Social Emotional Learning in Elementary & Middle School

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SUSD PARENT SESSION OCTOBER 2021
• Originally founded in 1994 as Cleo Eulau Center
• Mental health agency focused on education and learning environments
• Support teachers, students and entire school community by
  • fostering healthy relationships
  • developing resilience in both youth and educators
• Educate on direct connection between emotions and learning
• Create more vital, healthy, and positive learning environments
Mission

Acknowledge Alliance is dedicated to promoting lifelong resilience in children and youth by strengthening the caring capacity of the adults who influence their lives.
Project Resilience
Social Emotional Learning program

- Elementary Curriculum 3rd - 5th grade: 10 lessons
- Middle School Curriculum 6th - 8th grade: 7 lessons
- Led by mental health professionals
- Teachers collaborate - but do not prepare
- Mid-lesson activities for teachers
- Original Project Resilience journals for student use during lessons, to take home once the program ends.
Follows CASEL’s recommended practices

**Sequenced**: Planned set of activities to develop skills sequentially in step-by-step fashion

**Active**: Use active forms of learning such as role-plays and behavioral rehearsal with feedback

**Focused**: Devote sufficient time exclusively to developing social and emotional skills

**Explicit**: Target specific social and emotional skills
Foundational Concepts
• Resilience
• Empathy
• Mindfulness
• Gratitude

Lesson Activities
1. Character Strengths
2. Brain Development & Emotions
3. Coping Skills
4. Communication
5. Team Work & Conflict Resolution
6. Review and Celebration
Mindfulness

Mind Full, or Mindful?
Character Strengths

- Appreciation of beauty & excellence
- Social intelligence
- Teamwork
- Zest
- Perspective
- Love of learning
- Love
- Judgment
- Creativity
- Fairness
- Perseverance
- Self-control
- Curiosity
- Humor
- Gratitude
- Sense of meaning
- Bravery
- Forgiveness
- Prudence
- Leadership
- Honesty
- Hope
- Humility
- Kindness

www.viacharacter.org

The power of classroom wellness
Acknowledgment Alliance
Understanding the Brain

Upstairs brain
Thinking Brain/
Pre-frontal Cortex

Downstairs brain
Emotional Brain/
Amygdala
Coping Skills

Coping Skills Categories

😊 GET IT OUT: some kind of outward release
   examples - running a lap, crying, singing, squeezing a stress ball

😊 CALM WITHIN: inward focused relaxation
   examples - deep breathing, meditation, journaling, positive self-talk

🎧 SET IT ASIDE: temporary distraction
   examples - listening to music, taking a nap, having a snack

😊 POSITIVE SPIN: see the positive or help another
   examples - community service, learning from another point of view

😊 SIT WITH IT: notice your feelings without
   trying to change them
   examples - name what you’re feeling, be with the experience
   like a friend, with kindness and curiosity

😊 ASK FOR HELP: Ask someone you trust for help
   examples - family member, guardian, teacher, coach, counselor,
   mentor, friend, classmate, neighbor...

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Problem Solving & Teamwork

S stop
T take a breath
O observe what is happening*
P plan

*Things you can observe:
  • Observe your body
  • Observe your feelings
  • Observe your mind
  • Observe the other person
“It's been beneficial each year because the students are different every year. A lot of times there are conflicts between students, and working together on tasks and interacting with each other in a non-academic way allows them an opportunity to be open to each in other ways.”

“It teaches them coping skills that are practical in life. The kids can get stressed out a lot and they are under a lot of pressure so knowing what they can do is helpful. For example, mindful breathing is easy to do and they can do it any time.”
What students say...

• “I’ve been trying the different skills on my own and it’s improved my mood and decisions.” 7th grade student

• “Mindfulness makes you relax. Character Strengths make me proud to be myself. Problem solving makes me think and stop for a moment.” 6th grade student

• “Communication skills helped me with group projects, and mindfulness helped me pay attention to what I'm doing in many situations where I get carried away.” 6th grade student
Resilience doesn’t mean we don’t experience hardship. Resilience is what happens when we experience something difficult and make it through.
Thank you for your support!

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