

Declaration for emotional education SEL (Social and Emotional Learning)

Promoted by RIEEB (International Network for Emotional Education and Wellbeing) and supported by the organizations listed at the end.

Addressed to governments and competent educational authorities around the world, some of which are listed at the end of the text.

Thanks to the involvement of many people, SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) and emotional education (in Spanish-speaking countries) are expressions that reflect a reality in educational practice that has developed progressively in many parts of the world, mainly from the beginning of the 21st century.

SEL and emotional education are understood as an educational process that aims to develop emotional competencies. SEL contributes to prevention in the broad sense (of anxiety, stress, depression, violence, drug use, risky behaviors, suicides, etc.) and the improvement of self-esteem, empathy, conviviality, performance, and wellbeing, among many other aspects. SEL is aimed at the entire population and throughout life.

We are witnessing a growing awareness and sensitization of the importance and need of SEL due to its favorable effects on multiple aspects of life. The technical-professional competencies, specific to each profession, must be complemented with generic and transversal competencies, common to all people, where social and emotional competencies are an important element. This approach has been advocated by institutions such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Economic Forum (WEF), and many others.

In the 21st century, it is essential to rethink the purposes of education in the world. Although the transmission of knowledge is vital, it is no longer enough. Although the training of professionals is critical too, it is not enough either. We must take one more step to create educational systems to develop skills and attitudes of respect and cooperation that make global conviviality and wellbeing possible. In this approach, SEL plays a relevant role.

Before birth in the family, SEL must be present throughout preschool, primary, and secondary education, vocational education, higher education, and lifelong learning. SEL adopts a life span approach.

In the 21st century, we should not only measure economic and technological development but also use indicators that include emotional wellbeing, with its repercussions on non-violence, peace, values, solidarity, coexistence, freedom, security, responsibility, etc.

We must celebrate the legislative initiatives in favor of SEL, and emotional education, among which are the emotional education law approved in Corrientes and Misiones (Argentina), and the laws enacted in the United States in favor of SEL. We must also applaud other laws and movements in the same direction found in Germany, Chile, Ecuador, France, Lithuania, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and other countries. In Spain, the last educational law approved in 2020 explicitly cites “emotional education.” These are all important steps. But there is still a need for widespread action by teachers, families, social agents, and society in general.

We consider it appropriate to point out that the regulation of anger as a strategy for preventing violence should be among the objectives of all educational systems in the world. Other important aspects that characterize emotional education and that should be strengthened are emotional awareness which is an essential factor in self-knowledge; emotional regulation, which is a fundamental competence for conviviality and wellbeing; the development of healthy self-esteem, the social skills necessary to maintain good interpersonal relationships, and the construction of shared wellbeing, among others.

We affirm our adherence to this declaration's general principles and commit ourselves to do everything possible to raise awareness about the importance and need of emotional education in teachers, families, organizations, the political class, and society in general. The objective is that in a short period, SEL and emotional education, based on scientific research, becomes a reality in educational practice in all countries of the world as a sustainability objective.

By this declaration, we propose the following objectives:

- 1.- Initial training in SEL (emotional education) for all teachers. This is the responsibility of the study plans of the universities involved in teacher training.
- 2.- Continuous training in emotional education for practicing teachers. This implies public administrations, entities involved in the permanent training of teachers, and the educational centers themselves.
- 3.- Continuous training of families in emotional education for implementation since before birth. This implies the City Councils, Municipalities, Public Administration, entities involved in continuous training, health professionals (mainly gynecology and pediatrics), educational centers, and other organizations involved in training in community media.
- 4.- The implementation of SEL in educational centers from the first levels, with a sequential presence throughout all courses, to develop emotional competencies that are put into practice according to the 24/7 principle: 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- 5.- Develop a culture of non-violence and peace, where the emotional competencies of awareness and emotional regulation, as well as social competencies and moral emotions, are critical factors in the prevention of bullying, school violence, gender violence, and especially violence against women, social violence associated with adolescents and young people, and all kinds of violence in general.
- 6.- Promote SEL research (emotional education) by universities, research centers, and public administrations to envision the best strategies for its effective implementation to serve as support to public administrations in their decision-making on educational policies.

7.- Assessment of the emotional competencies of the candidates for teaching staff of any educational level, with the understanding that they are competencies that any professional of education needs.

8.- Availability of instruments for evaluating the emotional competencies of students, teachers, and other professionals, to be used, the way the OECD has been promoting since 2015, in the evaluation of basic competencies and international comparison tests such as the PISA tests.

9.- Establish systems of accreditation of emotional competencies for teachers, educational centers, and organizations in general, which public administrations recognize as requirements for access to the teaching profession and as a merit for access to many professional functions in which emotions are essential (health, leadership, politics, responsible parenting, etc.).

10.- Involve each country's governments and public administrations to incorporate the appropriate steps (legislative, economic, practical, training) that guarantee the fulfillment of the right of every human being to comprehensive education, particularly in its emotional aspect (SEL). And that the measures adopted in this regard are free for all citizens.

With the intention that this declaration reaches relevant organizations and people in the educational and political world, such as those mentioned below, it is requested to support this declaration with a personal signature.

Aimed at governments and competent educational authorities around the world, among which there are:

UN (United Nations)

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)

WHO (World Health Organization)

ILO (International Labor Organization)

UE (European Union)

OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development)

UNDP (United Nations Development Program)

WEF (World Economic Forum)

WB (World Bank)

OAS (Organization of American States)

OEI (Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos)

Governments all over the World

Universities implied in teacher training

Educational institutions for all educational levels (preschool, primary, secondary, universities, etc.)

Organizations that support the Declaration for Emotional Education:

RIEEB (Red Internacional de Educación Emocional y Bienestar)
COPOE (Confederación de Organizaciones de Psicopedagogía y Orientación de España).
Colegio Oficial de Psicología de Aragón.
AAPS (Asociación Aragonesa de Psicopedagogía).
ACO (Associació Catalana d'Orientació).
ACPO (Associació Catalana de Psicopedagogia i Orientació)
AEOP (Asociación Española de Orientación y Psicopedagogía).
AOIB (Associació d'Orientadors/es de les Illes Balears).
AOPH (Asociación de Orientadores Provincia de Huelva)
AOSMA (Asociación de Orientadores y Orientadoras de Málaga)
APOAN (Asociación Profesional de Orientadores/as de Andalucía).
APOCLAM (Asociación Profesional de Orientadores/as en Castilla - La Mancha).
APOCOVA (Asociación de Profesionales de la Orientación de la Comunidad Valenciana).
APOECyL (Asociación Profesional de Orientación Educativa de Castilla y León).
APOEGAL (Asociación Profesional de Orientación Educativa de Galicia).
APOEMUR (Asociación de Profesionales de Orientación Educativa de Murcia).
APOEX (Asociación Profesional de Orientadores en Extremadura).
APOLAR (Asociación de Profesores de Orientación Educativa de la Rioja).
APSIDE (Asociación de Psicopedagogía de Euskadi).
ASOSGRA (Asociación de Orientadores de Granada, con representación en Jaén y Almería).
AVOP (Asociación Valenciana de Orientación y Psicopedagogía).
FAPOAN (Federación de Asociaciones de Profesionales de la Orientación de Andalucía).
INEEW (International Network for Emotional Education and Wellbeing)
PADME PUBLICA (Asociación de Profesionales de Atención a la Diversidad Madrileña de la Educación Pública).
Fundación ADANA.