

The Social Emotional Learning Achieved by

# Youth Education Program Commonpoint Queens

2022-2023



Commonpoint Queens is dedicated to sustaining and enhancing the quality of individual, family and communal life throughout Queens, serving people of all ages, ability levels, stages of life and backgrounds.



*Administrators know the value of having a quality after-school program in the building, shared with the school community.*

— Commonpoint Queens School Principal

## What We Are

Commonpoint Queens is a social services organization that meets our borough’s diverse and evolving needs. People of all ages and backgrounds are welcome to come together to find support, access opportunities and build community connections throughout their lives.

Guided by the Jewish values of service and justice, we were founded to support our local Jewish community, which we continue to do today. As the demographics have evolved over six decades, we have extended our reach in the community across 52 sites in Queens, including the Sam Field Center and Central Queens, where many of our programs are based.

## What We Do: After School Youth Education

Our Youth Education Services Department provides a full range of After School activities, trips and special events for kindergarten through 8th-grade children.

At each partner school, the Program Director and their supervisor work closely with the principal to develop after-school programming aligned with school learning goals and Common Core standards. Program Directors and Education Specialists are active members of each school’s Leadership Team, providing a formal structure of team meetings and ongoing planning support.

This report focuses on our **Elementary and Middle School programming across 14 sites:**

<b>Beacon 158</b>	<b>Beacon 172</b>	<b>Beacon 216</b>
<b>PS 115</b>	<b>PS 165</b>	<b>PS 178</b>
<b>PS 200</b>	<b>PS 21</b>	<b>PS 266</b>
<b>PS 55</b>	<b>Central Queens</b>	<b>IS 178</b>
<b>MS 200</b>	<b>MS 67</b>	

SEL (Social Emotional Learning) is incorporated into all after school activities throughout the year. Students are provided opportunities to develop teamwork skills and meet new friends.

Funded by the Department of Youth and Community Development through the Comprehensive Afterschool System of NYC, School’s Out New York City Initiatives and other funding sources, our after-school programs are offered free of charge and are limited in enrollment.



*This program helps my child grow up to become an independent and successful person. I love this program. The staff are doing a great job.*

— PS 55, 3rd Grade Parent



*Our son absolutely loves this program ... He has made many friends and is extremely grateful for the staff who help with homework. He thoroughly enjoys arts and crafts, as well as the gym activities. We appreciate programming during holidays, which relieves the burden on working parents. It's an excellent place for kids to attend, providing a community environment that cares for them.*

— PS 21, 2nd Grade Parent



## Program Highlights, 2022-23

Students worked with program staff to plan diverse community engagement events, partnering with local anchor institutions like Northwell Hospital and civic organizations like the Girl Scouts. This year, our events attracted hundreds of students and families.

Given the diverse makeup of students and families, there was a renewed effort to recognize, explore and celebrate diversity and cultures in the program. Program directors and staff worked closely with administrators, families, students and other community stakeholders to create events, projects, workshops and celebrating:

**Jewish Holidays | Black History Month | Diwali |  
Hispanic Heritage Month | Chinese New Year | EID/ Ramadan |  
Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month**

Staff worked hard to connect families to other supportive resources. As a result, student engagement increased, and families became more engaged with the schools. Families appreciated the academic support offered to students, especially with homework and enrichment opportunities.

Commonpoint Queens pays close attention to our staff and provides continual resources to nurture their professional development and personal well-being. The Program Director provided monthly staff development workshops to support program staff:

**classroom management | lesson planning |  
trauma-informed care**

We are grateful to our Senior Directors for their ongoing leadership and to our Program Directors, Outreach Coordinators, Administrative support, Instructors and Youth Workers for providing after-school care to participants throughout the school year. Without their dedication, mentorship and help to uplift our communities, our programs would not be possible.

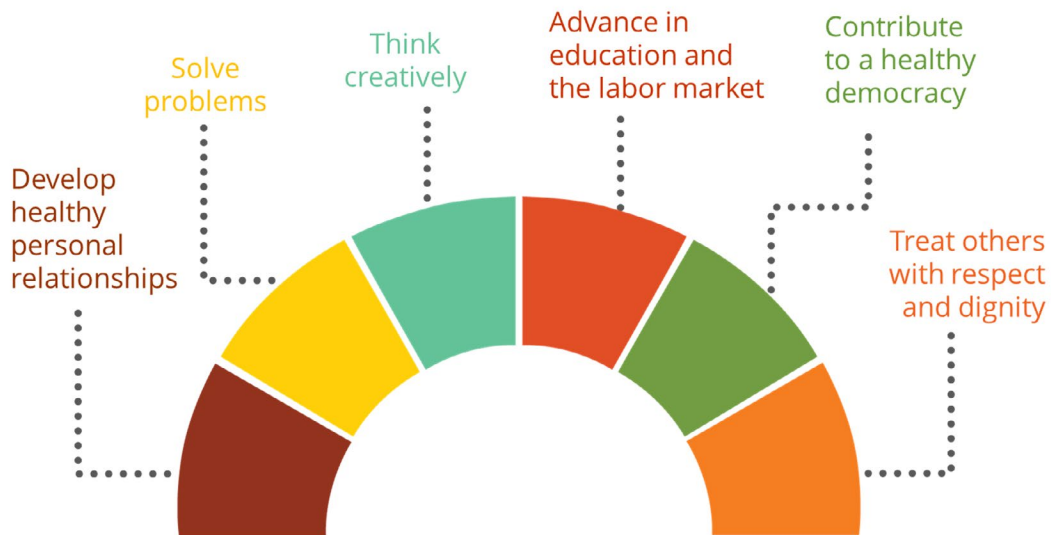


# The Difference We Make

## Elementary and Middle School Youth Education Program Results, 2022-23

- **WHO:** A sample of 454 After School students, kindergarten to 8th grade
- **GROWTH:** **13 percent increase in SEL competencies** observed by staff and teachers
- **SO WHAT:**

**RESEARCH CONFIRMS**  
SEL equips youth and adults to:



(1) Greenberg, M. T. (2023). Evidence for social and emotional learning in schools. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/928.269>





*The program has been incredibly important for my child's academic and personal development. Although he initially struggled to engage with the program, his behavior has improved significantly, and he has achieved much better grades.*

— PS 165, 3rd Grade Parent

## How We Measure Social Emotional Learning

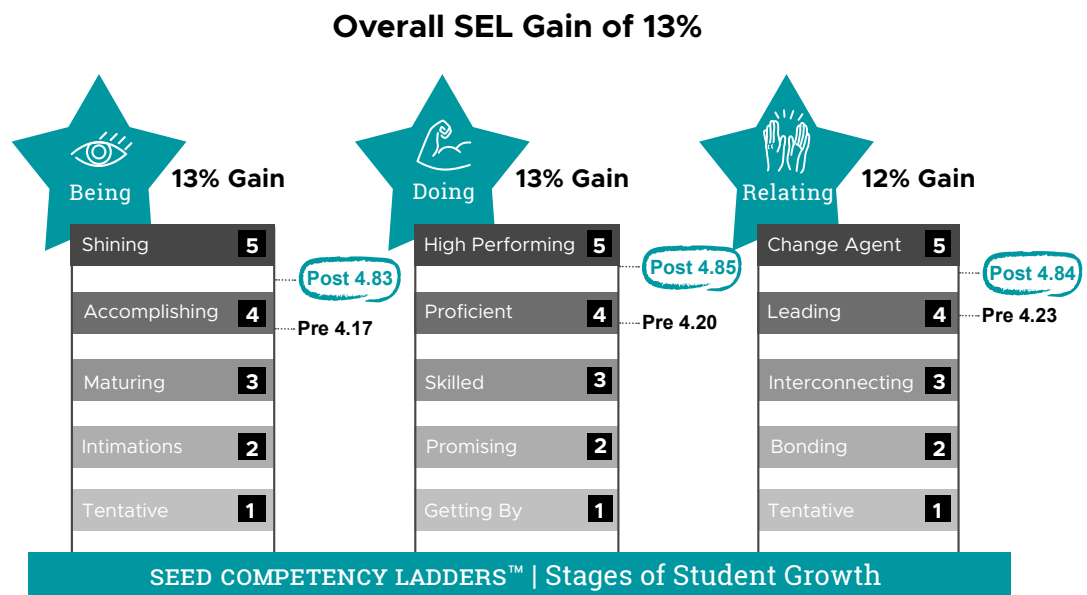
Working in partnership with [SEED Impact](#), three [SEED Competency Ladders™](#) were customized by the Youth Education program staff and integrated with programming to measure, credibly report and accelerate major shifts in competency.

SEED Impact measures SEL across three domains, and guides programs to define progressive outcomes depicted as a “results ladder” that participants climb.

We support whole-child development across three domains:

- 1. Being:** comfort with self
- 2. Doing:** aptitude with new skills
- 3. Relating:** interpersonal relationships

## Growth in SEL Competencies



As shown, students were observed to begin the year at an unusually high stage on each ladder. On average, by year’s end, they very nearly realized the north star, the highest aspirations defined by Commonpoint Queens for students of their age.

Overall, the **13 percent average gain in SEL competency** represents a half-stage advance on each of the SEL Competency Ladders, with movement in:

- Being, from Accomplishing towards Shining
- Doing, from Proficient towards High Performing
- Relating, from Leading towards Change Agent





*This program helped me become more vocal and confident. This will help me in making new friends and speaking with confidence.*

— Beacon 216, 8th Grade Student



## Three Student SPOTLIGHTS\*

SEL Gain:  
21%

**Kaelyn, PS 200, 1st Grade.** Kaelyn has undergone a significant transformation. She has become more confident and cooperative and has developed a newfound love for expressing her thoughts. She now actively seeks to be involved in activities, seeks help and communicates effectively. Her shyness has significantly diminished

SEL Gain:  
21%

**Ashley, Beacon 172, 6th Grade.** Ashley was too shy to participate in group activities at the beginning of the year and often worked on her homework alone in a corner. As the year progressed, she became more comfortable expressing her emotions and opinions about school and life. She has developed greater trust in those who show her respect and has become more vocal about her needs, such as asking for help with homework.

SEL Gain:  
18%

**Ryan, PS 115, Kindergarten.** Ryan has developed fine motor skills and is particularly skilled at writing letters and numbers. Throughout the school year, Ryan demonstrated a remarkable growth mindset as he started to understand the difference between right and wrong. Despite his carefree nature, he has shown an increasing level of maturity over time.

SEL Gain:  
20%

**Robin, Beacon 216, 8th Grade.** Initially, Robin was hesitant about being part of the program. After a few weeks, she transformed into an outgoing individual who gets along with everyone and is the first to participate in any activity. She displayed remarkable social growth and became the most confident and outspoken person in class.

\*Note: Names throughout this report are fictitious to protect student anonymity.

# Student Self-Reflection

Middle School participants were invited to self-reflect using a survey tool customized by the Commonpoint Queens staff, with guidance from SEED Impact. Below are the results for the 140 middle school students who completed the self-assessment:

Students indicated 17 percent growth on average across twelve SEL practices, four per domain:

- **16 percent growth in Being**
- **15 percent growth in Doing**
- **19 percent growth in Relating**

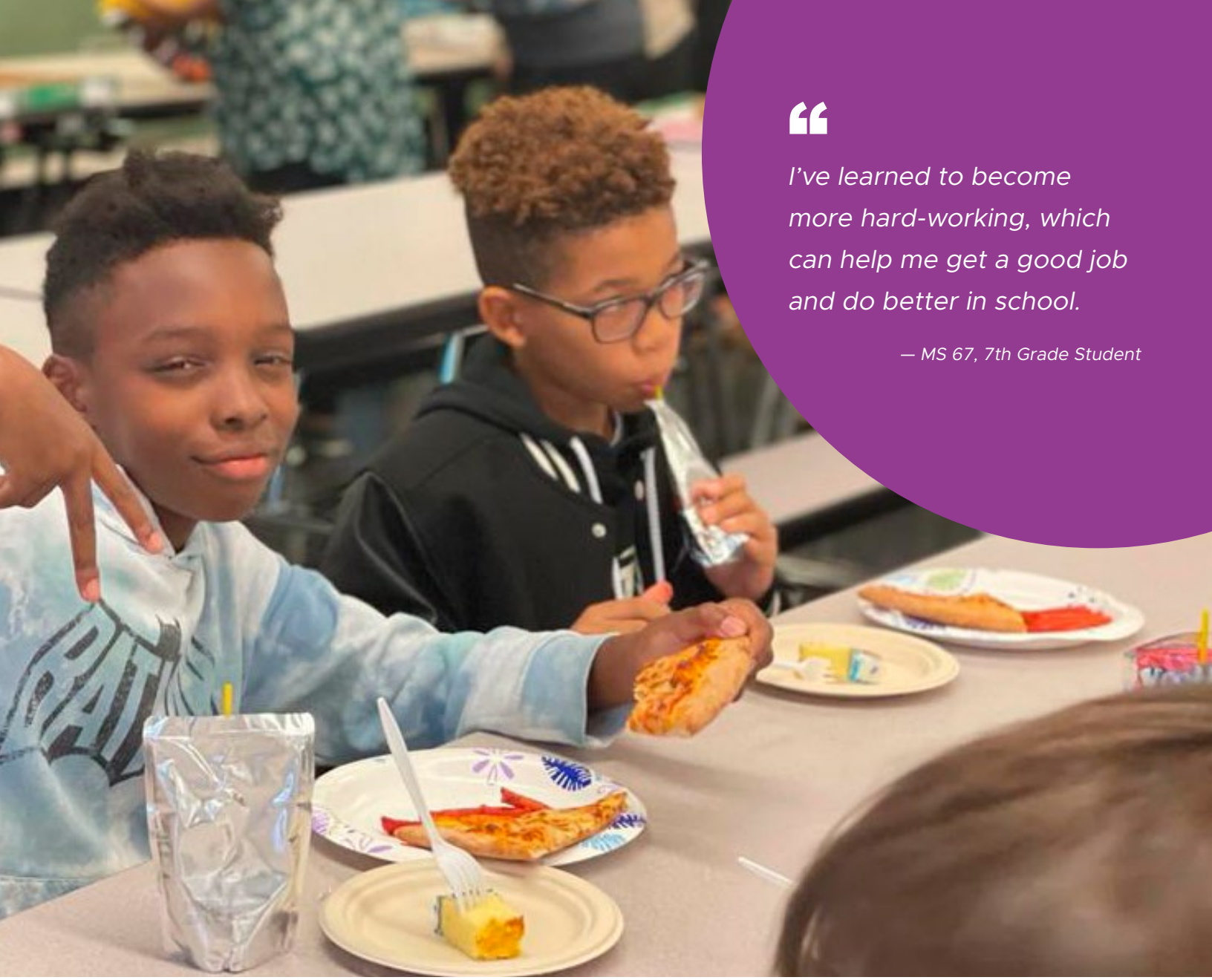
Youth experienced higher gains than teachers observed in them. This is due to the unusually high SEL levels teachers perceived students to begin with at the start of the year. The students themselves felt that they started at a lower level in each domain, which suggests they perceived having more room to grow.

Students showed their most significant growth in the RELATING domain with their greatest change in the RELATING practice:

**“I feel part of this program.”**







“

*I've learned to become more hard-working, which can help me get a good job and do better in school.*

— MS 67, 7th Grade Student

## How We Do It

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) refers to the intentional development of attitudes, behaviors and skills that are fundamental for academic and life success. An SEL-focused program provides well-rounded instruction and accelerates student growth.

At Commonpoint Queens, our SEL programming intends two essential benefits:

- 1. encouragement of positive, strength-based behaviors as norms for lifetime practice**
- 2. discouragement of behaviors associated with negative school and life outcomes**

Educators, policymakers, and employers increasingly attest that **SEL is the key to optimizing education and training.**



# In Their Words: Parents

Two hundred ninety-one parents offered feedback; a small selection follows:

## Safety and Safe Spaces

- My son feels happy and safe at Beacon. He has been able to make lots of friends and really enjoys the activities. For me, as a working parent, Beacon has been a lifesaver. I know my kid is in a safe environment after school. I also appreciate the full-day programs when school is closed. **Beacon 158, 5th Grade**
- My daughter enjoys her after-school program very much. She feels safe and loves being with her friends. As a parent, it is comforting to know that she is in a safe environment surrounded by good people. **MS 67, 6th Grade**
- The program provided a safe environment for our daughter to complete her homework while also giving her a chance to socialize. Having a secure space was crucial for her to concentrate on her tasks and interact with others, which helped improve her communication skills. **PS 115, 5th Grade**

## Communication and Support

- I cannot speak highly enough of the program and its director. Communication is clear, and information is provided promptly. The program offers events during full days off, which is extremely helpful for working parents. I highly recommend this program. **MS 67, 7th Grade**
- The program provides a good source of information and is a big help for the community socially and economically. **PS 115, 1st Grade**
- My daughter loves this program. The staff members are always approachable and easy to talk to. The staff are always available and provide exceptional care for my daughter. As a result of the help with her homework, my daughter improved tremendously this year. **PS 115, 5th Grade**

## Enrichment and Encouragement

- Each counselor is so caring and compassionate. I love the enrichment programs, which include dance, art and sports. The diverse content has exposed my child to many different cultures and enhanced her ability to partner with others. **PS 115, 2nd Grade**
- I would like to express my immense gratitude to the afterschool team for their efforts to enrich my child's life. Since attending the afterschool sessions, my child's curiosity and enthusiasm have flourished. The positive impact on their growth and development is truly remarkable. I look forward to ... the exciting opportunities that lie ahead. **PS 115, 1st Grade**
- My child enjoys spending his recreation time with the staff and his friends. According to him, the staff is very interactive with the children, which he finds engaging and fun. He feels included and valued while spending his time there, which is very meaningful to him and our family. **PS 178, 4th Grade**

# In Their Words: Parents (continued)

## Activities and Skill Building

- I appreciate that an hour is set aside for our son to start his homework after school. Also, having an activity at the end of the day for him to release his energy is wonderful. He enjoys attending, whether it's afterschool programs, holiday camps, or any other activities. Thank you for making his afterschool life engaging and worthwhile. **Beacon 216, 4th Grade**
- My child enjoyed participating in various programs such as dance and crochet. I loved how the counselors took their time to teach her, and she enjoyed attending baking class, gingerbread making, and performing at the health fair. Seeing that the counselors also assisted her with her homework was great. **Beacon 172, 6th Grade**
- My son and I are thrilled that he is participating in the afterschool program this year. He has formed many good friendships and developed a passion for playing basketball and badminton. The classes on handicrafts and cooking are great additions! He has become more lively and outgoing. **MS 67, 6th Grade**

## Family Impact

- This program allowed us to continue working until we finished our shift. Without this program, we would not know how we can both be able to work or must make other sacrifices or arrangements with family. **PS 115, 5th Grade**
- As a busy parent, I struggle to help my child with homework. Fortunately, the afterschool program has been a great help. My child has made new friends, engaged in physical activities, and completed all his homework with the help of supportive teachers. Every day, he comes home excitedly talking about ... how much fun he had. **PS 21, 2nd Grade**
- This program provides financial help to families and benefits the child by being located within their own school. As a result, children feel a sense of security and reduction in stress due to familiar surroundings and the presence of their usual staff and classmates. **PS 21, 4th Grade**



*Well where do I begin. My daughter has been in this program since the 3rd grade. She has benefited in multiple capacities. Education, social emotional and just an overall help for working families. The staff is amazing and very supportive. Absolutely love and adore there nurture and overall professionalism.*

— Beacon 172, 7th Grade Parent





## COMMONPOINT QUEENS

Community happens here

Sam Field Center  
58-20 Little Neck Parkway  
Little Neck, NY 11362  
718-225-6750

[commonpointqueens.org](http://commonpointqueens.org)