

Course Title:	Human Relations
Grade(s):	Grades 9-12

Course Description
This course is designed for special education students who attend general education classes and require an additional supportive environment staffed by a transdisciplinary team. Its focus is on developing student skills and competencies in personal and social domains. The goal of the course is to be proactive in nature, providing students with the skills and strategies necessary to manage emotions, arrive at good decisions, and develop coping skills that are necessary in meeting daily demands and expectations. All students in Human Relations will explore transition goals to prepare for life beyond high school. Special Education teachers, school counselors, and related service faculty provide students and parents with vocational assessments, explore transitional opportunities, and access community resources.
Approved Curricular Materials/Textbook(s)
<i>The Self-Esteem Workbook for Teens</i>, Lisa M. Schab <i>The Anxiety Workbook for Teens</i>, Lisa M. Schab <i>Mindfulness for Teen Anxiety</i>, Christopher Willard

Unit Title	Unit Description (Include Unit Objectives)	Unit Pacing
Unit 1: IDEA & Self-Advocacy	Students begin the course by learning about their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and how these protections support their emotional and academic well-being. They explore their IEPs, understand the support available to them, and learn the role they play in their own educational planning. Students learn to recognize their strengths and needs and begin practicing how to express those needs respectfully and confidently. They develop the skills to communicate their concerns, ask for help, and participate actively	3 weeks September

	in their IEP meetings. By the end of the unit, students understand how self-advocacy empowers them to manage challenges and make informed decisions.	
Unit 2: Empathy	This unit introduces students to the concept of empathy, understanding and valuing the feelings and perspectives of others. Students learn to recognize emotions in themselves and others, interpret social cues, and practice expressing understanding in supportive ways. They explore how empathy strengthens relationships, reduces conflict, and helps them navigate social situations. Through role-play and discussion, students build confidence in showing compassion and responding appropriately to the feelings of the people around them.	2 weeks September - October
Unit 3: Coping Skills	Students learn healthy strategies for managing stress, frustration, and overwhelming emotions. The unit emphasizes practical tools they can use in school, at home, and in the community. Students practice calming techniques, such as breathing exercises, grounding strategies, and positive self-talk, and learn how to select coping tools that fit different kinds of stressors. They build awareness of personal triggers and begin developing individualized coping plans that help them stay regulated and ready to learn.	3 weeks October
Unit 4: Communication Skills	This unit supports students in developing clear, respectful, and effective communication skills for a variety of social and academic situations. Students practice active listening, turn-taking, tone of voice awareness, assertive communication, and expressing needs without conflict. They learn how communication affects relationships and begin applying new skills in conversations, group activities, and problem-solving scenarios.	4 weeks October - November
Unit 5: Relationships	Students explore the different types of relationships in their lives including friendships, family, school relationships, and community connections, and learn what makes these relationships healthy and supportive.	3 weeks November - December

	Students identify qualities of healthy vs. unhealthy interactions and practice setting boundaries, resolving conflict, and giving and receiving feedback. They learn how empathy, communication, and self-awareness contribute to building and maintaining meaningful relationships.	
Unit 6: EF Skills	This unit examines how executive-function skills such as planning, organization, emotional control, and decision-making, play a role in social and emotional success. Students learn to identify personal EF strengths and difficulties and explore strategies that help them improve self-control, follow through on responsibilities, and manage daily tasks. They learn that strengthening EF skills leads to better relationships, reduced stress, and greater independence.	3 weeks January
Unit 7: Avoidance and Perseverance	Students explore why people avoid difficult tasks or emotions and how avoidance affects their mental health, relationships, and academic progress. Students learn to recognize avoidance behaviors in themselves, understand the emotions behind them, and practice strategies for facing challenges gradually and safely. They also develop perseverance by setting realistic goals, celebrating small successes, and reflecting on how persistence builds confidence and resilience.	4 weeks January - February
Unit 8: Response to Trauma	This unit introduces students to the concept of trauma and how difficult experiences can affect emotions, behavior, and relationships. The content is presented gently, with a focus on safety, understanding, and empowerment. Students learn how trauma can influence the brain and body, how to notice signs of emotional overload, and how to use grounding strategies to stay regulated. They explore ways to seek support from trusted adults and learn that healing and growth are possible through connection, coping skills, and self-awareness.	3 weeks February

Unit 9: Identity and Values	Students explore their strengths, interests, cultural backgrounds, values, and personal goals. Students reflect on the factors that shape their identity and learn how their values guide their choices and relationships. They practice expressing their authentic selves, recognizing their worth, and appreciating the diverse identities of others.	4 weeks March
Unit 10: The Brain and Mental Health	This unit provides students with a foundational understanding of how the brain works and how it affects emotions, behavior, and mental health. Students learn about basic brain functions tied to emotional regulation, stress responses, and decision-making. They explore the importance of mental health, understand common symptoms of emotional difficulty, and identify strategies and resources that support well-being.	4 weeks April - May
Unit 11: Life Skills	In this final unit, students connect the social and emotional skills learned throughout the course to real-life situations they will encounter as they move toward adulthood. Students practice problem-solving, goal-setting, decision-making, and self-management in everyday contexts such as school responsibilities, social interactions, and planning for the future. They learn how strong interpersonal skills, emotional awareness, and healthy habits prepare them for independent living, work, and community life.	4 weeks May - June