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I. Role of assessment in social-emotional and behavioral learning

A movement to increase assessment in order to make data driven decisions about instruction is sweeping the country. Increasingly, federal funding is contingent upon assessment, data collection and differentiated instruction based on that data. There is mounting pressure not only for more precise and continuous assessment of academic abilities, but also for parallel assessment of student behavioral progress.

Computer-based technology has enabled increasingly precise measures of math and reading. However, the same level of precision is not possible in the fuzzy area of social emotional learning (Zadeh, L.A. 1999, 2001, 2002). Psychometric testing often seems more precise than it is, and may be insensitive to cultural differences.

Although educational psychology and related fields are imprecise sciences, they need not be impractical ones. Ripple Effects offers science-based, practical, real world, computerized tools for assessing organizational, group, and individual levels of social-emotional-behavioral competence and readiness to learn. They are more like the common Brannock™ foot size measurement device than diagnostic medical tests. Most people, most of time, can use them easily to find out what they need to know.

Funders’ documentation requirements are propelling the push toward assessment, and Ripple Effects reporting system can fulfill those requirements. However, the purpose of Ripple Effects assessment tools is not only to provide information to administrators and funders, but, more importantly, to provide feedback and guidance to individual learners, and to inform an expert system that uses learner input to instantly create a responsive intervention for each learner.
There is growing consensus that pre-intervention assessment is needed to determine readiness to learn, the best entry point for continued learning, and baselines against which individual and group level progress can be measured. In the case of students with special needs, pre-intervention assessment is required by law.

A variety of tools have been created and are widely used for pre-intervention assessment of academic proficiency. A much narrower set of resources are available to assess social-emotional competencies, but their numbers are growing. Validated psychometric measures of specific social, emotional and behavioral abilities (such as self-efficacy or emotional regulation) are available to those who have the staff to code and score them. They are more often used for research projects than for real world, everyday assessment. In addition, a growing number of group level tools are available to measure school culture, climate and safety. More recently, Functional Behavioral Assessment tools (page 7) have come into use. Several popular behavior assessment tools depend completely upon adult observations of student behavior.

Ripple Effects provides a full set of pre-intervention assessment tools: tools to assess school safety and culture; tools to guide implementers through assessment of school level strengths, constraints, challenges, and readiness to implement; tools to screen for social-emotional strengths in students and staff; tools for observational and functional behavioral assessment, in particular, as part of RTI planning; tools to identify baseline, classroom management skills for teachers; tools for assessment of concept mastery and of performance understanding; tools designed for pre-to-post evaluation in research settings; tools designed only to deepen self-understanding.

Following is a brief description of each.
School culture and safety

Ripple Effects offers web-based, group level, school climate profilers to quickly assess initial school climate needs from both student and staff perspectives. The School Safety Profiler is based directly on criteria identified by the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools (1998). In addition to providing direction for creating a safe school environment, the School Safety Profiler helps administrators meet needs assessment requirements for school safety funds. The Respect for Persons Profiler, developed in collaboration with Partners Against Hate, uses a similar format to assess respect for persons.
Ripple Effects provides print and electronic, site-based planning guides that lead administrators and implementers through a step-by-step process of assessing strengths, opportunities and barriers to successful use of Ripple Effects in their localized context. In assessing the context for implementation of Ripple Effects, different elements of the planning guide separately assess student, staff, and organizational strengths, barriers, constraints and opportunities, including technology infrastructure.

**Organizational readiness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The context - Part II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. For you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(same as your student or different, how?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the most important standard that you will be judged by this year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can this program help you achieve it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your greatest teaching strength?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can it be used to make this program a success?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your greatest barrier to success? (emotional factors, administrative or student behavior, skills level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can this program help deal with it?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The context - Part III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. Structural resources and constraints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are computers available that fit system requirements?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you already have headphones? Yes [ ] No [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location: Lab [ ] Back of classroom [ ] Mobile laptops [ ] Other [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting/Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where can you fit this in: Advisory period? ISS or alternatives to suspension? Counseling? After-school? Free time, such as study hall? Class time for life skills, health, or character education? Social/Safety frameworks that include more in RE, i.e. appreciating diversity, resolving conflict?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As reading material for ELL? In Language Arts for journal writing, media analysis? Is there a way to do individual instruction and intervention? Group instruction opportunities and/or problem-solving? Other opportunities or constraints?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a scheduled meeting time that could fit into? What time periods are available? What duration is possible (semester, year, 8 weeks, etc)? How often? A few long sessions, or more short sessions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other existing programs that this can support and supplement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What other prevention and youth development programs is your school or district using successfully? For instance, substance abuse programs like PATHS, Life Skill Training, or Project ALERT. Violence prevention programs such as Second Step, Units Counts, or Olweus Bullying Prevention; youth development approaches like SCAR, Community of Caring, the Social Decision Making Program, CARES, etc. How could this be a supplement?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample pages from fillable pdf, Site Planning Guide
**Screening for strengths**

Building on a cornerstone of strengths provides a stronger foundation for lasting, robust change, than focusing intervention efforts on deficits. This is a key principle of youth development theory and an essential element of the Ripple Effects model for change. It has special relevance for students with multiple risks factors for negative academic, behavioral and mental health outcomes. Research consistently shows that the presence of key personal strengths is a major marker for resiliency. It can be the difference between thriving through harsh circumstances, or being defeated by them.

A growing number of researchers point to evidence that a specific set of social-emotional abilities, also popularly known as “assets” (Search institute, 2002), together comprise the internal components of resiliency (Benard, 2004). The architecture of Ripple Effects student and staff training program is such that regardless of where one enters, it leads back to skill training in these affective, cognitive and behavioral capacities.

The majority of Ripple Effects assessment tools, whether content assessment, observational forms, RTI planning documents, or self-report, are also oriented toward identifying, reinforcing and leveraging social-emotional competencies to promote growth and change.

The following pages demonstrate how Ripple Effects assessment tools contribute to building personal strengths, even as they are measuring them.
Observational, behavioral assessment

Traditionally, the most common from of behavioral assessment has been teacher observation. Ripple Effects Social Behavior Observation Form (Stern, Ray, 1997) is an observational tool for measuring pro-social and anti-social behavior in school settings. It screens for both positive and negative behaviors with a focus on behaviors related to social skills, including problem solving.

A separate tool, Pounce, screens only for positive behavior. The purpose of the Pounce tool is not to document judgments in order to fulfill reporting requirements, but to focus educators’ attention on what students are doing right, in order to increase levels of positive reinforcement. By the end of 2010, data from Pounce results will be able to automatically generate an “Eagle eye” postcard to parents, communicating what their children have done well. Until then, teachers can manually fill in the postcard.

Ripple Effects Pounce
A behavior observation form for charting student strengths
Date __________
Observer Name _______________________ Email __________ Time Period ______
Location ___________________ Student’s Name: _______________________

Behaviors
1. Signs of a strong and healthy sense of self
   Self-regulation
   1. Student controls self in classroom settings
   2. Student controls self out of classroom settings
   3. Student understands what feelings are
   4. Student knows names for feelings
   5. Student recognizes mixed feelings
   6. Student shows understanding that feelings change
   7. Student takes responsibility for own feelings
   8. Student labels feeling appropriately
   9. Student communicates feelings clearly
   10. Student is mindful of what’s happening inside and outside
   11. Student shows awareness of physical sensations
   12. Student shows awareness of internal triggers for feelings
   13. Student can calm down at will
   14. Student expresses feelings in appropriate ways
   15. Student focuses on happiness
   16. Student is able to let go
   17. Student is able to stop impulsive reactions
   18. Student is able to predict consequences

Print version

Web version

Postcard to parents

The eagle at Marshall middle school
Standing up for his beliefs

Congratulations to you and your child!
Functional behavioral assessment

IDEA legislation specifically states that if disciplinary actions by school personnel are involved, the IEP team must develop a functional behavioral assessment plan within ten days. Ripple Effects expert system both provides a functional behavioral assessment and delivers a recommended intervention in a single step.

Gets to the purpose and function of behavior
Functional Behavioral Assessment goes beyond measuring observable behavior to trying to ascertain its purpose. Typically, during the assessment process, team members look for social-emotional, cognitive and/or behavioral skill deficits, as well as environmental factors, as potential explanations of problematic behavior. The goal is to use this data to identify a personalized intervention that promotes appropriate replacement behaviors that serve the same functions as the inappropriate behaviors. The more precisely a skill deficit is defined, and the more clearly situational triggers are identified, the more precisely skill training can be tailored to remediate it. But there are dangers with this approach.

Must not violate the sanctuary of the school
The desire to assess underlying causes of behavioral problems overlooks the fact that behavior is often driven by risk factors that are - and should be - the personal business of students and their families, not the subject of group scrutiny by a team of educators. Thus, Ripple Effects includes assessment of school-based context and triggers in its RTI planning guide, but does NOT encourage team members to speculate about environmental causes outside of school. It empowers learners to do their own functional assessment, privately, with the help of an expert system. The diagram on page 9 provides an example of how four different students, referred for defiance, are each led to separate understandings of the reasons for their behavior, and different skill-based interventions to change it.
Topic selection as de facto self-assessment

For students who face trauma and hardship in their personal lives, school is often the one environment where they can experience an identity that is not circumscribed by that pain. Probing to identify personal trauma in a school environment, however well intentioned, may violate an implicit promise of emotional safety on school property and pressure students into a level of self-revelation they would not freely choose. Not acknowledging that point of pain, however, may result in failing to address a major factor that interferes with school success.

The Ripple Effects approach for pre-intervention assessment of “where the student is” may offer a way out of this conundrum by encouraging students themselves to privately identify whichever factors may be impeding their school performance. It provides an emotionally safe place for students to recognize and begin to deal with these sensitive issues without exposing themselves, or being stigmatized (often only in their own mind) as being “carriers” of the problem.

In nurses and counselors office, the process is as simple as inviting students to “scroll down this list and see if you find something that interests you.” In classroom settings, “scroll down and see if you can find something that may be a clue to why this (expected behavior, assignment, part of school) isn’t working for you.” In discipline settings, the mandate (not invitation) might be: “After you’ve completed the tutorials on (specific offense) scroll down the list and see if you can find what YOU think might be causing you to act in this way.”

In each case, learner’s topic selection is the only input needed for the expert system to automatically lead each one to the skill training most relevant to them. Students can get an individualized intervention without teachers needing to cross a protective, privacy boundary. In research studies involving more than 4500 students, 95% of students privately sought - and found - computer-based guidance and skill building in areas THEY identified as propelling poor behavior or school failure. The results of this self-fit system: significantly better grades, fewer discipline referrals, at far less cost than live intervention (Bass et al, 2008, Perry et al, 2008, Patterson et al, 2008, Kauffman et al, 2009).
Expert system as functional behavioral assessment

FOUR USER’S EXPERIENCE OF EXPERT SYSTEM

Lesson 1

Student A

DEFIANCE “How to”

Student B

Student C

Student D

Lesson 2

Identify learning style (+1)

Build people skills (+5)

Work on assertiveness (+5)

Deal with abuse (+3)

Take control (+5)

Lesson 3

Emotional maturity (+2)

Controlling impulses (+2)

Tell someone (+1)

Work through feelings (+2)

Control thoughts (+2)

Problem-solve (+4)

Empathy (+4)

Managing feelings (+4)

Decisions (+4)

Don’t let it ruin your self-esteem (+3)

Work on assertiveness (+5)

Set goals (+4)

Avoid drugs & alcohol (+4)

Lesson 4

Know body sensations (+1)

Name your feelings (+1)

Limit external triggers (+2)

Watch internal triggers (+2)

Student A completes 2 lessons, does learning styles profile, deepens their understanding about how they learn.

Student B does 4 lessons, and chooses the path focused on emotional regulation.

Student C does 3 lessons, begins to explore talking to someone about abuse.

Student D explores 3 lessons, starting with self-determination, and goal setting.
**RTI: Early assessment for early intervening services**

**Response to intervention** (RTI) is a specific, federally mandated policy (IDEA, 2004) designed to help instructors bring more students to success, before they experience academic failure, disciplinary actions, or assignment to Special Education. It is a capacity-building approach built on early and often assessment of learners.

The intent of RTI is “to:

- Increase instructional accountability and justification
- Improve the alignment between assessment information and intervention development
- Initiate important intervention decisions earlier
- Provide effective and relevant support for students who do not respond to core curricula
- Enhance fidelity of instructional implementation” (Sugai, 2007)

RTI as a public policy typically assumes that there is for every student a single, objective, best entry point along a straight line of preset points that are the metrics for proficiency. Finding such a point is a much more difficult process with social-emotional learning than ascertaining pre-intervention levels of readiness for math, especially when teachers are not generally privy to personal history, including information about personal trauma, which can trigger discipline problems.

Ripple Effects RTI assessment tools (print and electronic versions), focus on:

- Identifying what, where and when common behavior problems occur
- Setting a specific behavioral goal for each student
- Helping teachers make a “shoe fit” match between the presenting behavior and an entry point tutorial.

Once students have selected a first topic, the expert system guides them to the most relevant information and skill building. In that process they are often led to identify underlying reasons for their behavior. Specific Ripple Effects tutorials can also easily be configured as an assigned set to align with identified students goals.

Professional development to support teachers in dealing with challenging behavior, can proceed along a parallel path.
Sample RTI assessment screens

RTI print forms

RTI Web Form
**Self-report surveys**

Ripple Effects provides self-report surveys to assess a range of attitudes, perceptions, and internal assets, such as problem solving ability. In each case, a widely validated, text-based, traditionally formatted survey has been adapted by putting it into a multi-cultural, peer narrated, developmentally appropriate, reading independent, multimedia, game format.

Ripple Effects self-report surveys include:

- The Ripple Effects *Resiliency Assessment Survey*, adapted from the Resilience & Youth Development module of the California Healthy Kid Survey. It assesses four components of resiliency: autonomy, empathy, connectedness and problem solving (Benard, 2002).

- The Ripple Effects *Self-Determination Scales*, adapted from the Multi-dimensional Health Locus of Control scales (MHLC). They measure attribution of control over life events to internal factors, and external factors, with external factors including powerful others, social forces and fate.

- Ripple Effects’ *Drug Norms and Perceptions*, adapted from Monitoring the Future (MTF), an ongoing study of the behaviors, attitudes, and values of American secondary school students (as well as college students, and young adults) funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

- Ripple Effects *Reading Self-efficacy Scale for Adolescents*, adapted from the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (Gresham et al. 1988), originally developed for use with college students.

- Ripple Effects *Teacher Self-Efficacy about Classroom Management Scale*, adapted from Albert Bandura’s Teacher Efficacy scales.

In addition to these pre-configured measures, Ripple Effects offers the capacity to put any validated survey, for which rights are owned or legally arranged for by the school client, into a multimedia game engine.
Self-report survey formats

To encourage an honest answer to every question, in student versions, each answer that is submitted results in forward movement in a game. No answer has any more weight than any other answer. Students who complete all of the questions are rewarded with an engaging animated sequence.

Although self-report can be unreliable as an absolute measure, it has comparative value and thus is frequently used to measure intervention impact of a mediating variable from pre-to-post. In addition subjective appraisal is a useful tool for promoting self-understanding.

For some factors, a high degree of differentiation is needed to detect significant differences from pre-to-post intervention. This is the case with teachers self-efficacy; thus use of a continuous measurement slider to assess self-efficacy about classroom management.
**Assessment to promote self understanding**

**Interactive self-profiles for students and teachers**

Ripple Effects Screen for Strengths suite includes more than three-dozen self-profile exercises with proportionally more in the teen program than in the two others. Learners complete a 24 item survey. The software uses that input to create values along orthogonal, bi-polar axes of a particular social-emotional or behavioral factor at a certain point in time. Results are returned as a single point on a quadrant with an accompanying narrative interpretation of results (page 15).

Ripple Effects profiles have been vetted for **face validity** by a diverse group of child psychiatrists and psychologists, educational specialists and students. Face validity of the profiles is further established by one-to-one relationships between test items and specific elements of Ripple Effects lessons that target a particular social-emotional capacity, such as affective (sensitivity to feelings) and cognitive (perspective taking) elements of empathy.

Four major fields of research provide evidence of **construct validity**:  
- For medical conditions such as PTSD or ADHD, content is drawn from DSM IV.  
- For social-emotional competencies such as empathy, test items probe for specific abilities researchers have identified as key components of that competency.  
- For risk and protective factors, content is drawn from NIH and CDC reports.  
- For learning styles, content is drawn from educational research.

Convergent validity has been demonstrated between learner completion of Ripple Effects empathy self-profiles, and scores on empathy scales from the California Healthy Kids survey, as well as peers’ scores on feelings of connectedness (DeLong Cotti, 2008).

Since results of the profiles are shared only with learners themselves, they have not been normed across groups, an important area of research that awaits funding.

Interactive self profiles

Ripple Effects for Teens Interactive self-profiles are available for the following topics, organized here into CASEL frameworks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF AWARENESS</th>
<th>SELF REGULATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Controlling impulses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk and protection</td>
<td>Managing feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning style</td>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning disability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention deficit disorder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports and exercise type</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHER AWARENESS</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIPS W/ OTHERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empathy (affective/cognitive)</td>
<td>Showing care (behavioral - empathy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Doin' democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>(Resolving) racial conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
<td>(Resolving) teacher conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internet - courtesy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internet - reading people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internet - harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internet - expressing yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DECISION MAKING</th>
<th>RESILIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making decisions</td>
<td>Hard things/Trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>Resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance abuse</td>
<td>Humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>Luck/Fate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Response to trauma is not specifically part of the CASEL framework, but is an important factor in many behavior problems.

Sample Personal Report

This profile measures your ability to feel for others, in terms of two things: how tuned you are to your own feelings, and how able you are to take the perspective of others. The idea is: 1) you can’t know what someone else is feeling if you don’t know your own feelings, and 2) people are coming from different places, so to really understand them, you need to be able to see things from their perspective.

Your answers suggest you are good at understanding the position of others. Your strong ability to take others’ point of view is a real gift. You’re likely to be able to see things from all sides. It can be a big help in problem solving. It’s half of what you need to really identify with others.

Your lower score on being tuned to feelings - your own or other people’s - means what you know about others is more from your head than from your heart. Sometimes people with this combination are tempted to manipulate others. They get a feel for what the other person’s hot buttons are and may get a kick out of pushing them. Sometimes bullies have this combination.

This can give a short-term rush, but it really backfires in the long run. People who don’t feel for others are at way more risk of committing serious crimes and eventually doing serious time.

Fortunately, you can easily avoid that outcome. Since you have such a strong base in being good at taking others’ perspectives, you just need to become more aware of feelings - your own and others. With that combination, you will have one of the major assets that can predict positive relationships and success in life. Look up “understanding feelings” in the cell phone and start today.
**Did they do it?**

**Assessment of implementation process**

Historically, the implementation process has been largely overlooked in evaluation studies. However, in the last decade there has been an explosion of interest in this area (Fixsen et al. 2005). The reason is simple: meta-analyses reveal that the implementation process may have more impact on objective outcomes than designed program quality (Lipsey & Wilson, 1998). This is because gaps between the original design of “model” programs and the actual delivery of those programs are often deep and wide. Government and foundation funders increasingly require quantitative data on the implementation process.

Dane & Schneider (1998) identified four primary characteristics to examine when assessing program fidelity:

- Adherence to design in terms of protocols, training, techniques and materials
- Exposure and dosage in terms of number and frequency of sessions
- Instructional skill level, including enthusiasm, preparedness and attitude
- Participant responsiveness, the extent to which participants are engaged by and involved in the activities and content of the program

Ripple Effects provides an automated system for measuring three of the four implementation factors identified above: adherence to design, dosage, and participant responsiveness. Because training protocols are hard wired into the software, fidelity to the fourth measure, instructional quality, is built-in.
Adherence and dosage measures

The first adherence factor in the Ripple Effects protocol is simply ensuring that students get in front of the computer and successfully sign in. The measure of that is the presence of a student record created at sign in. After that the question is whether students completed the assigned lessons. In particular, did they complete the interactive parts of the lessons. Completion rates for three interactive exercises are measured: Journal ("Brain"), content mastery ("Got it") and self-profile ("Profile"). Points are assigned for completion of each elements and dosage tracked. Time stamps on the journaling activities can be a marker for frequency of use.

Participant responsiveness

The degree of participant responsiveness, for both students and teachers, is measured by completion of the interactive parts of the program: the journal, assessment games, and interactive self-profiles. It is those scores that become the basis for dosage calculations that can then be correlated with outcomes.

Quantitative and qualitative analysis of compliance data across seven experimental studies examined the questions: To what degree did participants comply with the protocol? What factors most contributed to compliance rates? Summary results from those studies and a more thorough analysis of the implementation process can be found in Volume V of Ripple Effects Evidence of Effectiveness (http://www.rippleeffects.com/research/evidence).
Data on user experiences is an important source of direction for program development. Ripple Effects has an open ended form that learners can access at any point in their learning experience to provide feedback about what worked, what problems they may have encountered, and what they would like to see added for future editions of the software. It is accessed via the web button on all training software programs.

**Did they like it? Assessment of user experience**

Data on user experiences is an important source of direction for program development. Ripple Effects has an open ended form that learners can access at any point in their learning experience to provide feedback about what worked, what problems they may have encountered, and what they would like to see added for future editions of the software. It is accessed via the web button on all training software programs.
The next level of assessment is answering the question of whether students learned the lesson intended by the intervention. A principle of classical education is that the most valid and equitable tests for understanding are standardized tests (Thorndyke, 1918). Multiple-choice tests are the most common form of standardized tests. They are not vulnerable to charges of subjective interpretation of results.

To the degree that social-emotional competency includes a knowledge base that is grounded in science, standardized tests are a valid measure of memory, comprehension, and mental ability to logically apply a basic principle to a concrete situation in these areas as well.

Ripple Effects includes direct, objective, standardized assessment of the particular content for each lesson in each lesson, and identifies these built-in evaluations as core components of the intervention. More than 700 such micro-assessments of concept mastery are included in the series of programs. Every tutorial includes at least one. These assessment tools utilize multiple choice, matching, and true false questions in the form of interactive games, as a method of assessing concept mastery. These short quizzes check for understanding of three things: factual information about the topics selected, basic concepts related to social emotional learning, and conceptual ability to apply those concepts in practical situations.

*Did they learn? Assessment of concept mastery*
Assessment as means to content mastery

If, as many educators believe, the process of trial and error is a key mechanism for learning, then with appropriate feedback the process of testing itself can become the means for mastery. Ripple Effects employs this practice-toward-mastery approach in its extensive use of multiple choice testing throughout the program. It is not a traditional model for multiple choice testing. To begin with, all of the testing is embedded in a game format ("Got it"). In addition, Ripple Effects content mastery assessment tools differ from traditional multiple choice tests in three key ways:

• Because they are peer narrated, they are not dependent upon, or a proxy measure of, reading ability.
• Their goal is not to sort students into achievement categories, but to bring all students toward mastery. Thus the system refuses to accept wrong answers, and students receive points only when all answers are correct. Spitting out wrong answers is part of the game. The test is not finished until content is correct.
• The process is a physically engaging, playful one. For students who have keen kinesthetic intelligence, the physical process of engaging in the game may lead to learning more easily than does exposure to didactic instruction.

Although Ripple Effects software exclusively uses this pass/fail method for multiple choice activities within the software, traditionally formatted, versions to enable conventional scoring are also available request.
Assessment of performance knowledge
Conceptual understanding is not the same as “felt, or performance, understanding,” (Caine & Caine, 2004). From medical school to software engineering, scores on standardized tests fail to uniformly predict real world success or failure. This is true in academic areas; it is even truer in the highly nuanced area of social-emotional learning. Learners (adults as well as students) can often describe an intended, social-emotional response, such as assertive posture or message, but often don’t demonstrate that understanding in their actions.

Self-report with a caveat
Since the model for change of most social-emotional learning programs involves positively impacting internal mediators of behavior as the means for creating positive change in schools, it make sense to measure the mediating competencies. Nonetheless self-report is a notoriously unreliable method for ascertaining competency in these areas. However, when the goal is to assess gains in skill, as opposed to identify absolute values, subjective data can be useful.

Social emotional competencies
To date, a nationally normed, fully validated set of standardized tests to assess performance knowledge of the full range of social-emotional competencies that are mediators of behavior is not widely available, although such measure are currently being developed. Meanwhile, Ripple Effects Interactive Self-Profiles provide practical measures of core social-emotional competencies, and are extremely popular with learners, both adults and students. To use as a repeated measure for pre-to post-intervention comparisons, simply have students print and save their results.

Did it work? Quantitative proximal assessment
Some educators insist there are no possible universal understandings of subjectively known reality, rather there are multiple realities, and multiple understandings of reality. From this it follows that there is no standardized test of social-emotional competencies that validly measures knowledge across all learners. Holders of this position argue that the best measure of understanding is student presentation of what is known, preferably in the form of a visible construction, or learning “product,” such as a portfolio.

**Ripple Effects journal as portfolio**
The major personalized product universally generated through the Ripple Effects training software is an electronic journal in which students have applied each concept, lesson by lesson, to their own lives. By using the “Save” and “Print” options for each entry, students can create a step-by-step record of what they have learned and how they have applied that learning to their own lives. Binding these files together creates an impressive portfolio.

**True Story submissions**
In addition, Ripple Effects offers opportunities for learners (adult and student) to make sense of and present their personal understandings through submission of first person, true story videos that can be incorporated into the software program, or uploaded to Earned Wisdom Tech on YouTube. Specs are available at [http://www.rippleeffects.com/truestories.html](http://www.rippleeffects.com/truestories.html).
Did it matter? Distal impact on performance

Correlating with external outcomes
Impact on research-validated mediators of school outcomes is a proximal measure of success. Evidence of this performance understanding, although helpful, still does not answer the question of whether an intervention has achieved its goals. A compelling portfolio product is not a proxy for good behavior or school success. The most universally accepted measure of all interventions is real-world outcomes.

Ripple Effects recommends that all clients evaluate program impact in terms of external outcomes. Truancy, grades and discipline referrals are key behavioral outcomes to track in school settings, because they can be derived directly from administrative data. Dosage data from Ripple Effects interventions can be matched through student ID to administrative outcome data to establish correlations.

Ripple Effects historical impact on outcomes

See the complete summary of outcome data from eleven different studies, involving more than 4500 students, Evidence of Effectiveness, Vols. I, II, III, IV, V (http://rippleeffects.com/research/evidence.html).
IV. Data Collection, data analysis and reporting

A data management function, built into the Ripple Effects system, enables implementers to track individual and group progress against assigned goals. Ripple Effects data management system automatically generates several kinds of reports. Some are available directly to learners, others can only be accessed by authorized staff.

**Reports for learners**

1) Progress reports (dosage) for individual learners are continuously updated and available to each one, simply by clicking the “Scorecard” button.

2) The system tracks learner progress in completing interactive learning modes (“Brain,” “Profiles,” “Got Its”). Learners get 100 points for each.

3) Feedback on interactive profiles is presented as a graphic with a single point defining the numerical score along two dimensions. Text and audio narrative accompany the graphical presentation.

**Reports to administrators**

4) Group level responses to the school safety profiler are aggregated as they come in and instantaneously displayed in bar charts, by individual question and by theme. (See pg. 25)

5) Staff can track student (and teacher) dosage by entering the software through the administrators’ door, and clicking on the name of the student of inquiry.

**Exporting data**

All learners’ data can be exported in spread sheet form, to import into Excel™ or statistical packages for analysis. Clients’ in house researchers, third party researchers and/or Ripple Effects can then analyze correlations between dosage data and student outcomes.

**Interpretation of assessment results**

For an additional fee Ripple Effects will provide, customized formats and narrative interpretation of implications for practice of aggregated school data, in terms of identified needs and recommended corrective strategies.
Individual Basic
Ripple Effects offers three kinds of data reports for administrators. Individual assessment data is automatically collected within the program and is available in raw form without charge. Individual dosage data is continuously available to teachers, through the administrator’s screen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Michael Smith</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>abuse-boy/girlfriend, Got It</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>anti-depressants, Got It 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>apologies, Got It 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>appreciating diversity, Brain</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>appreciating diversity, Got It 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>appreciating diversity, Got It 3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>assertive eyes, Brain</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>assertive eyes, Got It 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>assertive message, Brain</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>assertive message, Got It 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>assertive posture, Brain</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>assertive posture, Got It 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONE</td>
<td>assertive reasons, Brain</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group Basic
School level data on school climate is aggregated as it comes in and displayed instantly.

Customized
For an additional charge, Ripple Effects can provide integrated reports with graphics that includes pre and post assessment and dosage data for each learner, student and teacher.
V. Administering student surveys

Proctor instructions for Ripple Effects learner surveys
Ripple Effects computer-based surveys enable easy and efficient collection of data and storage in text files that can be exported into other programs for analysis. To successfully proctor these surveys:

1. Have students complete selected surveys at designated times (usually before and after an intervention), using designated, trackable passwords (i.e. student ID).
2. Forward the survey data files to the researchers or statisticians who will analyze them.

1. Completing the Survey

A. Set up program, and confirm location of collected data
Verify that the Survey program has been installed, and that there’s a shortcut to it on the desktop (i.e. Survey icon). Make sure each computer has headphones, to ensure confidentiality. Make sure you know where student records are being stored - either locally, on each computer, or a central network server. Whoever set up the program should know.

B. Plan how you will track data, and have student ID list ready, if needed
Signing in to the program is key to making Ripple Effects Survey work for data collection. Student answers are saved in individual text files based on the password they entered when they first signed in to the program. Students must use a consistent, unique, traceable number-such as their Student ID - as their password, to make it possible to compare student answers before and after an intervention. Whatever you decide to use as the password, have that information ready to give to students when you administer the survey.

C. Plan your pre- and post- testing times
Surveys should be completed by all students being evaluated, as closely together in time as possible - ideally over no more than several days. Leave 5 -10 minutes for getting students signed in properly. Each Survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. So, estimate 25 minutes for one survey, about 40 minutes for two, whether pre- or post- intervention.
1. Completing the Survey Continued

D. Facilitate student completion of surveys

Direct students to sign in to program
Have students click on the short cut on the desktop, called “Survey.” This launches the program. They should click the first time button, to set up a new account. They should use their first and last name, and then their STUDENT ID (or some trackable identifier) as their password. This is how their answers will be tracked, when decoupled from their name, so it’s critical that they use their Student ID or another consistent identifier for the password. Follow instructions from the sign-in screen to arrive at the home screen for the program.

Choose a survey
Direct students to click on the “Topics” button in the top left corner. This will bring up the list of available surveys. Direct them to your required survey by name (such as “resiliency”).

Tell them just a few key things, or have them listen at each screen:
• Their answers won’t be connected to their name, so what they answer is protected.
• There are 24-45 questions in each survey. If they answer them all, they get a surprise reward.
• To hear things read aloud, roll the mouse over the questions and answer options.
• Click on questions to hear them read aloud again.
• They need to show you their Scorecard when they’ve finished a survey. Verify all assigned surveys are marked DONE.
• They MUST ACTIVELY QUIT out of the program, to separate their answers, but only after you have verified completion of the assigned surveys.

Give them privacy to input their responses. Verify they’ve finished a survey by checking their Scorecard.
2. Forward survey data files for analysis

Once all students have completed the required surveys, you can send copies of the data files for analysis. Student survey responses are stored in a folder called “TEST DATA”. This is stored inside the Survey folder, which is normally stored inside Program Files on the hard drive. If the program is set up to read files over the network, then the TEST DATA folder will be stored on a network server.

Make sure you find out where the TEST DATA folder is located. If you don’t know how the program is set up, you can try searching for the term “TEST DATA”, and see if you can locate it that way.

A. Go to the location(s) where the TEST DATA folder is stored. If it’s on the server, you’ll need to know the password to get to the network server. If it’s stored locally on each computer, you’ll need to collect TEST DATA folders from each computer students used to take the Survey. Once you know where to look, you’ll probably find it in a folder called Ripple Effects, in a sub-folder, “Survey” (RippleEffects/Survey/COPYTOHD/MAIN/TEST DATA). There should be as many files in the TEST DATA folder as there are students who did the surveys. Each file will be named with a student ID.

B. COPY the entire TEST DATA folder.

C. RENAME the copied folder with your school name. For instance, Where King is the school name:

   King TEST DATA

If you are doing a pre-test, and will also be doing a post-test, you should add that information to the folder name (i.e. King PRETEST DATA).

D. Deliver the first data set to the statistician or researcher who will be evaluating it. If you’re going to email it, you should compress the folder first (using StuffIt or “winzip”).

E. Move the files out of the TEST DATA folder after the pretest, so that an entirely new set of records, with the post test data only, can get saved separately.

3. For Technical Support

Getting valid data out of the program is a priority for us as well as you.

If you need help, don’t hesitate to call Ripple Effects toll free at 888-259-6618.
Ripple Effects Assessment and Data Management System
Know your resources: print, electronic, live

SOFTWARE
Digital training tools: Ripple Effects for Kids (grades 2-5), Ripple Effects for Teens (grades 6-10), Ripple Effects - Rural, Ripple Effects for Staff.

Assessment tools: Screen for Strengths, Data Manager

PRINT

• Users Guide for Staff
• Get Going Fast/ Quick Tips Sheets

Guides for tiered intervention

• Universal Promotion  positive youth development outlined to match national standards
• Targeted Prevention scopes and sequences for preventive risk reduction in 14 areas
• Mental Health scopes and sequences for children’s mental health and substance abuse
• Individualized Intervention sample individual intervention plans for behavior problems
• Juvenile Justice sample interventions for the 10 most common juvenile, criminal offenses

Guides for Planning, training & technical support

• Implementation Planning helps you build a site-specific plan for use, also as fillable pdf form
• Planning for RTI create an individualized response
• Parents and community involvement strategies and resources
• Trainer’s Resources agenda, training scenarios, evaluation forms, check-off lists, certificates
• Assessment Tools which electronic measures to use for which outcomes
• Technology Support comprehensive technical instructions and troubleshooting
• Evidence of Effectiveness quantitative and qualitative studies

Extra copies of these materials are available in print for a fee, or free to customers as a PDF.

WEB

• Implementation: rippleeffects.com/support/implement
• Technical: rippleeffects.com/support/tech
• Tech support: help@rippleeffects.com

LIVE 1-888-259-6618

• Free technology and Implementation support
• Fee-based training evaluation services.
• Call for pricing.

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