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SOCIAL SKILL INSTRUCTION

Group with Youth in Schools

Spring 2026 SOWK 487w Week 14

WEEK 14 PLAN

Agenda

- * Program example of school-based program
- * Overview of SEL
- * Implementation of ART Moral Reasoning
- * Ideas for Working with Adolescents and Social Skills

Learning Objectives

- Describe key characteristics of youth with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) and explain the role of school social workers in psycho-educational settings.
- Identify the CASEL 5 SEL competencies and recognize how Washington State's K–12 SEL standards provide a framework for school-based group work.
- Experience the ART moral reasoning facilitation process by participating in a structured group activity.
- Apply evidence-based social skill instruction strategies to group work with youth who have EBD.

WHAT IS EBD

Externalizing behaviors

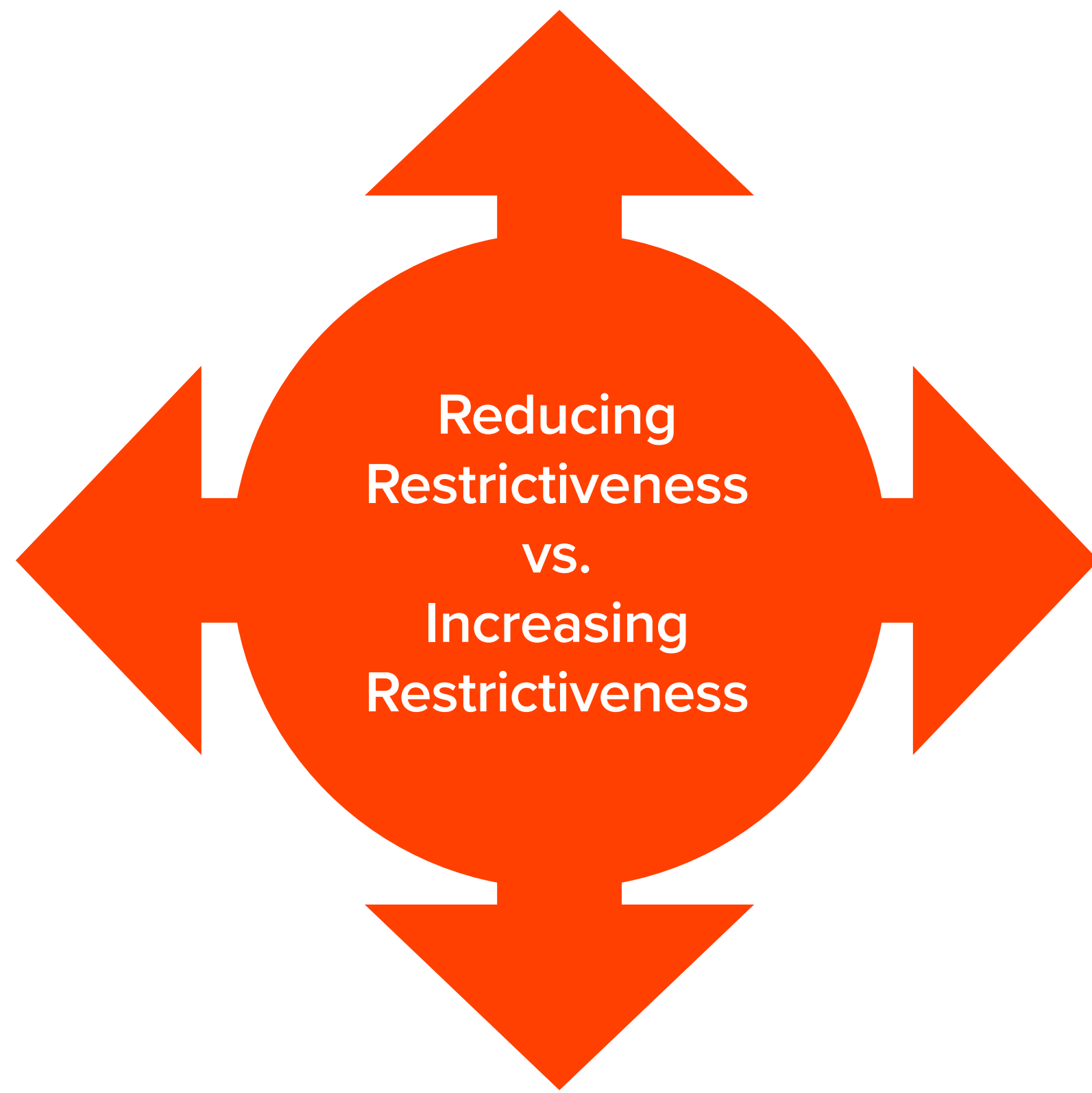
Internalizing behaviors

Low incidence disorders

EBD IS QUALIFIED AS AN "EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE" AS A CONDITION EXHIBITING ONE OR MORE SPECIFIC EMOTIONAL AND/OR BEHAVIORAL DIFFICULTIES OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME AND TO A MARKED DEGREE, WHICH ADVERSELY AFFECTS EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE.

PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL CLASSROOM MODEL

- * Therapeutic model uses a group milieu
- * Focused on helping students understand behavior, how it impacts them, and developing strategies for changing behaviors



UNIQUE ASPECTS OF THIS CLASSROOM

- High ratio of staff to students
- Special training for staff
- A variety of schedule options are provided to meet the student's individualized needs
- To keep kids in school, focus on managing and addressing behaviors inside the Bridges Classroom as much as possible
- Coordinate outside services and providers for students
- Inclusion of a social worker and mental health perspective in the educational process

CLASSROOM STRUCTURES



GROUP WORK

ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION
**SPECIALLY DESIGNED
SOCIAL SKILL INSTRUCTION**
TRACKING BEHAVIOR
PROGRESSIVE LEVEL SYSTEM
TOKEN ECONOMY

**POSITIVE
REINFORCEMENT**

CONTINUUM OF STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS BEHAVIOR

**ADDRESSING THE
BEHAVIOR
THROUGH
ADMINISTRATIVE
DISCIPLINE**

Providing positive reinforcement

Planned ignoring

Proximity control

Reteaching

Coming back to the group

Loss of privileges

Positive notes home and reporting problems

Changes in schedule

Tasks and expectations not going away

Finding plans to keep them in school

Coordinating with outside services

**ADDRESSING
BEHAVIORS IN
THE CLASSROOM**

WHAT IS SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING?



CASEL

FRAMEWORK

THE CASEL 5

The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts

Self-Awareness

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Responsible Decision Making

Social Awareness

Relationship Skills

- Integrating personal and social identities
- Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets
- Identifying one's emotions
- Demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Examining prejudices and biases
- Experiencing self-efficacy
- Having a growth mindset
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose

The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations

Self-Management

SOCIAL &
EMOTIONAL
LEARNING

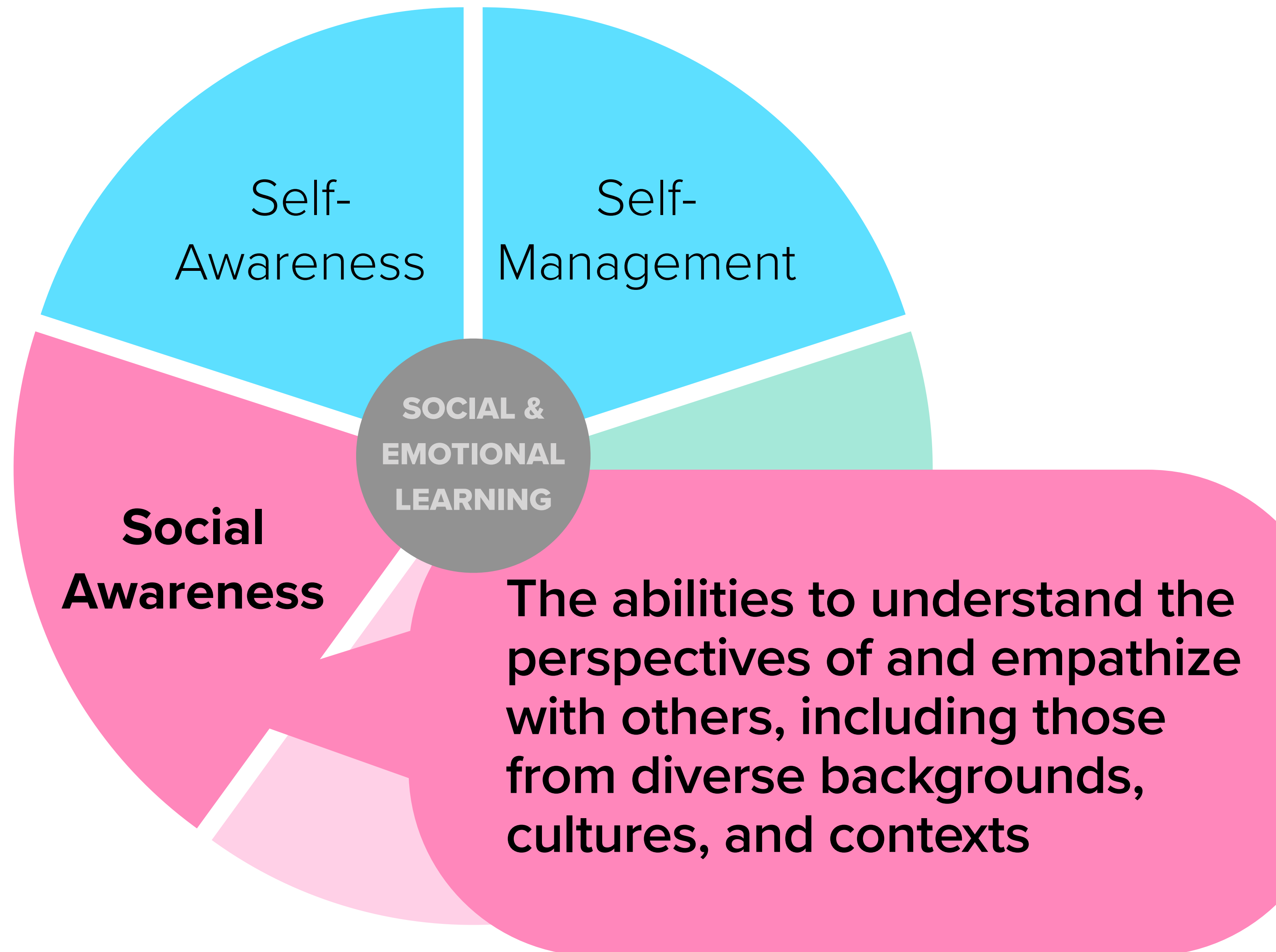
Social
Awareness

Relationship
Skills

Responsible
Decision
Making

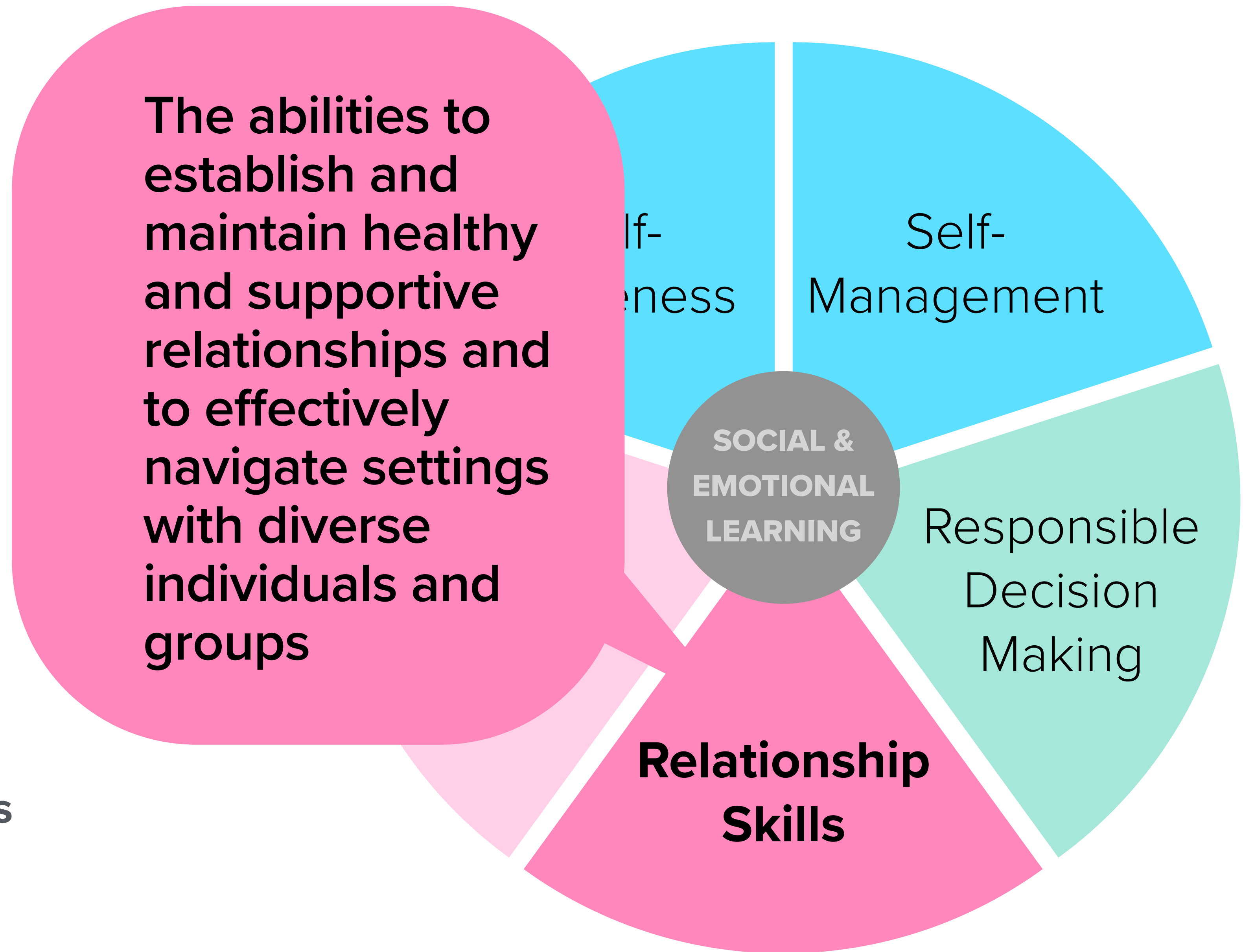
- Managing one's emotions
- Identifying and using stress management strategies
- Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
- Setting personal and collective goals
- Using planning and organizational skills
- Showing the courage to take initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency

- Taking others' perspectives
- Recognizing strengths in others
- Demonstrating empathy and compassion
- Showing concern for the feelings of others
- Understanding and expressing gratitude
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Recognizing situational demands and opportunities
- Understanding the influences of organizations and systems on behavior



- **Communicating effectively**
- **Developing positive relationships**
- **Demonstrating cultural competency**
- **Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving**
- **Resolving conflicts constructively**
- **Resisting negative social pressure**
- **Showing leadership in groups**
- **Seeking or offering support and help when needed**
- **Standing up for the rights of others**

The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups



The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations

SOCIAL &
EMOTIONAL
LEARNING

Social
Awareness

Relationship
Skills

**Responsible
Decision
Making**

- Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
- Learning how to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, and facts
- Identifying solutions for personal and social problems
- Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions
- Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside and outside of school
- Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being
- Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts

CASEL FRAMEWORK

THE CASEL 5

Small Group Discussion:

- * What might it look like to implement instruction related to these areas?
- * How can these competencies be embedded into daily routines, classroom culture, or existing curriculum?
- * What challenges might arise when promoting these competencies with students from diverse backgrounds or with differing needs?
- * How can school social workers collaborate with educators and families to support the development of SEL competencies?



WASHINGTON ADOPTED SEL STANDARDS

[HTTPS://WWW.K12.WA.US/STUDENT-SUCCESS/RESOURCES-SUBJECT-AREA/SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL-LEARNING-SEL](https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/resources-subject-area/social-emotional-learning-sel)

ALIGNMENT OF WASHINGTON SEL STANDARDS AND CASEL SEL COMPETENCE AREAS

WASHINGTON STATE STANDARDS

CASEL 5 FRAMEWORK

- Strong Alignment
- Limited Alignment
- No Alignment

	Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Self-Efficacy	Social Awareness	Social Management	Social Engagement
Social-Awareness	Strong Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment
Self-Management	Limited Alignment	Strong Alignment	Strong Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment
Responsible Decision Making	Limited Alignment	Strong Alignment	Strong Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment
Relationship Skills	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Strong Alignment	Strong Alignment
Social Awareness	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment	Strong Alignment	Limited Alignment	Limited Alignment

WASHINGTON'S K-12 SEL STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS FOR SELF

Standard	Benchmark
<p>Standard 1—Self-Awareness: Individual can identify their emotions, personal assets, areas for growth, and potential external resources and supports.</p>	<p><u>Benchmark 1A</u>: Demonstrates awareness and understanding of one’s own emotions and emotions' influence on behavior.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 1B</u>: Demonstrates awareness of personal and collective identity encompassing strengths, areas for growth, aspirations, and cultural and linguistic assets.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 1C</u>: Demonstrates self-awareness and understanding of external influences, e.g., culture, family, school, and community resources and supports.</p>
<p>Standard 2—Self-Management: Individual can regulate emotions, thoughts, and behaviors.</p>	<p><u>Benchmark 2A</u>: Demonstrates the skills to manage one’s emotions, thoughts, impulses, and stress in constructive ways.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 2B</u>: Demonstrates responsible decision-making and problem-solving skills.</p>
<p>Standard 3—Self-Efficacy: Individual can motivate themselves, persevere, and see themselves as capable.</p>	<p><u>Benchmark 3A</u>: Demonstrates the skills to set, monitor, adapt, persevere, achieve, and evaluate goals.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 3B</u>: Demonstrates problem-solving skills to engage responsibly in a variety of situations.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 3C</u>: Demonstrate awareness and ability to speak on behalf of personal rights and advocacy.</p>

WASHINGTON'S K-12 SEL STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS **FOR SOCIAL**

Standard	Benchmark
<p>Standard 4—Social Awareness: Individual can take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures.</p>	<p><u>Benchmark 4A</u>: Demonstrates awareness of other people’s emotions, perspectives, cultures, languages, histories, identities, and abilities.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 4B</u>: Demonstrates an awareness and respect for similarities and differences among community, cultural and social groups.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 4C</u>: Demonstrates an understanding of the variation within and across cultures.</p>
<p>Standard 5—Social Management: Individual can make safe and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions.</p>	<p><u>Benchmark 5A</u>: Demonstrates a range of communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 5B</u>: Demonstrates the ability to identify and take steps to resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 5C</u>: Demonstrates the ability to engage in respectful and healthy relationships with individuals of diverse perspectives, cultures, language, history, identity, and ability.</p>
<p>Standard 6—Social Engagement: Individual can consider others and show a desire to contribute to the well-being of school and community.</p>	<p><u>Benchmark 6A</u>: Demonstrates a sense of school and community responsibility.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 6B</u>: Demonstrates the ability to work with others to set, monitor, adapt, achieve, and evaluate goals.</p> <p><u>Benchmark 6C</u>: Contributes productively to one’s school, workplace, and community.</p>

STANDARD 1: SELF-AWARENESS

**INDIVIDUALS CAN IDENTIFY THEIR EMOTIONS,
PERSONAL ASSETS, AREAS FOR GROWTH, AND
POTENTIAL EXTERNAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS.**

**Benchmark 1A—Demonstrates
awareness and understanding of
one’s own emotions and emotions’
influence on behavior.**

Environmental and Instructional
Conditions for Learning:

**Provide students with nurturing
settings, curriculum or content,
and opportunities to practice
understanding their own
emotions.**

BENCHMARK 1A INDICATORS

Early Elementary	Late Elementary	Middle School	High School/Adult
With adult assistance, I can recognize, identify, and name my emotions, feelings, and thoughts.	I can explain the different intensities of my emotions and feelings.	I can use self-reflection to determine if my emotions and feelings are proportional to the situation.	I can analyze how and why an emotion can trigger behaviors in different contexts.
With adult assistance, I can recognize how different emotions, feelings, and thoughts feel in my body.	I can identify and describe physical symptoms and thoughts related to my emotions and feelings (e.g., hot, shoulders tight).	I can identify emotions and feelings that contribute to or detract from my ability to solve problems.	I can evaluate the impact that focusing intensely on my emotions has on me.
With adult assistance, I can verbally express my emotions or feelings.	I can identify thoughts that are caused by emotions and feelings and how these thoughts affect my actions.	I can examine possible outcomes associated with different ways of communicating emotions and feelings.	I can demonstrate the ability to analyze the effectiveness of actions I take to deal with my emotions and feelings.
With adult assistance, I can describe the difference between a fixed and a growth mindset.	I can take a moment to reflect on whether I am using a fixed or growth mindset in my interactions with others.	I can adjust my thoughts to reflect a growth mindset when meeting a goal or experiencing challenges in my life.	I can demonstrate the ability to analyze, critically think about, and understand the attitudes I hold that contribute to my development of a fixed or growth mindset while dealing with challenges or meeting goals.

**EMBEDDED
SOCIAL
EMOTIONAL
LEARNING**

VS

**EXPLICIT
SOCIAL
EMOTIONAL
LEARNING**

AGGRESSION REPLACEMENT TRAINING

GROUP NORMS

- Respect
- Safety
- Participation
- Confidentiality

THINKING ERRORS

AKA: COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

THINKING ERRORS OR COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS LEAD US TO TROUBLE WHEN WE USE THEM TO MAKE SENSE OF OUR POOR CHOICES AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR. WE ALSO END UP WITH CONSEQUENCES THAT WE DO NOT LIKE.

Self-centered Thinking: Thinking about only your own needs or interests, not caring about others. One example is saying “If I lie to people, it is nobody’s business but mine.”

Assuming the Worst: Acting as if the worst outcome in a situation is the only possible outcome. Thinking people are out to get you. One example is saying, “I might as well lie, people won’t believe me if I tell the truth.”

Blaming Others: Not accepting responsibility for your choices and consequences. Making it seem like someone forced you to act how you did. Saying someone else is responsible. One example is saying, “People make me lie when they ask too many questions.”

Minimizing/mislabeling: Thinking Errors or Cognitive Distortions lead us to trouble when we use them to make sense of our poor choices and antisocial behavior. We also end up with consequences that we do not like.

THINKING ERRORS

AKA: COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

THESE SAME STYLES OF THINKING CAN ALSO LEAD US TO POSITIVE DECISIONS.

Style of Thinking	Positive/Pro-social	Okay Because
Self-Centered Thinking	I am not going to rob a bank with you because I don't want to get in trouble. You do whatever you want.	You are using Thinking Ahead to stay out of a situation that may lead to trouble.
Assuming the Worst	If I drink and drive, I will die.	You are using Thinking Ahead and may save your own life.
Blaming Others	If there weren't so many drug dealers in my neighborhood, it would be a safer place to live.	If it is a factual statement, then you are not trying to blame someone else.
Minimizing/mislabeling	It is no big deal to get a flu shot, the needle just hurts for a second.	You are using a Reminder to help to calm yourself down.

“YOUR FATHER IS LATE AGAIN,” REGGIE'S MOTHER TELLS REGGIE ONE NIGHT AS HE SITS DOWN TO DINNER. REGGIE KNOWS WHY; HE PASSED HIS FATHER'S CAR ON THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL. IT WAS PARKED OUTSIDE THE MIDTOWN BAR AND GRILL. REGGIE'S MOTHER AND FATHER HAD ARGUED MANY TIMES ABOUT HIS FATHER'S STOPPING OFF AT THE BAR ON HIS WAY HOME FROM WORK. AFTER THEIR LAST ARGUMENT, HIS FATHER HAD PROMISED HE WOULD NEVER DO IT AGAIN. “I WONDER WHY YOUR FATHER IS LATE,” REGGIE'S MOTHER SAYS. “DO YOU THINK I SHOULD TRUST WHAT HE SAID ABOUT NOT DRINKING ANY MORE? DO YOU THINK HE STOPPED OFF AT THE BAR AGAIN?” REGGIE'S MOTHER ASKS HIM. WHAT SHOULD REGGIE SAY OR DO?

MORAL REASONING

Problem Situation: Reggies Problem

“Real” Problem Definition: _____

Name	1	2	3	4	5
Group Decision					

AGGRESSION REPLACEMENT TRAINING

Tasks to Consider

- * Relate problems to real-life experiences
- * Elicit and list mature responses first
- * Avoid reinforcing immature reasoning
- * Leverage peer influence
- * Use perspective-taking and role-taking
- * Facilitate group consensus
- * Praise growth and reflection

TECHNIQUES UTILIZED WITH INVOLUNTARY GROUPS

- Emphasizing choices already made
- Emphasize choice
- Limited, clear requirements
- Clarifying roles
- Avoid emphasis on blaming
- Positive future focus
- Clarifying non-negotiable requirements
- Clarifying rights and limitations
- Rewarding acknowledging responsibility

STRENGTHS BASED GROUP WORK WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

- 1** Form groups based on member felt needs and wants, not diagnoses
- 2** Structure groups to welcome the whole person, not just the troubled parts
- 3** Integrate verbal and nonverbal activities
- 4** Decentralize authority and turn control over to group members
- 5** Develop alliances with relevant other people
- 6** Maintain a dual focus on individual change and social reform
- 7** Understand and respect group development as a key to promoting change

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES TO PRACTICE SOCIAL SKILLS

FOR STUDENTS WITH EBD

- Peer-mediated practice and mentoring
- Role-playing
- Social stories
- Video modeling

PHASES OF PROVIDING SOCIAL SKILL INSTRUCTION



PHASE 1: PRE-SOCIAL SKILL PRACTICE STRATEGIES

- * Discuss the importance of social skills
- * Identify and define targeted social skills
- * Model appropriate social behavior

PHASE 2: PRACTICE

- * Implement social skills practice strategies
- * Monitor

PHASE 3: POST-PRACTICE

- * Data analysis
- * Maintain, intensify, or fade the social skill practice strategies