

## **Aligning A Rhythm2Recovery Social & Emotional Development program to the CASEL SEL Guidelines. 2022**

There is widespread recognition on the need for social and emotional education (SEL) with young people across the school system in order to assist in the creation of an equitable, supportive and respectful school climate, and to benefit the social and emotional (mental) health of young people, and improve student outcomes in the behavioural and academic realm.

In many countries SEL is mandatory in all schools but freedom exists on how to deliver it and which approach to take. In Australia, several jurisdictions accredit specific courses, whilst others do not. The Rhythm2Recovery model has been accredited as an SEL, mental health intervention by NESA – the New South Wales Education Authority.

CASEL [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org) is the dominant accreditation body in the USA and maintains rigorous standards, supported by a strong research presence, to ensure schools can choose with confidence programs that will impact their students most positively. At present, no music-based programs are listed by CASEL, despite a wealth of positive research on their impact on the social and emotional health of young people. This is likely due to the limited nature of reflection within most music programs – the Rhythm2Recovery model provides that missing element, and the challenge of evaluating the impact of music within the scientific model, with many of its most powerful elements remaining immeasurable.

This document provides our facilitators with specific information on how to link the Rhythm2Recovery model, exercises and research to the CASEL requirements.

---

**To be considered for inclusion in the *CASEL guide to Effective SEL Programs*, a program must be universal, that is, for use with all students, delivered during the school day, and designed for students in the preschool to high school grade range.**

Programs must also have written documentation of their approach to promoting students' social and emotional development and provide a sufficient level of detail to ensure the consistency and quality of program delivery. Finally, evaluation, design, and implementation criteria are evaluated according to the type and rigor of evidence and key features that programs must demonstrate to be included.

*Note the Rhythm2Recovery model is applicable for use with all students, across all ages, but, is often prioritised for 'at risk' students. If this use, for select groups, is specified it will make any application for inclusion in the guide unacceptable. The Rhythm2Recovery workbooks and the R2R Healthy Relationships and Bullying Prevention manuals provide significant instructions and clear detail on how to deliver these music-based exercises to achieve positive SEL outcomes.*

According to CASEL - 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. (CASEL, 2020). Weissberg and colleagues (2015) have identified a set of five core clusters of social and emotional competencies (SECs): self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

**As Rhythm2Recovery is a model of practice, it can be presented for inclusion by CASEL as either:**

- **A Program** – Healthy Relationships or Bullying Prevention Manuals or one structured by an education professional from the R2R workbook and other resources.
- **A Teaching Practice** – a model designed to create optimal conditions for the development of social and emotional competence, including strategies that promote reflection by students or build positive and supportive relationships among teachers, students, and families

**The Three Standards for selection to the CASEL Guide:**

1. *CASEL SElect programs must:*
  - *Be evidence-based with at least one carefully conducted evaluation, with control group, (RCT or QE designs only) that documents statistically significant impacts on specific student behavioural outcomes and/or institutional outcomes compared to the control.*
  - *Be well-designed, classroom-based programs that systematically promote students' social and emotional competence, provide opportunities for practice, and offer multiyear programming.*
  - *Deliver high-quality training and other implementation supports, including initial training and ongoing support to ensure sound implementation.*
2. *CASEL Promising programs:*
  - *Must be well-designed and provide comprehensive SEL programming but lack substantive research. Evidence includes at least one of the following: The evaluation shows a positive impact favouring the intervention group only on nonbehavioral outcomes such as attitudes or a specific social or emotional skill (e.g., emotion recognition or decision-making).*
  - *The evaluation demonstrates positive significant outcomes that favour the intervention group but does not adjust for pre-test, and the groups were equivalent at baseline.*
  - *The evaluation shows an outcome for improved teaching practices and not only a behavioral student outcome.*
  - *The evaluation includes a significant outcome that favours the comparison group on an outcome that is substantively important to the program's theory, but the program has an additional qualifying evaluation with an independent sample that demonstrates positive effects by at least a 2:1 ratio (i.e., at least two effects favouring the intervention group for every one effect favouring the comparison group).*

- *May also demonstrate a positive impact on teaching practices without accompanying positive student outcomes.*

### 3. CASEL SEL-Supportive programs (formerly called SEL-Related):

- *Meet the SElect or Promising criteria for their evidence of effectiveness on student outcomes and could be a beneficial component of systemic SEL implementation, but from a design perspective lack the necessary criteria for inclusion.*
- *Specifically, these programs may not cover competencies comprehensively (for example, confining self-management to deep breathing but not including important components like goal-setting), offer opportunities for practice and generalization, be part of a Tier 1 approach for all students, or be designed for implementation during the school day.*

## **Addressing the Research Requirements of the CASEL Accreditation Process**

Formal research into the Rhythm2Recovery model has been completed as part of the DRUMBEAT program, the first program designed by the author for the Holyoake Institute – with consistent findings of positive impacts on student behaviour, social skills, attitudes and attendance. However, these are unlikely to be accepted by CASEL as they are seeking research on a specific program, rather than a model of practice. They may be relevant in relation to assessment of a ‘**Teaching Practice**’.

### **Key Research Studies are listed below:**

- Martin, K., & Wood, L. (2017). Drumming to a New Beat: A Group Therapeutic Drumming and Talking Intervention to Improve Mental Health and Behaviour of Disadvantaged Adolescent Boys. *Children Australia*, 42(4), 268-276. doi:10.1017/cha.2017.40

*Children from three socio-economically deprived schools, showing behavioural problems – improved mental well-being, reductions in post-traumatic symptoms*

- Wood, L., Ivery, P., Donovan, R., & Lambin, E. (2013) To the beat of a different drum - improving the social and mental wellbeing of at-risk youth with drumming. *Journal of Public Mental Health*, 12,2 p70-79

*180 students across 19 schools with control groups. Drumming & Cognitive therapy combination increases self-esteem in identified 'at risk' school students, whilst reducing behavioural incidents and increasing school attendance.*

- Faulkner, S., Wood, L., Ivery, P., & Donavon, R. (2012). It is not just music & rhythm - Evaluation of a drumming-based program to improve the social wellbeing of alienated youth. *Children Australia*, 37,1, p31-39.

*Sixty students classified as 'high risk' across three schools with control - improvements in attendance, social integration and behaviour as well as reductions in suspensions.*

To gain high level CASEL accreditation as a program it is likely an applicant will need to complete independent research on a specific Rhythm2Recovery program prior to the application being submitted.

**For an overview of how the R2R model is used to address student mental health visit <https://tinyurl.com/58dmjemr>**

## **Addressing CASELS Five Core SEL Competencies**

Teaching material should emphasize the importance of developing both intrapersonal competencies that include self-awareness and self-management and interpersonal competencies that include social awareness and relationship skills.

The five areas include:

1. Self-Awareness - The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behaviour across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose
2. Self-Management - The abilities to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation and agency to accomplish personal/collective goals.
3. Social-Awareness - The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts. This includes the capacities to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behaviour in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.
4. Relationship Skills - The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. This includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed.
5. Responsible Decision Making - The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions across diverse situations. This includes the capacities to consider ethical standards and safety concerns, and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being.

### **Exercises within the Rhythm2Recovery Resources that address the five SEL areas nominated by CASEL**

***The Rhythm2recovery model involves fun socialisation through playing rhythmic music in groups, combined with reflective discussions, led by an accredited facilitator (teacher, counsellor etc.), that link the exercises to social and emotional awareness, and understanding.***

These exercises can be organised into a program to meet the 'Program Requirements' or for research purposes. Note - Programs must also have written documentation of their approach to promoting students' social and emotional development and provide a sufficient level of detail to ensure the consistency and quality of program delivery.

## 1. Self-Awareness

CASEL AIM	R2R Activity
Integrating personal and social identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Drum</li> <li>• Find Your True Sound</li> </ul>
Identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find Your Strengths</li> </ul>
Demonstrating honesty and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand Up for Your Values</li> <li>• Standing Up for It</li> </ul>
Linking feelings, values, and thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Values Rhythm</li> <li>• What Does a Good Friend Do</li> </ul>
Examining prejudices and biases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who's out &amp; what's it all about</li> </ul>
Experiencing self-efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 on and 4 off</li> <li>• A new Adventure</li> </ul>
Having a growth mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, I can</li> <li>• Courage</li> </ul>
Developing interests and a sense of purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you want from your life?</li> <li>• Dream Catcher</li> </ul>

## 2. Self-Management

CASEL AIM	R2R Activity
Managing one's emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Rhythmic Wave</li> <li>• Play it fast, Play it slow</li> <li>• A Storm of Feelings</li> <li>• An Emotional Journey</li> <li>• Rumble in the Jungle</li> <li>• Fade to nothing</li> <li>• Hold onto your rhythm</li> </ul>
Identifying and using stress-management strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A storm of Feelings</li> <li>• The Pressure Valve</li> <li>• Hold on to your rhythm</li> </ul>
Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus</li> <li>• The Rhythmic Wave</li> <li>• Fade to Nothing</li> <li>• It's your choice</li> </ul>
Setting personal and collective goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From little things, big things grow</li> <li>• The Ego Trap</li> <li>• Find Your Voice</li> </ul>
Using planning and organizational skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From little things, big things grow.</li> </ul>
Showing the courage to take initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courage</li> <li>• A new Adventure</li> </ul>
Demonstrating personal and collective agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I've got the power</li> <li>• Take back your power</li> </ul>

### 3. Social Awareness

CASEL AIM	R2R Activity
Taking others' perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Musical chairs – extending your perspective</li> </ul>
Recognizing strengths in others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find Your Strengths, part 2</li> <li>• The Appreciation Chair</li> </ul>
Demonstrating empathy and compassion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagine it was you</li> <li>• Giving Thanks</li> </ul>
Showing concern for the feelings of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An emotional journey</li> <li>• Imagine it was you</li> <li>• Are you in or are you out</li> </ul>
Understanding and expressing gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving Thanks</li> <li>• The Appreciation Chair</li> </ul>
Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Speaker's Chair – Find Your Values</li> <li>• Hold onto your values</li> </ul>
Recognizing situational demands and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold onto your rhythm</li> <li>• Find your voice</li> <li>• One door shuts &amp; another door opens</li> </ul>
Understanding the influences of organizations/systems on behaviour	

### 4. Relationship Skills

CASEL AIM	R2R Activity
Communicating effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue</li> <li>• Listen deeply</li> <li>• Call &amp; Response – communication 101</li> <li>• Copy That - Gossip</li> </ul>
Developing positive relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Values Rhythm</li> <li>• What does a good friend do?</li> <li>• Friends</li> <li>• Giving &amp; Receiving</li> <li>• One to the left &amp; one to the right</li> <li>• Don't touch me</li> </ul>
Demonstrating cultural competency	
Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Layer in your rhythm</li> <li>• Harmony exercise</li> <li>• 1 &amp; 1 = 3</li> </ul>
Resolving conflicts constructively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 &amp; 1 = 3</li> <li>• Musical chairs – expanding perspective</li> <li>• If it is to be, then it's up to me</li> <li>• The Blame Game</li> </ul>

Resisting negative social pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold onto your rhythm</li> <li>• Play it fast, play it slow</li> <li>• It's your choice</li> </ul>
Showing leadership in groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community drum – beginning the rhythm</li> <li>• Call &amp; Response – leading the calls</li> </ul>
Seeking or offering support and help when needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends</li> <li>• Balance Me</li> <li>• A few good friends</li> <li>• Giving &amp; receiving</li> <li>• Guide me home</li> </ul>
Standing up for the rights of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing up for it</li> <li>• Hold onto your values</li> </ul>

## 5. Responsible Decision Making

CASEL AIM	R2R Activity
Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 + 1 = 3</li> </ul>
Identifying solutions for personal and social problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find Your Voice</li> </ul>
Learning to make a reasoned judgment after analysing information, data, and facts	
Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's your choice</li> </ul>
Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside & outside of school	
Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rites of passage</li> <li>• A pledge of Responsibility</li> <li>• If it is to be, then it's up to me</li> </ul>
Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts	

**Detail of these exercises can be found in the Rhythm2Recovery Workbooks, Volume 1 & 2.**

*Note – The exercises 'Rumble If...' and 'The Speaker's Chair' can be used to add additional reflective questioning to any subject areas that require more exploration.*