



Recognizing SEL In Action: A Daily Leadership Habit

(For Directors and Leaders Observing Classrooms)

What To Look For

Focus your observations — both formal and informal — on real, lived social-emotional learning happening throughout the day. Look for authentic moments that reflect the four Everyday Interactions Matter (EIM) pillars:

Connection:

- Warm greetings, gestures, or moments of comfort
 - Shared laughter, play, or authentic expressions of care
 - Teachers recognizing and responding to children's cues, both verbal and nonverbal
 - Children showing they feel welcomed and safe — in their own way
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Reciprocity:

- Back-and-forth conversations, exchanges, or shared play
 - Teachers following a child's lead or honoring their ideas
 - Children solving problems together or collaborating naturally
 - Adults adjusting their responses based on children's communication styles
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Inclusion:

- Children inviting others into play or exploration
- Teachers creating flexible ways for all children to participate
- Moments where differences are honored, and belonging is visibly supported
- Ensuring every child's presence, participation, and voice is valued

Opportunities to Grow:

- Gentle stretching of skills: Supporting resilience, persistence, and expression
 - Celebrating small emotional or cognitive risks children take
 - Offering encouragement during conflict, challenge, or new learning moments
 - Creating space for autonomy, emotional exploration, and peer leadership
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What to Celebrate

- ☀ Simple, everyday gestures that build trust and belonging
 - ☀ Staff responsiveness to individual strengths and needs
 - ☀ Growth in persistence, empathy, problem-solving, and self-regulation
 - ☀ Children's authentic ways of connecting, playing, and growing
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Reflection Prompts for Leaders

🌀 Where did I notice Connection , Reciprocity , Inclusion , or Opportunity to Grow  today?

🌀 How can I celebrate authentic SEL moments that reflect each child's strengths and individuality?

🌀 How can I weave this noticing into our culture — through staff meetings, coaching, and family partnerships?

🌀 How does what I observe align with the environment of trust, growth, and belonging we are cultivating?

Closing Reminder

**"SEL lives in the small spaces —
in the everyday moments where children are invited to connect,
belong, and grow."**