

Building Resiliency Skills for Workforce Readiness

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Youth Opportunities Unlimited

Agenda



- Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) Overview
- Y.O.U. Curriculum Framework
- Resiliency & Workforce Skills
- Social & Emotional Learning
- The Social & Emotional Model for Workforce Readiness
- Thoughts/Questions

History of Y.O.U.



- Founded in 1982 by Cleveland Mayor George Voinovich as a public-private partnership to ensure young people had summer job opportunities.
- Have evolved and expanded over the course of 40+ years to include school based, community based, and young adult career readiness training and advising, mentoring, and work experience programming.



Mission & Vision of Y.O.U.



Mission: To prepare teens and young adults to become economically self-sufficient contributors to building Northeast Ohio's educated, skilled and inclusive workforce.

Vision: A just and equitable community where every young person is ready and confidently pursuing a meaningful future.

Y.O.U. Programming



School Programs

- Jobs for Ohio's Graduates
- Founding Partner of PACE
- Open Doors Academy Partnership

Work Experience Programs

- Summer Youth Employment Program
- Summer Career Academies
- Internships



Y.O.U. Curriculum Framework



Based on the amount of time we spend with a student in our programming, we've developed a curriculum framework of objectives, skills & topics for training.

Y.O.U. Curriculum Framework



Skills/Topics

Resume	Belonging	Advocating for Oneself	Goal Setting
Cover Letter	Decision-Making	Leveraging Resources	Hard vs. Soft/Essential Skills
Professionalism	Aligning Decision-Making w/ Vision	Applying for Positions	Emotional Intelligence
Time Management	Problem Solving	Interviewing	Growth Mindset
Accountability & Personal Responsibility	Critical Thinking	Career Exploration	Visioning
Effective Communication	Giving & Receiving Feedback	Employer Expectations	Digital Literacy
Teamwork	Financial Literacy	Self-Reflection	Articulating What They've Learned
Taking Initiative		Strengths & Areas of Growth	Leadership

Skills



- Write down or think of 3-5 skills that are - or have been - instrumental to success in your career, your work in the community, and your personal life.
- Think of skills that transfer across all facets of your life.
- Be ready to share.

In-Demand Skills



The 2024 Most In-Demand Skills

1. Communication
2. Customer service
3. Leadership
4. Project management
5. Management
6. Analytics
7. Teamwork
8. Sales
9. Problem-solving
10. Research








Top skill of the moment: Adaptability

LinkedIn Learning

Top skills employers prioritized when recruiting on LinkedIn in the past year. (Feb 2024).

Core skills in 2025



1.  Analytical thinking
2.  Resilience, flexibility and agility
3.  Leadership and social influence
4.  Creative thinking
5.  Motivation and self-awareness
6.  Technological literacy
7.  Empathy and active listening
8.  Curiosity and lifelong learning
9.  Talent management
10.  Service orientation and customer service

 Cognitive skills  Self-efficacy  Working with others  Management skills  Technology skills  Engagement skills

Note: The skills selected by surveyed organizations to be of greatest importance to workers at the time of the survey.

Source: World Economic Forum. (2025). *Future of Jobs Report 2025*.

In-Demand Skills

Future of Jobs Report 2025 by the World Economic Forum

- 1,000 leading global employers
- Representing:
 - 14 million workers
 - 22 industry clusters
 - 55 economies

Resiliency Skills

- Keys to building resilience:
 - Understanding yourself, your needs & your emotions
 - Managing your emotions & stress
 - Setting goals & maintaining motivation to reach them
 - Taking care of yourself
 - Making decisions that align with your broader goals
 - Building and maintaining positive relationships

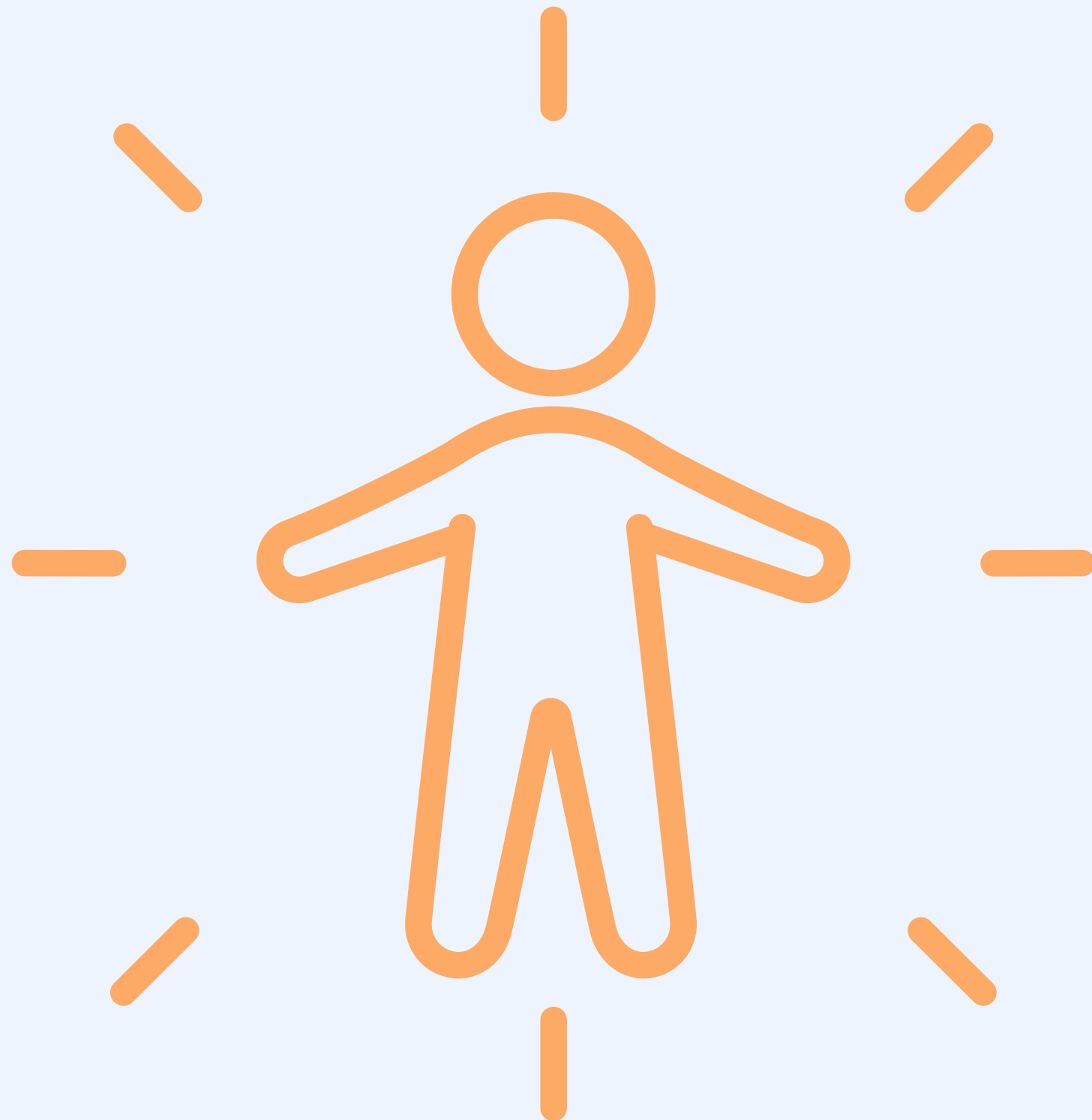
CASEL Framework for Social & Emotional Learning



Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

“At the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, we envision all children and adults as self-aware, caring, responsible, engaged, and lifelong learners who work together to achieve their goals and create a more inclusive, just world. How? Through a commitment to SEL.”

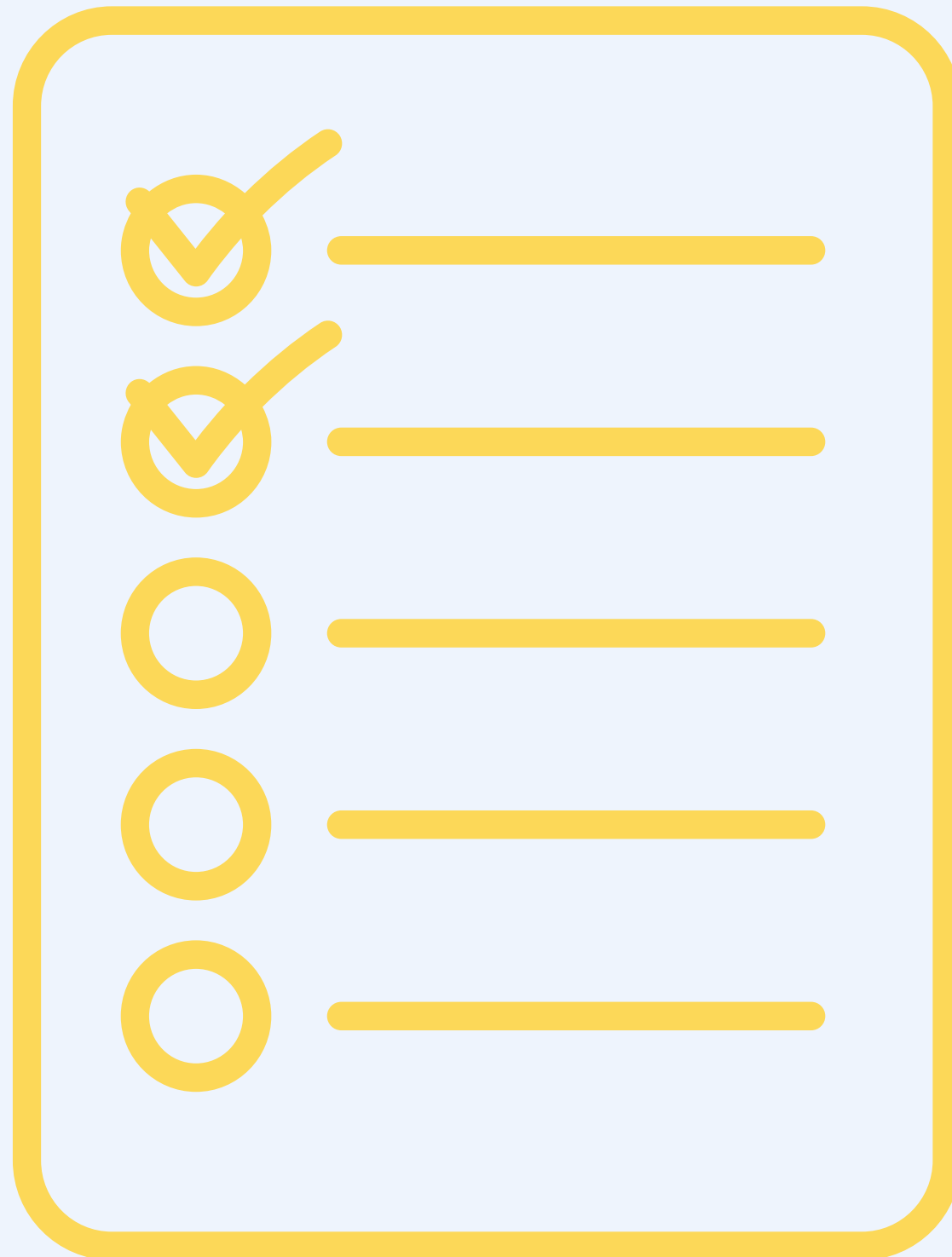
Self-Awareness



“The abilities to understand one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one’s strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose.”

<https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework>

Self-Management



“The abilities to manage one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors 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 and collective goals.”

<https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework>

Responsible Decision-Making



“The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior 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.”

<https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework>

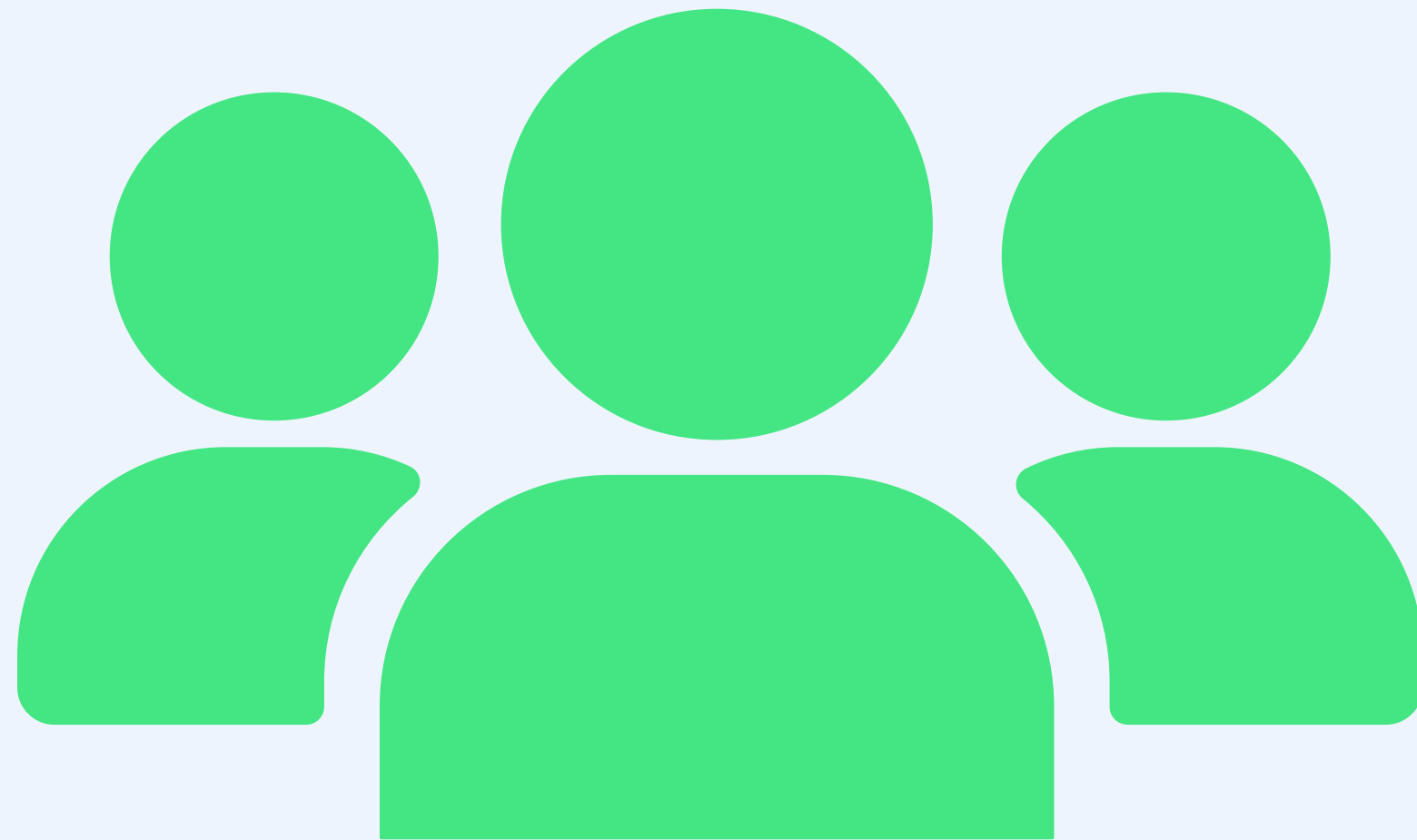
Relationship Skills



“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.”

<https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework>

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 behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.”

<https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework>

SEL Skills Research



- Young people with strong social skills:
 - more likely to make and sustain friendships
 - initiate positive relationships with adults
 - exhibit fewer problem behaviors (Durlak et al., 2010)
- Social & emotional skills:
 - serve as important protective factors in the face of negative life events or chronic stress (Buckner, Mezzacappa & Beardslee, 2003; 2009)
 - support job and financial security & physical and mental health through adulthood (Mischel et al., 1989; Moffitt et al., 2011; Jones, Greenberg & Crowley, 2015).

SEL Skills Research



- “ ‘Non-academic’ mindsets and behaviors such as perseverance, time management, work habits, cooperation, and social and academic problem-solving skills contribute to:
 - academic achievement
 - high school graduation
 - postsecondary success

particularly at transition points, such as moving from middle to high school or high school to postsecondary education” (Farrington et al., 2012)

SEL Skills Research



- “Youth who feel connected to school, form positive relationships with peers & adults, and have strong:
 - communication skills
 - peer-refusal skills
 - emotional awareness
 - regulation skills

are **less likely to engage in risky behaviors** that can undermine educational goals and lead to social, behavioral, mental, and physical health problems later in life.” (Terzian et al., 2011)

SEL Skills Research



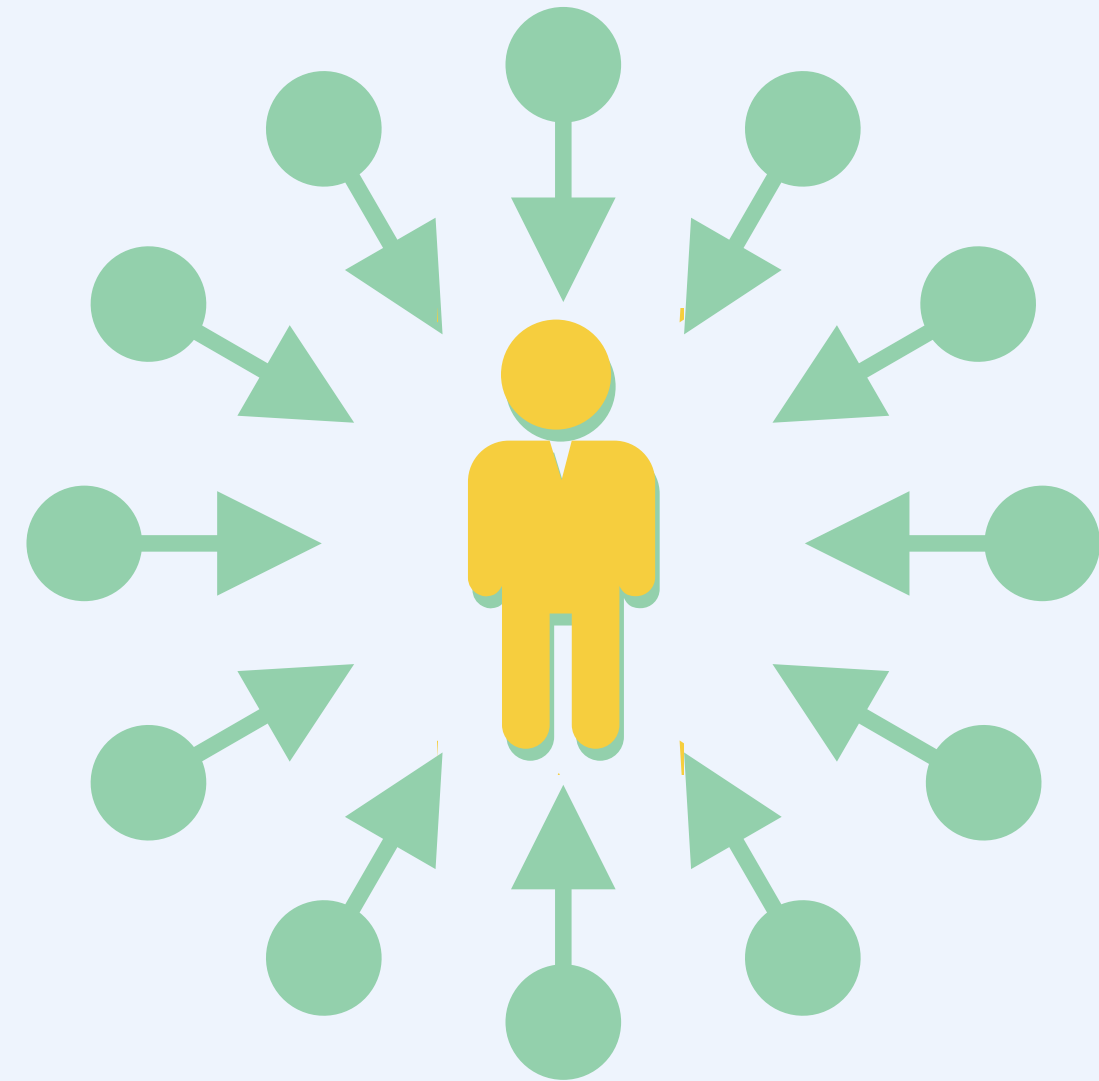
- “SEL competencies related to **self development, communication, critical thinking, leadership, teamwork**, and more have been **identified as critical to postsecondary completion and workplace success** (e.g., Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012; ACT, 2014; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2021).”

Y.O.U. Programming



- Center the student
- Self-leadership
- Evolve our thinking & design
- Relevancy

- How can we ensure students are well-informed about what they want and what opportunities they have?



Shifting Our Thinking



SEL Skills are the basis for success, whatever path anyone chooses.

Your path must be based on an understanding of who you are, what you want for your future, managing yourself effectively to get there, how to adapt to change, and how to work with people in multiple contexts.

No matter how much jobs change or AI & tech come into play in our society and organizations, it all comes back to SEL.

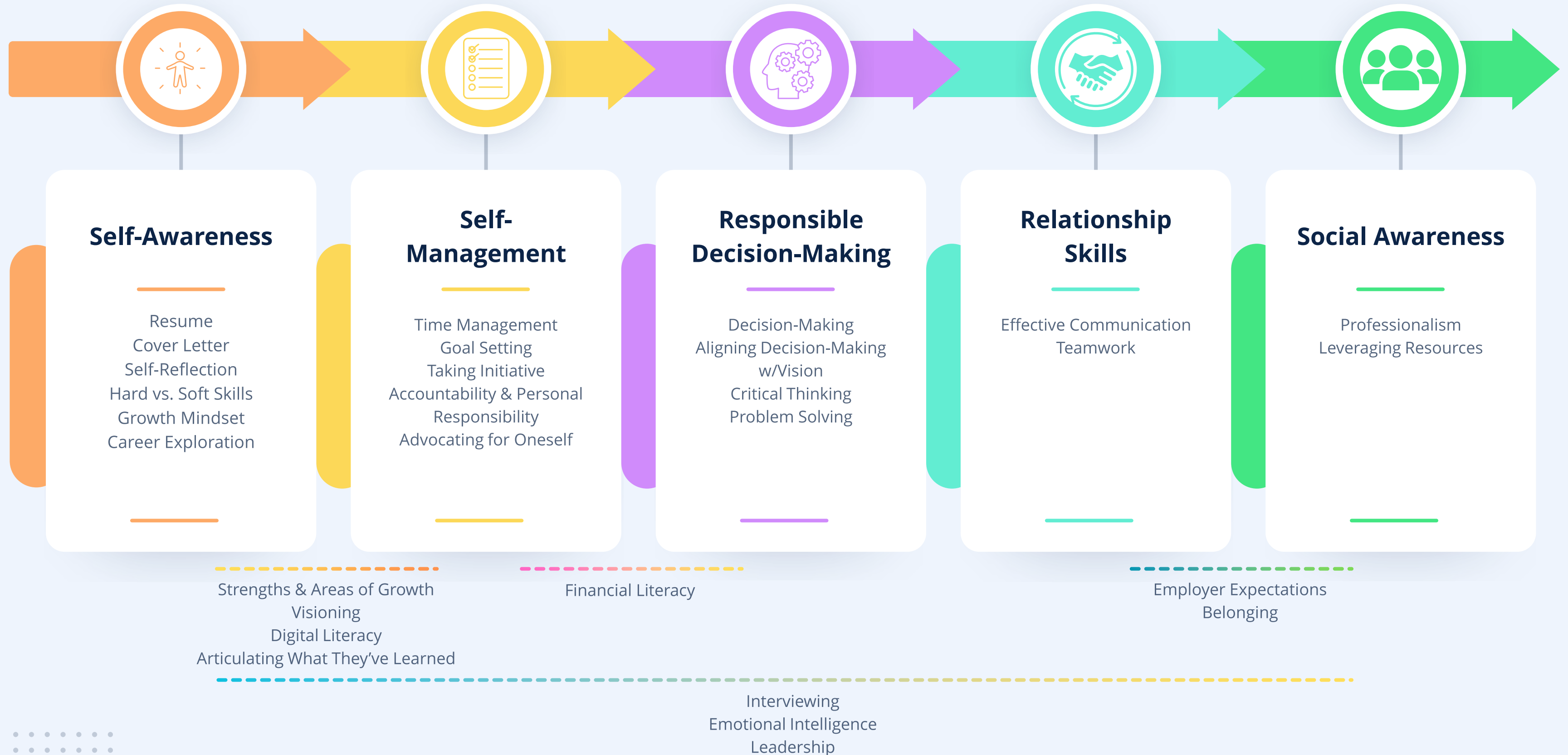
Shifting Our Thinking



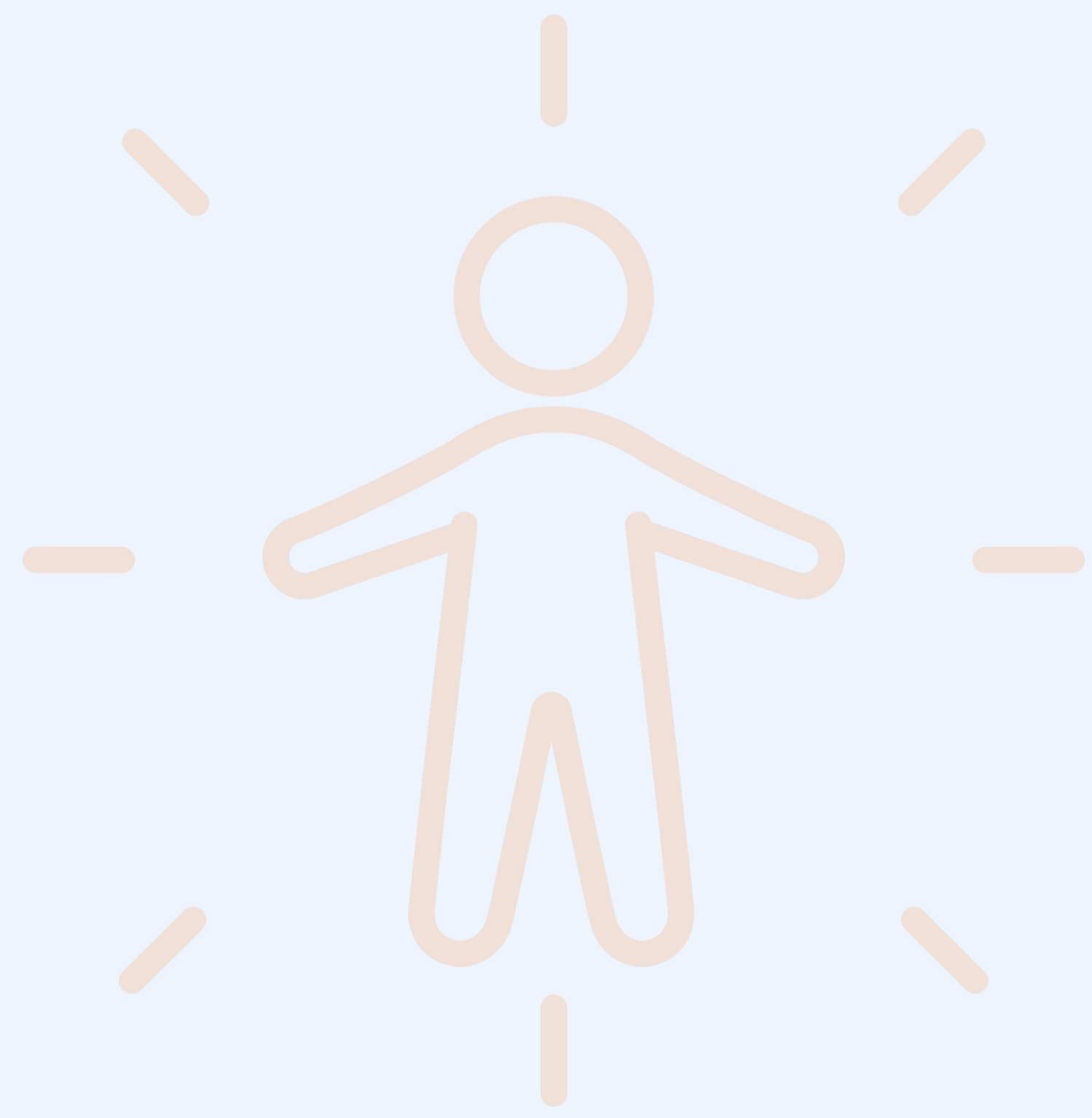
Often SEL Skills are hidden, but we want to move to highlighting the hidden side of what we're teaching.

Everything we're doing to help young people succeed is Social & Emotional Learning, ours just happens to be in the context of Workforce Readiness.

The Social & Emotional Model for Workforce Readiness



Self-Awareness



*Who am I
and who do I
want to be?*

*How do I want to
represent myself?*

*What are my
strengths?*

*What am I
interested in?*

*What hard & soft
skills do I possess?*

*What am I
passionate
about?*

Self-Management

What are my goals?

How do I manage my time?

Do I take initiative?



A checklist graphic with five items. The first two items have checkmarks, and the last three have empty circles.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Do I take responsibility?

How do I hold myself accountable?

How can I advocate for myself?

Responsible Decision-Making

Is that a good source for information?

Is that a good decision for my future?

What should I do?



What are my future options?

How do I handle a problem?

Does that align with my goals?

Relationship Skills

What makes a good team?

What's the best way to say what I want to say?

How can I be a good teammate?



How can I build positive relationships?

What does my employer expect of me?

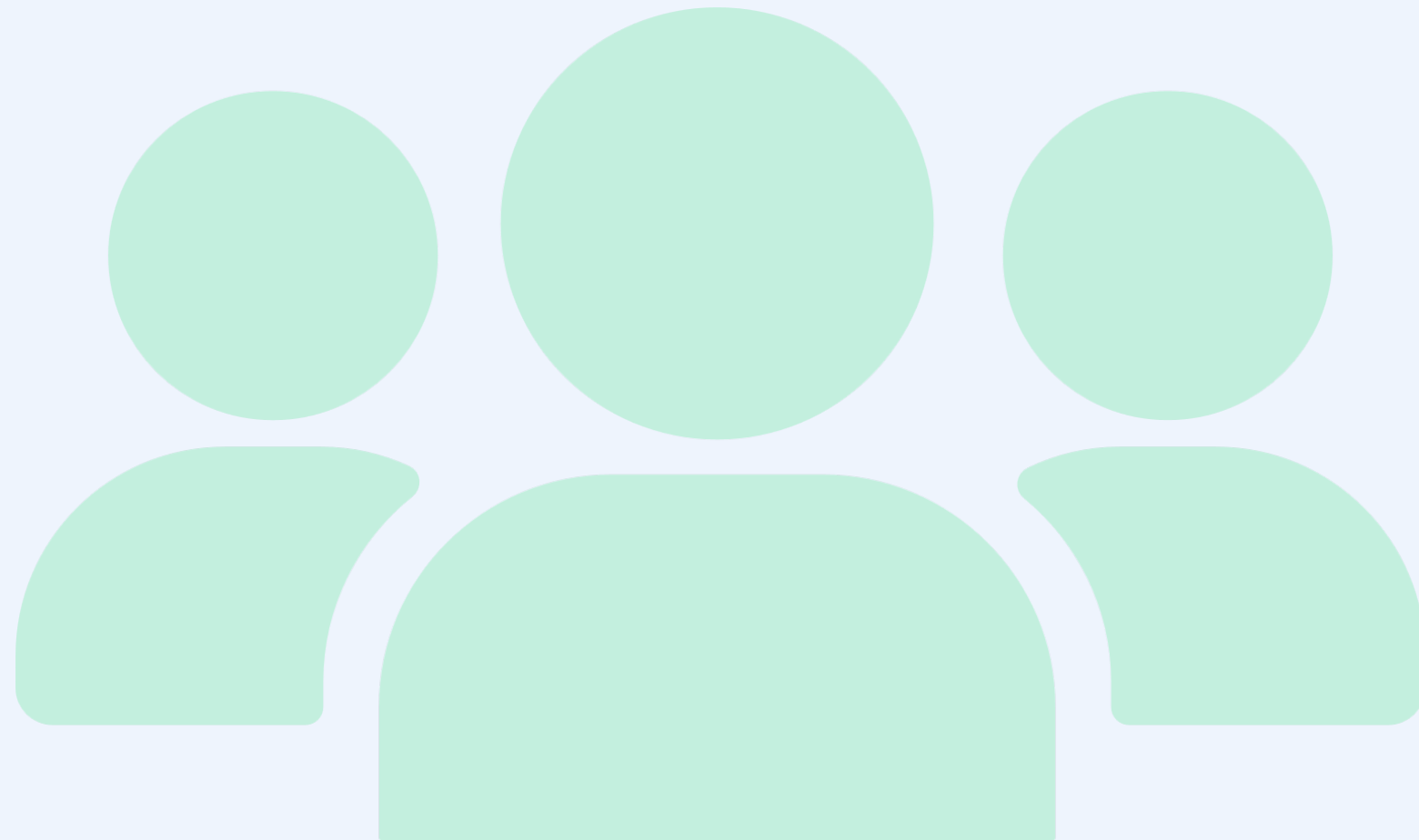
Am I being clear in my communication?

Social Awareness

Am I helping others feel welcome?

What does it mean to be professional?

How can I "read the room"?



Do I need to adjust my approach?

What are others' experiences like?

How can I stand up for justice?

Reflection



We cannot achieve Y.O.U.'s mission, our vision, or positive youth development in general without acknowledging and amplifying a focus on centering students & their development of SEL skills.

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Vision: A just and equitable community where every young person is ready and confidently pursuing a meaningful future.

Thoughts/Questions?



Thank you for your time!

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