



GUIDE TO

# CREATE AND SHARE TOOLS

## Create and share tools

This is a guide on how to collect, adapt and share social and emotional learning (SEL) tools.

We recommend using the guide together with the "5 steps" guide to target the challenges identified in step 3.

You can also use tools developed through this guide as starting points for shared learning (see "Guide to facilitate shared learning").

## Research based

This guide is research based and developed through the [BOOST project](#).

## Copyright

[Guide to create and share tools](#) © 2023 by [BOOST project](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#)



The project has received funding from the European Union's HORIZON 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No: 755175

# What is a tool?

Tools in this context are practical actions or exercises that aim to improve social and emotional competence. They could be tools that help strengthen interaction between school staff and children, interaction between children, tools for mapping the classroom environment or tools for self development.

It is all about promoting social and emotional competence among children and school staff.

## Mapping student's friendship networks

The sociogram below is an illustration of a social network in a group of children. This is achieved through a sociometric technique using peer nomination. Children with several arrows pointing at them are socially attractive. Those with few arrows might be socially isolated.

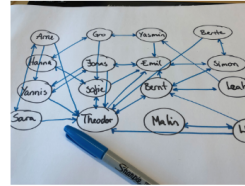
So how do you reveal the social relationships of a group?

Ask each child in the group you are interested in to answer the following three questions:

1. Who are your best friends in school?
2. Who would you like to work with in class?
3. Who would you like to spend time with during break time (recess)?

There can be some overlap to these questions, so you might decide to use only the first question. Children are asked to nominate 3-5 children. It is important to set a fix number, but at the same time give children the opportunity to open to a few more than their closest friends (Pj., Frostad and Flem 2008).

With the answers, you can try to make a sociogram, but an easier way to see these social relationships is to set up a matrix, where you place the names of the children in the group on the vertical axis and the nominees in the horizontal axis. You can use a program like Excel to do this. The responses from each child in the vertical axis is placed along the horizontal axis. You then use Excel to program to tally up the number of friends, or social desirability each child has.



	Anna	Rebecca	Selma	Hannah	Elisabeth	Victoria	Olivia	Ella	Sarah	Ingrid	Rachel
Anna											
Rebecca		1		1				1			
Selma					1			1			
Hannah				1							
Elisabeth						1		1		1	
Victoria					1						1
Olivia							1	1			
Ella			1	1							1
Sarah					1	1					1
Ingrid										1	1
Rachel									1	1	
	0	1	3	2	2	3	0	4	1	2	3

Inspired from (Farmer and Cairns 1991)

*Photo: Example of tool for mapping student's friendship networks.*

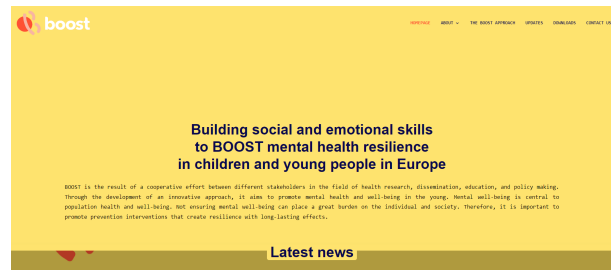
# Lessons from the BOOST project

- There is a high demand for tools that promote social and emotional learning in schools.
- School staff find it time consuming to find relevant tools as they are spread all over the place (web pages, youtube, forums, SEL-programmes, books, etc).
- School staff prefer tools that are practical and easy to utilise in school contexts.

In the BOOST project we addressed this challenge by creating the BOOST toolbox; a wide selection of tools made available through a website (<https://testversion.boostapproach.com/en/tools-3/>).

However, there was a big difference in how schools perceived the usefulness of various tools. A tool that was considered useful for one school, was not necessarily of interest to another. The same variation could be seen across countries. This might be explained by the fact that different schools face different challenges.

For tools to be considered useful they need to address a relevant challenge and be adapted to the local context and culture. Thus, we recommend following the steps in this guide to collect, adapt or design your own set of tools.



Screenshot: The Boost project web page - a research project funded by the EU.

How to

# CREATE, COLLECT OR ADAPT TOOLS

# There are a lot of tools out there

A lot of SEL tools already exist, but as they are spread all over the place they could be hard to find. In addition, school staff are already pressed for time. Building an easily accessible toolbox for your school staff is a good strategy to facilitate development of SEL skills at your school. Below, you find a list of possible sources for SEL tools:

- Your own staff! Each school staff could be a resource with personal experience and knowledge of tools and activities that build SEL skills.
- Tools from different SEL programmes (books, online material, courses, etc.)
- National/ international tool banks (e.g. European toolkit for schools, or similar national tool banks)
- Tools on YouTube, Facebook groups, Pinterest, etc.
- Tools from other schools
- Your friendly AI (e.g. ChatGPT)



## Map tools already existing at your school

Most school staff are already using tools that aim to improve SEL skills. It could be activities, events, games, practical self development tools, etc. Arrange a session where you try to map out tools or activities that are already being used at school. Which tools and activities have led to good results?

Quite often there is a great potential for sharing such tools across grades within the school and across staff categories. Tools or activities used in grades 1-4 might be unknown to staff in grade 5-9 and vice versa. By utilising resources already available at the school it is easier to achieve a whole school approach and to improve SEL skills for all school staff.

One way of initiating the mapping is to start out identifying tools relevant for a specific challenge or topic. E.g. see what your school mapped out in step 2/3 in the 5-steps approach.

The session could be carried out as a mix of individual work, group work and summary in plenary sessions.

Later in this guide, we present a template that could be used to describe tools in a standardised way.



*Photo: Arrange a session with the purpose of mapping out existing tools or activities carried out at your school.*

# ChatGPT - utilising the benefits of AI

Due to the variety of needs of each school for tools and knowledge and the constantly changing social and emotional learning terrain, ChatGPT can be a useful source for identifying solutions for your school's particular needs, since it captures all information available from the www. It can model positive language and communication skills, and offer personalized support. ChatGPT can help school staff create a more supportive and inclusive learning environment.

**However, be critical to the information you receive, and ask ChatGPT for references.**

The image displays three screenshots of ChatGPT interactions. The first screenshot shows a user asking for ways to improve a school's inclusivity, with the AI providing a list of six strategies. The second screenshot shows a user asking for activities to promote cohesion, with the AI listing five ideas and a reminder to be patient. The third screenshot shows a user asking for tools to address exclusion, with the AI providing a list of five activities and a reminder to be consistent.

**ChatGPT Response 1:**

I'm a teacher. We are facing a challenge with students being excluded by classmates on social media platforms. How can we as a school improve this situation or contribute to a more inclusive environment?

Exclusion on social media platforms can be a significant challenge for schools, as it can negatively impact students' well-being and sense of belonging. Here are some strategies that schools can use to help address this issue and promote a more inclusive environment:

1. Educate students about the impact of exclusion. Help students understand the negative impact of exclusion and encourage them to be more mindful of their online behavior and language.
2. Foster a positive school culture. Develop a positive school culture that values diversity and inclusivity, and actively promote this culture through school policies, programs, and initiatives.
3. Encourage empathy and respect. Encourage students to practice empathy and respect for others, and promote positive communication and conflict resolution skills.
4. Provide support for victims of exclusion. Provide support for students who have experienced exclusion on social media platforms, such as counseling services, peer support programs, or safe spaces for discussion and healing.
5. Work with parents and guardians. Engage parents and guardians in discussions about the impact of exclusion on social media platforms and encourage them to monitor their children's online behavior.
6. Use social media positively. Encourage students to use social media in positive ways, such as to connect with peers, share interests, or promote positive messages.

By taking these steps, schools can help address exclusion on social media platforms and promote a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

[Free Research Preview: ChatGPT may produce inaccurate information about people, places, or facts. ChatGPT May 20 Version](#)

**ChatGPT Response 2:**

Certainly, there are several activities and tools that you can use to promote better cohesion among your students and help them build stronger friendships. Here are a few ideas:

1. Icebreaker Games: You can start the school year with icebreaker games to help students get to know each other better. These games are fun and engaging, and they help break down barriers and encourage interaction between students. For example, you could try "Two Truths and a Lie" or "The Name Game."
2. Class Projects: Collaborative class projects can help students work together towards a common goal, and give them an opportunity to share their strengths and talents with each other. Consider having your students work on a class mural, a group presentation, or a community service project.
3. Group Activities: Group activities can be a fun way to encourage students to work together and get to know each other better. You could organize a field trip, a class picnic, or a game day where students can work in small groups and play games together.
4. Buddy Systems: Pairing students with a buddy can be a great way to help them develop friendships and provide support to each other. You could randomly assign buddies, or you could ask students to choose a buddy that they would like to work with.
5. Classroom Culture: Creating a positive classroom culture is important for promoting cohesion among students. Encourage kindness, empathy, and inclusivity in the classroom, and make sure to recognize and celebrate student achievements.

Remember, building strong friendships takes time, effort, and patience. Be consistent in your efforts, and encourage your students to be kind and supportive of each other. With time, you'll see your students begin to form stronger bonds and build meaningful friendships.

[Free Research Preview: ChatGPT may produce inaccurate information about people, places, or facts. ChatGPT May 20 Version](#)

**ChatGPT Response 3:**

Hi, I am a teacher for an elementary school and I want to create better cohesion among the students in my class. We have some challenges with some students being alone and not having many friends. Do you have any tips for good activities, exercises or tools that I can use?

Exclusion on social media platforms can be a significant challenge for schools, as it can negatively impact students' well-being and sense of belonging. Here are some strategies that schools can use to help address this issue and promote a more inclusive environment:

1. Educate students about the impact of exclusion. Help students understand the negative impact of exclusion and encourage them to be more mindful of their online behavior and language.
2. Foster a positive school culture. Develop a positive school culture that values diversity and inclusivity, and actively promote this culture through school policies, programs, and initiatives.
3. Encourage empathy and respect. Encourage students to practice empathy and respect for others, and promote positive communication and conflict resolution skills.
4. Provide support for victims of exclusion. Provide support for students who have experienced exclusion on social media platforms, such as counseling services, peer support programs, or safe spaces for discussion and healing.
5. Work with parents and guardians. Engage parents and guardians in discussions about the impact of exclusion on social media platforms and encourage them to monitor their children's online behavior.
6. Use social media positively. Encourage students to use social media in positive ways, such as to connect with peers, share interests, or promote positive messages.

By taking these steps, schools can help address exclusion on social media platforms and promote a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

[Free Research Preview: ChatGPT may produce inaccurate information about people, places, or facts. ChatGPT May 20 Version](#)

*Screenshot: Examples using ChatGPT to find suitable activities and tools to address a challenge.*



# Suggested template for describing tools

We recommend that tools are described and presented following a standardised setup. This way, it will be easier for school staff to read about the tool and to find tools suitable for their specific topic, challenge or age group.

We suggest the following sections, but feel free to make your own adjustments:

- **Age or classes:** Who is this tool suitable for?
- **Aim or objective:** What is the purpose of the tool?
- **Expected outcome for children:** eg. what will the children learn from this tool?
- **Expected outcome for school staff:** e.g. what will school staff achieve or learn using this tool?
- **Description:** a short description of the tool and how activities should be carried out
- **Tips and experiences:** general comments or tips shared by people that have been using the tool
- **References/links/video/examples**

## Reflecting on other people's thoughts and feelings

**Age:** from the age of 8 and up.

**Objectives:** Practice reflecting and building empathy.

**Expected outcome for the student:** To become more aware of other people's experiences and feelings.

**Expected outcome for school staff:** To involve the whole class in discussions. To get to hear/read the thoughts of each individual student.

First, distribute as many copies of this tool (below) as you need for the task. This reflection tool can be used when a class, or a group of students, for example, reads a book or watches a film where a character needs to make a choice. Take a break from the story or film and let the students reflect on the character's thoughts, feelings and possible choices. Let the students take time to think by themselves before they fill out the sheet. Feel free to encourage students to write several suggestions in each field. You can put the students together in pairs or small groups if you can gather the whole class.

**Comments from school staff**

A teacher tried this out with 30 students. The teacher was surprised to see that all students participated in discussions, but not all gave feedback when using the tool.


The same teacher believes the tool will be useful in the future to see results.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What is she or he thinking?

What is she or he feeling?

What could he or she choose to do?



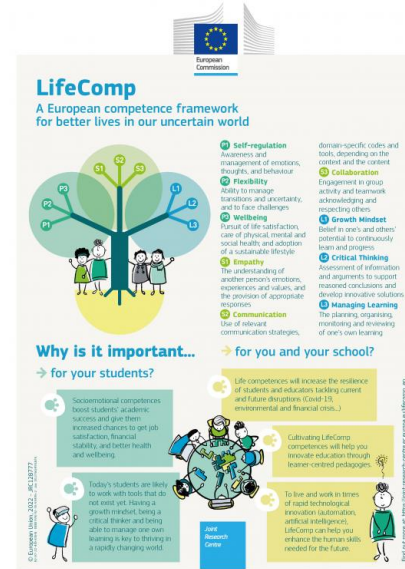
How to

# ORGANISE AND SHARE TOOLS

# How to structure or categorise tools?

Categorising and structuring tools can be done in many ways. Below are some suggestions you may find useful.

- The tool database can get unmanageable, so make sure tools are searchable or easy to find
- Use a standardised template to describe your tools. This makes it easier to get an overview of the tool and its purpose.
- Tools can be categorised in different ways, e.g. according to age of children, classes or challenges. You can also categorise tools into SEL categories defined in a relevant SEL framework, for instance the SEL categories defined in the introduction of the 5-step guide.
- Find your own way of categorising and documenting tools, based on what is relevant for your school.



[https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/lifecomp/lifecomp-conceptual-reference-model\\_en](https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/lifecomp/lifecomp-conceptual-reference-model_en)

# Suggestions for where and how to store tools

- Make sure you organise your tools in a way that encourages and enables all school staff to easily find, upload and download tools.
- Organise your tools so that it is possible to search for keywords inside documents. Google drive or OneDrive have good search engines for this purpose.
- Tag your tools with #keywords to make it easier for school staff to find suitable tools for a specific situation or challenge.
- Keep printed tools in a ring binder for a low tech and simple way of storing tools. This could however be more difficult to keep updated and challenging to share/search.

