

2020 - 2021



# THE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING ACHIEVED BY High School Students

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (LDP) PARTICIPANTS

**The Trinity Education for Excellence Program (TEEP)**, is a three-to-six-year, tuition-free, out-of-school time, pipeline opportunity. Middle and high school students gain academic enrichment, leadership development, meaningful employment experience, peer mentoring, and high school and college admissions support. 2021 marked TEEP's 22nd anniversary as a program of Trinity Boston Connects.





*“I want to learn how to put myself out there a little more because even after our wilderness experience, I find myself hesitating to do things that involve any type of risk.”*

–Cameron, rising 11th grader,  
1st experience in LDP

Beginning as rising 7th graders, young people of color engage three consecutive summers in a five-week, summer intensive. Morning sessions focus on academic confidence through project-based curricula. Afternoon sessions offer experiential learning. Participants meet for several community-building events during the school year.

Graduates of the middle school program continue in TEEP’s Leadership Development Program (LDP). LDP serve as mentors and

paid counselors to their younger peers. They also participate in year-round college and career mentoring.

This report focuses on the social and emotional development of 14 high school students who served as mentors to middle school students in the 2021 summer camp (held in-person following the virtual, pandemic season). A [companion report](#) presents the development of middle school participants.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM CONTENT

LDP participants are trained in three essential community practices: racial equity, trauma-inclusive care, and restorative justice. They receive ongoing coaching over successive summers where they start as Counselors-in-training and may be promoted to Counselors and ultimately, to Supervisors. LDP students engage in year-round college and career programming including mentorship, campus tours, and career exploration. They also participate in experiential learning opportunities such as community-building retreats.

This summer, with the support of LDP leaders-in-training, TEEP provided middle school students with a safe and welcoming space where they could share their opinions and voice concerns. Participants were given the necessary tools to build their self-advocacy skills and express themselves in different situations. LDP students organized events, participated in field trips and team-building experiences, creating a weekly newsletter that was shared with the TEEP community, TBC staff, and via social media.

# the difference we make

Research shows that youth with stronger SEL are more likely to provide meaningful contributions to society & to gain



academic & career success

positive relationships

better physical & mental health

The 14 LDP participants self-assessed their Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) using the SEED Impact Competency Ladders™. The students included four rising 11th graders, four rising 12th graders, and six high school graduates. They were familiar with the evaluation process, having participated in comparable self-assessments in previous years. They made good use of the opportunity for personal and shared reflection to deepen their understanding of SEL practices, and to sharpen their ability to assess and guide the SEL learning of their middle school mentees.

On average,

- The LDP participants self-reported a **four percent gain in SEL** during the five-week summer camp. As high school students engaged for multiple years with TEEP, they had already achieved 32 percent SEL gains during the last measurement period, so further growth was modest.

SEL is an integral part of individual human development. A meta-analysis of over 200 programs, covering three decades of research, found that those focused to develop social and emotional wellbeing had lasting, positive effects. Students showed decreased emotional distress, such as anxiety and depression; improved social and emotional skills (e.g., self-awareness, self-management); improved attitudes about self, others, and about school (including higher academic motivation, stronger bonding with teachers); better classroom behavior (e.g., following classroom rules); decreased classroom misbehavior and aggression, and improved academic performance (e.g., standardized achievement test scores).<sup>1</sup>

Through well-rounded instruction, continuous evaluation, and authentic partnerships between SEL providers, families and communities, SEL advances educational equity and excellence.<sup>2</sup> Youth with stronger SEL are more likely to gain academic and career success, foster positive relationships, and attain better physical and mental health, leading them to achieve more meaningful contributions to society.<sup>3</sup>

SEED Impact's approach to SEL outcomes measurement supports the priorities of Trinity Boston Connects to deepen, capture and quantify whole-person development.

**“** Having found a safe space in TEEP as a rising 8th grader, by the start of this summer (having been largely inactive for a year in the pandemic), as a rising 11th grader, Anna described herself as fluctuating between being very quiet and shy, or very loud. 'I'm kind, and I can be awkward sometimes. I am really indecisive.' She was hoping to improve her self-expression.

By end of summer, Anna noted more confidence in identifying and expressing her values. She wanted to make improvements in her social skills, particularly with new people. She felt her greatest leadership strength was being responsible. She self-described as, 'I'm very funny once you get to know me. **”**

–Cameron, rising 11th grader, 1st experience in LDP

<sup>1</sup>Durlak, J., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions (PDF). Child Development, 82(1), 405-432.

<sup>2</sup>Casel.org. 2020. What Is SEL. [online] Available at: <<https://casel.org/what-is-SEL/>> [Accessed 20 October 2020].

<sup>3</sup>Council of Distinguished Scientists National Commission on Social, Emotional and Academic Development. The Aspen Institute, September 2017.

# How We Measure Social-Emotional Learning

SEED Impact provided tools to measure SEL gains across three domains (Being, Doing, and Relating), and guided the TEEP leaders to define progressive outcomes depicted as competency ladders that participants climb.

**SEL KEY** The highest stage of each ladder articulates the ideal outcomes toward which participants are encouraged by TEEP to aspire, as here described:



**BEING**  
self-confidence and self-efficacy

Students are becoming more composed, capable, confident, and self-directed. They experience an elevation of spirit and/or increased optimism about themselves and world.



**DOING**  
capacity to perform

Students are feeling more able to make decisions and becoming prepared to take on bigger challenges. They feel and observe progress in their life.



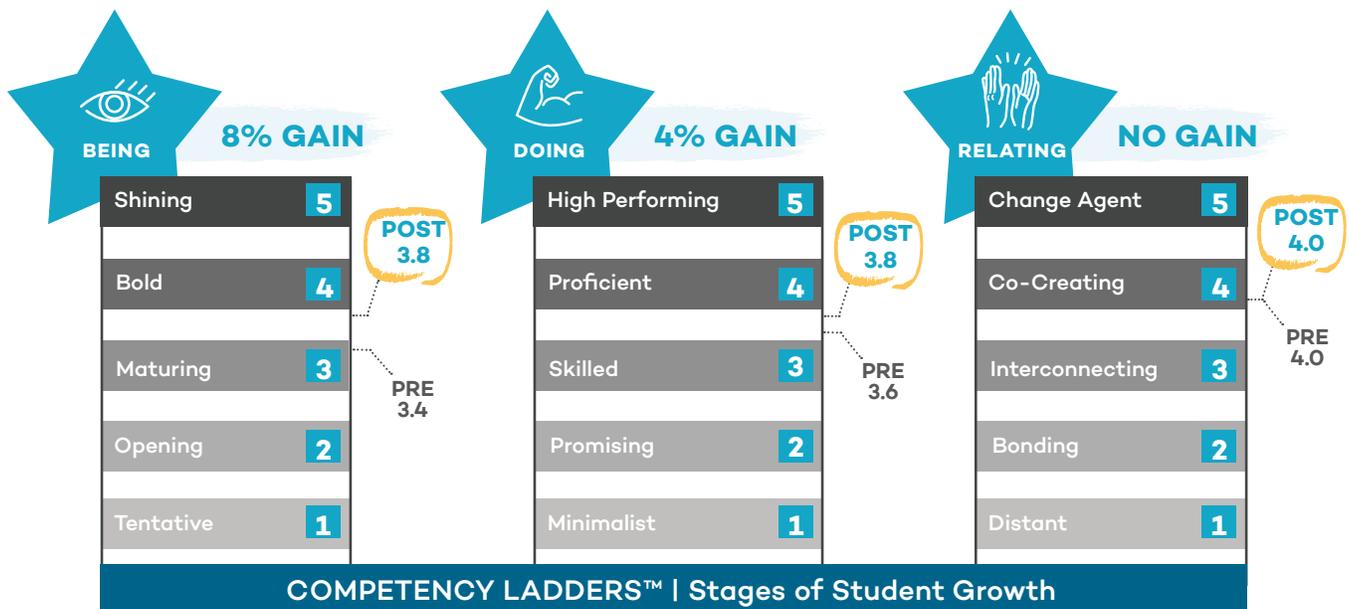
**RELATING**  
ability to engage with others

Students are gaining confidence and becoming more comfortable in their interactions with others. They seem interested in others' success as well as their own.

Progress is measured by evaluating how much of the unclimbed ladder has been mastered pre to post.

## GROWTH IN SEL COMPETENCIES

From July (pre) through August (post), 14 LDP participants self-assessed an overall gain in their SEL competencies of **4 percent**—a modest ascent on the ladders (each rung represents a 20 percent advance).



As shown above, students' self-reported changes varied by SEL domain:

- Being practices:** As a group, students advanced from “Maturing” (3.4 out of 5 max) to solidly “Maturing” (3.8). Seven youth indicated small gains, five youth indicated holding steady at the same level, and two youth noted small drops in Being.
- Doing practices:** The students advanced from “Skilled” (3.6) to solidly “Skilled” (3.8). Seven youth indicated small gains, four youth indicated holding steady at the same level, and three youth noted slight drops in Doing.
- Relating practices:** The participants as a group self-assessed at “Leading” (4.0), both at pre and post. Six youth indicated small gains, four youth held steady, and four youth noted slight drops in Relating.

# MASTERY OF NINE SEL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

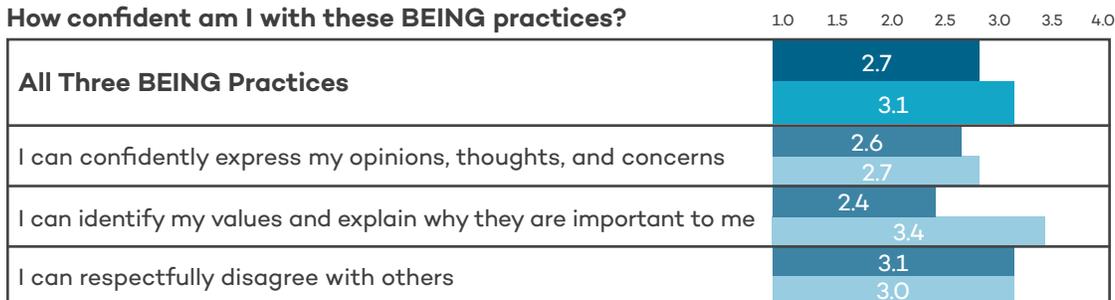
As an additional component of the self-assessment process, the LDP students were asked to rate their mastery of nine leadership practices, three each for Being, Doing, and Relating.

To self-assess their mastery of the practices shown below, they used this rating scale:



JULY    AUGUST

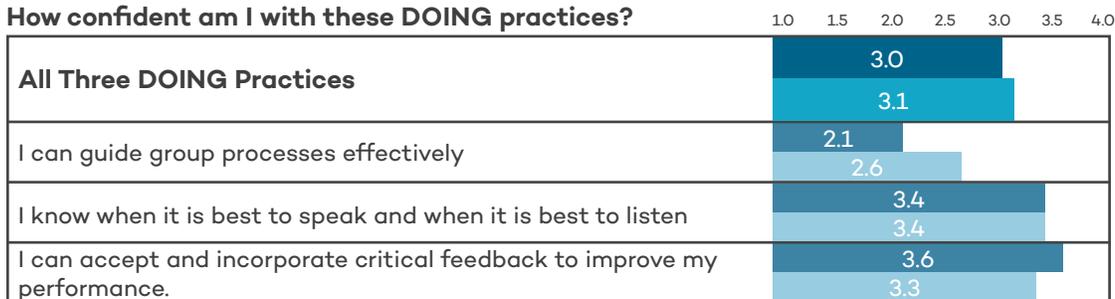
## How confident am I with these BEING practices?



PRE: The average self-rating (2.7 out of 4.0 max) indicated **"Sometimes with help."**

POST: The average self-rating (3.1 out of 4.0 max) indicated **"I got this."**

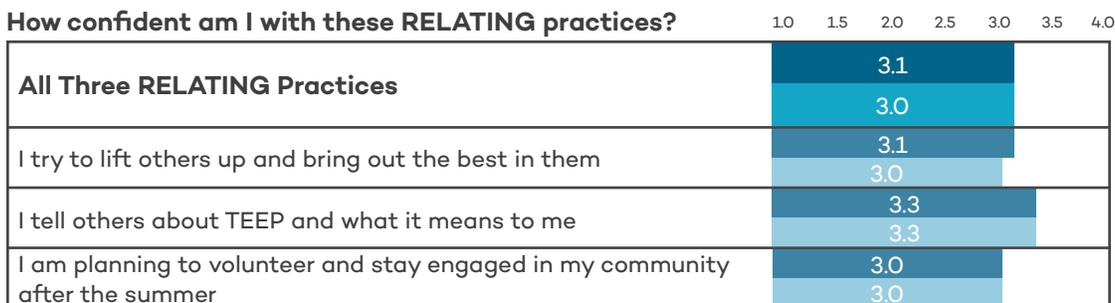
## How confident am I with these DOING practices?



PRE: The average self-rating (3.0 out of 4.0 max) indicated **"I got this."**

POST: The average self-rating (3.1 out of 4.0 max) indicated **"I got this."**

## How confident am I with these RELATING practices?



PRE: The average self-rating (3.1 out of 4.0 max) indicated **"I got this."**

POST: The average self-rating (3.0 out of 4.0 max) indicated **"I got this."**

High-achieving students rated these practices 3.0 or higher in August:

- I can identify my values and explain why they are important to me (3.4)
- I know when it is best to speak and when it is best to listen (3.4)
- I tell others about TEEP and what it means to me (3.3)

**Correlation.** The students were very consistent in their self-ratings of their being, doing, and relating practices using both tools. Positive correlation (0.70) was found for all three domains.

# RETROSPECTIVE SPOTLIGHT ON THE YOUTH: IN THEIR WORDS

Two time periods of student feedback follow for a representative sample of four LDP students:

## Ian after 2 TEEP MS summer camps and first LDP experience (during pandemic)

“ I was proud to help the older staff members to make videos. It helped me be more conscious of what I do and how I work. The TEEP community is a very great community with great goals. I hope I can become a more open person and a better leader ... I have learned in TEEP that you should always be a nice and responsible person. Also, to be honest with yourself and to admit when you are wrong.

## Ian, rising 11th grader, after 2 years in LDP

“ I am a positive person, and respect others always. My strength as a leader is to be close with the people around me. I want to learn more about being a leader, knowing what to do and when to do it. I will observe other counselors, learn from them, and make those ideas my own. I want to learn how to be a person everybody looks up to.

## Jocelyn, after 3 TEEP MS summer camps and one year in LDP

“ I want to share some of my life with others especially for people that struggle with some things that I do. I hope to gain confidence in myself, ... and I want to be able to overcome my fear of basically large crowds or speaking in front of a lot of people.

## Jocelyn, rising 12 grader, 3 years in LDP

“ I am very mindful and kind, and able to get feedback and change things around without a problem. When I am uncomfortable, I ask for help or speak out to change that. I have learned how to respect others and use TEEP values within my life and in relation to those who surround me. I aim to keep growing to become who I truly am as I keep using the values.

# RETROSPECTIVE SPOTLIGHT ON THE YOUTH: IN THEIR WORDS (continued)

Two time periods of student feedback follow for a representative sample of four LDP students:

**Osara, after 3 TEEP MS summer camps and one year in LDP**

“ TEEP has helped me be more vocal and also be more ‘out there’. I learned you never need to feel alone. Having trust in people can really help you at TEEP. I can’t wait for next summer. I hope to gain more knowledge as a counselor.

**Osara, rising 12th grader, three years in LDP**

“ I am a person that likes to help people with their problems, encourage others to try new things, and ... be positive. My strength as a leader is helping kids break out of their comfort zone. And also helping them integrate with new students.

**Kaylee, after 3 TEEP MS summer camps plus 3 years in LDP**

“ This summer I really had to ask myself if I wanted to do this. I had to basically revamp myself and start fresh which turned out great because I was able to really feel like a leader. TEEP allowing me to work this summer in a different environment really helped with that.

**Kaylee, HS graduate, 7 years with TEEP**

“ I’m a quite reserved person but with a side that’s fun and energetic. I know how to handle emotion. I’m caring and considerate as well as good at time management. I’m a quick adaptor and work rather quick on my feet. I also can come up with many ideas very quickly.