get along with others.**²

¹ Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), <https://casel.org>.

² Maine Social and Emotional Learning and Development Project, Maine Children's Alliance, Maine DOE, Maine Children's Growth Council, 2017

Preventing Expulsion

While challenging behavior is a part of typical child development, programs in Maine are reporting that these behaviors are becoming more common and more disruptive.

Nationally, and in Maine, high numbers of young children are being expelled from early childhood programs due to challenging behaviors. Expulsion has been shown to hinder SEL, delay or interfere with identification of disabilities, and increase family stress.

Providing programs with professional development and training that is focused on SEL can give practitioners the tools they need to prevent and address challenging behaviors and avoid expulsions.³

³ Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO), Information and Resources to Assist States in Developing Policy on Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion, 2017



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MRTQ PDN Supports SEL in Programs

MRTQ PDN offers a variety of evidence-based professional development opportunities for individuals and programs that address SEL and challenging behavior:

- **Training:** includes *Positive Supports and Challenging Behavior* and *Introduction to Infant Mental Health*; SEL embedded in other trainings
- **Maine Credentials:** the Maine Inclusion Credential focuses on competencies required to support all children in early childhood and out-of-school time programs
- **On-site Consultation:** individualized support for programs; includes mental health consultation
- **Communities of Practice:** peer-to-peer support designed around practitioner needs
- **Warm Line:** phone or email resource for practitioners and families, staffed by trained consultants

Contact Us

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