



The Social-Emotional Learning Achieved by Trinity@McCormack

A Trinity Boston Foundation Program

It is commonly understood that "youth concentrated in under-resourced communities are more likely to experience trauma and community violence, which greatly affects their ability to learn and engage in schools." - Bragin & Bragin, 2010

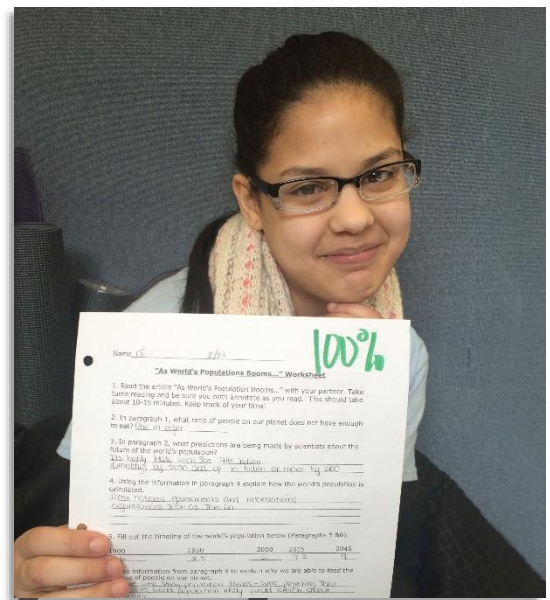
Trinity@McCormack is an integrated model of student support that offers both individual counseling and school-wide services to further the development of a safe and supportive school community. The program aims to foster a sense of belonging and success among students who have experienced a high level of trauma by drawing on the principles of restorative justice, trauma-informed care and racial equity.

- **SEED Competency Ladders™**

Trinity@McCormack and Trinity Boston Foundation have worked closely with SEED Impact to customize developmental Competency Ladders™ to track, guide and accelerate growth in Social Emotional Learning (SEL), a critical dimension of youth development.¹ Program leaders administered this aspect of our study, assessing 16 youth at the start and end of the year.

- **Retrospective Satisfaction Survey**

In addition to the SEL ratings and narrative observations provided by program leaders, the 16 students self-assessed their personal experience of Trinity@McCormack, using a seven-item Retrospective Satisfaction Survey. These data reveal how the youth themselves value the experience.



SUMMARY FINDINGS

Competency Ladder analyses point to a **65 percent gain achieved in one year** in SEL development.

These findings affirm that the social emotional skills taught are taking root in participants.

Youth with stronger SEL are more likely to have

- ✓ academic and career success,
- ✓ positive relationships,
- ✓ better physical and mental health,
- ✓ meaningful contributions to society.²



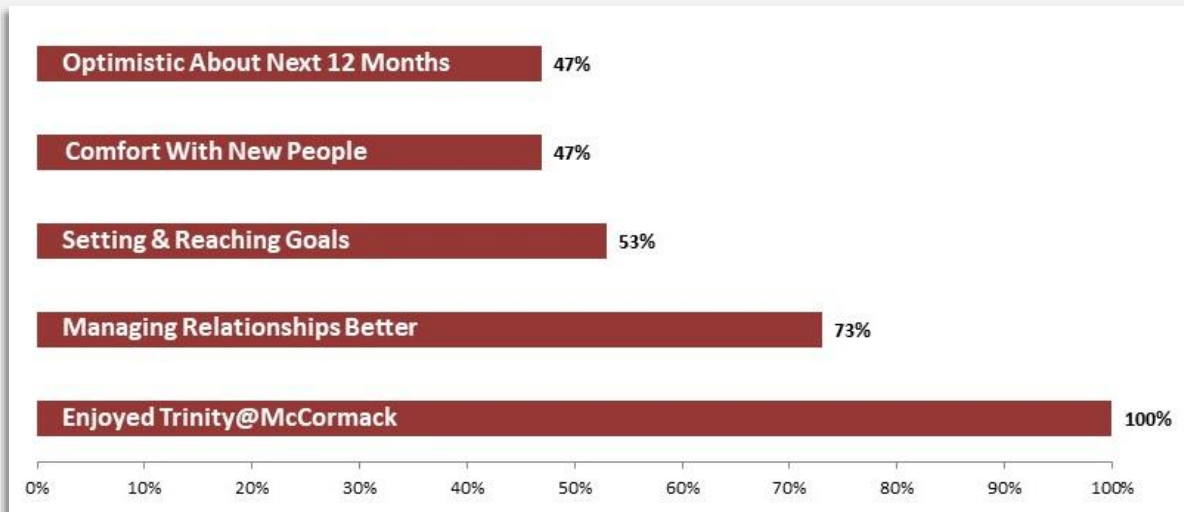
"I didn't want to come to school before and now I do. My attitude changed."
-7th Grade Student

"I just think about realistic goals and do my best to get there."
-8th Grade Student

¹ Across the field, SEL has been challenging to measure without lengthy surveys that yield questionable results. A white paper explaining the simple yet robust approach we are testing is available on request.

² Council of Distinguished Scientists National Commission on Social, Emotional and Academic Development. The Aspen Institute, September 2017.

Retrospective Survey findings revealed participants reporting significant gains, as shown below.



Combining the two measurement lenses confirms validity of the SEL measure. The youth who self-reported gaining most from the year were externally assessed as having larger SEL gains, as well.

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL VALUE OF TRINITY@MCCORMACK

The following profiles are provided by program leaders to illustrate the life-altering impact of Trinity@McCormack:

“Jamal”, a 7th grader, has improved his self-observation skills and self-awareness, but continues to get distracted easily. He has developed strong relationships with teachers and feels more connected to school. Attention has improved. Jamal is more open and trying behavioral interventions to increase his focus and attention. Daily rewards have been successful. He was able to maintain relationship with clinician through difficult rupture.

“Roxanna,” a 7th grader, has improved her short-term goal setting, specifically around homework, behavior, and engagement in classes. She continues to struggle with challenges such as attendance and making positive choices in peer groups, but is working with her Trinity life coach on these issues. Roxanna has developed strong relationships in the program and is liked by teachers. She is kind, thoughtful, and determined in her relationships and goals.

Self-ratings by youth of their experience correlated with SEL gains on these elements:

1. Respond differently to situations
2. Manage relationships better
3. Increased comfort engaging with new people.
4. More positive about achieving success in the next 12 months.



HOW WE MEASURE SEL

We analyze SEL in three domains:

- **BEING**
emotional competency; how learners view and carry themselves
- **DOING**
cognitive skills; how technically prepared they are to respond to challenges
- **RELATING**
interpersonal skills; how well they interact with others

Competencies in all three domains tend to be retained and carry over to new tasks and life challenges.



DETAILED COMPETENCY STUDY RESULTS

On average, increases were achieved in each of the competency domains, as follows:



Overall, the three 8th graders had more movement up the three ladders than their younger peers. Comparable SEL gains were observed in the sixth and seventh graders.

- Participants included nine 6th graders, five 7th graders, and three 8th graders.
- The program team used a cloud survey to indicate the rungs on the ladders that best described each youth. They included supporting narratives to validate their assessments.
- Data were collected in Fall 2017 to serve as the baseline, and again in Spring 2018, near the end of the school year.

"I'm not scared anymore. Loud people were scary before."

- 6th Grade Student

"I feel like next year I can get good grades. Before I was always failing, but now I know I can do the work and get better grades."

- 7th Grade Student

"At Trinity there's always someone I can talk to, they calm me down."

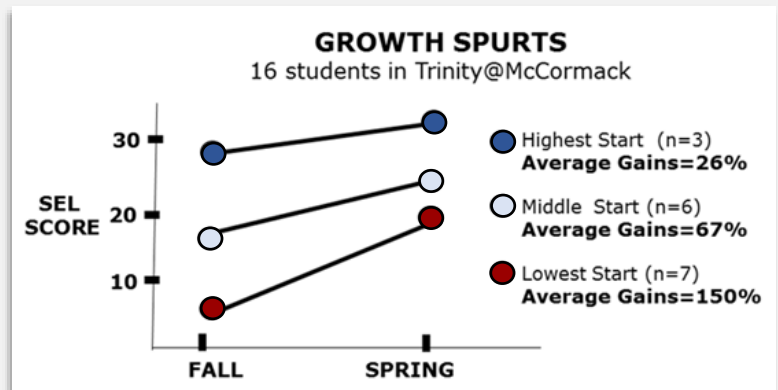
- 6th Grade Student

Trinity@McCormack is changing the odds for Boston youth.

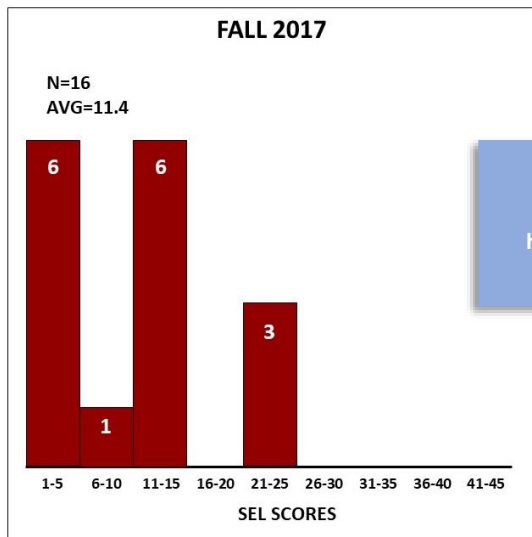
The seven students who started the school year with the lowest SEL (4.6 average out of max 15) increased their SEL by **150 percent**.

The six students in the middle of the distribution in the Fall (13.0 average) increased their SEL by **67 percent**.

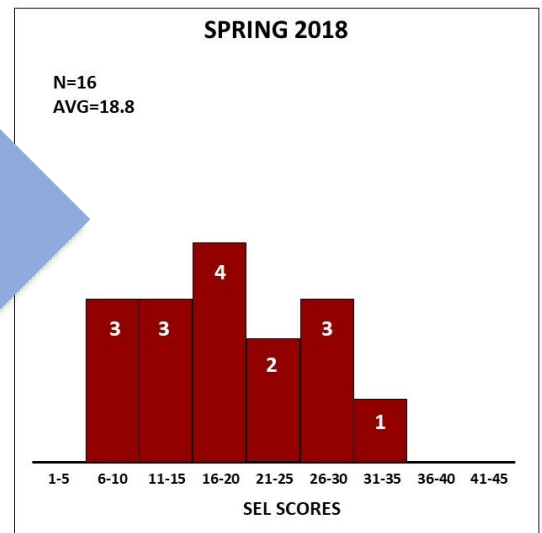
The remaining three students with the highest SEL at the start (24.0 average) increased their SEL by **26 percent**.



The charts below show how the overall 65 percent increase in SEL scores was distributed from Fall 2017 to Spring 2018. Scores skewed low at the outset, in the Fall.



During the program year, there is a clear shift toward higher competency levels for the entire population.



"I used to get in trouble and was always failing. I've improved my grades and made friends. I'm proud of participating."

-7th Grade Student

