

Be Well This Month

Care for Our Social and Emotional Well-Being

March 2025

This monthly email shares information and resources for supporting social emotional learning (SEL) and well-being at home and work.

Be well, the Student Support Services Team



March is **Women's History Month**, an opportunity to reflect on the achievements, resilience, and contributions of women throughout history and today. In honor of Women's History Month, the New York State Museum has launched a [Women's History Resource](#) page with exhibits, programming, and other resources. We hope you'll explore this new resource! You might also consider a visit to see [Margery Ryerson: Art is Contagious](#), on view through September 7th.

This month's content addresses Goal 3 of [New York's Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks](#), which focuses on **practicing intentional decision-making skills and behaviors that consider social, emotional, and physical safety and well-being in personal, school, and community contexts.**

See an overview of the goals and benchmarks in [our brand-new explainer video!](#)



How to Build Mindful Social Media Habits in the Age of TikTok—for You and Your Kids

By Erica B. Marcus



"A few years back, I was scrolling through my Instagram feed when I came across an image of Miranda, my childhood best friend. She was on a beautiful white-sand tropical beach, tan and radiant, contorted into an incredible yoga pose. In contrast, I was sitting in my living room, pasty white and deeply bundled against the frigid Maine temps, nearly comatose from tech use. And I noticed something. As I stared at the pic, my throat clenched slightly. My shoulders rose up just a hair. And my stomach dropped. I had a wisp of a thought: *Ugh. I wish that was me.* This was followed by a cascade of reasons that

I was better than her, in a desperate attempt to make myself feel better. What makes this moment notable, even though this yucky feeling had happened a bajillion times while looking at Insta, was a recognition of how that image impacted me... This time helped me wake up and ask myself, 'Is scrolling through social media healthy for me?' The answer was a resounding no." Read more about how mindfulness can support a healthier relationship with social media in [How to Build Mindful Social Media Habits in the Age of TikTok—for You and Your Kids](#) on [mindful.org](#).

A simple exercise from Yale's Happiness Lab will help you make decisions that lead to long-term happiness

By Jenna Abdou

"Close your eyes and imagine you're sitting across from yourself in 20 years. How might that change the decisions you make today?... This experiment reflects a central question [Laurie Santos'] work explores: How do we make decisions that lead to long-term happiness?" In this interview, [A simple exercise from Yale's Happiness Lab will help you make decisions that lead to long-term happiness](#), Jenna Abdou and Laurie Santos talk about transforming self-talk, redefining success, and creating space for serendipity.



Forget 21 days. Most healthy new habits take at least two months to stick

By Joshua Korber Hoffman



“Wondering why you’re already struggling with that New Year’s resolution? A new study suggests that forming healthy new habits takes a lot longer than we thought. For years, popular wisdom has held that it takes just 21 days to add a new habit to your daily routine. But according to recent research from the University of South Australia (UniSA), new habits typically take around two months to engrain, and can take up to almost a year. The researchers reached this conclusion after conducting a meta-analysis of 20 earlier studies, published between 2008 and 2023, and involving more than 2,600 participants.

These studies measured habitual behavior to find an overall trend in the length of time taken for healthy habits to form.” Read more about the study and its findings in [Forget 21 days. Most healthy new habits take at least two months to stick](#) on CNN.com.

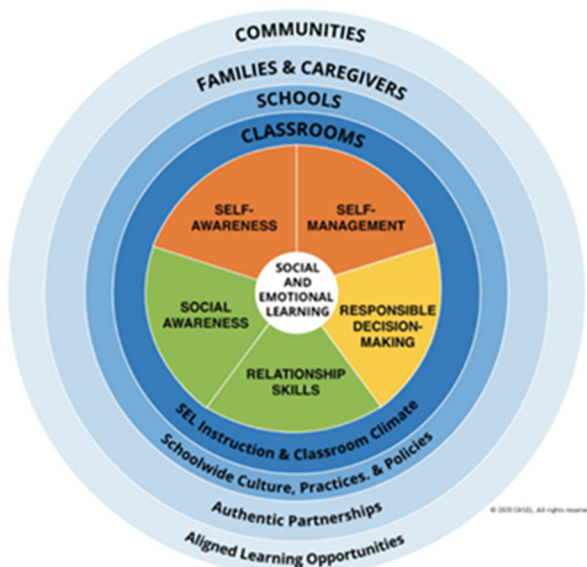
Seven Barriers to Building More Meaningful Connections

By Natalie Kerr and Jaime Kurtz

“If you search Google for ways to find social connection, you might come across advice like ‘reach out to existing acquaintances,’ ‘join a club,’ or ‘get involved in your community.’ This commonsense advice implies that forming connections is as simple as putting yourself out there. While reaching out is certainly important, it’s often not enough on its own. The truth is that we routinely encounter barriers that block our efforts to make and strengthen meaningful relationships. Some of these barriers are byproducts of our psychological makeup, while others are the result of unseen social forces. As a result, the path to connection is not always easy to navigate.” Learn more about these barriers and how to navigate them in [Seven Barriers to Building More Meaningful Connections](#) on Greater Good Magazine.



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Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation. SEL can

help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities.

[Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2020](#)

Find more [resources for Social and Emotional Learning](#) on our website. We welcome your feedback about SEL or this newsletter at studentsupportservices@nysed.gov.