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Table 9.1 • *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and How to Respond to Them*

Question	Responses
What are social-emotional competencies?	Sometimes SECs are referred to as "soft skills" or "employability skills" (Jones et al., 2021). They are interpersonal and intrapersonal skills that employers are looking for and are essential for successful careers. CASEL (n.d.c), a key organization formed from a large network of parents, educators, and researchers, identified five main competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.
Why does my child need to develop SECs?	As described in the introduction, youth mental health is a growing concern in the United States. Research indicates that students who develop social-emotional skills are better equipped to combat issues that create anxiety, stress, depression, lack of confidence, and frustration as well as demonstrate improved academic performance. These competencies are tools that help students better understand their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in stressful situations. All learning is socially and emotionally connected, and social-emotional competencies are essential for preparing students for college, career, and community life.

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Question	Responses
Why include teaching about SECs in math class?	There is a close connection between the math practices we want to develop in students and the social-emotional competencies. For example, learning mathematics can sometimes be a frustrating experience, requiring students to persevere, listen to and work with others, and adapt their thinking and behavior to enable them to be more successful. In addition, the stronger students become with these competencies, the more success they can experience inside and outside of the math classroom.
How are SECs integrated into the daily math classroom routines?	We can integrate SECs into the classroom as students solve problems, explain their thinking, listen to others share, discuss ideas, make decisions about what math tools to use, make sense of new ideas, demonstrate perseverance, and more. The SECs are naturally a part of what we do in math but integrating them into instruction means we name them when we use them and help students be aware of how they are developing these skills, so they are visible. Teachers can create a supportive environment in the classroom by teaching social and emotional skills directly, modeling positive behavior, and helping students practice these skills.
Doesn't including instruction focused on SECs take time away from learning math?	Developing SECs in tandem with learning math helps students to develop and strengthen both skills simultaneously. For students who are apprehensive about math, they can leverage the SECs in the lesson to build success in the math classroom.
How are SECs assessed or measured?	SECs develop on a continuum. They are not a "have it" or "don't have it" type of skill, but rather skills that develop and build over time and with repetition. SECs are often assessed informally through observation and by listening for them in practice.
What can families do to support the development of SECs?	We are not born knowing how to manage our emotions, control our behavior, or handle tough situations. These skills are learned over time, and both teachers and families play an important role in building them. Families can support this learning by setting a good example through their words, attitudes, and actions. At home, families can talk about the social-emotional competencies students are learning in school and look for ways to practice them together. This teamwork between teachers and families helps students grow stronger in managing their emotions and behavior.