



Nurturing healthier, happier classrooms with SEL

Move This World helps students, teachers, and families build social and emotional skills with an easy-to-adopt multimedia approach

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a hot topic in K–12 education, especially since the pandemic has highlighted the importance of mental and emotional health. Move This World is working with D2L to deliver interactive video exercises that help schools integrate SEL into daily classroom activities, taking the pressure off teachers and contributing to measurable reductions in incidents and suspensions.

At a glance

Client: Move This World

Learners: 2,000,000+

Industry: K–12

Website: www.movethisworld.com

Platform/Features:

- Brightspace Core
- Performance Plus
- Brightspace Services—Data Consulting Services

Interviewees:

- Kathy Krupa, VP of Partnerships

Highlights:

- 28% decrease in overall incident reports for schools that adopt Move This World for SEL
- 35% decrease in incident reports and 15% decrease in suspensions for English language learner (ELL) students
- 27% decrease in incident reports and 13% decrease in suspensions for special education (SPED) students

“From the very beginning, teachers saw that our approach to SEL made a big difference to their students, but teachers already have so much on their plates. We wanted to make delivering SEL instruction easy and engaging for all teachers and students without taking time away from academic skills.”

Kathy Krupa, VP of Partnerships, Move This World

Challenge

Bringing SEL to life

The Move This World story begins in 2007, when founder Sara Potler LaHayne spent a year as a Fulbright Scholar in Bogota, Colombia. During her research, she found that traditional dry, text-based approaches to social and emotional learning (SEL) were failing to engage most students. She realized that the playground, not the classroom, was where most SEL took place, because that’s where children have the most freedom to move, interact, and express their emotions.

That insight led to the creation of Dance 4 Peace, later rebranded as Move This World. The company started by working directly with students at U.S. schools to teach social and emotional skills through movement and creative expression before switching to a “train the trainer” approach and finally to facilitating classroom SEL teaching through multimedia experiences.

Video quickly proved to be a fun and effective way to teach SEL skills on an ongoing basis and grow the SEL foundation within a school community. Around seven years ago, Move This World began to curate a video library of highly engaging, participatory exercises

for teachers to deliver to their students daily. Each grade level has a unique multimedia-based curriculum with a scope and sequence designed to build skills appropriately over time.

“Our videos are interactive and incorporate movement, creative expression, and moments of play to teach students a common language to express their emotions and provide skills that can help them navigate any situation,” says Kathy Krupa. “We support our students from Pre-K through 12th grade to ensure they have a solid foundation for recognizing, managing, and communicating their emotions.”

The launch of the video library was when things really started to accelerate for Move This World—the organization reached its first million students within four years and its second million just two years later. The next challenge was how to make this growth sustainable and put SEL content not only in the hands of teachers but also in the hands of students and their families across the country.



Solution

Building dynamic user experiences

The initial version of Move This World's learning environment was built using a software platform designed for professional development content.

"It worked, but it lacked the ability to engage and grow with the vision of Move This World," says Kathy Krupa. "We wanted something more than just a video library. Our ultimate goal is a platform that students and teachers can interact with directly, a place where they can create space for themselves and each other to build their social and emotional capacity. The whole experience needs to be really engaging and interactive."

Move This World realized that D2L Brightspace would be the right choice to help the organization scale. D2L Brightspace not only provides a flexible and extensible foundation for building dynamic user experiences—it also helps automate back-office processes such as enrollment and offers analytics capabilities that Move This World can use to prove the real-world value of SEL to schools.

Harnessing powerful analytics

"We have to be able to show our schools the return on investment from our programs," explains Kathy Krupa. "D2L's data consulting services team is helping us capture and analyze really granular data."

Using Performance Plus's Insights Report Builder, D2L Brightspace's analytics engine, Move This World creates dashboards for school administrators, with separate "cards" for each school in each district. The cards display key metrics for all the Move This World users within the school, based on live data from D2L Brightspace—for example, how frequently they log in, how much time they spend per visit, and which content they use with their classes.

Kathy Krupa comments: "We can see which teachers are using our content in their lessons, and how it's helping to influence students' behavior over time. By correlating the use of our SEL content with metrics such as absenteeism, incident reports, and suspensions, we can clearly demonstrate the value that Move This World provides."



Adapting to a world in crisis

The adoption of D2L Brightspace also paid dividends for Move This World when the COVID-19 pandemic changed the game for educators in early 2020.

“The big advantage was that, unlike most education providers, we didn’t really have to change anything,” says Kathy Krupa. “With D2L Brightspace, we could already deliver all our content online, so we were able to focus on developing new content to support students while schools were closed.”

For example, Move This World used the D2L Brightspace Course Builder tool to create new playlists of accessible, bite-sized SEL content, and made them available to families for use in the home.

“For families with children who were too young to understand what was happening with COVID, we brought some normalcy back into their lives by giving them activities to do with their families,” says Kathy Krupa. “In fact, parents found our content useful for themselves, too—with all the stress of the pandemic, they also had to learn new skills to cope with and navigate these challenging times and situations.”

“Above all, we want to continue educating teachers and parents that SEL is not just a check-the-box topic or a trend that’s hot right now. It’s about developing life skills that are just as important as literacy or math. These skills support every other aspect of a student’s development.”

Kathy Krupa, VP of Partnerships, Move This World

Result

Demonstrating real value

With D2L Brightspace in place, Move This World is able to demonstrate tangible value for schools that integrate SEL content into their classrooms. On average, these schools see a 28% reduction in overall incident reports as their students develop their self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills—the five core competencies defined by the Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

The skills that Move This World teaches are particularly valuable for students whose social and emotional needs have traditionally been underserved by mainstream education. For example, English language learner (ELL) students see a 35% reduction in incident reports and a 15% reduction in suspensions, while special education (SPED) students see improvements of 27% and 13%, respectively.

Raising the profile of SEL nationwide

“We’ve already helped over 2 million students across 42 states, and we couldn’t have sustained that growth without our partnership with D2L,” comments Kathy Krupa. “Together, we want to continue that progress and give every student, teacher, and parent access to our SEL content.

She concludes: “In online education, we’re often talking about engagement in terms of logging in or clicking buttons, but when we talk about engagement with SEL there’s much more to it than that. Digital delivery of SEL exercises allows students to authentically interact and build a deep enough understanding of critical social emotional skills that they quickly start to transfer outside of the classroom. My favorite story is when I saw two students who had been sent to the principal’s office. They were able to engage with each other directly about why they had gotten into trouble, what they were feeling, and what techniques they could have used to handle the situation better. When you see students talking to each other about their emotions and reflecting on what they’ve learned, that’s true engagement.”