SEL Check-In Question Bank

75 check-in questions by grade band and purpose, with a weekly check-in tracker

For: K-12 teachers, counselors and advisory leaders

How to use this bank

- Pick one question per day and rotate the purpose across the week. Keep the daily opener to 2 or 3 minutes; save the weekly and hard-day questions for a 10- to 15-minute circle.
- Offer a quick public signal and a private written option. Always allow a pass, and acknowledge every response briefly.
- Never use check-in answers for grades or discipline.

Elementary (K-5)

Feelings today

1. What color is your mood right now?
2. If your feelings were weather, what would the forecast be?
3. Fist-to-five: how was your morning?
4. One word for how you feel, and one word for how you want to feel by lunch.
5. Which animal matches your energy: a sloth, a puppy, a cat or a cheetah?
6. Is there a feeling in your body right now? Where is it?

Energy and readiness

1. Did you eat something this morning? Did you sleep okay?
2. What is one thing that would help you be ready to learn right now?
3. Do you need a stretch, a drink of water or a quiet minute first?
4. What is one thing you are looking forward to today?

Friendship and belonging

1. Who was kind to you yesterday?
2. Who did you play with at recess, and what did you play?
3. Is there someone in our class you would like to know better?
4. Did anyone need help yesterday? Did they get it?
5. What is one way you could be a good friend today?

Learning

1. What was tricky yesterday, and what did you do about it?
2. What is one thing you want to get better at this week?
3. Is there anything from yesterday you still have questions about?
4. What helps most when you are stuck: a friend, a teacher, a break or trying again?

Middle school (6-8)

Feelings

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you doing, and what number would make today good?
2. Name the feeling under the feeling. If you are annoyed, what is underneath?
3. What has your attention right now that is not school?
4. Pick a song title that describes your morning.
5. Where are you on the energy and mood grid, and where would you like to be?

Stress and workload

1. What is the heaviest thing on your plate this week?
2. How many hours did you sleep last night? What got in the way?
3. What is one thing you can finish today that would lower your stress?
4. When you feel overwhelmed, what do you usually do, and does it work?
5. Is there a deadline coming up that you are not sure how to meet?
6. What is one thing in your control today and one thing that is not?

Belonging

1. Who at school knows how you are really doing?
2. Is there a group or activity where you feel like you fit? What makes it work?
3. Did you see someone being left out this week? What happened?
4. What is one thing people at this school get wrong about you?
5. Who is one person you could thank today, and for what?
6. If a new student arrived tomorrow, what would you want them to know about our class?

Learning

1. What is one thing you understand now that you did not last week?
2. What is a choice you made yesterday that you would make differently?
3. Which class are you most behind in, and what is the smallest next step?
4. What would make it easier to ask for help in this class?

High school (9-12)

Feelings

1. One word for how you are arriving today. One word for what you need.
2. What has been taking up space in your head this week?
3. Rate your week so far from 1 to 10. What would move it one point higher?
4. What is something you are proud of that nobody at school knows about?
5. When did you last feel genuinely relaxed? What were you doing?

Stress, workload and sleep

1. How many hours of sleep are you averaging this week?
2. What is the one task you keep avoiding, and what would it take to start it?
3. Which of your current stressors can you change, and which do you need to cope with?
4. What is your plan for the next 48 hours, and is it realistic?
5. How do you know when stress is tipping from motivating into harmful?
6. What is one thing you will say no to this week to protect your time?

Relationships and belonging

1. Who is in your corner right now?

2 Is there a relationship, at school or outside it, that is draining you?
3 What is a conversation you have been putting off?
4 When did someone show you empathy recently? What did they do?
5 If you had a serious problem this week, who at this school would you tell?

Goals and reflection

1 What is one decision you are weighing right now, and what are the options?
2 What did you do this week that lined up with your values? What did not?
3 What would your future self thank you for doing today?
4 What is one habit that is helping you, and one that is not?
5 What do you want to be different by the end of this semester?
6 What feedback did you receive recently, and what did you do with it?

Weekly reflection (all grades)

1 What worked this week?
2 What got in the way?
3 What is one change you will make next week?
4 Who helped you this week, and did you tell them?
5 What is one thing you learned about yourself?
6 What do you want me to know before Monday?

After a hard day or hard news (all grades)

1 How are you doing with what happened?
2 What do you need right now: information, quiet, company or something to do?
3 What has helped you get through hard things before?
4 Is there anything you are worried about that we have not talked about?
5 Who is someone you can check on today?
6 What would make this room feel safer right now?
7 Is there anything you want to say or ask, privately or to the group?

Weekly check-in tracker

Day	Question number and what the room showed
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	

Follow-ups (keep private).

Student	Follow-up needed, date done, who was informed

Student	Follow-up needed, date done, who was informed

Responding to a concerning answer

1. Find a private moment the same day. Start with what the student wrote, ask one open question, then wait.
2. Thank them. Do not promise secrecy you cannot keep, and tell them what happens next.
3. If the answer suggests self-harm, suicide, abuse, neglect or being unsafe, involve your counselor or administrator immediately and follow your school's reporting procedure. You report reasonable suspicion; you do not investigate.
4. Write down what was said, when, and who you told.
5. Make sure students know the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is available 24 hours a day by call, text or chat.

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