

Empathy Matters: Organizations that Study Empathy

Four organizations that study the role of empathy in human development

The role of empathy in education and human development has been the subject of in-depth study in a wide range of fields from sociology, psychology and neuroscience to evolutionary biology, economics and civic engagement. Research clearly shows that empathy matters, whether you're talking about leadership development and the ability to function within a team, the perceived openness of doctors toward their nurses and patients or a child's capacity for prosocial behavior and the ability to learn.

Indeed, human beings are wired for empathy: the presence of oxytocin, mirror neurons, and thousands of years of evolutionary biology all suggest that our brain circuitry has evolved with empathy at its core. Research also tells us that far from being something we can take for granted, our capacity for empathy—and indeed our basic neurobiology—is as much the product of culture, experience, and practice as it is genetics.

Take a look at the vast bodies of knowledge and ongoing studies conducted and compiled by the following organizations and research centers:

- [CASEL](#): Founded in 1994 by author Daniel Goleman and a host of leading researchers, educators, and philanthropists, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning has worked exhaustively to advance the science and evidence-based practice of social and emotional learning (SEL). After years of research and analysis, they have demonstrated the foundational role SEL plays in promoting positive behaviors such as conflict management, cooperation, and inclusiveness, and in preventing negative behaviors and outcomes. [Read more about the benefits of social-emotional learning.](#)
- [Greater Good Science Center](#): The Greater Good Science Center studies the psychology, sociology, and neuroscience of well-being, and teaches skills that foster a thriving, resilient, and compassionate society. Based at the University of California at Berkeley, the GGSC is unique in its commitment to both science and practice, sponsoring groundbreaking scientific research into the pillars of social and emotional well-being, and offering a host of tools – from an [online magazine](#) to extensive expert [videos](#) and [blogs](#) — to help you apply those findings to your own lives.

- [Developmental Studies Center](#): DSC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to children's academic, ethical, and social development, and the creator of the internationally-recognized [Caring School Community](#) program. They have produced numerous [articles and papers](#) on the benefits of a caring school community and its impact on academic achievement, reduced violence and drug use, and students' moral and ethical development.
- [Teleos Leadership Institute](#): With his ground-breaking book Emotional Intelligence, author and psychologist Dr. Daniel Goleman forever changed the way we think of effective leadership in business—putting to rest once and for all the idea that emotional intelligence was the sole domain of those in humanitarian fields. Teleos has continued to conduct extensive research backing up the importance of empathy in business and leadership development, and developing award-winning training and programming to help leaders and staff use the four competencies attached to emotional intelligence to overcome organizational challenges.