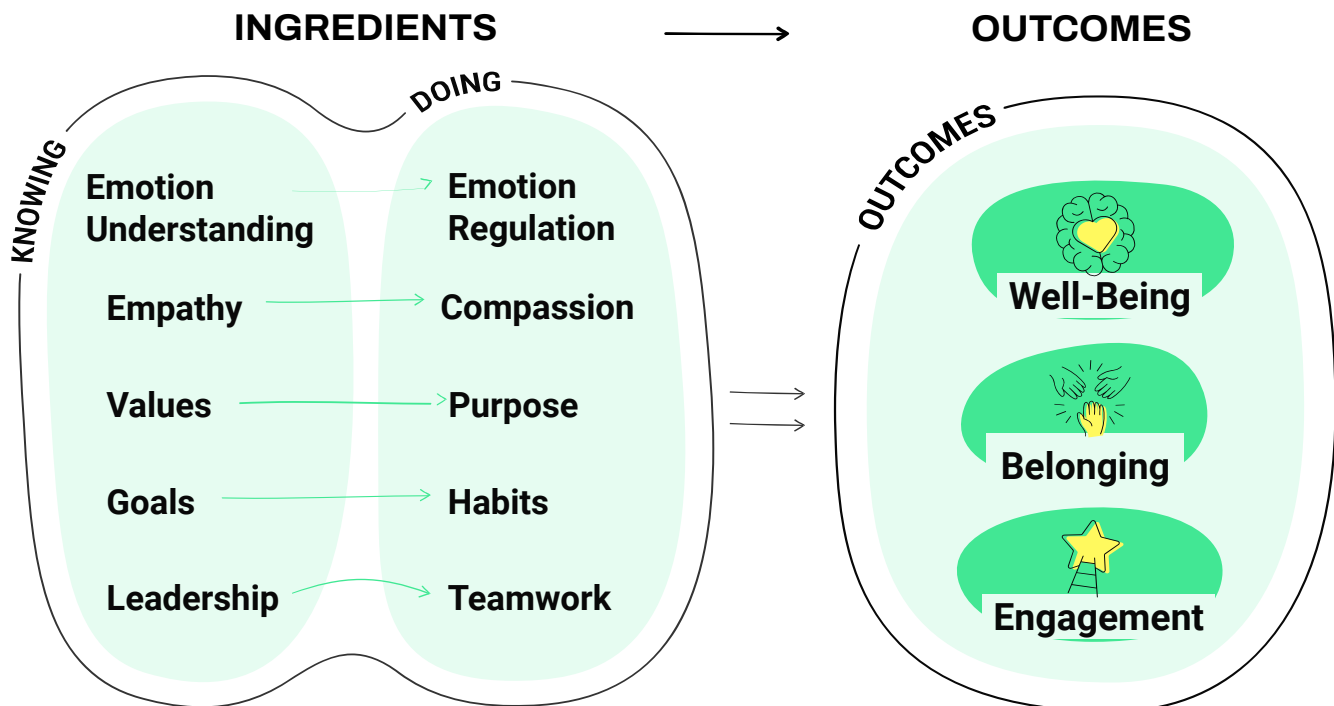


3 THINGS TO KNOW

1. Our curriculum was built alongside middle and high school students and educators, bringing in a wide variety of perspectives and experiences.
2. We combine character development with skills for life success to lead students towards 3 research-backed outcomes: **Well-Being, Belonging, Engagement**.
3. Building strong, trusting relationships with and among students is a foundational component of our lessons. To increase belonging, all lessons are also available in Spanish.



COMPONENTS STUDENTS ENJOY

- Interactive connection games and activities
- Weekly character challenges
- Lots of opportunities for student voice and choice
- Opportunities to have real conversations with their peers
- Curriculum that is geared toward secondary students

Want more information?

- Visit [CharacterStrong.com](https://www.characterstrong.com)
- View our [FamilyStrong](#) page and introductory video.
- Gain family access to the curriculum. ([click here](#))

Character Challenge SAMPLES:

Checking In

Notice someone at your school who might be having a tough time. Show this person you care about them by learning 3 things about their life.

Be Selfless

Set aside 10-30 minutes of intentional time to do something positive for a loved one outside of school.



Middle School & High School Curriculum: Overview for Families

The Research: Benefits of the CharacterStrong Curriculum

Research studies on character education and the teaching of skills for life success reveal a number of positive outcomes when delivered at the middle school and high school levels. These skills include empathy, goal-setting, habit-building, emotion regulation, and more. CharacterStrong is designed to include these skills while building a foundation of strong relationships among students. The student benefits of experiencing a program like CharacterStrong include:

- Improved sense of belonging at school and among classmates
- Increased sense of well-being and emotion regulation
- Increased self-discipline and engagement at school
- Improved academic performance, including grades, test scores, and attendance
- Readiness for college and career
- Increased probability of longer term success into adulthood

(Jeynes et al., 2019; Johnson, 2021).

The Research Behind the Outcomes:

Belonging

School belonging is a critically important asset for students that is one of the **fundamental conditions for learning**. When students have a sense of belonging at school they feel accepted, valued, respected, included, and supported by others in their classroom or school.

Belonging is a basic human need.

Benefits of a sense of belonging include –

- Improved attitudes toward learning
- Increased academic performance, including grades and attendance
- Greater happiness, self-esteem, & positive identity
- Decreased disruptive behavior such as fighting, bullying, and vandalism

Allen, K., Kern, M. L., Vella-Brodrick, D., Hattie, J., & Waters, L. (2018). What schools need to know about fostering school belonging: A meta-analysis.

Engagement

Behavioral engagement is about “doing school” – attendance, participation, and active involvement in the classroom and school community. Cognitive engagement refers to how much students actively focus on learning and mastering new skills. In short, **engagement drives learning**. The emotional component of engagement combines how students feel about schoolwork, as well as their teachers, peers, and the school environment. Student polls indicate that engagement rates drop in middle and high school. Focusing on building relationships, creating safe, supportive environments, and improving school culture increases engagement, benefiting all students.

National Association of State Boards of Education. (2015, March). A State of Engagement: NASBE Study Group on Student Engagement.

Well Being

Well-being is a state of mental and physical health characterized by positive emotions and healthy psychological and social functioning. Students with **well-being feel socially connected** and have a sense of purpose and greater ability to manage life challenges. Increasing well-being benefits all students, including those struggling with social and emotional difficulties. These benefits include –

- **Improved life satisfaction**
- Improved mental health
- Healthier behaviors and decisions
- Greater social connectedness
- Stronger engagement at school
- Reduction in behaviors that interfere with learning

Allensworth et. al. (2018). Ibid