



Supporting SEL in Living Quarters



Whether it is in a cabin, dorm, or tipi, a student's living quarters are settings with great potential for intentional social and emotional development. Here, students work with their peers (and sometimes interact with students from other schools) to establish positive living spaces. They have to navigate potential challenges such as shared bathrooms and limited storage space. For students who have not had many—or any—experiences away from home or interactions with peers from other cultures, this element of the program can create anxiety, fear, and mistrust. Taking proactive measures to establish group agreements, make everyone feel welcome, and establish systems of accountability and responsibility can help students to navigate these social interactions.

As program leaders, it is worth asking ourselves, “How much specific support and instruction do I give to chaperones, teachers, and/or cabin staff to make use of the opportunities for social and emotional learning (SEL) in living quarters?” Here is an example:

[Multnomah Outdoor School Uses These Cabin Cards for Teen Leaders](#)
