

EmotionBlock

A toolkit for social emotional learning
through storytelling and event sequencing



The need

Social emotional learning (SEL) during **early and middle childhood** not only contributes to children's well-being during **the early years**, but also **long-term positive impacts**, such as mental health and prosocial behaviours. (Denham, 2003)

The goal

To develop an child-centered, engaging, and accessible learning experience to help children, between age 3 to age 8, explore emotions, emotion regulation methods, social awareness, and relationship skills.



SEL framework

The SEL framework proposed by CASEL includes five core social and emotional competencies, namely **self-awareness, self-management, responsive decision making, relationship skills, and social awareness** (CASEL, 2015).

Storytelling and SEL

When children read aloud fictional stories about emotions with others or freely talk about their real-life emotion stories, they gain a better understanding of related events and develop emotional awareness (Denham, 1995; Mikhailovna, 2018; Shuster, 2000).

Event sequencing and SEL

Sequencing skills is when children breakdown events into smaller subsets of events and put them in correct order. Learning how to sequence events helps children form connections between different stages of an event (Doenyas et al, 2014). When it comes to SEL, it helps children understand the connection between emotions and emotion triggers.



Previous work

Traditional

Teacher-led, classroom-based, curriculum-based (PATHS, CASEL)

Technology-enhanced

Conversational agent for storytelling: Therapist Vibe: Children's Expressions of their Emotions through Storytelling with a Chatbot (Santos et al, 2020)

Interactive interfaces: Inside Out: Teaching Empathy and Social-Emotional Skills (Kralicek et al, 2018)

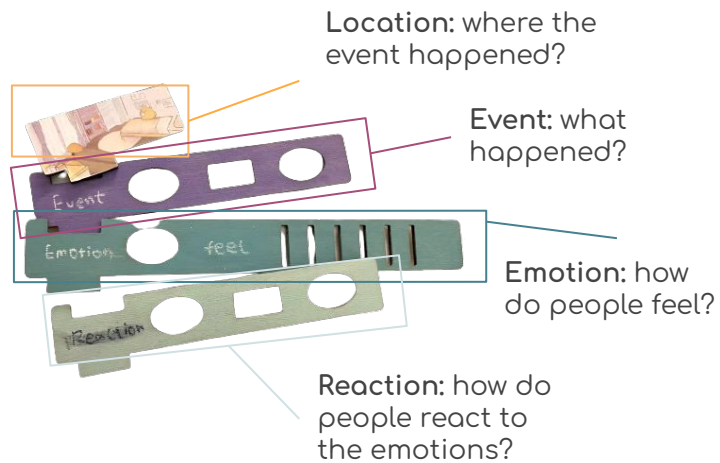
What is missing

A **systematic** and **engaging** tool to help children learn **the five aspects of SEL** by **telling stories** about emotions (both fictional and real-life) **in a sequenced way**.

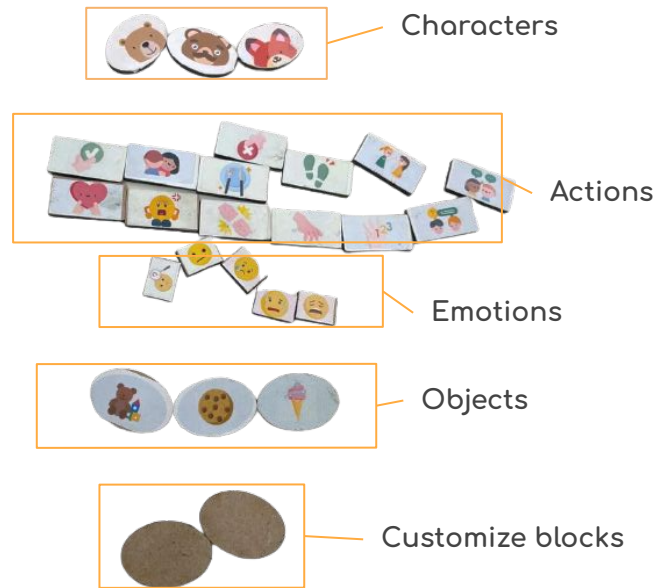


Blocks

Description blocks



Element blocks





Backend system

Documenting & tracing

The screenshot shows a software interface with three main sections:

- Left Panel:** A text area containing the following text:
Location Park
Event
Emotion feels
Reaction
Emotion feels
Below the text are two buttons: "Run" and "Save".
- Middle Panel:** A vertical grey bar with the text "Descriptions" at the top and "Elements" below it.
- Right Panel:** A visual representation of a narrative sequence. It consists of four horizontal bars, each representing a different element:
 - Location:** A blue bar with a dropdown menu showing "Park".
 - Event:** A purple bar with a red arrow pointing right and two small white icons.
 - Emotion:** A blue bar with the text "feels" and four small white icons.
 - Reaction:** A green bar with three small white icons.
 - Emotion:** A yellow bar with the text "feels" and four small white icons.

The backend system is for adults to assist children's narrating process by providing real-time guidance and visualization.



Learning goals

Event sequencing

Understand emotions and how they impact our behavior

Emotion coping strategies

Figure out the good strategies to respond to emotions

Understand difference

Know how people feel differently

Build connections

Collaborate with friends and adults

Boost creativity and self-reflection

Collaborate with friends and adults

Practice fine motor skills

Manipulate small pieces



1

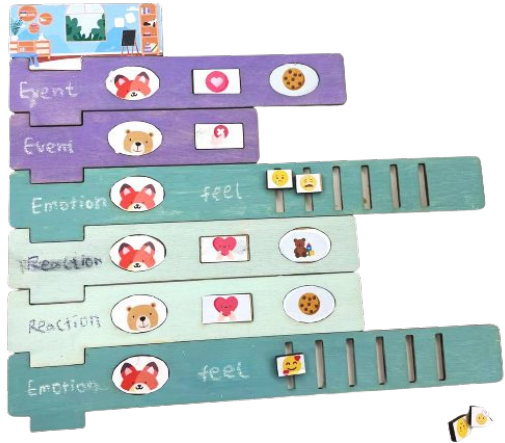
Solving puzzles based on stories

Event sequencing

Fine motor skills

Example

Bear has a cookie. Fox wants the cookie, but bear doesn't want to give it to him. Fox feels sad and disappointed. He thinks about it, and shares his toy with bear. In return, bear shares his cookie. They are both very happy.



2

Narrating your feelings

Emotion coping strategies

Boost self-reflection

Example

Tell one thing that makes you sad today using EmotionBlock. Can you recall what made you feel sad? How did you cope with emotions? Will you do it another way?





3

Developing empathy

Understand difference

Build connection

Example

Play with friends to think about how others feel and how people feel differently under the same condition. For example, Cathy lost her cat, how do you think she might be feeling? Tom makes a joke about Cathy, how do you feel and how does Cathy feel?



4

Developing your stories

Boost creativity

Example

Draw your own blocks and share with friends and parents. Use your imagination!





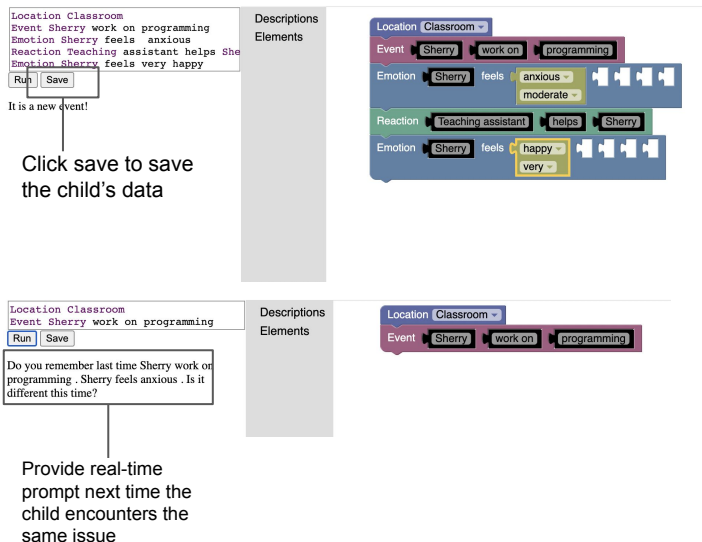
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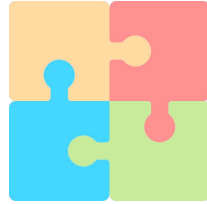
Store data and backtrack

Build connection

Example

Parents, teachers and therapists can use the backend system to create data profile for every child they work with. The database stores the children's narration data, and will give real-time prompts based on the data stored.





Thank you