Social and Emotional Learning Observation and Reflection: A Resource Tool

New York State Education Department

The Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core outlines early learning expectations linked to K-12 standards, organized by key domains of learning. The NYSED, Office of Early Learning is developing a series of resource sets to assist teachers and administrators as they reflect on program practices and supports in each of the key domains. This set focuses on Social and Emotional Development and includes an overview and directions for using the observation tools, a child scan, a teacher scan, and an environment inventory. The set also includes a school-wide reflection tool for administrators and teams to plan and implement program improvement, resources, and supports.

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Contents

Part 1: Observation Resources	**1. Purpose and Directions** This overview provides an introduction to the set, including directions for using each of the observation tools. **2. Child Observation Scan** This classroom tool guides observations about children's social and emotional behaviors. It is organized by the subcategories in the PreK Foundation for the Common Core. **3. Adult Observation Scan** This classroom tool guides observations about adult behaviors that support children's social and emotional development. **4. Environment/Structures that Support Social and Emotional Development** This tool takes inventory of the environmental supports that promote children's social and emotional development.
Part 2: Administrator Tool	**5.Program Improvement and Reflection** This worksheet helps observers translate observations into actions that promote the identification of school/program needs and priorities to support social and emotional development that are aligned to the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core.

This series was developed by the New York State Education Department, Office of Early Learning, in partnership with the Northeast Comprehensive Center.
For more resources in this series, visit
www.p12.nysed.gov/earlylearning

NORTHEAST COMPREHENSIVE CENTER

1. Purpose and Directions for Use

Purpose: This observation and reflection tool was developed to help principals/site managers organize their impressions of the implementation of the *New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core* (Prek Foundation). This tool focuses on **Domain 3: Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)**. This tool is designed to provide a snapshot to help administrators reflect on program design and teaching practices that support SEL. While this tool is focused on the prekindergarten level, teachers and administrators at the kindergarten to third grade levels can adapt it to fit their needs.

Directions: This tool requires an observer to conduct two 20-30 minute observations in a classroom, plus a 10 minute environmental scan in each classroom. The observations may be done on the same day or on different days. The tool may be used by administrators or peer teams of teachers who then work with administrators to reflect on program design and practices. This resource tool is intended to guide reflections about the program resources and supports in SEL and to help guide next steps to implementation. It is not designed or intended to be used as part of a teacher evaluation system. Observers may opt to leave classroom/teacher identifiers off of the observation forms.

The **Child Observation** scan asks you to observe the behaviors of children during at least a 30 minute period. You may consider doing two separate 30 minute observations at different times of day, but you should remain for at least 30 minutes each time. The scan is organized by the subcategories in the Prek Foundation and includes a list of "Potential Red Flags." Make a slash [/] mark each time you observe a child doing a positive and "red flag" behavior in the Number of Times Observed column. If there is no opportunity to observe a behavior, mark the N/A column. Then count the Times Observed and write the number in the Total Times Observed column. Summarize your overall impression at the bottom.

The **Adult Observation** scan asks you to observe the behaviors of the adults during a 30 minute period. The scan is organized by the subcategories in the Prek Foundation and includes a list of "Potential Red Flags." Make a slash [/] mark each time you observe an adult doing a positive and "red flag" behavior in the Number of Times Observed column. If there is no opportunity to observe a behavior, mark the N/A column. Then count the Times Observed and write the number in the Total Times Observed column. Summarize your overall impression at the bottom.

The **Environment/Structures that Support Social and Emotional Development** inventory asks you to scan the classroom to inventory environmental supports that promote SEL.

The **Program Improvement and Reflection** worksheet helps program administrators translate the Prek Foundation standards and classroom observations into actions that promote the identification of school/program needs and priorities to support SEL that are aligned to New York State's Prekindergarten Program Implementation Guidance.

2. Child Observation Scan

Date:_____ Classroom: _____
Children's Age Range: _____ Observer: _____

Children's Behavior	Number of Times Observed	N/A	Total Times Observed
Self –Concept and Self –Awareness…Look for children:			
Expressing needs/feelings appropriately			
Showing willingness to try tasks, independently or with support			
Taking care of their own needs, independently or with support			
Self-Regulation and Adaptability…Look for children:			
Appropriately adjusting behavior during transitions (e.g., entering class, switching activities)			
Attending to planned activities/tasks for at least 5 minutes			
Responding to offers of assistance when under stress			
Relationships with Others…Look for children:			
Seeking help from/initiating contact with adults or peers			
Interacting with/playing/talking with peers			
Taking turns, sharing, independently or with support			
Using pro-social problem-solving skills (seeking assistance, compromising), with or without support			
Accountability…Look for children:			
Following rules, directions, routines			
Helping with tasks (cleaning up, responding to requests)			
Potential Red Flags…Look for children:			
∅ Acting withdrawn or sad, receiving no support from adults			
∅ Acting out aggressively			
∅ Throwing long, drawn-out tantrums			
∅ Not sticking with tasks for more than 5 minutes			
∅ On their own, not joining in activities/play with peers or with adults			
∅ Acting out or becoming anxious during separation from familiar adult			

Summary
To what extent did most children demonstrate positive social and emotional behaviors?

3. Adult Observation Scan

Date:_____ Classroom: _____
and Roles of Adults: _____ Observer: _____

Adult's Behavior (teachers, assistants, and volunteers)	Number of Times Observed	N/A	Total Times Observed
Self –Concept and Self –Awareness…Look for adults:			
Using children's names; greeting children on arrival			
Using specific, positive reinforcement for good decisions, actions and behaviors; recognizing effort (e.g. "I like the way Andre is sitting on his shape!")			
Self-Regulation and Adaptability…Look for adults:			
Modeling appropriate self-control (e.g., staying calm, using warm tone of voice)			
Monitoring children's behavior and modifying plans when children lose interest in activities			
Using classroom management strategies consistently (e.g., using signals and cues, redirecting, transition songs/activities, timing down, varying speech/intonation)			
Relationships with Others…Look for adults:			
Using warm and responsive behavior and caring with children and other adults in the room			
Interacting with individual children, at eye level			
Guiding/coaching reluctant children to play with peers			
Helping children to learn from others, take turns and share (e.g., "after Lila has finished, it's Eli's turn")			
Acknowledging children's acts of kindness to others, positive interactions			
Accountability…Look for adults:			
Keeping directions to manageable numbers (e.g., 2-3 step directions, 3-4 rules at specific centers/activities)			
Explaining/reinforcing rules, routines and expectations; setting boundaries (e.g., "What do we do during group share? That's right! You wait to hold the 'my turn to talk' ball!")			
Potential Red Flags…Look for adults:			
∅ Not connecting to individual children; talking only to whole groups			
∅ Using negative or mostly directive language (e.g., "stop that!" "be quiet!"); yelling			
∅ No visual/verbal cues about rules/routines			
∅ No planned transition activities/strategies; no anticipation of transition			

Summary
To what extent did adults (teachers, assistants, volunteers) consistently demonstrate skills and competencies to support social and emotional development? What kind of support might the adults need?

4. Environment Inventory

Date:_____   Classroom: _____

Observer: _____

*Environment/Structures that Support Social and Emotional Development	N/A	Observed	Not Observed
Physical Environment…Look for:			
Classroom arrangement with active areas and quiet areas			
Children's names, art and work displayed in classroom			
Pictures/art of children and their families in the classroom			
Books and materials reflecting the cultures of children and their families			
Books and center materials include ways for children to learn about: • People's characteristics and traits and feelings • Caring for living things (classroom plant or pet) • Taking turns and cooperating (e.g., games and activities)			
Learning centers with adequate space for multiple children and are clearly defined so children understand (e.g., clear boundaries, marked by pictures/symbols, materials laid-out and easy to access)			
Welcoming classroom for children and families			
Schedules and Routines…Look for:			
Daily schedule is posted so teachers, assistants and volunteers understand			
Schedule includes a balance of structured and unstructured activities			
Schedule includes activities that encourage and teach sharing, turn-taking and cooperation			
Schedule includes opportunities for peer interactions, e.g., peer placement during activities, high interest materials, partnering.			
Transition times between activities is minimal (e.g., children are rarely waiting between activities)			
Summary			
How could the classroom environment better support the social and emotional development of children?			

5. School-wide Reflection Worksheet

Program Improvement, Resources and Supports: Reflection Worksheet				
	CURRENT STATUS			Next Steps
	Already in Place	N/A	Potential Area to Develop	

A. Program Leadership
  1. Principal/site manager communicates the link between SEL and improved educational attainment and achievement.
  2. Principal/site manager identifies professional development and other resources to support integration of SEL across all domains to support high quality classroom instruction.
  3. Principal/site manager ensures preschool staff are aware of and use state and district SEL standards.				

B. Research-Based and Effective Curriculum and Instruction in Support of State and District Standards
  1. All preschool staff receive training/orientation to SEL teaching practices, e.g., promoting self-awareness, self-regulation, relationships, and responsibility.
  2. Preschool staff have resources to select books and materials that support SEL.
  3. Principal/site manager ensures planning activities and materials include goals to support SEL teaching practices, e.g., lesson plans, activity plans, daily schedule.
  4. The physical space supports children's SEL, e.g., space is adequate, welcoming, child-friendly.				

C. Supporting Teachers in the Classroom
  1. Teachers have opportunity and access to coaches or mentors to support SEL integration.
  2. Principal/site manager provides opportunities for teachers to receive feedback about their implementation of SEL practices and techniques.
  3. Principal/site manager provides ongoing access for staff to learn about teaching skills and techniques that support SEL.
  4. Principal/site manager provides opportunities for staff to receive support with handling challenging behaviors.
  5. School/preschool program ensures paraprofessionals and				

volunteers are included in training and feedback opportunities.				
D. **Assessments, Monitoring, and Reporting**				
1. Program makes available appropriate measures to assess students on SEL progress.				
2. Principal/site manager reviews progress of children's SEL at least annually.				
E. **Engaging Families and Community**				
1. School/preschool program has ongoing communication with parents about SEL.				
2. School/preschool program provides information to families about SEL and ways they can support children's development.				
3. School/preschool program provides paid time for staff to support home visits, as appropriate.				