



# **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT IN THE CLASSROOM: CAREER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

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When we think about providing social and emotional support in the classroom, we may imagine guidance counselors or school psychologists. While it is certainly important for students to have access to these professionals, there are other members of the educational team who can provide invaluable support as well.

Career development educators are in a unique position to help students build relationships and confidence in the workplace.

In this article, we discuss how addressing social and emotional needs in the classroom can benefit students' career development.

# Why is Social and Emotional Support Important for Career Development?

Social and emotional support refers to the assistance and guidance that students receive in order to manage their emotions and social interactions. This type of support can come from educators, parents, guardians, or other trusted adults.

When students feel supported, they are more likely to take risks and try new things. This is essential for career development, as students need to be able to experiment with different ideas and explore new opportunities.

Students who feel supported are also more likely to feel confident in their abilities. This confidence is essential for students as they begin to navigate the world of work.

There are many ways that educators can provide social and emotional support to their students.

Some of the most important things that educators can do are:

- Create a safe and supportive learning environment
- Encourage student voice and choice
- Teach social and emotional skills
- Build positive relationships with students
- Connect academic content to real-world experiences

Let's take a closer look at each of these strategies.

## Supportive Learning Environment

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment is the foundation for all social and emotional support in the classroom. When students feel safe and supported, they are more likely to take risks, try new things, and persevere when faced with challenges.

A safe and supportive learning environment can be created by:

- Setting clear expectations and rules
- Fostering a climate of respect
- Encouraging open communication
- Providing opportunities for social and emotional skill building

## Students' Voices and Choices

Students' voices and choices are essential in the classroom. When students feel like they have a say in their education, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated. Allowing students to have a voice also builds confidence and self-esteem.

Here are some ways that educators can give students a voice and choice in the classroom:

- Classroom discussions
- Brainstorming sessions
- Polls and surveys
- Student-led projects

## Teaching Social and Emotional Skills

When students are taught how to manage their emotions and interact with others, they feel more capable and confident. Social and emotional skills are essential for success in school and in the workplace.

There are many social and emotional skills that students can learn. Some of the most important skills are:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Decision-making

## Building Positive Relationships with Students

Positive relationships provide a foundation of trust and respect. When students feel connected to their educators, they are more likely to take risks, share their ideas, and ask for help when needed.

Here are some ways that educators can build positive relationships with students:

- Spending one-on-one time with students
- Getting to know each student's interests, strengths, and needs
- Checking in with students regularly
- Communicating openly and honestly
- Providing support and encouragement

# Connecting Academic Content To Real-World Experiences

When students can see how their academic content is relevant to their lives, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated. Connecting academic content to real-world experiences can also help students build confidence in their abilities and prepare them for success.

There are many ways that educators can connect academic content to real-world experiences. Some of the most effective methods are:

- Service learning projects
- Field trips
- Guest speakers
- Real-world problem solving

## Conclusion

The strategies discussed in this article are essential for teachers who want to set their students up for success, both in school and in their future careers. When students feel safe, supported, and connected to their learning, they are more likely to take risks, persevere when faced with challenges, and build the confidence they need to succeed.

What strategies do you use to support your students' social and emotional development?