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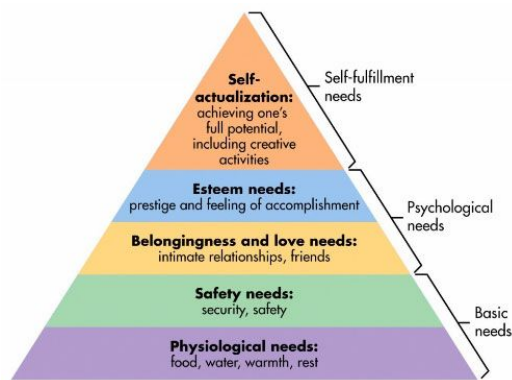
### Part III: Children's Barriers to SEL

#### Introduction: What Are Social and Medical Barriers?

In previous chapters we confirmed that SEL promotes five skills that help children achieve academic success and build positive relationships. Applying SEL at the classroom, school, and district levels transforms student learning.

Some children, however, are unable to benefit from SEL without special interventions. Why? They face social and/or medical barriers.

Social barriers occur due to events outside the classroom. These barriers are best reflected within Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:



The Hierarchy's bottom three levels represent what children require *before* they can learn effectively in a classroom setting. Unfortunately, not all children have these needs met. A child with an abusive parent may have an inherent distrust of adults. This child would be unlikely to respond to any teacher using SEL.

Medical conditions are responsible for the second type of barrier. A child with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may have difficulty with the relationship and social awareness components of SEL. Included in this group are children with depression and other medical conditions that impede self-esteem and self-actualization.

Without special interventions, it is unlikely that children in these two groups will flourish in a classroom or school that has embraced SEL. In Chapters 11 and 12 we will explore ways to identify these two groups of children early on in the academic year. These chapters include many techniques teachers can employ to engage with these children, ensuring that they, too, will benefit from SEL.