



Choose Love is proudly aligned with the new Character and Social Emotional Development Standards (CSED) which include BOTH Character.org and CASEL standards. PLUS, our Choose Love programs include Growth Mindset, Neuroscience, Mindfulness, Positive Psychology, Post-Traumatic Growth, and Emotional Intelligence components to create a solution that is both preventative and proactive.

These branches of knowledge, and the essential principles highlighted within our programming, have decades of scientific and qualitative research supporting their effectiveness. In addition, each of the character values in the Choose Love Formula (Courage + Gratitude + Forgiveness + Compassion-in-Action), which are at the heart of the Choose Love Movement, have strong evidence supporting their many benefits.

Choose Love For Schools™ teaches skills and concepts that are grounded in and support Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), addressing the [5 Core Competencies as defined by CASEL](#) (Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making Skills). SEL has decades of research validating its tremendous and positive impact on students' social and emotional well-being as well as on academic and personal success. For more information on SEL and specific research on SEL, we encourage you to visit <https://casel.org/> where you can be linked to SEL research and its impressive benefits.

Overall, scientific research proves that teaching evidence-based SEL in the classroom significantly [benefits all children](#), including those with special needs – that is, providing academic, behavioral, physical, mental, and socio-emotional benefits. To summarize the research data referenced above, benefits include improvements in social cognitive skills, self-control, and frustration tolerance; decreased anxiety, depression, sadness, and withdrawal; improved classroom atmosphere; less aggression and self-destructive behavior, including drug-use initiation; better scores on standardized achievement tests; more assertive social skills; effective conflict resolution; and increased prosocial behaviors, as well as less violence and more empathy.

For the 2020-2021 school year, our Choose Love For Schools™ program was updated to also align with Character.org's new [Model Standards for Character and Social-Emotional Development](#). These standards include the 5 core components of SEL (Self-awareness, Self-management, Social awareness, Interpersonal/Relationship skills, Responsible & Ethical Decision-Making) as well as moral, performance, intellectual and civic character strengths.

Aside from the foundational and guiding evidence-based and research-grounded competencies and principles which comprise our program, the Choose Love Enrichment Program package has been systematically evaluated by [The University of Arkansas](#) researchers, Dr. David D. Christian, PhD, LPC-S Assistant Professor of Counselor Education and Kristin K. Higgins, PhD, LPC-S Associate Professor of Counselor Education Department of Rehabilitation, Human Resources, and Communication Disorders College of Education and Health Professions University of Arkansas, et al., who assessed our program in an alternative school setting. The preliminary findings showed positive impacts and results which have been submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Please see the full report [here](#) and the presentation [here](#).

In Fall 2022, Colleen MacIntyre from Rhode Island College conducted a [Professional Impact Project](#) supervised by Dr. Mary Ellen McGuire-Schwartz. The study explored how the Jesse Lewis Choose Love program positively impacts students' social-emotional skills, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making. Over six weeks in a kindergarten classroom, the research demonstrated increased emotional awareness and the use of the Choose Love Corner as a tool for managing emotions.

In addition, during the school year of 2016-2017, [Ka'elepulu Elementary Elementary School in Kailua Hawaii](#) was the first pilot school to implement the Choose Love Enrichment Program. The administration conducted its own research within its classrooms that resulted in substantial positive outcomes in all areas. The reported outcomes of this study can be reviewed [here](#).

While not intended to scientifically assess the effectiveness of the program, we also annually collect survey-based program evaluation data for quality improvement purposes. We survey all users about their experience and satisfaction with the program.

Of respondents (N=425) to the 2024 Choose Love Educator Survey:

- **99%** of educators believe the program is effective
- **76%** of educators reported students showing more COURAGE (trying new or difficult tasks, expressing themselves more, etc)
- **80%** of educators reported students showing more GRATITUDE (appreciation, empathy, kindness)
- **72%** of educators reported students showing more FORGIVENESS (less aggression, more self emotional control)
- **79%** of educators reported an increase in COMPASSION-IN-ACTION (improved social skills, enhanced connections)
- **61%** of educators reported increased academic success
- **75%** of respondents reported an improvement in classroom climate
- **69%** of respondents reported an improvement in students' behavior
- **84%** of educators say they enjoy teaching the program
- **78%** of educators believe students enjoy the program
- **68%** of educators report increased job satisfaction as a result of teaching Choose Love
- **82%** of educators report benefitting personally from the Choose Love Program

Another study was recently performed to investigate the perceptions of educators toward their role with meeting the social and emotional needs of students, as well as how educators and students experience participation in a school-based social emotional learning (SEL) program with particular focus on the experience of educators and students participating in the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Enrichment Program. Data was collected through a qualitative multiple case study design that resulted in the following themes: Perceived Role of SEL in Schools, Purpose of SEL Instruction, SEL Implementation Requirements, and Benefits of SEL. Educators and students were in agreement about program outcomes. [View complete study here](#).

Of additional interest might be the adoption of the Choose Love For Schools™ program by the state of New Hampshire. In 2018, New Hampshire Governor Christopher Sununu's School Safety Preparedness Task Force recommended that it was necessary to expand SEL statewide. Based on this knowledge, Governor Sununu made implementing CLEP a statewide initiative (the first in the nation to do so). To support this initiative, Governor Sununu hired additional support and our team is working closely with his office as well as the office of Homeland Security to ensure all schools have the proper channels to teach the program effectively. [Here is the first year report](#) of Choose Love implementation in NH. In a recent survey from Homeland Security & Emergency Management (HSEM), the

Choose Love program was the most mentioned SEL program being used by the schools that responded - [view summary charts here](#). In addition, Spaulding Academy & Family Services (a New Hampshire facility with programs and services for children and youth with neurological, emotional, behavioral, learning or developmental challenges) provided statistics for 2021 that showed positive results after implementing the Choose Love curriculum - [view the outcomes here](#). Continuing this positive trend, in 2023, Spaulding Academy & Family Services reported very positive outcomes with its students - [view the summary and charts here](#).

The School Mental Health Collaborative at the University of South Florida is conducting a year-long study on the Choose Love For Schools™ program and the results will be shared with the Choose Love Movement once completed. The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of the Choose Love's SEL curriculum on students' social-emotional development. The Choose Love Student Survey was designed to assess students' growth in each of the five areas of competence outlined by CASEL; however, psychometric properties of this survey have yet to be examined. The present study "An Examination of the Psychometric Properties of the Choose Love's Student Survey-Revised" aims to evaluate the extent to which survey items fit within the five areas of competence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationships skills, and responsible decision-making) and the extent to which the Choose Love surveys are reliable at assessing students' social-emotional abilities.

Last and certainly not least, we have an extensive database of qualitative data in the form of educator feedback, student work samples, personal testimonials, and more, praising the Choose Love Enrichment Program and its impact on students, classrooms, and entire schools. This rich qualitative data highlights the personalized ways in which the Choose Love Enrichment Program goes beyond a program by initiating a daily practice whereby educators and students, classrooms and schools, create and sustain a positive and engaged culture of love. It has been amazing to hear and read about how students have been individually and collectively empowered as they are better able to handle emotions, have become more resilient in the face of adversity, can connect in meaningful ways with their peers, are engaged in a positive classroom culture, and are able to make healthy, responsible choices that better their lives and the lives of others. This qualitative data is what we consider to be some of the most valid and important data of all. We have provided a sample following the REFERENCES section.

REFERENCES

American Counseling Association. (2011a). Fact sheet 7: Terms to know. Retrieved from <https://www.counseling.org/docs/trauma-disaster/fact-sheet-7---terms-to-know.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

American Counseling Association. (2011b). Fact sheet 3: Disaster and trauma responses of children. Retrieved from <https://www.counseling.org/docs/trauma-disaster/fact-sheet-3---disaster-and-trauma-responses-of-children.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

CASEL. (2015). What is social and emotional learning? In CASEL. Retrieved from <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/>

CASEL. (2015) Outcomes associated with the five competencies. In CASEL. Retrieved from <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/outcomes/>

Conflict Resolution Education in Teacher Education. Retrieved from http://www.creducation.org/cre/home/about_us/about_cre
©2019 Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement EDUCATOR'S GUIDE | 64

Cuddy, A. (2012, June). Amy Cuddy: Your body language shapes who you are. Retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are?language=en

"Delaying Gratification." (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/willpower-gratification.pdf>

Garney, J. (2016). Mindfulness in the Classroom: How it helps kids regulate behavior and focus on learning. In Mindfulness. Retrieved from <https://childmind.org/article/mindfulness-in-the-classroom/>.

Harvard Health Publications. (2015). Relaxation techniques: Breath control helps quell errant stress response. Retrieved from <http://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/relaxation-techniques-breath-control-helps-quell-errant-stress-response>

HeartMD Institute. (2010). Just breathe. Retrieved from <https://heartmdinstitute.com/stress-relief/just-breathe/>

International Coaching Foundation. (n.d.). FAQs. Retrieved from <http://coachfederation.org/about/landing.cfm?ItemNumber=844>

Jones, T.S. (2010).

Journaling for mental health. (n.d.). In University of Rochester Medical Center Encyclopedia online. Retrieved from <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia/content.aspx?ContentTypeID=1&ContentID=4552>

Lomas, T., Froh, J. J., Emmons, R. A., Mishra, A., & Bono, G. (2014). Gratitude interventions: A review and future agenda. *The Wiley Blackwell handbook of positive psychological interventions*, 1-19.

Main, D. (2015, November 25). 5 Scientifically proven benefits of gratitude. Retrieved from <http://www.newsweek.com/5-scientifically-proven-benefits-gratitude-398582>

Mayo Clinic. (2016). Types of relaxation techniques.

Retrieved from

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/relaxation-technique/art-20045368?pg=2>

Mayo Clinic Staff. (2014). Meditation: A simple, fast way to reduce stress.

Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/meditation/in-depth/meditation/art-20045858>

Morin, A. (2014, November 23). 7 Scientifically proven benefits of gratitude that will motivate you to give thanks year-round. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/amymorin/2014/11/23/7-scientifically-proven-benefits-of-gratitude-that-will-motivate-you-to-give-thanks-year-round/#3ff7bbde6800>

Motzkin, J. C., Philippi, C. L., Wolf, R. C., Baskaya, M. K., & Koenigs, M. (2015).

Purcell, M. (2015). The Health Benefits of Journaling. Psych Central.

Retrieved from <http://psychcentral.com/lib/the-health-benefits-of-journaling/>

Williams, R. (2013, May 5). Do self-affirmations work? A revisit.

Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/wired-success/201305/do-self-affirmations-work-revisit>

Ventromedial prefrontal cortex is critical for the regulation of amygdala activity in humans. *Biological Psychiatry*, 77(3), 276-284. doi:10.1016/j.biopsych.2014.02.014

TESTIMONIALS

“In an educational landscape where many educators have the ‘not one more thing’ mentality, Choose Love is a breath of fresh air. In fact, it is the time I most look forward to all week.” -- **E Birdin, Long Meadow Elementary, CT**

“We have seen such a positive change in children and teachers. They are finding gratitude in the smallest things - these children live in extreme poverty, yet they are grateful. I've seen an increase in resilience in the students overall. I think the biggest change we've seen is the compassion they show to one another now. They are able to step outside of themselves and recognize the pain of others. I've had kids bring other kids to my room and say, 'he needs to be in our group because ...'” -- **Lisa Mackenzie, CA**

“Teaching the core concepts of the Choose Love Enrichment Program fundamentally transformed my classroom and became part of our culture. During the course of teaching the formula for choosing love, my classroom climate improved dramatically and students began using the phrase ‘choosing love’ not only in our classroom but in their daily lives. In addition, I personally benefited and was able to use the lessons in my own life. I feel that I am a better person because I implemented the Choose Love Enrichment Program in my class.” -- **Krislyn Petti, Wilby High School, CT**

“When a teacher meets their class for the first time they have planned lessons of how to improve the academic performance of each student and have a class management system in place. As we face them on the first day we don't know anything about homes and stresses in their lives. Classrooms need relationship building curriculums which The Choose Love Enrichment Program provides for students at all grade levels and soon to be families alike.” -- **John Cook, All Saints School, CT**

“I found that it was 100% effective, not only did it help with my at-risk students, it helped with my students that were doing well. It teaches social-emotional learning, it teaches self-improvement, and also compassion in action. It is one of the best programs I have ever found. It is innovative, it can be used across your district. If you want to make a difference not only in your students, but in your overall faculty, you need to take advantage of this program.” -- **Ginger Ulmer, Boonville, AR**

“I am overwhelmed with the LOVE that is being spread in HAMBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT!!!! There is not enough time to type everything, but I will try to give you a quick summary. In Portland Elementary – every child has his or her journals. They are decorated. They have had their first lessons. In Hamburg Pre-K, lots of coloring and conversation have gone down about Choosing Love and being kind to others. They too have posters and coloring sheets. At NAES – the building leaders have taken on the job of delivering the lessons. WOW!!! This has been soooooo powerful. It is so moving. They are loving it. They too have posters and coloring sheets. At HMS – talk about rocking it. I have visited many classes. The English teachers revamped their entire curriculum to work the lessons into their literacy maps. WOW!!! I have seen skits, heard conversations, seen reading. This has been a positive storm to this building. Every teacher's door has a message on it. Kids are talking about it. Thank you is not enough.” -- **Tracey Streeter, Hamburg, AR**

VIDEO TESTIMONIALS

[MAS Charter School, New Mexico](#)
[West Warwick, RI](#)
[Boonville High School, Arkansas](#)
[Prairie Elementary School, California](#)
[Educator Conversations](#)