

# Social-Emotional Learning and Classroom Management *pt. 1*



The next few teaching tips will look at facets of social-emotional learning (SEL). Social-emotional learning is "a term for the way children acquire social and emotional skills. It includes things like managing difficult emotions, making responsible decisions, handling stress, setting goals, and building healthy relationships (Child Mind Institute, 2025)."



*Successful classrooms, which foster a student's SEL, rely on effective classroom management. As teachers, we must keep attention in a classroom full of students, redirect negative or distracting behavior, and understand the mood of the room to make on-the-fly educational decisions. Teachers need to understand student behaviors and development, along with being familiar with effective classroom management techniques that work.*

*Classroom management isn't about controlling students and demanding perfection; it's about giving them the tools to be self-directed learners. These four skills can give your students the tools to become autonomous learners.*



## *Planning and Preparation*

Effective teachers map a lesson well, including downtime and transitional periods. In case something goes awry, effective educators have contingency plans for hiccups, with strategies to guide students back on track to becoming effective learners.

## *Building Quality Relationships*

It's important for us to maintain trusting, empathetic relationships with our students. On one hand, teachers need to be warm and caring toward our students, but on the other, we need clear boundaries and expectations. A proper balance is key in effective classroom management.

## *Management Embedded in the Environment*

Daily structures can help students maintain class expectations. Often, teachers might keep posters or charts on the walls with classroom expectations. Routines for changes in the day can help students stay focused. When we can embed structures into the classroom, it helps our students stay focused even when the teacher is unavailable.

## *Observe and Document Classroom Behaviors*

Teachers need to regularly reassess how their classes are run. Our classes often change, and we need to stay aware of these shifts. Documenting what happens in our classes helps us reflect on our decisions. For example, if you need to speak with a student about recent behavior issues, documenting their response helps you reflect on better ways to approach similar situations.