



## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING INITIATIVE



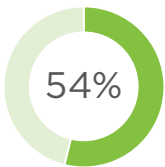
**Mission:** Organizing and providing resources to develop the social and emotional skills essential for lifelong success of Norwalk’s children.

### GOALS

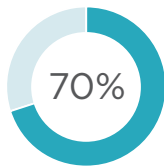
- Increase the number of high quality adult relationships with children and youth
- Increase parent engagement opportunities and support
- Increase the number of youth engaging in community activities

### / THE PROBLEM

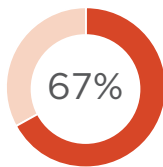
Based on a 2018 Search Institute Developmental Assets: Attitudes and Behaviors survey of all Norwalk Public School Students in grades 7, 9, and 11.



54% of our youth do not receive support from three or more non-parent adults



70% of our children and youth do not feel school provides a caring, encouraging environment



67% of youth do not feel they are given useful roles in the community

Nationally, approximately 50% of children have had one Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and 20% of children have experienced more than two ACEs.

### / WHY IT MATTERS

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can have lasting, negative effects on health and well-being. The most impactful ways to promote healthy child development and reduce the effects of ACEs is to proactively provide nurturing relationships, create environments where children feel emotionally and physically safe at home, in school and in neighborhoods, and teach children how to be resilient.

Youth with high numbers of developmental assets are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors (such as substance abuse and self-harming behaviors) and more likely to engage in thriving behaviors (such as doing well in school and helping others).

Per LinkedIn in 2020, the top five interpersonal skills employers are looking for in workers are creativity, persuasion, collaboration, adaptability, and emotional intelligence.

### / WHAT WE ARE DOING

- Increasing the number of adults in Norwalk trained in School Climate, Restorative Practices and Trauma-Informed Care including NPS staff, parents, community based organizations, police, bus drivers etc.
- Mapping community assets in support of identified needs of youth.
- Establishing two working groups focused on parent and youth engagement strategies, education and empowerment opportunities.
- Creating an easily accessible, centralized social services portal including a social services/mental health provider directory and community calendar with workshops/training for parents, children, youth and social services providers.
- Continually focusing on critical transitions for children and youth.

## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING TOOLKIT

### SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

The process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

### ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS SURVEY (A&B)

A Search Institute survey examining young people’s own sense of their strengths, supports, and skills that are essential for success in school and life.

### ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)

ACEs are serious childhood traumas that result in toxic stress that can harm a child’s brain and affect overall health. ACEs can include: emotional/physical/sexual abuse and neglect, domestic violence, household substance abuse and mental illness, separation or divorce, incarcerated household members, homelessness, natural disasters, war, and witnessing violence.

### SCHOOL CLIMATE AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

School Climate and Restorative Practices is based on principles that emphasize the importance of positive relationships as central to building community and involves processes that restore relationships when harm has occurred.

### TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

This strength-based framework is based on knowledge of the impact of trauma, aimed at ensuring environments and services are welcoming and engaging for service recipients and staff.

# ABOUT THE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING INITIATIVE



The 40 Developmental Assets research-based framework identifies basic building blocks of human development including the positive experiences of young people and their commitments, values, skills, and identity.

Percent of Norwalk youth reporting assets based on a 2018 Developmental Assets: Attitudes and Behaviors survey of all Norwalk Public School Students in grades 7, 9, and 11.

## EXTERNAL ASSETS



**SUPPORT**  
Young people need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, accept and appreciate them

- 1. Family support 76%
- 2. Positive family communication 32%
- 3. Other adult relationships 46%
- 4. Caring neighborhood 35%
- 5. Caring school climate 30%
- 6. Parent involvement in schooling 31%



**EMPOWERMENT**  
Young people need to feel valued and valuable. This happens when youth feel safe and respected

- 7. Community values youth 23%
- 8. Youth as resources 33%
- 9. Service to others 43%
- 10. Safety 46%



**BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS**  
Young people need clear rules, consistent consequences for breaking rules, and encouragement to do their best

- 11. Family boundaries 55%
- 12. School boundaries 60%
- 13. Neighborhood boundaries 42%
- 14. Adult role models 37%
- 15. Positive peer influence 75%
- 16. High expectations 57%



**CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME**  
Young people need opportunities (outside of school) to learn and develop new skills and interests with other youth and adults


- 17. Creative activities 21%
- 18. Youth projects 53%
- 19. Religious community 49%
- 20. Time at home 67%

## INTERNAL ASSETS



**COMMITMENT TO LEARNING**  
Young people need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, accept and appreciate them

- 21. Achievement motivation 72%
- 22. School engagement 32%
- 23. Homework 52%
- 24. Bonding to school 64%
- 25. Reading for pleasure 17%



**POSITIVE VALUES**  
Young people need to develop strong guiding values or principles to help them make healthy life choices

- 26. Caring 76%
- 27. Equality and social justice 82%
- 28. Integrity 79%
- 29. Honesty 75%
- 30. Responsibility 76%
- 31. Restraint 44%



**SOCIAL COMPETENCIES**  
Young people need the skills to interact effectively with others to make difficult decisions and to cope with new situations

- 32. Planning and decision making 37%
- 33. Interpersonal competence 52%
- 34. Cultural competence 64%
- 35. Resistance skill 53%
- 36. Peaceful conflict resolution 45%



**POSITIVE IDENTITY**  
Young people need to believe in their own self-worth and to feel that they have control over the things that happen to them

- 37. Personal power 36%
- 38. Self-esteem 44%
- 39. Sense of purpose 56%
- 40. Positive view of personal future 71%

Working Together, Everything Is Achievable.



The mission of Norwalk ACTS is to enrich and improve the lives and futures of all of Norwalk's children and youth, from cradle to career. Norwalk ACTS is a not-for-profit, cross-sector cradle to career partnership. We are made up of over 100 community and civic leaders, educators, organizations, and individuals who are committed to building and sustaining a community infrastructure to support a safe, equitable, and successful pathway for each and every child in Norwalk.

Our vision is that Norwalk will be the healthiest city in America for a child to grow academically, social emotionally, and physically.