SSIS SEL Brief Scales
Scores, Scoring, & Report Interpretation Guide

The Social Emotional Competencies Assessed

The SSIS SEL Brief + Mental Health Scales (SSIS SEL*b* + MH Scales) are multi-informant, criterion-referenced behavior rating scales consisting of 20 items that measure students' social emotional learning (SEL) skills. The SEL competencies assessed are based on the CASEL Competency Framework (2015) and are as follows:

Self-Awareness. Accurate recognition of one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior, including accuracy in the assessment of skills and a sense of confidence and optimism.

Self-Management. Effective regulation of one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations, including stress management, impulse control, self-motivation, and goal setting.

Social Awareness. Taking the perspective of, and empathizing with, others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, including understanding social and ethical norms for behavior and recognizing various resources and supports that are available.

Relationship Skills. Establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups, including clear communication, active listening, cooperation, resisting peer pressure, conflict negotiation, and seeking/offering help when appropriate.

Responsible Decision Making. Making constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions that are based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, consequences, and the well-being of self and others.

Scoring and Scores

The Teacher, Parent, and Student forms offer two types of scores useful for describing and evaluating students' SEL skills. These include raw scores and competency-referenced performance levels.

SEL Raw Scores with Confidence Intervals & Competency-Referenced Performance Levels

SEL Raw scores. Each of the five SEL competence scales on the Teacher, Parent, and Student Forms has four items. Each item has four possible responses (*never, seldom, often, almost always* on Teacher and Parent forms and *not true, a little true, a lot true, very true* on Student form*)* worth 0, 1, 2, and 3 points, respectively). By summing the points for the four items on each scale, a total raw score ranging from 0 to 12 is created. Summing the raw scores on the five competency scales on each of the SSIS Brief rating forms results in a Composite SEL raw score ranging from 0 to 60. Scores for the Composite Scale and Individual Scales represent positive levels of social emotional functioning, with higher scores indicating more frequent use of skills.
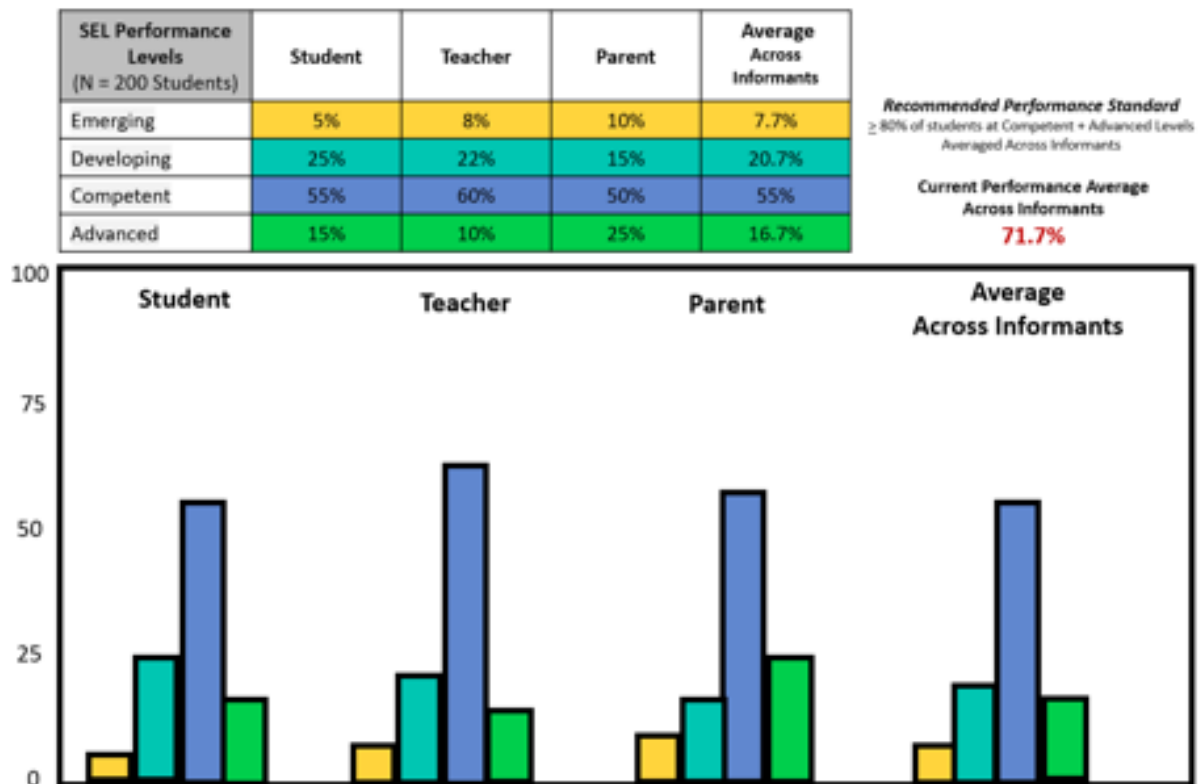
Confidence intervals. Confidence intervals are reported for scores to ensure a proper level of precision is used when interpreting scores. Confidence intervals (CI) are calculated using the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM), which indicates the average amount of score variation that is due to measurement error alone. The CI for SEL scores provides a range of values that likely encompasses an individual's true score. See **Appendix B** in the User Guide & Technical Manual for CI values.

SEL Performance Levels. To facilitate the interpretation of SEL Composite Raw Scores, a four-level framework was developed based on the CASEL Competency Framework to characterize the relative developmental and functional performance of a student's overall competence. The four levels for the SEL Competency-Referenced Performance Framework (SEL CRPF) are *Emerging*, *Developing*, *Competent*, and *Advanced*. Composite scores and their translation to a competency-referenced performance level are listed in **Appendix C** in the User Guide & Technical Manual.

Summarizing and Displaying Scores

An array of reports are available that summarizes the ratings of one or more informants for individual students to an entire school district of students. Each report includes descriptive statistics for the resulting scores and performance levels, along with tables and graphs of the students' social emotional learning skills (SEL). Performance Standards have been recommended as criterion for comparing actual average functioning levels for groups of students. These Performance Standards are considered aspirational and difficult to achieve, but hopefully motivate many groups to strive for improvement. Two of the most common summary tables and graphics with interpretive tips are illustrated next.

This first figure (below) is used to summarize a group (200 in this example) of students' SEL Performance Levels resulting from the ratings by the students themselves, and their teachers and parents. Students' SEL Composite Raw Scores have been transformed to one of the four SEL Competency-Referenced Performance Levels and then the percentage of students at each level based on the different informants is provided. In addition, the average percentage of students at each performance level across the three raters is provided. Finally, a Recommended Performance Standard of $\geq$ 80% of students at the Competent + Advance Levels is a provided, along with the actual Average Percentage of students assessed at these performance levels.

SEL Performance Levels (N = 200 Students)	Student	Teacher	Parent	Average Across Informants
Emerging	5%	8%	10%	7.7%
Developing	25%	22%	15%	20.7%
Competent	55%	60%	50%	55%
Advanced	15%	10%	25%	16.7%

Recommended Performance Standard
$\geq$ 80% of students at Competent + Advanced Levels
Averaged Across Informants

Current Performance Average Across Informants
71.7%

The second figure (below) provides a descriptive breakdown of one or more informants' ratings of students' SEL skills associated with the five contributing SEL competence domains. As illustrated in in the figure below, the Mean, Standard Deviation, and range for each SEL competency is graphed for Teachers (T), Students (S), and Parents (P). The X on the line graph represents the Mean rating, the vertical lines indicate the location of the ± 1 standard deviations along the 0 to 12-point scale for each item, and the small circles indicated the score range. Mean scores below 8 (circled in red) are considered in need of improvement and are linked to instructional Skill Units in the SSIS SEL Classwide Intervention Program (CIP); the bolded Skill Units are directly linked to items on the SEL Scales. More information about the CIP is available at SSIScolab.com.

SEL Scales	Rater	M (SD)	Score Range and Mean ± 1SD 0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—(8)—9—10—11—12	SSIS SEL CIP Skill Unit Aligned with Competency Scales
Self-Awareness	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	**Ask for Help** **Tell Others About Your Skills** **Be Positive About the Future**
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
Self-Management	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	**Listen to Others** **Follow the Rules** **Pay Attention to Your Work** **Stay Calm with Others** Express Your Feelings **Stay Calm When Pushed or Hit** Use appropriate language when upset Take criticism without getting upset **Say when there is a problem**
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
Social Awareness	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	**Do Nice Things for Others** **Stand Up for Others** **Make Others Feel Better** Show concern for others Show kindness to others when upset **Forgive others**
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
Relationship Skills	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	Say Please and Thank You Take Turns When You Talk **Get Along with Others** **Ask Others to Do Things with You** **Introduce Yourself to Others** Make Compromises **Resolve disagreements calmly**
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
Responsible Decision-Making	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	**Do the Right Thing** **Own Your Actions** **Respect Other People's Things** **Do Your Part in a Group** Listen to Different Ideas
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	

Interpretation and Use Tips

When reading reports for any of the SSIS SEL Brief Scales Series of assessments, the following points are essential for correct interpretation and use of the results:

1. SEL Composite and Scale scores are indicators of the frequency with which students have been observed to exhibit skills representative of valued SEL competencies. High scores are desired.

2. Use confidence intervals to communicate that measurement error must be considered when reporting scores and performance levels for SEL Composite scores.

3. Many years of research with behavior rating scale assessments like those in the SSIS SEL Brief Scales series indicates that two informants (teacher-student or parent-student) typically agree only moderately. This is largely because most raters observe students' behavior in only a subset of common situations daily.

4. SEL competencies assessed link directly to evidence-based interventions for teaching and improving skills in need of improvement.

In summary, reports are an important outcome of the assessment process. When the assessment process is driven by a purpose and focuses on SEL competencies with known relevance to students' social and academic functioning, communications among educators and students are enhanced, competency domains in need of improvement identified, and connections to strategies for teaching and improving such skills established. Thus, assessments initially inform and drive intervention, which in turn, requires additional assessments to determine the effects of the intervention and recommendations for future action. More information is available regarding the SSIS SEL Brief Scales series of assessments in the User Guides & Technical Manuals that accompany each assessment.

For more information about the SSIS SEL Brief Scales assessments,
Visit www.ssiscolab.com and click on the Knowledge Base tab.

SSIS SEL Brief + Mental Health Scales
Scores, Scoring, & Report Interpretation Guide

The Social Emotional Competencies and Concerns Assessed

The SSIS SEL Brief + Mental Health Scales (SSIS SEL*b* + MH Scales) are multi-informant, criterion-referenced behavior rating scales consisting of 30 items that measure students' social emotional learning (SEL) skills and emotional behavior concerns (EBC).

The SEL competencies assessed are based on the CASEL Competency Framework (2015) and are as follows:

Self-Awareness. Accurate recognition of one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior, including accuracy in the assessment of skills and a sense of confidence and optimism.

Self-Management. Effective regulation of one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations, including stress management, impulse control, self-motivation, and goal setting.

Social Awareness. Taking the perspective of, and empathizing with, others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, including understanding social and ethical norms for behavior and recognizing various resources and supports that are available.

Relationship Skills. Establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups, including clear communication, active listening, cooperation, resisting peer pressure, conflict negotiation, and seeking/offering help when appropriate.

Responsible Decision Making. Making constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions that are based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, consequences, and the well-being of self and others.

The SSIS SEL*b* + MH Scales also assess two key domains indicative of students' emotional behavior concerns. These domains are:

Internalizing Behaviors. Negative emotions and behaviors directed inwardly involving feeling anxious, sad, or lonely; exhibiting poor self-esteem; lack of interest or limited engagement with others.

Externalizing Behaviors. Negative emotions and behavior directed primarily toward others involving verbal or physical aggression; poor control of temper; arguing; actively excluding others.

Scoring and Scores

The Teacher, Parent, and Student forms offer two types of scores useful for describing and evaluating students' SEL skills and EBC. These include raw scores and criterion-referenced performance levels. As these scores are described, keep in mind that High SEL scores are desirable, while Low EBC scores are desirable.

SEL Raw Scores with Confidence Intervals & Competency-Referenced Performance Levels

SEL Raw scores. Each of the five SEL competence scales on the Teacher, Parent, and Student Forms has four items. Each item has four possible responses (*never, seldom, often, almost always* on Teacher and Parent forms and *not true, a little true, a lot true, very true* on Student form*)* worth 0, 1, 2, and 3 points, respectively). By

summing the points for the four items on each scale, a total raw score ranging from 0 to 12 is created. Summing the raw scores on the five SEL competency scales on each of the SSIS Brief rating forms results in a Composite SEL raw score ranging from 0 to 60. Scores for the Composite Scale and Individual Scales represent positive levels of social emotional functioning, with higher scores indicating more frequent use of skills.

Confidence intervals. Confidence intervals are reported for scores to ensure a proper level of precision is used when interpreting scores. Confidence intervals (CI) are calculated using the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM), which indicates the average amount of score variation that is due to measurement error alone. The CI for SEL scores provides a range of values that likely encompasses an individual's "true" score (a score without measurement error). See **Appendix B** in the User Guide & Technical Manual for CI values.

SEL Performance Levels. To facilitate the interpretation of SEL Composite Raw Scores, a four-level framework was developed based on the CASEL Competency Framework to characterize the relative developmental and functional performance of a student's overall competence. The four levels for the SEL Competency-Referenced Performance Framework (SEL CRPF) are *Emerging*, *Developing*, *Competent*, and *Advanced*. Composite scores and their translation to a competency-referenced performance level are listed in **Appendix C** in the User Guide & Technical Manual. Remember: <u>Higher SEL Composite Raw Scores reflect developmentally more advanced competency levels</u>.

EBC Raw Scores with Confidence Intervals and Criterion-Referenced Concerns Levels

EBC Raw Scores. Each of the EBC scales on the Teacher, Parent, and Student Forms has five items. Each item has four possible responses (*not true, a little true, a lot true, very true* on the Student form and *never, seldom, often, almost always* on the Teacher and Parent forms) worth 0, 1, 2, and 3 points, respectively. Summing the points for the five items on each scale creates a total raw score ranging from 0 to 15. There is <u>not</u> a combined or composite score for the total set of 10 items as the two scales (EBC-I & EBC-E) represent distinct constructs. Scores for the individual scales represent undesired levels of emotional and behavioral concerns, thus lower EBC raw scores are desired.
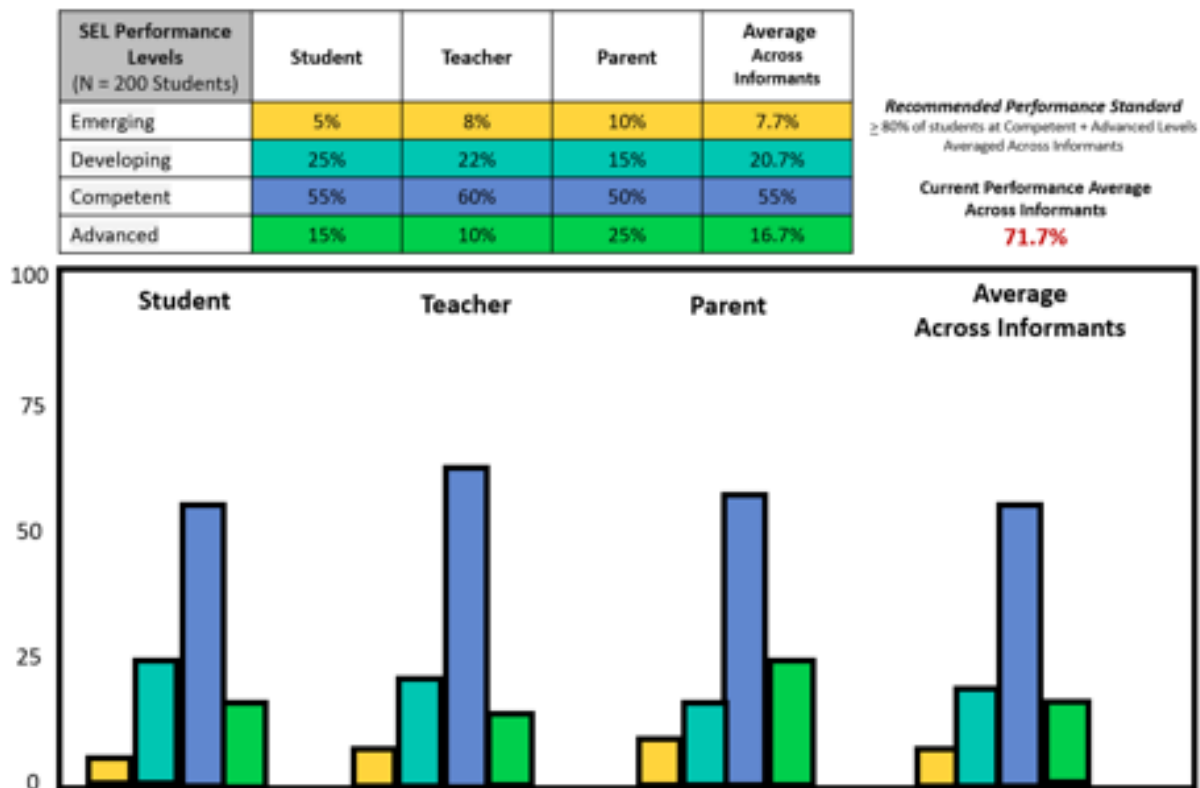
Confidence Intervals. As with the SEL scores, the calculation of confidence intervals establishes "reasonable limits" for interpretation of test scores considering measurement error. As such, confidence intervals for each EBC scale are provided in **Appendix B** of the User Guide & Technical Manual.

EBC Concern Levels. To facilitate interpretation of total raw scores for both the EBC Internalizing and Externalizing Scales, a three-level, criterion-referenced framework was developed to characterize the relative level of mental health concern. The three levels are *No Concern, Possible Concern,* and *Concern*. This approach is cautious and appropriate given the primary purpose of the EBC scales is screening. Unlike the SEL scales where intervention needs and planning are priority outcomes, the EBC scales are intended to identify students who <u>might be</u> experiencing mental health concerns. Most students' scores will fall within the *No Concern* level, and no further action is necessary unless their status should change in future screenings. Some students' scores will fall within the *Possible Concerns* level indicating that, when considering measurement error, their true functioning may be at the level of Some Concerns. For students with scores in this range, we recommend monitoring their functioning between screenings to ensure that they are not experiencing mental health difficulties. Finally, a small percentage (< 10%) of students will score at the *Concern* level. For students at this level, a mental health professional (school psychologist, counselor, social worker, etc.) should promptly follow-up with the student about their current mental health status, and based on the outcome of that interaction, conduct a more comprehensive assessment of any social, emotional, and/or mental health concerns. Composite scores and their translation to a criterion-referenced concerns level are listed in **Appendix D** in the User Guide & Technical Manual. Remember: <u>Lower EBC-I and EBC-E Composite Raw Scores reflect a more desirable concerns level</u>.

Summarizing and Displaying Scores

An array of reports are available that summarizes the ratings of one or more informants for individual students, a classroom, or even an entire school district of students. Each report includes descriptive statistics for the resulting scores and performance levels, along with tables and graphs of the students' social emotional learning skills (SEL) and emotional behavior concerns (EBC). Performance Standards have been recommended as criterion for comparing actual average functioning levels for groups of students. These Performance Standards are considered aspirational and difficult to achieve, but hopefully motivate many groups to strive for improvement. Several of the most common summary tables and graphics with interpretive tips are illustrated next.

This first figure (below) comprised of a table and graph is used to summarize a group (200 in this example) of students' SEL Performance Levels resulting from the ratings by the students themselves, and their teachers and parents. Students' SEL Composite Raw Scores have been transformed to one of the four SEL Competency-Referenced Performance Levels and then the percentage of students at each level based on the different informants is provided in both the table and illustrated graphically with bars for Emerging (E), Developing (D), Competent (C), and Advanced (A) levels indicated. In addition, the average percentage of students at each performance level across the three raters is provided. Finally, a Recommended Performance Standard of $\geq 80\%$ of students at the Competent + Advance Levels is a provided, along with the actual Average Percentage of students assessed at these performance levels.

SEL Performance Levels (N = 200 Students)	Student	Teacher	Parent	Average Across Informants
Emerging	5%	8%	10%	7.7%
Developing	25%	22%	15%	20.7%
Competent	55%	60%	50%	55%
Advanced	15%	10%	25%	16.7%

Recommended Performance Standard
$\geq$ 80% of students at Competent + Advanced Levels Averaged Across Informants

Current Performance Average Across Informants
71.7%

This second figure (top of next page) is used to summarize the percentage of students in a group (200 in this example) whose self-ratings on the EBC-Internalizing and EBC-Externalizing Scales resulted in scores that were transformed to the Concern, Possible Concern, or No Concern levels. The Recommended Performance Standard of $\geq 85\%$ of students at the No Concern Level for each EBC Scale serves as a criterion to compare the actual results. Note, if teachers and/or parents also had rated the students, the table and the graphs would also display their rating results.

| EBC Concern Levels (N = 200 Students)	EBC-I %	EBC-E %
Concern	8%	15%
Possible Concern	12%	10%
No Concern	80%	75%

Recommended Performance Standard
Average ≥ 85% of Students at No Concern Levels
For EBC-I and EBC-E
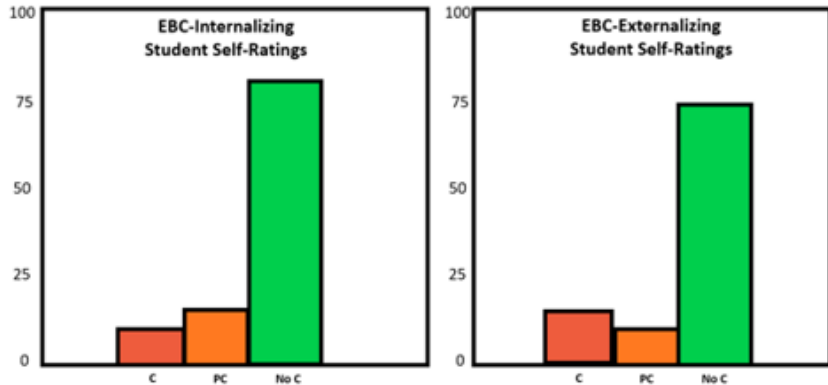
The third figure (below) presents an integrated examination of students' SEL and EBC performance level results. The results featured are those from only Student self-ratings on the SSIS SEL*b* + MH Scales, focusing on the SEL x EBC-I (Internalizing) results; a similar table and graphic would follow for the SEL x EBC-E (Externalizing) results. Note, had teachers and/or parents completed ratings, they too would be displayed in the bar graph alongside the Student data. Ideally, one hopes for students at either the SEL Competent or Advanced Levels and the EBC No Concern level. Research, however, suggests that students at each level of SEL competency have a small, but meaningful probability of having a co-occurring concern with either internalizing or externalizing behaviors.

District/School/Grade 200 students	Concern			Possible Concern			No Concern		
	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P
SEL Emerging	5%	% (N)	% (N)	6%	% (N)	% (N)	2%	% (N)	% (N)
SEL Developing	6%	% (N)	% (N)	8%	% (N)	% (N)	4%	% (N)	% (N)
SEL Competent	5%	% (N)	% (N)	12%	% (N)	% (N)	26%	% (N)	% (N)
SEL Advanced	4%	% (N)	% (N)	6%	% (N)	% (N)	16%	% (N)	% (N)

SEL x EBC – Internalizing
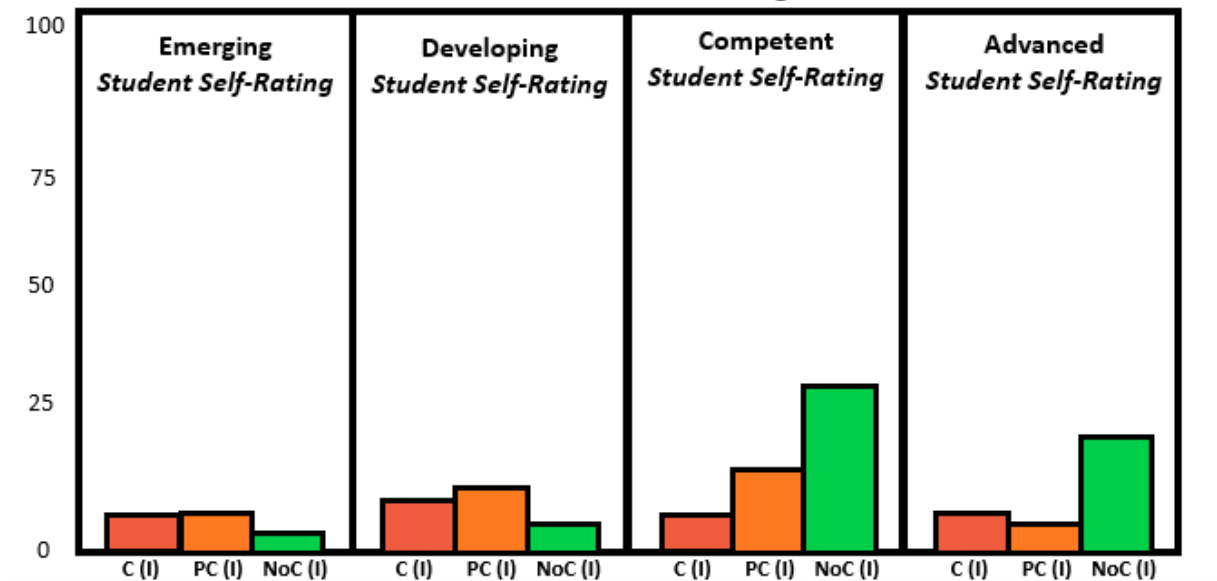
The fourth figure (below) is used to report the results of the SEL x EBC analysis for individual students in a classroom, school, or district. As illustrated, individual students are identified along with their (a) SEL Composite scores shaded to indicate their associated Competency Level along with the five SEL competency domain scores and (b) EBC-I and EBC-E raw scores also shaded to indicate an associated Concern Level. To the far-right side of the figure is a column used to signal when Follow-Up actions are recommended based on EBC scores. As indicated, relatively high EBC scores in either the Possible Concerns (orange) or Concerns (red) levels are identified for follow-up. The figure below is based on one type of informant – teacher, parent, or student – for purposes of illustration. When more than one informant is involved in rating students, scores for each informant are included.

	Social Emotional Learning Higher Scores are Desired [The higher the SEL score, the greater the frequency of desirable behaviors and more advanced the Competency Level]						Emotional Behavior Concern Lower Scores are Desired [The lower the EBC Scores, the lower the frequency of undesirable behaviors and the lower the level of concern]		
Student Name	**Total** (0-60)	**SA** (0-12)	**SM** (0-12)	**Soc A** (0-12)	**RS** (0-12)	**RDM** (0-12)	**Internal** (0-15)	**External** (0-15)	**Recommend Follow-up Based on EBC Score (Yes/No)**
Jen Smith	53	10	11	10	11	11	3	1	No
John Doe	36	7	8	7	8	6	2	8	Yes
Jessie Bond	48	9	11	10	9	9	9	2	Yes
Jose Garzon	23	5	6	4	5	3	2	4	No

A final data display (on the next page) provides a descriptive breakdown of one or more informants' ratings of students' SEL skills associated with the five contributing SEL competence domains. As illustrated in in the figure, the Mean, Standard Deviation, and range for each SEL competency is graphed for Teachers (T), Students (S), and Parents (P). The X on the line graph represents the Mean rating, the vertical lines indicate the location of the $\pm$ 1 standard deviations along the 0 to 12-point scale for each item, and the small circles indicated the score range. Mean scores below 8 (circled in red) are considered in need of improvement and are linked to instructional Skill Units in the SSIS SEL Classwide Intervention Program (CIP); the bolded Skill Units are directly linked to items on the SEL Scales. More information about the CIP is available at SSIScolab.com.

SEL Scales	Rater	M (SD)	Score Range and Mean ± 1SD 0—1—2—3—4—5—6—7—(8)—9—10—11—12	SSIS SEL CIP Skill Unit Aligned with Competency Scales
Self-Awareness	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	Ask for Help Tell Others About Your Skills Be Positive About the Future
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
Self-Management	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	Listen to Others Follow the Rules Pay Attention to Your Work Stay Calm with Others Express Your Feelings Stay Calm When Pushed or Hit Use appropriate language when upset Take criticism without getting upset Say when there is a problem
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
Social Awareness	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	Do Nice Things for Others Stand Up for Others Make Others Feel Better Show concern for others Show kindness to others when upset Forgive others
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
Relationship Skills	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	Say Please and Thank You Take Turns When You Talk Get Along with Others Ask Others to Do Things with You Introduce Yourself to Others Make Compromises Resolve disagreements calmly
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
Responsible Decision-Making	T	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	Do the Right Thing Own Your Actions Respect Other People's Things Do Your Part in a Group Listen to Different Ideas
	S	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	
	P	M (SD)	o |---------x---------| o	

Key Interpretation and Use Tips

When reading reports for any of the SSIS SEL Brief Scales Series of assessments, the following points are essential for correct interpretation and use of the results:

     1. SEL Composite and Scale scores are indicators of the frequency with which students have been observed to exhibit skills representative of valued SEL competencies. High scores are desired.

     2. EBC-Internalizing and EBC-Externalizing Scales yield separate Total Scores and are indicators of the frequency with which students have been observed to exhibit behaviors representative of emotional behavior concerns. Low scores are desired.

     3. Use confidence intervals to communicate that measurement error must be considered when reporting scores and performance levels for both SEL and EBC scores.

     4. Many years of research with behavior rating scale assessments like those in the SSIS SEL Brief + Mental Health Scales series indicates that two informants (teacher-student or parent-student) typically agree only moderately. This is largely because most raters observe students' behavior in only a subset of common situations daily.

     5. SEL competencies assessed link directly to evidence-based interventions for teaching and improving skills in need of improvement.

In summary, reports are an important outcome of the assessment process. When the assessment process is driven by a purpose and focuses on SEL competencies and/or EBC behaviors with known relevance to students' social and academic functioning, communications among educators and students are enhanced, competency domains in need of improvement identified, and connections to strategies for teaching and improving such skills established. Thus, assessments initially inform and drive intervention, which in turn, requires additional assessments to determine the effects of the intervention and recommendations for future action. More information about the SSIS SEL Brief Scales series of assessments is available in the User Guides & Technical Manuals that accompany each assessment.

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