PennState

School Resources to Support Military-Connected Students

Modular Socioemotional Learning (SEL) Lesson Plans

Flexible Universal SEL Instruction for Grades K-12

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR MILITARY FAMILY READINESS

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About the Modular SEL Lesson Plans

Lesson Focus

Elementary Lesson Plans

The lesson plans for elementary classrooms broadly cover understanding feelings, managing strong feelings, and asking for help. Content will include a range of developmentally appropriate examples for lower (K-2) and upper (3-5) elementary students.

Title	**Section 1** **(~ 10 minutes)**	**Section 2** **(~ 10 minutes)**	**Section 3** **(~ 10 minutes)**
Understanding Feelings	Introduction to feelings • Differences between feelings and behaviors • All feelings are OK; not all behaviors are OK • Why we should talk about feelings	Core Four feelings • Mad/ glad/ sad/ scared • Examples for lower elementary and for upper elementary Activity: Games to help practice using feeling words	Feeling words (past the core 4) • Frustrated/ disappointed/ worried/ excited Model and practice: using feeling words
Managing Strong Feelings	Introduction to tough feelings • When feelings are too much or too big • How to identify how you "feel" in your body • How feelings affect choices	Making the feeling smaller • Name it • Take a deep breath • Let it go	Model and practice: • Name it • Take a deep breath • Let it go
Asking for Help	When to ask for help • Reasons to ask for help (can't think of a solution/ too hard to manage/ bullying/ someone is being hurt) • Normalizing that we all need help sometimes • Tattling vs telling	How to ask for help • Asking a trusted adult • Asking a friend • Following through	Being a helper • When and how can you help? • When do you need to find a trusted adult for help (systematic abuse/ bullying/ adults asking kids for help)?

Secondary Lesson Plans

The lesson plans for middle and high school classrooms broadly cover stress and mood, alcohol and drug use, risks associated with alcohol and drug use, and cutting and self-harm. Content will include a range of developmentally appropriate examples for middle (6-8) and high (9-12) school students.

Title	**Section 1** **(~ 10 minutes)**	**Section 2** **(~ 10 minutes)**	**Section 3** **(~ 10 minutes)**
Stress and Mood	Emotions and feelings • All feelings are OK • Activity: Feeling words • Managing feelings	What is stress? • Good and bad • Identification Emotion regulation techniques • When is stress becoming too much • How to regulate stress • Model and Practice: stress regulation	How to get help • Who are helpers? • Activity: How do you get help? • Activity: Identification of helpers in your school
Alcohol, Drugs, and Risks	Introduction to alcohol, drugs, and risks • Prevalence • Realities of risk-taking	Substance use and mental health • Avoidance of other emotions/ Trying to feel something • Reality: Compounds the problem and makes symptoms worse	How to get help • How do you know if it's a problem? • How do you get yourself or someone else help? • Discussion: School- and community-based supports
Dealing with Distress	Stress vs. distress • Telling the difference between stress and distress • Signs and symptoms of peer distress • Signs and symptoms of self-distress	Strength-based skills for coping • Starting the conversation with listening skills • Changing negative thinking patterns • Coping alternatives to specific concerns	How to get help • For yourself • For someone else • Discussion: Friendships, privacy, and secrecy. When is it appropriate to share someone else's story? Confidentiality vs friendship vs safety • Boundaries and self-care

Lesson Format

Each set of lesson plans will be divided into three sections. This provides teachers some flexibility regarding their delivery plan: three 10-minute lessons or 30- to 35-minute lessons. In addition, lesson plans will reference additional resources (e.g., curricula, books, web links) that could lengthen the delivery time if used.

Lesson plans are embedded within this facilitator guide, and guidance for *facilitators* (i.e., school psychologist or school counselor) to train *implementers* (i.e., teachers) on lesson plan delivery is provided.

Lesson Delivery

School counselors and/or school psychologists are expected to serve as *facilitators*, and they will train teachers or other educators on the delivery of the lesson-plan material. It is recommended that the *facilitator* is someone who can serve as a point of contact for any referrals made during or following the delivery of the lesson. The *facilitator* is responsible for reviewing the implementation guidance for each lesson plan with the *implementer(s)* (i.e., the person(s) delivering the lesson plan) prior to lesson delivery. This can be done individually or in a group format. The form on the next page should be used for documentation.

During this training time, the *facilitator* and *implementer(s)* should review introductory information about the lesson plan content, view resources for further information, discuss plans for content delivery, practice skills needed for content delivery, select extension opportunities, record school-specific referral information in relevant lessons, and review any relevant school policies. School- or community-specific trends can also be discussed. In addition, the *facilitator* and *implementer* should discuss how the fidelity checklist will be completed and how to handle any lesson follow-ups or debriefings. The *facilitator* may choose to observe the lesson delivery for the purposes of feedback and support.

The Modular SEL Lesson Plans should be delivered to students by the *implementer(s)* **after** they have reviewed the implementation guidance with a *facilitator* (e.g., school psychologist, school counselor). However, there may be situations in which the *facilitator* delivers the lesson plan(s) directly to students. See the *Facilitator Notes* on page 12 for more information. Although each lesson contains a standard script, the level of presentation and amount of practice can be adjusted based on the developmental level of each class.

Depending upon the programming utilized within the school building, these lesson plans are built to function from initial content introductions to refresher or booster lessons. For instance, if a manualized program is already being used, these lessons can serve as booster sessions one month after introducing core content in the manualized program.

Each lesson includes ideas for extending the lesson content to incorporate into the larger classroom or schoolwide structures. Through discussion with the *facilitator*, integration of language, rules, and reward systems can serve to better sustain the information shared from the lesson plans.

In addition, lesson supplements (e.g., apps, websites, books, other lesson plans, lesson handouts), identified at the end of each lesson, provide additional exposure and practice using relevant concepts. The ages or grades denoted for each supplement indicate a minimum age or grade recommendation, but more advanced students may also engage with the materials. The lesson supplements are especially helpful when they are incorporated into the lesson plans after the initial exposure. For example, a first-grade class is taught the core lesson plans. The same students are taught the core lesson plans the following year when they are in second grade; however, carefully selected age-appropriate supplemental resources are incorporated into the instruction to build upon the core lessons.

Facilitator Approval Form

Name of *facilitator*
(school psychologist or school counselor): _____

Name of *implementer*
(deliverer of lesson plan): _____

Date(s) of training: _____

Coverage of training: Modular SEL Elementary Lesson Plans

- ☐ LP1: Understanding Feelings
- ☐ LP2: Managing Strong Feelings
- ☐ LP3: Asking for Help

Modular SEL Secondary Lesson Plans

- ☐ LP1: Stress and Mood
- ☐ LP2: Alcohol, Drugs, and Risks
- ☐ LP3: Dealing with Distress

By signing this form, the *facilitator* indicates that they have delivered the required guidance to the *implementer* to deliver the lesson plan(s) indicated above.

_____ _____

Facilitator Signature Date

By signing this form, the *implementer* indicates that they have received the required guidance to deliver the lesson plan(s) indicated above.

_____ _____

Implementer Signature Date

Implementer Notes

Delivery of the Modular SEL Lesson Plans relies on using foundational teaching skills and facilitating discussion. The OARS framework provides a strong foundation for listening skills, which may help the implementer identify student-specific risk factors and warning signs. The acronym "OARS" stands for

- Open questions
- Affirmation
- Reflective listening
- Summarization

Open Questions encourage the student to guide the story. Examples include the following:

- "What was that like for you?"
- "Can you tell me about…?"
- "Help me understand…"
- "Tell me more about…"

Affirmations are statements that acknowledge an individual's personal strengths and/or praise them for what they have already done. When genuinely provided, affirmations build rapport, demonstrate empathy, and help build the student's self-efficacy. Examples include the following:

- "I can see how hard it is for you to talk about this."
- "It takes strength to do what you're doing."
- "You're really taking care of yourself."

Reflective Listening is a technique that communicates you are listening and trying to understand the student's situation by reflecting on their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Here is an example conversation:

> Student: "When my father said that to me, I couldn't believe it. I didn't know what to do."
> School Personnel: "It sounds like you were in shock."

Summary statements help to confirm that what you heard and what the person meant to say are the same. This can include paraphrasing and can be useful when transitioning to a new subject, linking two subjects together, or closing the conversation. Examples include the following:

- "Let's go over what we've talked about so far."
- "Let me make sure I understand what happened. First…"

These skills may appear simple to use, but they require practice. For a brief, 10- to 15-minute training of the OARS skills, please see: https://schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/modules/details/reflective-listening-in-times-of-crisis/.

Facilitator Notes

Because the Modular SEL Lesson Plans will be delivered by individuals who have varying expertise, beliefs, and experience, *facilitators* should discuss any concerns or areas of need with *implementers* during the training session. Guidance for three areas of special considerations is listed below. If other concerns arise, please contact your supervisor for assistance.

Potential for self-disclosure from teachers.

In discussing topics that involve emotional responses and even possible distress, teachers may want to volunteer personal information to students in order to relate on a personal or informational level. While this is often harmless and/or useful for engagement, there are ethical considerations for teachers to consider in sharing personal information because they are authority figures. A rule of thumb often used in mental health is the acronym WAIT, short for "Why Am I Telling?" If a teacher is sharing information for the classroom's benefit—for example, to normalize a student's experience or to reduce classroom tension—their sharing is likely helpful. If the teacher is disclosing information to fulfill a personal need, such as a need to be liked or seen as relatable, their sharing may be inappropriate, and they should keep the disclosure to themself. Making this distinction is not always easy, so be sure to provide feedback or suggestions during training or debriefing meetings. Relatedly, teachers may disclose personal information to you during training, and you may want to discuss how teachers' experiences will play into their lesson delivery. In addition, remember that there may be some controversial or argumentative issues that teachers do not personally feel safe teaching. The teacher may ask the *facilitator* or other substitutes (e.g., another grade-level teacher) to cover the lesson plan content with their students if they do not feel they can effectively (or objectively) deliver content. While this might feel like an inconvenience, consider the potential outcomes (including debriefing, reteaching, and/or required documentation) that could be required following a poorly or harmfully delivered lesson plan.

Teachers who stigmatize.

Not all classroom environments can be considered safe spaces for open and respectful communication on sensitive topics. *Facilitators* should be aware that, in schools today, teacher bullying of students is perceived to be widespread by school personnel and students (Zerillo & Osterman, 2011). If a teacher struggles with stigmatization of students, they should undergo further professional development before being allowed to engage in the Modular SEL Lesson Plans. Teachers may also need gentle reminders from *facilitators* that we all view students and situations through personal lenses, and these perceptions may affect how we, as teachers, treat students. The facilitator may want to add some guided reflection on any concerns they notice regarding this circumstance.

Mandatory debriefing with *facilitator*.
When necessary, based on *facilitator* judgment, debriefings after each section or lesson may be mandatory. Considerations for mandatory briefings may include, but are not limited to, rating teacher capacity for lesson-plan delivery, offering professional development through supervision including goal-setting and feedback, monitoring vulnerable student populations, reflecting on content acceptability and relevance to students, or monitoring fidelity. As a less formal form of support, we recommend the facilitator and teacher engage in check-ins after each lesson delivery for the first year—even if just to review the fidelity sheet. This can be done in a group format.

Implementation Guidance

Content Introduction

First, consider why it is important for teachers to take on feelings in the classroom. For teachers themselves…

> "Emotion regulation is an important component of classroom management and discipline, and experienced teachers believe that successful regulation makes them more effective in the classroom. Choosing to regulate emotions in the classroom does not mean that teachers want to eliminate emotional expressions in the classroom. Rather, it means they seek to find a balance – and this often takes time" (Sutton & Harper, 2009, p. 399).

For students, emotion regulation is associated with several outcomes that are essential to learning and, later, adult functioning. These include academic and socioemotional outcomes (Murray et al., 2015). Emotion regulation and cognitive regulation are seen as building blocks students will use to organize their behavior and work toward goal-directed actions (Murray et al., 2015).

What is emotion regulation? It "involves actively managing strong and unpleasant feelings and results in adaptive functioning in emotionally arousing situations. *It requires awareness and understanding of feelings* and involves self-calming strategies and tolerance or management of internal distress" (Murray et al., 2015, p. 6, emphasis added).

For the first Modular SEL Lesson Plan, "Understanding Feelings," the content will address the first step in emotion regulation: *awareness and understanding of feelings.* As with teachers, remember that successful regulation for students takes time and practice; extension opportunities and lesson supplements are recommended to provide structured practice opportunities.

Further Content Resources

Murray, D. W., Rosanbalm, K. D., Christopoulos, C., & Hamoudi, A. (2015). *Self-regulation and toxic stress: Foundations for understanding self-regulation from an applied developmental perspective*. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/self-regulation-and-toxic-stress-foundations-understanding-self-regulation-applied

Sutton, R. E., & Harper, E. (2009). *Teachers' emotion regulation. International handbook of research on teachers and teaching*. Springer. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-0-387-73317-3_25

Zandt, F., & Barrett, S. (2017). *Creative ways to help children manage big feelings: A therapist's guide to working with preschool and primary children.* Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Content Delivery

This lesson can be delivered in three 10-minute chunks or in one 30- to 35-minute lesson. The subsections of this lesson plan are as follows:

1. Introduction to Feelings
2. The Four Core Feelings
3. Feelings Beyond the Core Four

Extension Opportunities

- Incorporate "Understanding Feelings" into Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) or other behavior programming (e.g., use tickets to reinforce suitable use of feeling words).
- Incorporate feelings into lesson plans to expand students' feelings word vocabulary. Try using a transactional reading style to highlight and discuss feelings. Stop at a part where the character is expressing a feeling. Ask questions like the following:
    - What do you think they are feeling?
    - What happened before this that might tell why they are feeling that way?
    - Look at their face. How can you tell that they are feeling that way?
    - Have you ever felt that feeling? What makes you feel that way?
    - What will happen next? What should they do?
- Model identification of feelings for students. This can occur through structured daily activities, such as a "feelings check-in" every morning, and/or through teachable moments based on lesson content or classroom dynamics.
- Use the students' responses from the lesson activities to create a "word wall" that is filled with feelings words or a poster in the room with feelings faces.

School Procedures

Important! Teachers should try to recognize risk factors and warning signs of student suicide ideation or action in case they arise. Key feelings to watch for in your students during the "Understanding Feelings" lesson plan could include hopelessness, helplessness, and depression and/ or mood variability. Warning signs can be summarized using the mnemonic, IS PATH WARM:
Ideation
Substance

Purposelessness
Anxiety
Trapped
Hopelessness

Withdrawal
Anger
Recklessness
Mood Fluctuations

Before beginning the lesson, clarify the point of contact (e.g., the school counselor) to whom you may refer a student(s) if you have any feelings of concern for this student(s).

For a brief, 10- to 15-minute training regarding the risk factors of student suicide, please see the training below:
https://schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/modules/details/risk-factors-of-student-suicide/

For a brief, 10- to 15-minute training regarding the warning signs of student suicide, please see the training below:
https://schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/modules/details/warning-signs-and-stressful-precipitating-events-of-student-suicide/

Lesson Plan

Introduction

Remember, emotion regulation is important for student outcomes, and the first step in being able to regulate emotions is being able to identify them. Emotions/feelings are different from behaviors, and all feelings are valid. It's helpful for students to talk about their feelings with trusted adults. Instruction about feelings should progress from the Core Four (i.e., glad, sad, mad, and scared) to beyond (e.g., excited, disappointed, worried, frustrated).

Knowledge Checklist

- Why it is important to be aware of and understand our feelings in terms of outcomes for students
- The difference between a feeling (internal, not a choice, always acceptable) and a behavior (external, usually a choice, not always acceptable)
- The Core Four emotions (glad, sad, mad, scared) and how they look/feel
- Beyond the Core Four emotions (excited, worried, frustrated, disappointed) and how they look/feel

Materials Checklist

Lower Elementary (K-2)

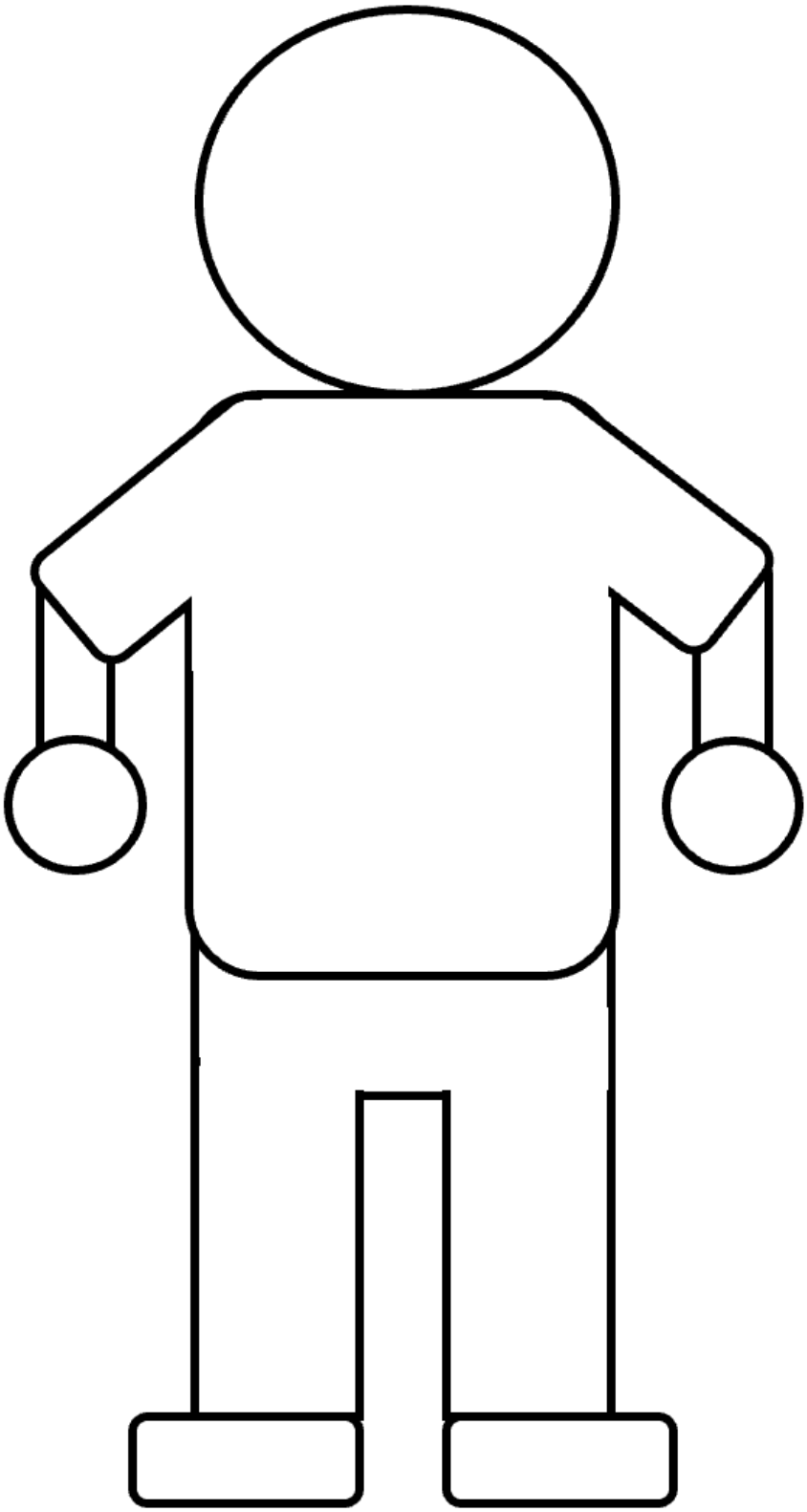
- Lesson Plan 1.2: Feelings Emojis handout
- Lesson Plan 1.3: Body Outline handout
- Lesson Plan 1.3: Stickers/markers/crayons/colored pencils

Upper Elementary (3-5)

- Lesson Plan 1 2: Feelings Emojis handout
- Lesson Plan 1.2: Paper and writing utensils
- Lesson Plan 1.3: Body Outline handout
- Lesson Plan 1.3: Markers/crayons/colored pencils

Student Handout: Feeling Emojis

Student Handout: Body Outline



Elementary Lesson Plan 1 Content

Student Learning Objectives

- Identify the difference between feelings and behaviors.
- List the four core feelings and feelings beyond the Core Four.
- Match feelings to responses in the body.

Elementary Lesson Plan 1.1: Introduction to Feelings

Lead the class in a discussion about the differences between feelings and behaviors; touch on the points in the table below. Ask,

> What is a feeling? What is a behavior? How are they different?

Feelings	**Behaviors**
Feelings are on the inside.	Behaviors are on the outside.
Usually, how we feel is not a choice.	Usually, how we behave is a choice.
All feelings are OK.	Not all behaviors are OK.

If students have a difficult time with these prompts, provide examples of feelings (e.g., happy, sad) and behaviors (e.g., running, throwing a tantrum), and ask students to identify whether the example is a feeling or behavior. Then, return to the differences between feelings and behaviors. When you're ready to move on, say the following:

> Sometimes, we can tell a person's feelings based on their behavior, but this is not always true. For example, there can be a lot of reasons why someone is crying. Sometimes, people cry when they are sad, when they are happy, and when they are very tired or frustrated.

Ask students to answer the following questions and explain why or why not:

- Is it OK to feel mad? [Yes] If you are feeling mad, is it OK to hit someone? [No]
- Is it OK to feel glad? [Yes] If you are feeling glad, is it OK for you to smile? [Yes]
- Is it OK to feel sad? [Yes] If you are feeling sad, is it OK for you to cry? [Yes]
- Is it OK to feel scared? [Yes] If you are feeling scared, is it OK for you to hide? [Maybe]

> All of these feelings (mad, glad, sad, and scared) are OK to feel. However, not all of the behaviors are OK. It is usually not OK to hit someone. In school, the consequences for hitting someone are _____. It might also not be OK to hide when an adult you trust wouldn't know where you are. For example, think about what would happen if you hid because you were scared of a fire drill in school. I wouldn't know where you were to make sure that you safely evacuated with the rest of our class. So, all feelings are OK, but not all behaviors are OK.
>
> It's important that we talk about our feelings because doing this can help us feel better. The way our brains work is that when we can use words to say how we feel, this helps us calm down and let some of the feeling go. Talking about our feelings can also help us feel closer to people we care about because we can understand each other better. Can you think of a time when sharing your feelings helped you feel better or solve a problem?

Students may wish to share a time out loud, write about it, or draw a picture about sharing their feelings. While sharing feelings is encouraged, it is OK if a student does not want to talk about their emotions, and their decision not to share should be respected.

You may wish to share your own example as a model for students, or you may borrow this example to share.

> Miguel was feeling sad (*feeling*) because his mother was away for the weekend and would miss his championship soccer game. At the last practice before the game, Miguel was too sad to concentrate on the drills he was supposed to be doing, and it was hard for his teammates to pass to him while he was looking at the ground instead of the ball (*behavior*). His coach asked him what was wrong, and Miguel explained how he was feeling. His coach understood and asked if it would help to have a video copy of the game that he could watch with his mother when she got home. Miguel liked this idea, and he thought he would even share the video with his cousins who lived far away (*sharing feeling led to a solution*).

Upper Elementary (3-5): Extension
Upper elementary students may want to talk about why it can be hard to share feelings. Provide the following prompt to students:

> Talking about feelings is a sign of strength. However, we sometimes have a hard time sharing our feelings with others.
>
> - What are some reasons it may be hard to talk about your feelings?
> - How can sharing your feelings actually help you in those situations?

Elementary Lesson Plan 1.2: The Four Core Feelings

There are four core (often referred to as the Core Four in this document) or main feelings: glad, sad, mad, and scared. Identify each of the faces from the Feelings Emojis handout. Ask students how they know which feeling to use to describe the face. Focus on the facial features, such as the mouth, cheeks, and eyes/eyebrows, and discuss how they are shaped.

Emotion	Facial Expression Examples
Glad	• Lip corners raised in a smile • Cheeks raised • Wrinkles around eyes
Sad	• Lip corners down in a frown • Eyes drooping • Inner corner of eyebrows raised
Mad	• Lips tightened or rolled in • Eyes bulging or narrowed • Eyebrows pulled down
Scared	• Lips stretched • Eyes opened wide • Eyebrows pulled up and together

Lower Elementary (K-2): Feelings Charades

> For this game, we're going to mix up the feeling faces cards and take turns acting out the feelings we see on the cards. When it is your turn, pick up a feeling face card, but do not show it to anyone. Act out the feeling using your own face or body language. If we cannot guess it, I will ask you to name something that makes you feel this way as an extra clue. Everyone else will raise their hand to guess which feeling you chose: glad, sad, mad, or scared.

Note: Allow time for all students to have a turn, but do not require participation.

Upper Elementary (3-5): Feelings Game

> You'll need a piece of paper and something to write with for this game. Write down as many feeling words as you can in 60 seconds. Ready**…** go! [Time 60 seconds]. Stop. Count how many words you have. Now, count how many words express each of the Core Four emotions: glad, sad, mad, and scared.

Elementary Lesson Plan 1.3: Feelings Beyond the Core Four

> We all have feelings that change throughout the day, and it can help us to know what our feelings are and talk about them with others. Often, we feel glad, sad, mad, or scared. Sometimes, our feelings are bigger or smaller than those feelings. For example, when we feel excited, that feeling is bigger than feeling glad. We might also feel disappointed, worried, or frustrated.
>
> - What are some things that make you feel worried? How do you feel inside when you are worried?
> - What are some things that make you feel frustrated? How do you feel inside when you are frustrated?
> - What are some things that make you feel disappointed? How do you feel inside when you are disappointed?
> - What are some things that make you feel excited? How do you feel inside when you are excited?
>
> We can also feel these feelings at different levels or to different degrees. For example, you might feel a little worried if you lose your homework, but you might feel very worried if your pet is sick.

For this next activity, either you or students can pick one of the feelings discussed: glad, sad, mad, scared, worried, frustrated, disappointed, or excited.

Lower Elementary (K-2): Body Mapping
Using the Body Outline handout, ask the students to draw or use stickers to show the feeling on the face. Then, ask your students to think about a time when they felt that feeling and to try to remember what they felt in their body. For example, a student who is feeling sad might feel like they have a lump in their throat. You can prompt some ideas about specific sensations by asking about students' breathing, whether they felt anything in their tummy, or whether some areas of their bodies felt tense or very tight. While there are individual differences in reactions to feelings, sharing what an individual commonly feels when they experience different emotions can be helpful. Draw or use stickers to reflect these sensations on the body outline.

Upper Elementary (3-5): Body Mapping
Using the Body Outline handout, ask the students to draw a feeling on the face. Then, ask them to think about a time when they felt that feeling and to try to remember what they felt in their body. For example, a student who is feeling sad might feel like they have a lump in their throat. You can prompt some ideas about specific sensations by asking about students' breathing, whether they felt anything in their tummy, or whether some areas of their bodies felt tense or very tight. While there are individual differences in reactions to feelings, sharing what an individual commonly feels when they experience different emotions can be helpful. Draw or use stickers to reflect these sensations on the body outline.

On the side of the outline, you may opt to have students list related feeling words. You may also instruct students to draw a thought bubble and write down the thoughts that the body outline might be having while experiencing the feeling.

If there is remaining time (any age level): follow the instructions for "Feelings Charade" using the Feelings Emojis handout (scared, glad, sad, mad, excited, worried, surprised, silly, and frustrated).

Lesson Supplements

Apps

- Touch and Learn – Emotions (Grades K-2): https://www.educationalappstore.com/app/touch-and-learn-emotions
- Emotionary By Me.Mu (Grades 2-3): https://download.cnet.com/Emotionary-by-Me-Mu/3000-20415_4-75763492.html
- Positive Penguins (Grades 4-5): https://apps.apple.com/us/app/positive-penguins/id570371342

Websites

- KidsHealth: http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/talk-feelings.html
- PBS: http://pbskids.org/games/feelings/

Books

- *What Makes Me Happy?* by Catherine & Laurence Anholt (Ages 3-6)
- *Double Dip Feelings* by Barbara Cain (Ages 5-8)
- *The Feelings Book* by Todd Parr (Ages 3-8)
- *The Grouchy Ladybug* by Eric Carle (Ages 1-6)
- *The Three Grumpies* by Tamra Wight (Ages 4-8)
- *Happy and Sad, Grouchy and Glad* by Constance Allen (Ages 4-7)
- *How Are You Peeling: Foods with Moods/Vegetal como eres: Alimentos con sentimientos* by Saxton Freymann (Ages 5-8)
- *How Do I Feel?* by Norma Simon (Ages 2-7)
- *I Am Happy* by Steve Light (Ages 3-6)
- *If You're Happy and You Know it!* by Jane Cabrera (Ages 3-6)
- *Lizzy's Ups and Downs* by Jessica Harper (Ages 3-9)
- *My Many Colored Days* by Dr. Seuss (Ages 3-8)

- *On Monday When It Rained* by Cherryl Kachenmeister (Ages 3-8)
- *Proud of Our Feelings* by Lindsay Leghorn (Ages 4-8)
- Sometimes I Feel Like a Storm Cloud by Lezlie Evans (Ages 4-8)
- *Smudge's Grumpy Day* by Miriam Moss (Ages 3-8)
- *The Way I Feel* by Janan Cain (Ages 4-8)
- *Today I Feel Silly & Other Moods That Make My Day* by Jamie Lee (Ages 3-8)
- *What I Look Like When I am Confused/Como me veo cuando estoy confundido (Let's Look at Feeling Series)* by Joanne Randolph (Ages 5-8)
- *"What Went Right Today?"* by Joan Buzick and Lindy Judd (Ages 3 – 8)
- *Franklin's Bad Day* by Paulette Bourgeois & Brenda Clark (Ages 5-8)
- *Hurty Feelings* by Helen Lester (Ages 5-8)
- *Sometimes I Feel Awful* by Joan Singleton Prestine (Ages 5-8)
- *The Very Lonely Firefly* by Eric Carle (Ages 4-7)
- *When I Feel Sad* by Cornelia Maude Spelman (Ages 5-7)
- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst (Ages 4-8)
- *Andrew's Angry Words* by Dorothea Lackner (Ages 4-8)
- *Bootsie Barker Bites* by Barbara Bottner (Ages 4-8)
- *The Chocolate Covered Cookie Tantrum* by Deborah Blumenthal (Ages 5-8)
- *How I Feel Frustrated* by Marcia Leonard (Ages 3-8)
- *How I Feel Angry* by Marcia Leonard (Ages 2-6)
- *Sometimes I'm Bombaloo* by Rachel Vail (Ages 3-8)
- *That Makes Me Mad!* by Steven Kroll (Ages 4-8)
- *The Rain Came Down* by David Shannon (Ages 4-8)
- *When I Feel Angry* by Cornelia Maude Spelman (Ages 5-7)
- *Lily's Purple Plastic Purse* by Kevin Henkes (Ages 4-8)
- *Creepy Things are Scaring Me* by Jerome and Jarrett Pumphrey (Ages 4-8)
- *Franklin in The Dark* by Paulette Bourgeois & Brenda Clark (Ages 5-8)
- *I Am Not Going to School Today* by Robie H. Harris (Ages 4-8)
- *No Such Thing* by Jackie French Koller (Ages 5-8)
- *Sheila Rae, the Brave* by Kevin Henkes (Ages 5-8)
- *Wemberly Worried* by Kevin Henkes (Ages 5-8)
- *When I Feel Scared* by Cornelia Maude Spelman (Ages 5-7)

Other Lesson Plans

- KidsHealth - Feelings (K-2): http://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/prekto2/personal/growing/feelings.pdf
- Expressing Emotions through Art Lesson 1—Everyone Shows They Care (K-2): http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom_resources/curricula/expressing_emotions/expressing_emotions_lesson01.html
- Spanish Kid Stuff - Feelings & Emotions (K-5): https://www.spanishkidstuff.com/lesson-plans.html
- Education World - Getting Emotional: Learning About Feelings (K-6): http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/getting-emotional-learning-about-feelings.shtml
- KidsHealth - Empathy (3-5): http://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/3to5/personal/growing/empathy.pdf

Lesson Handouts

- Feelings Emojis handout
- Body Outline handout

Elementary Lesson 1 Fidelity Checklist

Implementer: Please complete after delivering the **Understanding Feelings** lesson.

Component	Check if Yes	Check if No	Describe lesson modifications (e.g., deviations, additions)
Facilitator and implementer met to prepare for lesson delivery	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized additional resources to learn about the content	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Section 1.1 (Introduction to Feelings) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 1.2 (The Four Core Feelings) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 1.3 (Feelings Beyond the Core Four) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized extension opportunities	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	

Other notes:

Name of *facilitator*: _____

Name of *implementer:* _____

Implementation Guidance

Content Introduction

Emotion regulation "involves *actively managing strong and unpleasant feelings* and results in adaptive functioning in emotionally arousing situations. It requires awareness and understanding of feelings and involves *self-calming strategies and tolerance or management of internal distress*" (Murray et al., 2015, p. 6, emphasis added).

According to researcher James Gross, there are five "families" of emotion-regulation strategies that people typically use to manage strong or tough feelings.

Strategy	Description	Example
Situation Selection	Change what we are exposed to	A student who likes to draw but finds writing difficult may choose to plan his essay using a graphic organizer rather than a written outline. This is an example of selecting a situation that could support the student's positive emotions and moderate their negative emotions.
Situation Modification	Change the situation to influence how it affects our emotions	A teacher is frustrated because their students constantly forget their pencils, so the teacher could modify the situation by keeping a supply in their desk, thus, preempting their frustration.
Attentional Deployment	Select where we direct our attention	A teacher with a chronic illness may use attentional deployment before school by focusing on being energetic and enthusiastic rather than giving in to their fatigue.
Cognitive Change	Change the meaning of the situation to change its influence	A teacher who has been angry with a student for a week because of their recent disruptive behavior may learn that the student's father was recently incarcerated. This teacher may reassess the disruptive incidents and feel compassion and not anger because of this cognitive change.
Response Modulation	Adjust the usual response we associate with an emotion	A student, who finds his teacher's jokes funny, stops themself from laughing and adopts an angry facial expression instead, so they appear cool to their friends.

While these strategies are typical, not all of them are recommended for use. For example, inhibiting or suppressing emotions as a form of *response modulation* is not usually an effective or healthy strategy, which is one reason why we emphasize that all feelings are valid even when all behaviors are not. Use of other strategies will depend on the context of the situation.

Teachers may find it helpful to explore these ideas further and find examples of real-life emotion regulation strategies that they or their students use on a day-to-day basis. For elementary students, we will focus on one simple *response modulation* strategy: a three-step process in which students **(1) name the feeling, (2) take a deep breath, and (3) let it go.** This is different from asking students to inhibit or suppress a feeling. It's important to make sure students understand that negative or unpleasant feelings are "OK," and we need to understand what our feelings are so that we can respond in a suitable way. In this response-modulation process, we give the students time to actively manage what feelings they are experiencing by asking them to label the feelings. Then, we ask them to think about, or sit with, that feeling while using breathing to calm their bodies and minds. This will help lead students to the third step of letting the emotion go or, at least, making it "smaller" so they can better respond to the situation.

There are a few situations in which more or different intervention is recommended:

- *When the strategy by itself is not enough:* For students who exhibit severe mood fluctuations and/or extreme feelings such as hopelessness, purposelessness, anxiety, or anger, this strategy, alone, may not match the intensity of the emotion. For example, a student who identifies that they are very angry and thinks about or sits with their anger for a few minutes while doing deep breathing and then attempts to let the angry feeling go may still display signs of intense anger. In these cases, teachers may want to consult with a school counselor or school psychologist.
- *When the strategy may dismiss or alienate students:* Using this strategy for strong or tough emotions that arise in response to an extreme situation, such as being the victim of bullying or a traumatic event or experiencing the loss of a loved one or mental health disorders, may be seen as dismissive to students. Students may wish to comply with the directive to "let it go" and pretend that the strategy helped when it did not. It's important that teachers, school counselors, and school psychologists who are working with a student on this strategy understand why a student is experiencing a negative or strong feeling in order to determine if further support is needed. Be sure to monitor and/or follow up with these students to ensure their coping strategies are helping.

For most students who are experiencing tough/strong feelings in response to typical daily stressors, this simple response modulation strategy will probably be beneficial and effective.

In Modular SEL Lesson Plan 2, "Managing Strong Feelings," the content will focus on tough feelings that may arise day-to-day and will discuss how making the feeling smaller could help the student make better choices. Opportunities for modeling and practice are built into the third section of the lesson plan, and continued practice through extension opportunities and lesson supplements are recommended.

Further Content Resources

Gross, J. (2014). *The process model of emotion regulation.*
https://youtu.be/9n5MqKLitWo?t=214
Kuban, C. (2014). *Mind Body Skills: Activities for Emotional Regulation.* Starr Commonwealth.

Content Delivery

This lesson can be delivered in three 10-minute chunks or in one 30- to 35-minute lesson. The subsections of this lesson plan are the following:

1. Introduction to Tough Feelings
2. Making the Feeling Smaller
3. Making the Feeling Smaller: Model and Practice

Extension Opportunities

- Incorporate "Managing Strong Feelings" into PBIS, SEL, or other behavior programming (e.g., use tickets to reinforce the appropriate use of the practiced response strategy and integrate into self-regulation discussions).
- Use existing opportunities within lesson plans to identify feelings and responses. For example, when reading about real or fictional characters, reflect on what the person may have been feeling, how they reacted, the appropriateness of their choices, and what the consequences were for the character.
- Model emotion regulation for students by narrating your thought process in response to a strong/tough emotion. This will help students create their own inner dialogue in response to emotions when they don't have existing models.
- Breathing and meditation can serve as useful coping tools for students when these strategies are built into the classroom routine to modulate responses. When we practice these strategies in times of calm, students are better able to utilize them when agitated.
- Provide time and space to process emotions within classrooms. For example, create a "calm-down corner" that has materials for students who are better able to regain control using active distraction (an *attentional deployment* strategy).
- Guide students through reappraisal, which is a form of *cognitive change*. When a student's thoughts seem overly negative or exaggerated, such as "I'll never pass a math test, "help the student check the accuracy of their thoughts. In doing so, you should share concrete examples of the student's strengths, such as they received a "B" on their last math test or they answered the last four questions about math equations correctly.
- Proactively prevent unnecessary agitation by *selecting* or *modifying* situations for students. For example, consider elements of your classroom environment, student grouping situations, opportunities for choice, and other elements in your control to make this happen.

School Procedures

Key feelings to watch for during the “Managing Strong Feelings” lesson plan include feelings of hopelessness and helplessness and a general depressed or variable mood. Before beginning the lesson, clarify the point of contact (e.g., the school counselor) to whom you may refer a student(s) if you have any feelings of concern for this student(s).

If students effectively engage in alternate emotion-regulation strategies, be sure to encourage continued use of what works for that student across settings.

Lesson Plan

Introduction

Remember, emotion regulation is important for student outcomes. Emotions/feelings are different from behaviors, and all feelings are valid. It's helpful for students to talk about their feelings with trusted adults. When any of our feelings (glad, sad, mad, scared, excited, disappointed, worried, or frustrated) get too much or too big, we need to make sure we stay in control so our feelings don't decide our choices. It is helpful to (1) name the feeling, (2) take a deep breath, and (3) let it go. It takes regular practice to use this technique while we are calm when we feel overwhelmed.

Knowledge Checklist

- The difference between feelings and behavior and how feelings affect behaviors
- Emotions (glad, sad, mad, scared, excited, worried, frustrated, disappointed) and how they look/feel when they are too big or too much
- What is involved in each step of the following response modulation strategy: (1) name the feeling, (2) take a deep breath, and (3) let it go
- When this strategy is appropriate to use and when more or different interventions may be needed

Materials Checklist

Lower Elementary (K-2)

- Lesson Plan 2.1: Progressive Muscle Relaxation handout
- Lesson Plan 2.2: Materials to make an anchor chart
- Lesson Plan 2.3: Belly Breathing handout

Upper Elementary (3-5)

- Lesson Plan 2.1: Progressive Muscle Relaxation handout
- Lesson Plan 2.2: Materials to make an anchor chart
- Lesson Plan 2.2: Waves handout
  Lesson Plan 2.2: Student writing utensils
- Lesson Plan 2.3: Belly Breathing handout

Student Handout: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

1. Sit in your chair.

2. Put your feet flat on the floor. It is up to you if you want to close your eyes or keep them open.

3. Think about the way your body feels in your chair. Do you feel tension in any parts of your body? This activity will help relax your muscles.

4. Curl your toes down. Tighter. Curl them as tight as you can. Now relax. While keeping your feet on the floor, lift your toes up. Further. Lift them as far as you can. Now relax.

5. Lift your feet off of the floor, and tuck them under your chair. Squeeze with your thighs. Squeeze more. Squeeze as much as you can. Now relax.

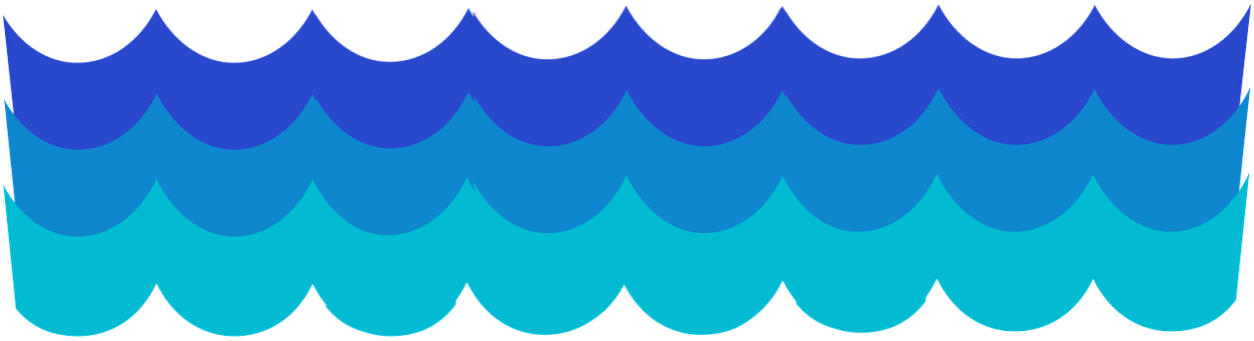
6. Squeeze the muscles in your belly. Now relax.

7. Pull your shoulders forwards. Now relax.

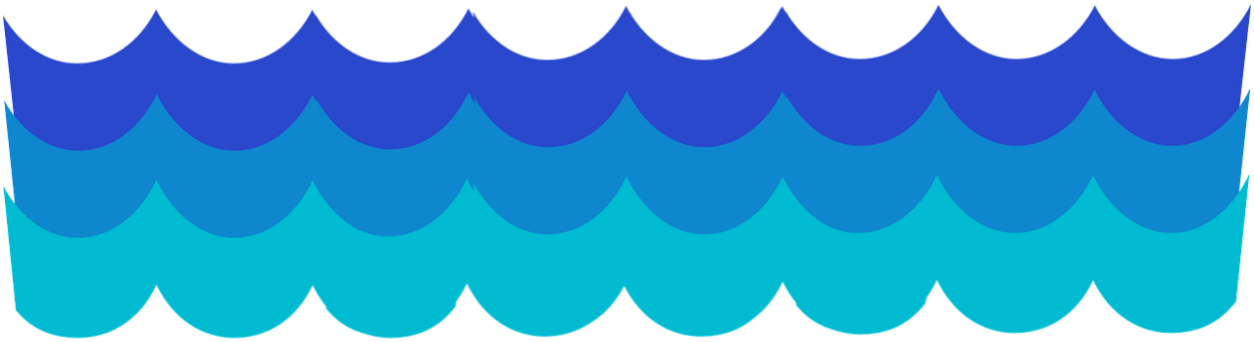
8. Squeeze your hand into a fist. Squeeze more. Squeeze as much as you can. Now relax.

9. Scrunch up your face. Tighter. Scrunch your face as tight as you can. Now relax.

10. Think about the way your body feels now. Do you still feel tension? If so, notice how different it feels from the parts of your body that are relaxed. Try to let go of any remaining tension by taking several slow, deep breaths.



“Feelings are much like waves; we can’t stop them from coming, but we can choose which one to surf.”
-Jonathan Martensson



Student Handout: Belly Breathing

1. One way to feel better when you are upset is by using belly breathing.

2. Pretend there is a balloon inside your belly.

3. Take a big breath in through your nose and try to fill up the balloon. You'll know you're filling it up when your belly puffs up.

4. Once your belly is puffed all the way up, let the air out of the balloon by breathing out of your mouth like you are blowing bubbles.

5. Let's do it again. Count to four as you breathe in through your nose, and count to four as you breathe out through your mouth.

6. Repeat the steps until your body and mind feel calm.

7. Practice often, so this strategy is easy to use when you need it most!

Elementary Lesson Plan 2 Content

Student Learning Objectives

- Identify tough feelings.,
- List three steps to minimizing tough feelings.
- Practice minimizing tough feelings.

Elementary Lesson Plan 2.1: Introduction to Strong/Tough Feelings

Review the differences between feelings and behaviors. Ask,

> Let's review - what are the differences between feelings and behaviors?

Ask students to name all eight of the emotions covered in the previous lesson. Give hints if students get stuck (e.g., make a "worried" face, name a time when people may feel that emotion).

- Mad
- Glad
- Sad
- Scared
- Frustrated
- Disappointed
- Worried
- Excited

Introduce strong/tough feelings by saying,

> Everyone has these feelings we just talked about, and all of the feelings are OK to feel, even if our feelings don't always feel good. For example, it doesn't feel good to be frustrated. Still, feeling frustrated is a natural part of life. Sometimes, we might need help understanding why a feeling is too much or too big. How do we know if a feeling is too much or too big? What do we do when the feeling is too much or too big?

Gather examples from the class. If students have trouble responding, follow up with more targeted questions, such as,

> What might it look like when we see someone who is *too* mad? What might it be like for a person when their feelings of worry are *too* big?

After some discussion, summarize with the following:

> There are many different ways we might be able to see, hear, or guess that a feeling is too much or too big for ourselves or another person. Think about all the different feelings we can have. All of these feelings have something in common. When a feeling is too much or too big, we might feel like our responses or actions are out of control. What does that mean? When people are out of control of their feelings, they might feel unable to change anything or make the feeling go away. They might feel overwhelmed with a feeling in their body and be too hot or too jittery/jumpy, or they may have a stomachache that keeps them from being able to think about what to do next. They might have a hard time remembering and following rules about which behaviors are OK and which are not OK. We're going to talk about how to identify tough feelings in our bodies and how these tough feelings might affect the choices that we make. Then, we'll practice how to make tough feelings smaller so we can begin to let them go.

Ask students to give examples of how people might feel a tough feeling in their body. What might that tough feeling feel like, and where would you feel it? The following examples may be helpful:

- Making a facial expression
- Breathing that is faster or harder
- Feeling something in your tummy (e.g., butterflies, very empty, rumbling)
- Feeling very tense or very tight
- Having a lump in your throat
- Feeling like you have a heavy heart
- Racing thoughts
- Feeling pain or nausea

Note: if you did not complete the Body Mapping activity from Lesson Plan 1: Understanding Feelings, now is an appropriate time to complete the activity. If you did complete the activity, reflect further. For example, do different students describe/draw the same feeling in different ways? Do some different feelings have similar colors or locations?

Alternatively, you may lead the class in a brief exercise to help students notice tension in different parts of their bodies and practice intentional relaxation using the Progressive Muscle Relaxation handout provided.

Conclude this section on tough feelings by saying,

> When we feel like we might have a feeling that is becoming too much or too big, and we no longer feel in control of our bodies and our emotions, we could have a very hard time behaving in ways that are OK. This can happen even for good feelings, like being too glad or too excited. Let a trusted adult know how we are feeling and ask for help. A trusted adult can help us focus on what we are feeling and why we are having this feeling. Then, they can help us make the feeling smaller so we can begin to feel more in control of how we feel and how we behave.

Can you think of a time when you had a tough feeling and made a choice that was not OK? Think of how you felt afterward, or maybe there were other consequences that happened because of that choice. People often wish they had acted differently after tough feelings affect their choices, so it's important to learn from these mistakes and try better next time.

Elementary Lesson Plan 2.2: Making the Feeling Smaller

This section covers a simple strategy for making any of the eight feelings smaller. Remember that more extreme feelings, mood fluctuations, and/or feelings such as hopelessness, purposelessness, anxiety, or anger may warrant consultation with a school counselor or school psychologist.

- Mad
- Glad
- Sad
- Scared
- Frustrated
- Disappointed
- Worried
- Excited

Here are three steps we can follow to make a feeling smaller.

1. Name it.
2. Take a deep breath.
3. Let it go.

Talk through each step in more detail. Create your own classroom chart with suggestions from students for reminders about when and how to use the three steps (using pictures for lower elementary students and keywords for upper elementary students).

Name it. When we can use words to say how we feel, it helps our brains calm down and let some of the feeling go. You might be able to name a feeling with just one word, or you might feel two things at the same time, like being scared AND excited to try something new. It is especially helpful to name the feeling out loud to another person if that is OK for the situation.

Take a deep breath. Taking a deep breath helps for several reasons. Doing this helps us keep our bodies calm because we are making sure our heart rates don't get too fast, and we are sending oxygen to our brain, which helps us think more clearly and persevere through challenges. Taking a deep breath also helps us pause and reflect on the feeling we are experiencing. We might think about what might have caused this feeling and whether we are being overly reactive to the feeling. Focusing on our breathing can give us time to process our thoughts.

Let it go. Remember what it feels like to be calm and check to see if there are any places in your body where you don't feel calm. Keep breathing, use muscle relaxation, get a drink of water, or do whatever else you need to let some of the feeling go. Wait to act until the feeling is smaller and you feel back "in control" of your behaviors.

There is a quote by Jonathan Martensson, “Feelings are much like waves; we can’t stop them from coming, but we can choose which one to surf.”

Lower Elementary (K-2):
Read the quote, and ask students to share all of the ways that a feeling can be like a wave (e.g., they come in different speeds and intensities, we can’t stop them, but we can try to choose how we respond to them, if they get too big/strong we need help).

Upper Elementary (3-5): Reflect on a Quote
Write this quote on the board or use the Waves handout. Ask students to write their ideas/thoughts about the quote and to focus on what they think it might mean. Tell students not to worry about getting the “right” answer. Ask students to share their ideas with the class.

Elementary Lesson 2.3: Making the Feeling Smaller: Model and Practice

You may decide to use the example scenario(s) provided next AND/OR use a scenario that is familiar and relevant to your classroom. Model using the three steps to your classroom and reference your new anchor chart. Then, follow the instructions for interactive modeling to engage students in practice.

> I have been working on a clay art project that has taken me a long time and a lot of special materials to make. I am really excited about this project because I should be done with it in time to give it to my friend for her birthday, and I have picked her favorite things to carve into the clay, like flowers and birds. When I get to the art room to put the final touches on my art project, I find that it is broken into pieces on the floor.

Name it. Say how you feel, using one or two of the eight feeling words, out loud to another person.

Take a deep breath. Narrate your thought process as you do this and focus on something external (five things you see, the sound of a fan) or internal (breath, a soothing thought). If you choose to focus on your breath, try following the steps on the Belly Breathing handout.

Let it go. Describe how your body is changing and what actions you are taking to help your body calm down (e.g., continuing to breathe, tensing and releasing your hands, letting yourself take a moment to cry and blow your nose).

Describe how you know you are calm again and what you gained from following the three steps while you let the feeling go.

Ask students what they noticed about your modeled example. If they missed any key behaviors, give them some prompts. Then, invite one or more students to model the same way you did. Ask students what they noticed the modelers doing. Have all the students model in pairs/small groups while you observe and coach them. Provide feedback, name specific, positive actions you notice, and redirect, respectfully but clearly, when students go off track.

Note: There are many different types of calm-down strategies that children may practice and share during this activity. For example, students may learn breathing strategies from other contexts, such as belly/balloon breathing, starting breathing, and 4-7-8 breathing. If a student can clearly explain the strategy and it is appropriate in the classroom setting, do not correct the student—try to encourage consistent use of whatever strategy works for the student across settings.

If you have remaining time, you may use this second example scenario to repeat the interactive modeling process:

> My family is going to be hosting an exchange student from a different country next week, and I am SO THRILLED that I feel like I'm about to burst! It's all I can think about, and it's been hard to pay attention in class or finish my schoolwork. I've gotten in trouble a few times for interrupting my teacher to remind everyone how many days until he arrives (4 days!). I also haven't gotten a lot of sleep because I am making lists of all the things I want to show my new friend.

Lesson Supplements

Apps

- Feel Electric! (Grade K): https://www.educationalappstore.com/app/feel-electric
- Stop, Breathe & Think Kids: Focus, Calm & Sleep (Grade 1): https://apps.apple.com/us/app/id1215758068?ign-mpt=uo%3D4
- Wellbeyond Meditation For Kids (Grade 2): https://apps.apple.com/us/app/id1082891966?ign-mpt=uo%3D4
- Stop, Breathe & Think (Grade 5): https://apps.apple.com/au/app/stop-breathe-think-meditation/id778848692

Websites

- Calm: https://www.calm.com/schools
- Go Noodle: https://www.gonoodle.com/
- Kidshealth: https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/anger.html

Books

- *A Boy and a Bear* by Lori Lite (Ages 4-9)
- *Angry Octopus* by Lori Lite (Ages 6-12)
- *Virginia Wolf* by Kyo Maclear (Ages 4-8)
- *Emily's Blue Period* by Cathleen Daly (Ages 5-8)
- *Juna's Jar* by Jane Bahk (Ages 5-9)
- *My Happy Life* by Rose Lagercrantz (Ages 6-9)
- *The Red Tree* by Shaun Tan (Ages 8-12)
- *Your Happiest You: The Care and Keeping of Your Mind and Spirit* by Judy Woodburn (Ages 8-12)
- *Sometimes I'm Bombaloo* by Rachel Vail (Ages 3–8)
- *Emily's Tiger* by Miriam Latimer (Ages 4-8)
- *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashley Spires (Ages 4-8)
- *Millie Fierce* by Jane Manning (Ages 4-8)
- *Wemberly Worried* by Kevin Henkes (Ages 4-8)
- *First Day Jitters* by Julie Danneberg (Ages 4-8)
- *Fraidyzoo* by Thyra Heder (Ages 4-8)
- *Black Dog* by Levi Pinfold (Ages 4-8)
- *What to Do When You Worry Too Much: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Anxiety* by Dr. Dawn Huebner (Ages 7-12)
- *Wilma Jean, the Worry Machine* by Julia Cook (Ages 7-10)
- *I'm Furious (Dealing with Feelings)* by Elizabeth Crary (Ages 3-8)
- *I Hate Everything!: A book about feeling angry (Our Emotions and Behavior)* by Sue Graves (Ages 4-8)
- *How to Take the Grrrr Out of Anger* by Elizabeth Verdick (Ages 8-13)
- *Cool Down and Work Through Anger* by Cheri J Meiners (Ages 4-8)
- *When I Feel Angry* by Cornelia Maude Spelman (Ages 5-7)
- *When Miles Got Mad* by Sam Kurtzman-Counter (Ages 4-7)
- *Mad Isn't Bad: A Child's Book About Anger* by Mundy Michaelene (Ages 6-9)
- *When Sophie Gets Angry – Really, Really Angry* by Molly Bang (Ages 3-7)
- *Llama Llama Mad at Mama* by Anna Dewdney (Ages 2-5)
- *Zach Gets Frustrated* by William Mulcahy (Ages 5-8)
- *Sally Simon Simmons' Super Frustrating Day* by Abbie Schiller (Ages 5-6)
- *When I Feel Scared* by Cornelia Maude Spelman (Ages 5-7)
- *When I Feel Sad* by Cornelia Maude Spelman (Ages 5-7)

Other Lesson Plans

- Education World - Be the Boss: A Lesson Plan on Managing Feelings (K-6): http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson-plan-managing-feelings.shtml
- Shaw Connections Lab - Emotional Regulations Lesson Plans: https://www.shawconnectionslab.com/resources/

Lesson Handouts

- Progressive Muscle Relaxation handout
- Belly Breathing handout
- Waves handout *(can be printed as a poster)*

Elementary Lesson 2 Fidelity Checklist

Implementer: Please complete after delivering the **Managing Strong Feelings** lesson.

Component	Check if Yes	Check if No	Describe lesson modifications (e.g., deviations, additions)
Facilitator and implementer met to prepare for lesson delivery	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized additional resources to learn about the content	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Section 2.1 (Introduction to Tough Feelings) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 2.2 (Making the Feeling Smaller) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 2.3 (Making the Feeling Smaller: Model and Practice) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized extension opportunities	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	

Other notes:

Name of *facilitator*: _____

Name of *implementer:* _____

Implementation Guidance

Content Introduction

The following content is information that was derived from the research of Dr. Richard Newman, a professor at the University of California, Riverside. Dr. Newman became interested in academic and social help-seeking when he was a classroom teacher and realized that students may be help-seeking when he was a classroom teacher and realized that students might need to be encouraged and supported to ask for help. However, Dr. Newman also realizes that there can be social costs to seeking help, especially in situations such as peer harassment. For example, when help-seeking is not the norm for help-seeking is not the norm in the classroom, students might be worried about being perceived as weak or experiencing "payback" from other students if they ask an adult for help.

Dr. Newman compares adaptive and nonadaptive help-seeking. Nonadaptive help-seeking involves 1) seeking help when it is unnecessary (i.e., "dependent help-seeking") and 2) failure to seek help when it is necessary (i.e., "avoidance of help-seeking"). Adaptive help-seeking involves seeking help to maintain safety. Note that the adaptive nature of help-seeking is individualized by the student, and different factors of the situation may be different across people and situations.

Adaptive help-seeking requires students to make several decisions (Newman, 2008):

a. *necessity* of help (e.g., "Is the work so difficult that I can't solve it on my own?"),
b. *the target* of the request (e.g., "Who is most likely to provide useful help?"), and
c. *content* of the request (e.g., "What exactly should I ask for?").

Being able to make these decisions relies on the individual possessing a foundational understanding of emotion regulation and social skills, and not all students may have this. If students display extreme difficulty with asking for help after this lesson, consult with a school counselor or school psychologist to determine if a more intensive intervention regarding emotion regulation and/ or social skills is warranted.

As help-seeking lessons are integrated into the classroom setting, one should consider the importance of adult behaviors. First, adults should lead by example and should involve students with or share opportunities for adaptive help-seeking. Think about the language used around help-seeking. For example, is a student being "needy" or self-aware and motivated to assert their needs?

A decrease in adaptive help-seeking could occur if adults are not responsive to appropriate student requests for help. Characteristics of teachers can support or inhibit help-seeking in the classroom. These include teachers' willingness, competence, reactions to help-seeking-

questions, expectations, personality traits, relationships with students, predictability, familiarity, gender, and mood (Le Mare & Sohbat, 2002). Further,

> Previous studies have linked help-seeking- to students' self-perceptions, and the results indicate that the need for help is most threatening for students who have low self-esteem and/or have self-perceptions that they are low in cognitive and social competence (Karabenick & Knapp, 1988; Le Mare, 1998; Newman, 1990; Newman & Goldin, 1990; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997). The teacher characteristics, which students in the present study identified as discouraging help-seeking, are the kinds of behaviors that undermine children's positive self-perceptions. When adults show little interest in children's initiatives because they are busy or they pay superficial attention to what children say, speak discourteously to children, and use judgmental vocabulary, they convey attitudes of aloofness, disrespect, lack of acceptance, and insensitivity. Such attitudes, as we have seen here, make children feel inadequate, confused, and/or angry (cf., Kostelnick et al., 1988). Hence, they are doubly damaging in that they inhibit help-seeking in the present and may contribute to negative self-perceptions that, in the long term, further discourage asking for help (pp. 250-251).

This is what Dr. Newman (2008) has to say about teachers as contextual variables related to help-seeking (p. 7):

> Help-seeking at school is a social transaction with the teacher. Teachers and students may not have similar views about harassment. Believing that social support is unavailable increases students' stress (Newman & Murray, 2005). Anxiety, fear, anger, and apathy are likely to be allayed by a positive student-teacher relationship. One that is characterized by teachers' involvement, sense of caring, and shared sensitivity regarding safety (e.g., when environmental cues unambiguously signal danger; see Birch & Ladd, 1996; Meyer et al., 2004; Patrick et al., 2002).
>
> To the extent teachers have negative perceptions of students who come to them for help, these perceptions potentially are reflected in behavior toward individuals who, in fact, may have an especially difficult time with peer interaction. One can envision that if teachers believe a particular child is teased because of behaviors under their control (e.g., showing off) or if they think the child is tattling, they may feel unsympathetic and look unfavorably on a request for help. Ignoring a child's request may exacerbate anxiety, or it can lead to feelings of shame and, perhaps, constructively serve to modify the child's behavior. On the other hand, if a teacher believes a child is teased because of uncontrollable causes (e.g., physical disability) that make it hard for the child to handle the situation, caring teachers will be understanding of requests for help (Graham & Juvonen, 2001; Weiner, 1995). In fact, teachers may use such an occasion to help the child learn other coping strategies and to instruct the perpetrator (and perhaps the whole class) about the dangerous consequences of harassment (APA, 1999). As with students' help-seeking, teachers' help-giving should be calibrated to students' needs. One can envision a caring teacher being overly protective of certain children in situations the children should handle on their own (Birch & Ladd, 1998).

Calibration of help-giving is a delicate balance; information given can add too much cognitive load if students do not have a basic understanding of the matter at hand. Conversely, when teachers tend to give short answers to complex questions, students become less likely to ask for help over time (Sparks, 2014).

In summary, help-seeking by students and help-giving by teachers are individualized processes that must be adjusted to the individual and the situation. Cultural differences may come into play, including socioeconomic status (Sparks, 2014). However, teachers must also recognize that each help-giving decision they make contributes to a classroom culture around the acceptability of help-seeking. While responses to adaptive and nonadaptive help-seeking will differ, they should all be caring. Le Mare and Sohbat (2002) recommend that, to reduce student perceptions of teacher disinterest or hostility and increase appropriate help-seeking, teachers should explain to the students why they are not willing to give help in cases of nonadaptive help-seeking.

For the third Modular SEL Lesson Plan, "Asking for Help," the content will focus on when and how students should ask for help, and then, information on being a helper will be given. Opportunities for modeling and practice are built into the lesson plan, and continued practice through extension opportunities and lesson supplements are recommended.

Further Content Resources

Le Mare, L., & Sohbat, E. (2002). Canadian students' perceptions of teacher characteristics that support or inhibit help-seeking. *The Elementary School Journal*, *102*(3), 239-253. https://doi.org/10.1086/499702

Newman, R. S. (2008). Adaptive and nonadaptive help-seeking with peer harassment: An integrative perspective of coping and self-regulation. *Educational Psychologist, 43*(1), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520701756206

Sparks, S. (2014). *Students' help-seeking strategies offer clues for educators*. https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/08/20/01help.h34.html

Content Delivery

This lesson can be delivered in three 10-minute sessions or one 30- to 35-minute lesson. The subsections of this lesson plan are:

1. When to Ask for Help
2. How to Ask for Help
3. Being a Helper

Extension Opportunities

- Incorporate "Asking for Help" into PBIS, SEL, or other behavior programming (e.g., use tickets to reinforce the appropriate use of the practiced strategy).
- Give classroom-specific instructions that promote openness, and discuss when and how to ask for help at the beginning of the year, and provide refreshers after breaks or changes in rules.
- If jobs or helper roles are used in class, highlight ways in which students can fulfill their duties in those roles and how those roles fit with the content presented. Here are some job ideas that can teach your students responsibility, help them feel involved, and cut down on your workload: https://www.weareteachers.com/classroom-jobs/
- Use existing opportunities within lesson plans to identify adaptive and nonadaptive help-seeking. For example, when reading about real or fictional characters, reflect on the decision-making processes the character(s) used and what the consequences were for the character(s) and/or others.
    - Characters in the book *Wonder* (grades 4-5) encounter several opportunities for help-seeking, and they must choose to take or avoid these opportunities. One of the main messages is associated with a pledge to "choose kind." See more here: https://wonderthebook.com/for-teachers
- Create structured opportunities for students to seek or provide help to others, such as having a "Buddy Bench" at recess or offering tutoring services to younger students.

School Procedures

In order to make decisions about help-seeking, the individual must have a foundational understanding of emotion regulation and social skills, and not all students may have these skills. If students display difficulty with asking for help, even after this lesson, consult with a school counselor or school psychologist to determine if more intensive intervention is warranted.

Be aware that, while unlikely, opening the door to disclosures of being unsafe can prompt students to share situations that may require mandated reporting. If you do not have previous training in responding to disclosures of abuse, you may wish to learn more before implementing this lesson. These brief guidelines from the Australian National Child Protection Clearinghouse might be useful: http://earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/files/pb2.pdf

Before beginning the lesson, clarify the point of contact (e.g., the school counselor) to whom you may refer a student(s) if you feel concerned for your student(s).

Lesson Plan

Introduction

Remember, an individual who uses adaptive help-seeking must be able to implement fairly sophisticated procedures that are related to an ability to make decisions and use skills to carry out the request. These procedures can be impacted by social pressures and waves of feelings that are too big or too strong. Therefore, students can benefit from guidance regarding when their help-seeking is adaptive (necessary) or nonadaptive (dependent help-seeking or avoidance of help-seeking)- They can also benefit from instruction about how to use effective help-seeking methods. Gentle reminders and explanations about refusals of nonadaptive help-seeking can help students learn about and understand these procedures and determine when to ask for help and when not to.

Knowledge Checklist

- Be aware of and understand the decision process for adaptive help-seeking (i.e., do I need help? Whom should I ask for help? What exactly should I ask this person?)
- Consider reasons why we might need help (i.e., if we need information to help solve a problem; if we need support with feelings, like when they are too big or too much to manage; or to stop someone from being hurt.)
- Understand the difference between tattling and telling
- Determine how to be a helper, including when students might choose not to help

Materials Checklist

Lower Elementary (K-2)

- Lesson Plan 3.2: Space to write /draw Asking for Help steps for later reference
- Lesson Plan 3.2: Asking for Help handout

Upper Elementary (3-5)

- Lesson Plan 3.2: Space to write Asking for Help steps for later reference
- Lesson Plan 3.2: Asking for Help handout

Student Handout: Asking for Help

Today's Date:_____

Dear _____ (teacher's name),

I am having difficulty with the following:

- ☐ Getting along with my group
- ☐ Paying attention during class
- ☐ Taking notes
- ☐ Understanding assignments
- ☐ Finishing assignments
- ☐ Completing homework
- ☐ Studying for tests
- ☐ Other:_____

Can we meet to discuss strategies that will help me?

Thank you,

_____(student's name)

Elementary Lesson Plan 3 Content

Student Learning Objectives

- List three reasons we might need help.
- Explain how to determine whether you need help.
- Practice reflective listening skills so you can help others.

Elementary Lesson 3.1: When to Ask for Help

Note: Teachers who are working with Upper Elementary (3-5) students may choose to present highlights from Section 1 if students demonstrate the ability to make an appropriate selection of when to ask for help; additional time can be spent on practicing help-seeking in Section 2.

This section covers when to ask for help and when not to ask. Say to students,

> Let's start by talking about reasons why or situations when we should ask for help. We should ask for help when we are not able to fix a situation by ourselves. Three reasons that we might need help are if we need the following:
>
> 1. **Get information** to help solve a problem.
> 2. **Need support with feelings**, like when they are too big or too much to manage.
> 3. **Stop someone from being hurt**.
>
> Let's think of an example for each of these situations. I'll start…

Share an example of each type of reason, then ask your students to offer some examples. The following types of examples fit each category (be sure to cover safety):

Information

- Sometimes, I see other teachers use a strategy or activity that I like, so I ask them to explain or teach it to me so I can use it with my class.
- When I have a disagreement with someone, I might ask a friend for advice so I can see different points of view.

Support with feelings

- When I am feeling lonely, I might reach out to a friend and ask to spend quality time with them.
- Sometimes, I feel like I haven't done a very good job, so I often speak to or call my (parent/partner/friend/other) for encouragement.

To stop someone from being hurt

- When I see or find myself in any situation that is unsafe because of…
    - the surroundings (e.g., broken slide on the playground),
    - the actions people are taking (e.g., bullying, doing actions that are unsafe),
    - being asked to keep secrets that make me feel uncomfortable or
    - feelings of being unsafe, upset, confused, or worried,

  …I tell an adult who can help.

> When shouldn't we ask for help? When we don't need help or haven't tried to solve the issue by ourselves yet, we want to take other steps first (unless it is a matter of safety) before we ask for help.

Provide classroom-specific strategies for other steps to take first based on rules and norms that exist in your classroom. Remind students about classroom routines for asking for help, such as raising hands or going to the teacher's desk at a certain time. If you encourage peer collaboration, you may wish to use the "Ask Three Before Me" rule for routine questions. This rule is when a student asks for help from three other students before coming to you.

> Sometimes, our feelings about a situation make us feel like we cannot handle the situation on our own, even if we actually could. Remember our strategy for how to make tough feelings smaller—name the feeling, take a deep breath, and let it go. Use this strategy and see if we are better prepared to respond by ourselves.

We should also understand the difference between tattling and telling (sometimes called reporting), which is described in the table below. Discuss the differences with students.

> Another time we do not need to ask for help is when we are tattling. What is the difference between tattling and telling?

Tattling	**Telling/Reporting**
Situation is safe.	Situation is not safe for ourselves or others.
I can solve the situation or question on my own, and an adult isn't needed.	I can't safely solve on my own, so I need help from an adult.
Telling an adult about something that was done wrong to get another person in trouble or avoid blame.	Telling about when someone needs help because we are concerned or worried.

> A quick way to think about the difference between tattling and telling is to ask ourselves, are we getting someone *out of danger* or *into trouble*? Let's try some examples.
>
> Pretend our class is waiting in line to get a drink from the water fountain. Saying to the teacher, "he's cutting in line!" is **tattling** because everyone is safe, and it's a situation that you can try to solve on your own. For example, you could say, "It's Alex's turn to use the water fountain; please wait for your turn." A time when you would need to **tell or report** the situation to the teacher is if the other student was pushing Alex out of the way, and someone might get hurt.

Let's try another situation.

A student tells the teacher, "She took one of the blocks I wanted to use!" Is this tattling or telling? [Tattling. Everyone is safe, and you can try to solve the problem on your own.]

A student tells the teacher, "She pushed over the block tower on top of me!" Is this tattling or telling? [Telling. We want to make sure no one was hurt from a falling block tower.]

It isn't always easy to tell if something is tattling or telling. For example, let's think about name-calling. At first, this is a situation that we can try to solve on our own. You could say, "I feel sad when I hear rude words because they hurt my feelings. I like playing with people who use kind words." However, if the name-calling keeps happening, you might need **help with your feelings** because they may become too big or too much to manage by yourself. When you tell or report this situation to your teacher, remember to describe the whole situation so the teacher knows you already tried to solve the problem by yourself, and that didn't work, so now, you need help.

Talk as a class about what gentle reminder you might use for tattling vs. telling. For example, you, as the teacher, may want to say,

If someone is about to be hurt, tell me. If no one is being hurt, try to work out any disagreements or situations among yourselves. If talking among yourselves doesn't work, come and talk to me.

Conclude this section by asking,

Are there any questions about when to ask for help?

Elementary Lesson Plan 3.2: How to Ask for Help

Asking for help is a skill. We'll talk about a few different ways an individual can ask for help; however, the main decisions an individual must make when they ask for help are the same (Newman, 2008): the necessity, the target, and the content of the request.

Now, we are going to talk about *how* to ask for help. When we think about asking for help, we should ask ourselves three questions:

1. Do I need help?
2. Whom should I ask for help?
3. What exactly should I ask this person to do?

Let's talk about each question and consider how to answer each question. The first question is, **"Do I need help?"** What reasons can help us answer this?

Review from Section 1: We might need help with **information that we can't find**, like a solution to a problem; we might need **help with feelings**, like when they are too big or too much to manage; or we might need **help from an adult** because someone is being hurt, or we are concerned that a situation is not safe.

Remember, consider whether you can try to solve the problem on your own first. Ask yourself, "Have I tried other strategies that have worked in the past?"

If you decide you do need help, the second question is, **"Whom should I ask for help?"** There are some situations in which you will need to ask an adult for help, like when the situation isn't safe. Asking a trusted adult for help is also a good idea when you think they can provide the most useful help.

Who might a trusted adult be? Someone who is available, caring, and listens to concerns about safety could be a trusted adult. This adult should be sensitive about your privacy, but, remember, they may not be able to keep what you say to them a secret if someone might be hurt. Adults whom you know or recognize, like adults from your school, parents of friends, or helping professionals who wear uniforms (e.g., doctors, nurses, police), can, generally, be trusted adults.

Most of the time, though, we can ask another student for help. Sometimes, we might want to ask a friend for help if the task we need help with is something they are good at doing, if it can help us to be better friends, or if we need help right away and an adult is not there.

You might ask yourself questions like, "Who is nearby and most likely to be available to help?. . my teacher?. . the hallway monitor?. . a classmate? Who is most likely to be understanding and kind?"

You might want to ask the person you pick if they have time to help you. Most people want to help other people, but if someone is busy, they may find it hard to help you right away. If that person is too busy to help, you might want to try again later or ask another person. Remember, if you are asking for help because someone is getting hurt (e.g., a fire, an injury), it is okay to, and you should, interrupt an adult if they are busy.

The third question is, **"What exactly should I ask this person to do?"** Here is an example of someone's thought process for what exactly they should ask their teacher when they are worried about getting bullied on the playground. This student says to themself,

"Should I ask the teacher for advice on a strategy that I can use on my own . . . or just let them know how bad I feel?. . or ask if I can stay inside and not go out to the playground . . . or can I just assume the teacher will know what to do? How can I show the teacher that I've tried my hardest to fix the problem and am asking them to help me as a last resort? Is it better if I go to the teacher when there aren't other kids around?.? I don't want to look like a tattletale."

To ask for help in an effective way, you need to explain the kind of help you want clearly. Try to do this in a calm and polite voice so the other person can hear everything you say. For example, the student above might decide to say this to their teacher,

"Can I talk to you in private? I'm feeling scared about going out to recess because, for the last few days, some other kids have been picking on me. I tried everything I could think of, like staying away from them, asking them to stop, and running to my friends when they find me. My friend heard I might get punched at recess today. Can I stay inside and not go out to the playground?"

Students may have difficulty talking through their requests clearly or calmly. Provide multiple ways for students to approach you if they need your help. For example, you might want to create a classroom template like the Asking for Help handout.

At this point in the lesson, discuss other options students can use when they need to ask an adult for help.

The remainder of this section is practice and conclusion. Because there were several steps listed in the process of asking for help, you should review these steps prior to or during skill practice. Write or draw them as an anchor chart for students to reference.

1. Do I need help?
    i. Get information
    ii. Need support with feelings
    iii. Stop someone from being hurt
2. Whom should I ask for help?
3. What exactly should I ask this person to do?

Let's practice the skills of asking for help. Who can give me an example of a time in school when you might need to ask for help?

Work through 3-5 examples provided by students. As they show increased capability with the steps, introduce examples of times when they would NOT need to ask for help and discuss why. Continue discussing more examples until students seem comfortable with the information and process.

There are different ways to follow through on asking for help. If the problem is solved, thank the person for helping and let them know how the situation turned out. If the problem is not solved, you may need to go back through the steps again. The next time, try changing parts of asking for help, like whom you choose to ask for help or what you ask that person to do.

Apply these changes to an example that was previously provided by a student.

Elementary Lesson Plan 3.3: Being a Helper

This section will discuss when and how students can help other students and when the student who needs help should find a trusted adult. Introduce being a helper by saying,

> You can all choose to be helpers. We know it feels good to be a helper, but sometimes, we forget to help or don't think about how we could help when we are focused on our own lives. You could be a helper when someone needs to pick things up, you could be a helper when someone has a job to do, and you could be a helper when someone asks you for help.
>
> If someone needs help, the first step is to be a good listener. That might be all the help that someone needs! Let's review how to be a good listener.

If you already have classroom or schoolwide guidelines on what being a good listener entails, use those here in place of the following suggestions.

- LOOK at the person who is talking.
- LISTEN, and don't interrupt.
- ASK questions to find out more.
- NOD, or say something to show you understand.
- REPEAT what you heard in your own words.

> Let's practice listening to another person by repeating what we've heard to show that we've really heard what they are telling us.

The following is an optional activity you can use to practice listening skills.

- Have a student tell the class what their favorite color is and then call on the next person to speak. The next person to speak repeats what the first person said and adds what their favorite color is. That person calls on a third person to speak, who repeats only what the person right before him—the second person—said and adds what their favorite color is.
- If students forget what the person before them said or start to tell their favorite colors without first repeating what they have just heard, gently point that lapse out and ask them to try again.
- You can continue with other statements such as, "On Saturday, I like to .... "
- Conclude the activity by complimenting the students on their listening skills and providing suggestions for specific times to practice these skills in the classroom.

> So, sometimes, a helper just needs to be a good listener and be kind to the person they are helping. That might be when someone needs **support with feelings**, like when the feelings are too big or too much to manage. Other times, a person might need **information** or assistance to help solve their problem. Lastly, someone might need help if they are **being hurt**.
>
> When we see someone being hurt at school, whether it's being verbally picked on or being physically hurt, we can be a helper in a few different ways. We can stop giving attention to the

bully and invite the person being bullied to join us. We can also report the incident to an adult we trust.

Please give an example of a time when you chose to be a helper. How did you try to help?

Discuss examples with students, and be sure to correct students if they share examples when it would have been more appropriate to ask an adult (i.e., when there were safety concerns and an adult was available) for help. If examples of reporting to an adult are not covered spontaneously, ask this question:

When do you need to find a trusted adult for help?

Be sure to talk about the following examples: cases of abuse/harm (i.e., when someone is being hurt, hurting someone else, or hurting themselves); bullying or other peer harassment; and adults asking kids for help that makes the kids uncomfortable, including when they are being asked to keep a secret.

There are times when we might choose not to help others, like when it is against the rules or helping could cross a personal boundary. You could say this,

There are times when you may choose not to help another person. For example, you might choose to be a helper if a classmate asks you to explain a math problem they don't understand, but you might choose not to help someone if they ask to copy your math homework. That would break a rule in school.

Another time we might choose not to help is if it crosses a personal boundary for ourselves or someone else. For example, pretend your friend is sad and wants a hug, but you aren't feeling well and don't want to give them a hug right then. It's OK to say that you don't feel like a hug but will hold their hand or find them a stuffed animal to hug. It's also OK to ask an adult for help in a situation like this.

What about when a friend asks you to "help" by keeping a secret or taking a side in an argument? Sometimes, this is OK, like if the secret is about a surprise gift or the argument discusses a topic you feel strongly about. We have already talked about times when you should not keep a secret—when are those?

At this time, students should mention the following: cases of abuse/harm (i.e., when someone is being hurt, hurting someone else, or hurting themselves); bullying or other peer harassment; and adults asking kids for help that makes the kids uncomfortable, including when they are being asked to keep a secret.

Can you think of times when you may not want to take a side in an argument?

Let students respond. Then, mention these examples: when you are uncomfortable with the argument, or you are uncomfortable taking sides between the people involved. For example, when the argument is no longer respectful (e.g., name-calling might be used) or when emotions

are too much or too big, you may not want to be involved in the argument. Be sure to respect students' personal boundaries at all times.

Conclude the section by stating what tasks you will ask helpers to do in your classroom so students have clear ways to apply the information from this section.

Lesson Supplements

Apps

- Toca Pet Doctor (Grade K-1): https://tocaboca.com/app/toca-pet-doctor/
- Daisy Chain (Grade 2-3): https://apptopia.com/ios/app/915700151/about
- Spirits Of Spring (Grade 4-5): http://larvagamestudios.com/portfolio/spirits-of-spring/
- Random App of Kindness (Grade 5): http://www.rakigame.com/#home

Websites

- Sites That Help Kids Do Good: https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/sites-that-help-kids-do-good
- Stop Bullying: https://www.stopbullying.gov/kids/kid-videos

Books

- *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* by Philip C. Stead (Ages 2-6)
- *The Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade* by Justin Roberts (Ages 3-5)
- *Be Kind* by Pat Zietlow Miller (Ages 3-6)
- *Apt. Three* by Ezra Jack Keats (Ages 3-7)
- *Because Amelia Smiled* by David Ezra Stein (Ages 3-7)
- *Good People Everywhere* by Lynea Gillen (Ages 3-7)
- *Hey, Little Ant* by Phillip M. Hoose (Ages 3-7)
- *How to Heal a Broken Wing* by Bob Graham (Ages 3-7)
- *Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch* by Eileen Spinelli (Ages 3-7)
- *The Journey* by Francesca Sanna (Ages 3-7)
- *The Little Engine That Could* by Watty Piper (Ages 3-7)
- *The One Day House* by Julia Durango (Ages 3-7)
- *Enemy Pie* by Derek Munson (Ages 3-8)
- *You, Me and Empathy* by Jayneen Sanders (Ages 3-9)
- *Chocolate Milk, Por Favor* by Maria Dismondy (Ages 4-11)
- *Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun: Having the Courage to Be Who You Are* by Maria Dismondy

(Ages 4-11)

- *The Kindness Quilt* by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace (Ages 4-5)
- *Blizzard* by John Rocco (Ages 4-7)
- *Pinduli* by Janell Cannon (Ages 4-7)
- *The Face at the Window* by Regina Hanson (Ages 4-7)
- *Two White Rabbits* by Jairo Buitrago (Ages 4-7)
- *Seven Chinese Brothers* by Margaret Mahy (Ages 4-8)
- *A Chair for My Mother* by Vera B. Williams (Ages 4-8)
- *Mama, I'll Give You the World* by Roni Schotter (Ages 4-8)
- *Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed* by Emily Pearson (Ages 4-8)
- *Since We're Friends: An Autism Picture Book* by Celeste Shally (Ages 4-8)
- *The Three Questions* by Jon J Muth (Ages 4-8)
- *What Does It Mean to Be Kind?* by Rana DiOrio (Ages 4-8)
- *Yuko-chan and the Daruma Doll* by Sunny Seki (Ages 4-8)
- *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* by Carol McCloud (Ages 4-9)
- *Kindness is Cooler, Mrs. Ruler* by Margery Cuyler (Ages 5-10)
- *The Can Man* by Laura E. Williams (Ages 5-10)
- *A Bike Like Sergio's* by Maribeth Boelts (Ages 5-8)
- *I'm New Here* by Anne Sibley O'Brien (Ages 5-8)
- *Patch* by David Slonim (Ages 5-8)
- *Sam and the Lucky Money* by Karen Chinn (Ages 5-8)
- *Those Shoes* by Maribeth Boelts (Ages 5-8)
- *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein (Ages 6-8)
- *Desmond and the Very Mean Word* by Desmond Tutu (Ages 6-9)
- *Non-Random Acts of Kindness* by Lauren Myracle (Ages 6-9)
- *The Invisible Boy* by Trudy Ludwig (Ages 6-9)
- *The Cats in Krasinski Square* by Karen Hesse (Ages 7-10)
- *One Hen: How One Small Loan Made a Big Difference* by Katie Smith Milway (Ages 8-12)
- *The Lilith Summer* by Hadley Irwin (Ages 9-12)

Other Lesson Plans

- Shaw Connections Lab - Peer Relationship Lesson Plans: https://www.shawconnectionslab.com/resources/
- Good Character - Listening to Others (K-5): https://www.goodcharacter.com/elementaryschool/listening-to-others/

Lesson Handouts

- Asking for Help handout

Elementary Lesson 3 Fidelity Checklist

Implementer: Please complete after delivering the **Asking for Help** lesson.

Component	Check if Yes	Check if No	Describe lesson modifications (e.g., deviations, additions)
Facilitator and implementer met to prepare for lesson delivery	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized additional resources to learn about the content	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Section 3.1 (When to Ask for Help) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 3.2 (How to Ask for Help) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 3.3 (Being a Helper) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized extension opportunities	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	

Other notes:

Name of *facilitator*: _____

Name of *implementer:* _____

Implementation Guidance

Content Introduction

Emotion regulation "involves actively managing strong and unpleasant feelings and results in adaptive functioning in emotionally arousing situations. It requires awareness and understanding of feelings and involves self-calming strategies and tolerance or management of internal distress" (Murray et al., 2015, p. 6). Emotion regulation is associated with several student outcomes that are essential to learning and later adult functioning, including academic and socioemotional outcomes (Murray et al., 2015).

As stated above, emotion regulation is comprised of both emotional awareness and strategies to regulate strong or tough feelings. To regulate stress and mood, people typically use techniques that fall within five "families" of emotion-regulation strategies, according to researcher James Gross:

Strategy	Description	Example
Situation Selection	Change what we are exposed to	A student who likes drawing but finds writing difficult may choose to plan his essay using a graphic organizer rather than an outline. This option supports the student's positive emotions and moderates their negative emotions while planning.
Situation Modification	Change the situation to influence how it affects our emotions	A teacher who finds students constantly forgetting their pencils frustrating may modify the situation by keeping a supply of pencils in their desk, which may preempt their frustration.
Attentional Deployment	Select where we direct our attention	A teacher with a chronic illness may use attention deployment before school by focusing on being energetic and enthusiastic rather than giving in to their fatigue.
Cognitive Change	Change the meaning of the situation to change its influence	A teacher who has been angry with a student for a week because of their recent disruptive behavior may learn that the student's father was recently incarcerated. This teacher may reappraise the disruptive incidents and feel compassion, not anger, because of this cognitive change.
Response Modulation	Adjust the usual response we associate with an emotion	A student who finds their teacher's jokes funny stops themself from laughing and adopts an angry facial expression instead to appear cool to their friends.

Adults may find it helpful to explore these ideas and find examples of real-life emotion-regulation strategies that they or their students use on a day-to-day basis and identify if these strategies are helpful and why. As a starting point, we will focus on one simple *response-modulation* strategy, which is a three-step process in which students **(1) name the feeling, (2) take a deep breath, and (3) let it go.** This is different from asking students to inhibit or suppress a feeling, which is usually *not* effective or healthy. Remember, this is why we emphasize that all feelings are valid even when all behaviors are not. Ensure your students understand that negative or unpleasant feelings are "OK," and we need to understand what our feelings are so that we can respond to them in an appropriate way. In this response-modulation process, we are giving the students time to actively manage what it is they are feeling by asking them to give the emotion, or feeling, a label (or identify it), and then sit with it or think about it while breathing to calm their bodies and minds. This can help lead students to the third step of letting the emotion go or, at least, making it "smaller" so they can better respond to the situation.

There are a few situations when more or different interventions are recommended:

- *When the strategy by itself is not enough:* For students who exhibit severe mood fluctuations and/or extreme feelings such as hopelessness, purposelessness, anxiety, or anger, this strategy, by itself, may not match the intensity of the emotion. For example, consider a student who identifies that they are very angry and sits with their anger for a few minutes while doing deep breathing and then attempts to let the anger go. This student may continue to show signs of intense anger afterward. In these cases, teachers should consult with a school counselor.
- *When the strategy may dismiss or alienate students:* Using this strategy for strong or tough emotions that are appropriate in response to an extreme situation—bullying, discrimination, loss of a loved one, traumatic experience, mental health disorders—may be seen as dismissive to students. Students may wish to comply with the directive to "let it go," and they may pretend that the strategy helped when it did not. Teachers and school counselors who work with a student on this strategy must have an understanding of why a student is experiencing a negative or strong feeling to help determine if further support is needed. Be sure to monitor and/or follow up with these students to make sure their coping strategies are helping.

For most students who experience tough/strong feelings in response to typical daily stressors, this simple response-modulation strategy will probably be beneficial and effective.

However, at times, we all need to seek help to manage stress. Adaptive help-seeking requires students to make several decisions (Newman, 2008):

d. *necessity* of help (e.g., "Is the work so difficult that I can't solve it on my own?"),
e. *target* of the request (e.g., "Who is most likely to provide useful help?"), and
f. *content* of the request (e.g., "What exactly should I ask for?").

A decrease in adaptive help-seeking could occur if adults are not responsive to appropriate student requests for help. Characteristics of teachers can support or inhibit help-seeking in the classroom. These features can include teachers' willingness, competence, reactions to help-seeking, expectations, personality traits, relationships with students, predictability, familiarity, gender, and mood (Le Mare & Sohbat, 2002).

Calibration of help-giving is a delicate balance, and provided information can add too much cognitive load if students do not have a basic understanding of the situation. Conversely, when teachers tend to give short answers to complex questions, students become less likely to ask for help over time (Sparks, 2014). Teachers must recognize that each help-giving decision they make contributes to a classroom culture that speaks to the acceptability of help-seeking. Le Mare and Sohbat (2002) recommend that teachers explain to the student why they are not willing to give help in cases of nonadaptive help-seeking in order to reduce student perceptions that a teacher is disinterested or hostile and increase a student's appropriate help-seeking.

For the first Secondary Lesson Plan, "Stress and Mood," the content will focus on discussing what stress is and why stress occurs, managing emotions, and identifying ways to get help when stress or feelings are too much. Opportunities for modeling and practice are built into the lesson plan, and continued practice through extension opportunities and lesson supplements are recommended.

Further Content Resources

Gross, J. (2014). *The process model of emotion regulation.* https://youtu.be/9n5MqKLitWo?t=214

Le Mare, L., & Sohbat, E. (2002). Canadian students' perceptions of teacher characteristics that support or inhibit help seeking. *The Elementary School Journal*, *102*(3), 239-253. http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1002218.pdf

Murray, D. W., Rosanbalm, K., Christopoulos, C., & Hamoudi, A. (2015). Self-regulation and toxic stress: Foundations for understanding self-regulation from an applied developmental perspective (OPRE Report 2015-21). Washington, DC: *Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*.

Newman, R. S. (2008). Adaptive and nonadaptive help seeking with peer harassment: An integrative perspective of coping and self-regulation. *Educational Psychologist, 43*(1), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520701756206

Terzian, M., Moore, K. A., & Nguyen, H. N. (2010). Assessing stress in children and youth: A guide for out of school time program practitioners. *Child Trends*, *22*, 1-5. https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Child_Trends-2010_10_05_RB_AssessingStress.pdf

Content Delivery

This lesson can be delivered in three 10-minute sessions or one 30- to 35-minute lesson. The subsections of this lesson plan are as follows:

4. What is Stress?
5. Emotion Regulation Techniques
6. How to Get Help

Extension Opportunities

- Incorporate discussions about "Stress and Mood" into PBIS, SEL, or other behavior programming (e.g., use tickets to reinforce the appropriate use of the practiced strategy).
- Model identification of feelings for students. This can occur through structured daily activities, such as a "feelings check-in" in every class and/or through teachable moments based on lesson content or classroom dynamics.
- Model emotion regulation for students by narrating your thought process in response to a strong/tough emotion. This will help students create their own inner dialogue in response to emotions when they don't have existing models.
- Use breathing and meditation in the classroom routine as a way to modulate responses to demonstrate some useful coping tools for students because, when we practice these strategies in times of calm, students are better able to utilize them when agitated.
- Provide time and space for students to process emotions within classrooms. You may want to create a "calm-down corner" and include materials for students who better regain control using active distraction.
- Guide students through reappraisal, which is a form of *cognitive change*. When a student's thought seems overly negative or exaggerated, like "I'll never pass a math test," help the student check the accuracy of their thought. In doing so, have concrete examples of the student's strengths, such as XXX. Remember, a student will likely see through disingenuous or vague feedback about their strengths).
- Proactively prevent unnecessary agitation by *selecting* or *modifying* situations for students. To accomplish this, consider elements of your classroom environment, student grouping, and opportunities for choice.
- Use existing opportunities within lesson plans to identify adaptive and nonadaptive help-seeking. For example, when reading about real or fictional characters, reflect on the characters' decision-making processes and discuss what the consequences were for the characters.
- Create structured opportunities for students to seek or provide help to others, such as through student groups or volunteering.

School Procedures

Key feelings to look for during discussions include feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, and depression or mood swings. If students effectively engage in alternate emotion-regulation strategies instead of what is presented in this lesson, be sure to encourage continued use of what works for that student across settings.

In order to make decisions about using help-seeking, the individual must have a foundational understanding of emotion regulation and social skills, and not all students may have these skills. If students display difficulty with asking for help even after this lesson, consult with a school counselor or school psychologist to determine if more intensive intervention is warranted.

Be aware that, while unlikely, opening the door to disclosures of being unsafe can prompt students to share situations that require mandated reporting. If you do not have previous training in responding to disclosures of abuse, you may wish to learn more before implementing this lesson. These brief guidelines from the Australian National Child Protection Clearinghouse might be useful: http://earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/files/pb2.pdf

Before beginning the lesson, clarify the point of contact (e.g., the school counselor) to whom you may refer a student(s) if you have any concerns for your student(s).

For a brief, 10- to 15-minute training regarding the risk factors of student suicide, please see the training below:
https://schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/modules/details/risk-factors-of-student-suicide/

For a brief, 10- to 15-minute training regarding the warning signs of student suicide, please see the training below:
https://schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/modules/details/warning-signs-and-stressful-precipitating-events-of-student-suicide/

Lesson Plan

Introduction

Remember, emotion regulation is important for student outcomes, and the first step in being able to regulate emotions is being able to identify them. All emotions/feelings are valid. It's helpful for students to talk about their feelings with trusted adults. When any of our feelings get too big or too strong, we need to make sure we stay in control. It is helpful to (1) name the feeling, (2) take a deep breath, and (3) let it go. Remember, an individual who uses adaptive help-seeking must be able to implement fairly sophisticated procedures that are related to an ability to make decisions and use skills to carry out the request. These procedures can be impacted by social pressures and feelings that are too big or too much, so students can benefit from guidance regarding when their help-seeking is adaptive (necessary) or nonadaptive (dependent help-seeking or avoidance of help-seeking). They can also benefit from instruction about how to seek help in ways that are effective.

Knowledge Checklist

- What is involved in each step of the following response-modulation strategy: (1) name the feeling, (2) take a deep breath, and (3) let it go
    - Discuss when this strategy is appropriate to use and when more or different interventions may be needed
- What is the definition of stress, and what are the effects of stress and healthy responses to stress
- What is the decision process for adaptive help-seeking (i.e., do I need help? Whom should I ask for help? What exactly should I ask this person?)
- Where can students find help in your school/community

Materials Checklist

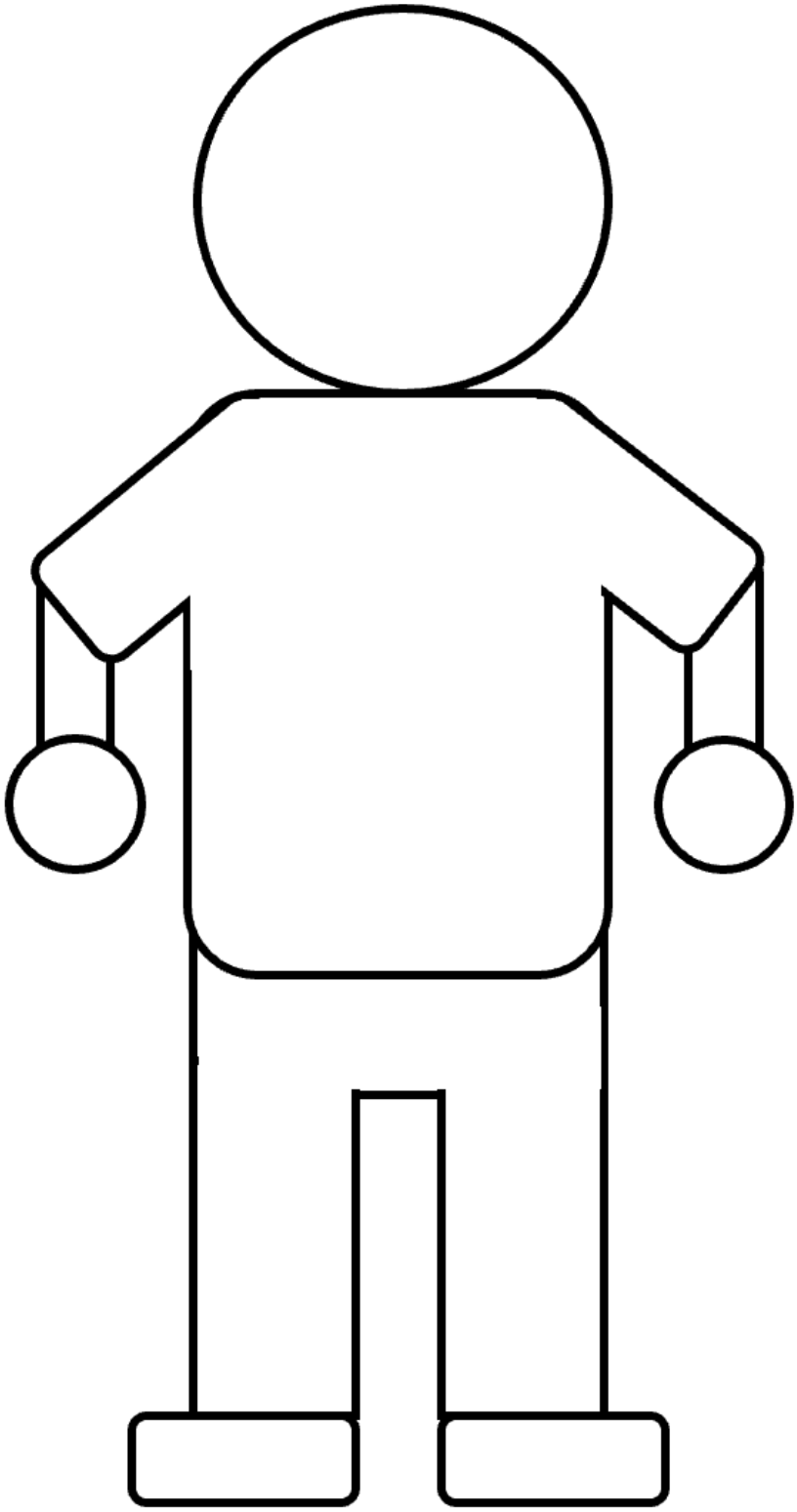
Middle School (6-8)

- Section 1: Body Outline handout
- Section 2: Deep Breathing handout OR Progressive Muscle Relaxation handout
- Section 3: Asking for Help Note handout (optional)
- Section 3: Space to write Asking for Help steps for later reference

High School (9-12)

- Section 1: Body Outline handout
- Section 2: Bee Breathing handout OR Relaxation in Under 5 Minutes handout
- Section 3: Asking for Help Note handout (optional)
- Section 3: Space to write Asking for Help steps for later reference

Student Handout: Body Outline



Student Handout: Deep Breathing

Background:

We can help our bodies and our minds calm down, focus, and respond constructively to stress by practicing deep, focused breathing. There are many reasons you might be distracted. Maybe you've just come from activities like gym, music, or lunch, and you are finding it hard to refocus. A hallway between classes that is crowded, chaotic, and loud can cause dysregulation. There are a range of activities you can use to help yourself calm down, center yourself, and become more focused and present. A few moments of silence or quiet journaling can give you a short break from your busy school day and can help the agitation in your body and brain diminish or stop. Another strategy we use is deep, focused breathing. This practice can reduce anxiety or excitement, increase focus, and help you manage stress. Deep breathing can be helpful in the moment when you are faced with a chaotic or challenging experience. But daily practice with deep, focused breathing can also prepare you to respond constructively and intentionally to chaos, stress, or anxiety.

Practice deep breathing every day by following these steps:

1. Place your hands on your belly and take several deep breaths.
2. Notice where in your body you feel your breath going in and out. Do you feel the air in your nose as it goes in and back out? Do you feel the air going further down into your body, causing your belly to rise and fall?
3. Start with 5-10 breaths on day 1. Slowly work your way up to a 2-minute practice. As time goes on, try to slow down and deepen your breaths. Find a pace that works for you.

Adapted From:

Van Woerkom, Marieke. (2018, May 2) *SEL tip: Teach deep breathing*. Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility. https://www.morningsidecenter.org/teachable-moment/lessons/sel-tip-teach-deep-breathing

Student Handout: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

1. Sit in your chair.

2. Put your feet flat on the floor. You can close your eyes or keep them open.

3. Think about the way your body feels in your chair. Do you feel tension in any parts of your body? This activity will help relax your muscles.

4. Curl your toes down. Tighter. Curl them as tight as you can. Now relax. While keeping your feet on the floor, lift your toes up. Further. Lift them as far as you can. Now relax.

5. Lift your feet off of the floor, and tuck them under your chair. Squeeze with your thighs. Squeeze more. Squeeze as much as you can. Now relax.

6. Squeeze the muscles in your belly. Now relax.

7. Pull your shoulders forwards. Now relax.

8. Squeeze your hand into a fist. Squeeze more. Squeeze as much as you can. Now relax.

9. Scrunch up your face. Tighter. Scrunch your face as tight as you can. Now relax.

10. Think about the way your body feels now. Do you still feel tension? If so, notice how different it feels from the parts of your body that are relaxed. Try to let go of any remaining tension by taking several slow, deep breaths.

Student Handout: Asking for Help

Date: _____

Dear _____ (teacher's name),

I am having difficulty with the following:

- ◊ Paying attention during class.
- ◊ Getting along with my group/classmates.
- ◊ Understanding classwork.
- ◊ Taking notes.
- ◊ Completing an assignment.
- ◊ Completing my homework.
- ◊ Studying for tests.
- ◊ Getting along with my group/classmates.
- ◊ Something else: _____

Can we please meet to discuss strategies to help me?

I can meet at this time: _____

or this time: _____

Sincerely,

_____(student's name)

Adapted From:

Alberta Government. (n.d.) *Asking for help note: Student tip sheet*.
https://www.learnalberta.ca/content/insp/html/student/askingforhelpnote.pdf

Student Handout: Bee Breathing

Background:

Bhramari Pranayama, also known as Humming Bee Breath, is a calming breathing practice that soothes the nervous system and helps to connect us with our truest inner nature. Bhramari is the Sanskrit word for "bee," and this breathing practice is so named because of the humming sound produced at the back of the throat during the practice—like the gentle humming of a bee.

Benefits:

- Calms and quiets the mind
- Releases cerebral tension
- Stimulates the pineal and pituitary glands, which supports their proper functioning
- Soothes the nerves
- Relieves stress and anxiety
- Dissipates anger
- Lowers blood pressure
- Bolsters the health of the throat
- Strengthens and improves the voice
- Supports the healing of bodily tissues
- Induces sound sleep

Contraindications:

- Bhramari should not be practiced by pregnant or menstruating women. It is also contraindicated for individuals who have extremely high blood pressure, epilepsy, chest pain, or an active ear infection. Bhramari should not be practiced in a supine position (lying down).

When to Practice:

- Bhramari (as with most pranayamas) is best practiced on an empty stomach. While it can be practiced at any time of day, bhramari is particularly potent in the early morning and late at night—when there are fewer distracting noises and our inner perception is most acute.

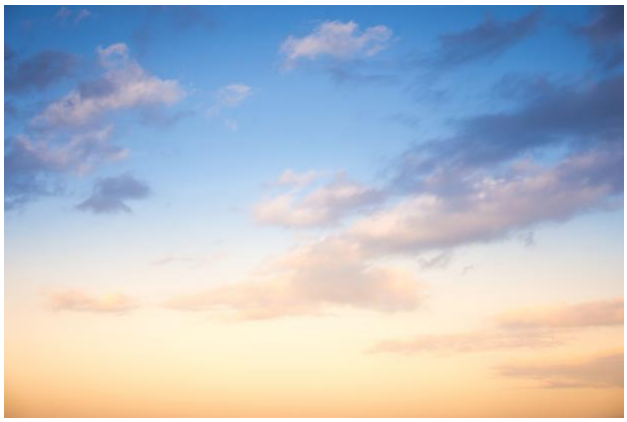
Bee Breathing Steps:

1. Choose a comfortable sitting position. If you are able, it is best to sit cross-legged on the floor with a cushion or blanket to elevate the hips comfortably. Alternatively, you may choose to sit toward the front of a chair with your feet flat on the floor.
2. Allow your spine to lengthen so your back, neck, and head are erect.
3. Gently close your lips and keep your teeth slightly apart. Bring the tip of your tongue to the space behind your upper front teeth.
4. Maintain this position of your mouth throughout the practice, and frequently check to ensure that your jaw remains relaxed.
5. Close each ear with your thumbs.
6. Place your index fingers at the midpoint of your forehead—just above the eyebrows—and reach the middle, ring, and pinky fingers across your eyes so the tips of these fingers press very gently against the bridge of your nose.
7. To begin, take a long, deep breath through your nostrils and bring the breath all the way into your belly. Drop your chin to your chest, begin to exhale slowly, and make a steady, low-pitched "hmmm" sound at the back of your throat—like the humming of a bee.
8. Focus on making the sound soft, smooth, and steady. The positioning of your tongue allows the vibration to resonate better throughout your head, which can affect the tissues of your brain.
9. Keep your body completely still and bring your awareness to the center of your head—to ajna chakra—let the sound fill your head and spread to the rest of your body. Merge with the sound, and allow the vibration to permeate your entire being. At the end of the exhalation, slowly straighten your neck as you inhale again through your nostrils to repeat the process.
10. Begin with seven repetitions. You may continue with seven repetitions, or you may add one repetition per week and slowly build up to a total of seventeen repetitions.
11. After the final exhalation, allow your breath to return to normal and observe any changes that have occurred. How do you feel physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually? What energetic shifts do you notice because of this practice? Where do you notice sensations in your body, and how is it different from when you started?
12. When you are ready, gently open your eyes and continue to direct some of your awareness within.
13. If it is morning, slowly stand and offer your full attention to the rest of your day; if it is evening, notice the vibrational calm that this practice has initiated in your body and try to maintain it as you prepare to retire for the night.

Adapted From:

Banyan Botanicals. (2023). *Bhramari pranayama.* https://www.banyanbotanicals.com/info/ayurvedic-living/living-ayurveda/yoga/bhramari-pranayama/

Student Handout: Relaxation in Under 5 Minutes



Background:

Below is a short, guided meditation script you can use for relaxation. Having a short, guided meditation script up your sleeve can be really helpful—whether it is to calm down when feeling worried or connect with yourself and slow down. Feel free to play with this script and add your own touches.

Steps:

1. Take a deep breath, and when you're comfortable, begin to close your eyes.
2. Take a moment to imagine yourself being more calm, peaceful and focused.
3. As you allow your unconscious mind to naturally conjure an image of what that would feel like, consider what you might be seeing and hearing and what you might be feeling that indicates you are more calm, peaceful, and focused.
4. Perhaps you are already feeling more calm, peaceful and focused. If not, notice that your unconscious mind can reveal how you might do this.
5. Think of a simple way to incorporate this feeling of calm into your life in the days and weeks ahead.
6. Know that it really can be this easy to create a little more peace and calm in your life.
7. Take a breath and begin to move your attention back to the room. Listen to the sounds around you, and begin to open your eyes.

Adapted From:

Elsey, Emma-Louise. (2022, November 1) *Relax your clients in under 5 minutes with these guided meditation scripts*. The Coaching Tools Company. https://www.thecoachingtoolscompany.com/de-stress-series-relax-clients-in-under-5-mins-guided-meditation-scripts/

Secondary Lesson Plan 1 Content

Student Learning Objectives

- Identify the difference between feelings and behaviors.
- Match feelings to responses in the body.
- List the three-step process of response modulation.

Secondary Lesson Plan 1.1: What is Stress?

Lead the class in a discussion about the differences between feelings and behaviors, and touch on the points in the table below. You may want to say,

> We're going to spend a little time talking about stress. First, let's define feelings and behavior. What is a feeling? What is a behavior? How do they compare?

Feelings	**Behaviors**
Feelings are mostly internal.	Behaviors are external.
Usually, how we feel is not a choice.	Usually, how we behave is a choice.
All feelings are OK.	Not all behaviors are OK.

> All feelings are OK to feel. However, not all behaviors are OK. We should talk about our feelings because doing so can help us feel better. The way our brains work is that when we can use words to say how we feel, saying these words can help us calm down and let some of the feeling go. Talking about our feelings can also help us feel closer to people we care about because we may understand each other better. Talking about feelings is a sign of strength. However, some people have a hard time sharing their feelings with others.
>
> - What are some reasons it may be hard to talk about your feelings?
> - How can sharing your feelings actually help you in those situations?

Allow students to respond.

> Thanks for sharing your responses.

Feelings Game

> You'll need a piece of paper and something to write with for this game. Write down as many feeling words as you can in 60 seconds. Ready… go! [Time 60 seconds]. Stop. Count how many words you have. Now, count how many words express each of the following core emotions: glad, sad, mad, and scared.

Discuss results and whether any of your students gleaned any insights from this game. For the next activity, tell students to pick one of the feelings from their list.

Using the Body Outline handout, ask the students to draw the feeling on the face. Then, ask them to think about a time when they felt that feeling and try to remember what they felt in their body. For example, a student feeling sad might have felt a lump in their throat. You can prompt specific sensations by asking about whether their breathing was fast or slow, whether they felt anything in their stomach, or whether some areas of their body felt tense or very tight. While there are individual differences in reactions, sharing what you commonly feel when experiencing different emotions can be helpful. Again, have students draw to reflect these sensations on the body outline.

On the side of the outline, you may opt to have students list related feeling words. You may also instruct students to draw a thought bubble and write down the thoughts that the body outline might be having while experiencing the feeling.

> Jonatan Martensson once said, "Feelings are much like waves; we cannot stop them from coming, but we can choose which one to surf." What does this quote mean to you?

Discuss the quote with students and talk about how feelings, like waves, can come in different speeds and intensities. T=Remember, we can't stop them, but we can try to choose how we respond to them (e.g., go over, swim through, get out of the water), and, if they get too big or strong for us to swim, we might need help.

> Remember that all feelings are OK to feel, even if some feelings don't always feel good. For example, it doesn't feel good to be frustrated. Still, feeling frustrated is a natural part of life. We might need help when any of these waves of feelings get tough because they are too big or too strong. How do we know if a feeling is too big or too strong?

After some discussion, summarize with the following:

> There are a lot of different ways we might be able to see, hear, or guess that a feeling is too big or too strong, but one key idea is that we might feel out of control. What does that mean? When a person is out of control of their feelings, they might feel unable to change anything or make the feeling go away. They might feel overwhelmed with a feeling in their body and be too hot or too jittery/jumpy or have a stomachache that keeps them from being able to think about what to do next. They might have a hard time remembering and following rules about which behaviors are OK and which are not OK.
>
> There are many ways that we can manage our feelings. We are going to cover just one strategy right now. It's a three-step process:
>
> 1. Name the feeling,
> 2. Take a deep breath, and
> 3. Let it go.
>
> Let's talk through each of these steps.

Name it. When we can use words to say how we feel, this action can help our brains calm down and let some of the feeling go. You might be able to name a feeling with just one word, or you might feel two things at the same time, like being scared AND excited to try something new. Next, name the feeling out loud to another person if that is OK for the situation or just to yourself.

Take a deep breath. Taking a deep breath helps for several reasons. This action helps us keep our bodies calm by making sure our heart rates don't get too fast and by sending oxygen to the brain, which helps us think more clearly and persevere through challenges. Taking a deep breath helps us pause and reflect on the feeling we have, what might have caused it, and whether we are being overly reactive. Focusing on our breath or something else around us gives us time to process our thoughts.

Let it go. Remember what it feels like to be calm, and check if there are any places in your body where you don't feel calm. Keep breathing, use muscle relaxation, get a drink of water, or do whatever else you need to let some of the feeling go. Wait to take action until the feeling is smaller, and you feel back "in control" of your behaviors.

Note, ensure students understand that letting go of a feeling is different from suppressing or "bottling it up," which is not a healthy strategy because we are taking the time to manage what it is we are feeling actively.

Secondary Lesson Plan 1.2: Emotion Regulation Techniques

This section will provide information about and practice with emotion-regulation techniques.

So, we have talked about feelings and examined one way to manage them when they are too big or too strong. Stress is one specific type of feeling. What do you think of when you think of stress?

Discuss prior knowledge of stress with students.

Stress comes from the **tension between a person's reaction to a challenge** and **their skills to handle the challenge**, which differs based on different factors, including **resources** that are available to them.

Stress can be *acute* or *chronic*.

- *Acute* stress results from short experiences that occur once or multiple times. One example of an acute stressor might be moving to a new place.
- *Chronic* stress is ongoing, such as a lifelong illness or caring for a family member who has health concerns.

While having stress involves challenges, that does not necessarily mean stress is bad. When could stress be good?

Discuss this idea with students. Examples might include stress that motivates you to study for an exam or practice before a big game, stress that helps your body respond in an emergency, and/or stress from making life changes, trying new things (i.e., leaving your comfort zone), or learning a new process, and these might involve making mistakes and failures before enjoying success.

> Stress is unavoidable and, in many cases, helps us develop as we learn to adapt and overcome challenges. However, when stress is too much or too big, it can be harmful to our health. Stress can increase our heart rate, pulse, blood pressure, muscle tension, and body temperature. It can decrease our blood vessel size and digestive action and make our breathing too shallow. While these symptoms are happening in your body, you might not notice the health effects. What are more visible signs that stress might be too big or too much?

Discuss with students. Potential responses include changes in mood, behavior, and/or physical appearance:

Emotional	**Physical**	**Mental**
- Overwhelmed - Nervous - Anxious - Worried - Frustrated - Unhappy/depressed - Uncomfortable - Freaking out - Out of control - Angry	- Trouble breathing - Trouble sleeping - Stomach aches - Dizziness - Eating more or less - Headaches - Acne - Aches and pains - Tension in muscles - Panic - Chest pains - Susceptibility to physical or mental illness	- Exaggerating things - Having bad thoughts - Having too much to think about - Can't make a decision - Overthinking - Negative thinking - Can't concentrate - Blanking out

> When we notice any of these changes in ourselves or others, we want to respond in healthy ways. Let's talk about four main methods we can use to manage stress.

> **Breathing and relaxation.** Deep breathing is one of the fastest ways to deal with stress in the moment, which is why it is step #2 in our *name the feeling-take a deep breath-let it go* process. You can utilize deep breathing at any time, but it is especially important when stress is starting to feel very bothersome as if you are getting to a seven or above on a 10-point stress scale. Other forms of relaxation might include practicing meditation, yoga, muscle relaxation, guided imagery, or other mindful activities.

Middle School: Choose between the following deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation exercises.

Deep Breathing: Pause here and do a deep breathing exercise. Introductory steps are included below, and the full Deep Breathing handout explains how to expand to a daily practice.

1. Invite students to place their hands on their abdomen and take several deep breaths. Model it as you practice your own deep belly breathing.
2. Invite students to simply notice where in their bodies they feel their breath going in and out. Do they feel the air in their nose as it goes in and back out? Do they feel the air going further down into their bodies, causing their belly to rise and fall?
3. Start with 5-10 breaths on day 1.
4. Check in with students to see what they thought about this exercise. There are no wrong answers.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation. Lead the class in a brief exercise (also available as a Progressive Muscle Relaxation handout) to help students notice tension in different parts of their bodies and practice intentional relaxation.

1. Notice your body in your chair, uncross your legs. You can close your eyes or keep them open. First, scrunch your toes – tight…tighter...tighter...relax. Bend your toes up toward your face – tight...tighter...tighter... relax.
2. Now, your calves, hold your lower legs up under your chair and let them down. Tighten your thighs and your bottom, and feel yourself rise up in your chair. Now, relax.
3. Tighten your abdominal muscles. Good job, now, relax them.
4. Pull your shoulders in toward each other…relax.
5. Scrunch your hands into a fist – tight…tighter…tighter…relax. Now, pull your hands in and cross them while scrunching your shoulders up toward your ears. Good job, now, relax.
6. Tighten your jaw. Relax. Scrunch up your face real tight – tight...tighter...tighter...relax.
7. Now, go back through your whole body and let go of any tension you might still feel in each body part. Notice the different feelings you may have in places that are still tight. Now, try to relax those muscles.

High School: Choose between the following bee breathing or body scan exercises.

Bee Breathing: Pause here and do a deep breathing exercise. Introductory steps are included below, and the full Bee Breathing handout provides additional information.

1. Sit toward the front of a chair, with your feet flat on the floor. Allow your spine to lengthen so that your back, neck, and head are erect. Gently close your lips, keep your teeth slightly apart, and bring the tip of your tongue to the space behind the upper front teeth. Maintain this position of your mouth throughout the practice, and frequently check to ensure that your jaw remains relaxed.
2. Then, close each ear with your thumbs, place your index fingers at the midpoint of your forehead—just above your eyebrows—and reach your middle, ring, and pinky fingers across your eyes so the tips of these fingers press very gently against the bridge of your nose. You may choose to close your eyes.
3. To begin, take a long, deep breath through your nostrils and bring the breath all the way into the belly. Drop your chin to your chest and begin to exhale slowly, making a steady, low-pitched 'hmmm' sound at the back of your throat—like the humming of a bee. Focus on making the sound soft, smooth, and steady.
4. At the end of the exhalation, slowly straighten your neck as you inhale again through your nostrils to repeat the process.
5. Repeat seven times.
6. After the final exhalation, allow your breath to return to normal and observe any changes that have occurred. How do you feel physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually? What energetic shifts do you notice as a result of this practice? Where do you notice sensations in your body, and how is it different from when you started? When you are ready, gently open your eyes.

Body Scan. Lead the class in a brief body scan using the Relaxation in Under 5 Minutes handout to help students notice tension in different parts of their bodies and practice intentional relaxation.

1. Get comfortable in your chair and relax. Take a deep breath and place your feet flat on the floor, really FEELING your feet in contact with the ground underneath you. Just take a few more deep breaths like this for a moment [pause].
2. Start by focusing on your toes. Scrunch them up, and then release. [pause]
3. Now, relax your ankles [pause], calf muscles [pause], knees [pause] and thigh muscles [pause]. Remember, let any thoughts you may have float up and away from you in an air bubble. [pause].
4. Now, relax your buttocks [pause] and pelvic area [pause], and begin to notice any tension you may have in your back. Breathe in deeply, and, as you breathe out, slowly relax and release any tension you may have in your back. [pause]
5. Now, your shoulders. Lift them up, and then release them completely. Wonderful. [pause]
6. Now it's time to relax your neck and jaw muscles. Take a deep breath in, and as you breathe out, let go of any tension you're holding in your neck and jaw [pause].

7. Finally, the top of your head [pause]. Hunch your shoulders up one last time, and as you release your shoulders, any remaining tension can sink down and flow out of you [pause].
8. Wonderful. Take a few more deep breaths, and enjoy this feeling of relaxation and calm for a little while longer. [longer pause about 1 minute]
9. [Softly] Hmmmmm. I'd like you to now slowly bring your attention back to the room. Begin noticing the sounds around you, and when you're ready, open your eyes [pause].
10. So, how do you feel?

Social support. Having the helpful support of friends, family members, and others who know you and your life circumstances is very important. Reach out to others who are good at helping when you are feeling stressed. This means they listen to you talk and encourage you to engage in healthy coping strategies. If stress is arising from your relationships, try practicing active listening (fully concentrate, understand, respond, and remember what is being said) and mindful communication (say what you really mean) to resolve conflicts or seek help from a mediator. If a friend or someone else is encouraging you to engage in unhealthy stress relievers like drinking or doing drugs, you should **not** turn to this person when you are stressed.

Hobbies and extra-curricular activities. Everyone should do at least one activity that brings them joy per day, even if you spend only a few minutes doing it. This activity should not require a lot of resources. For example, you might choose to read a book you enjoy, play a board game with friends, or sit outside and look at and hear nature. Being physically active at a comfortable level is especially effective for managing stress; try taking a walk where you focus on the feeling of your feet touching the ground.

Self-compassion. Having the ability to forgive yourself is important for stress levels. Notice when your thoughts are unhelpful, like when they are overly negative or exaggerated, and check the accuracy of that thought. If it's not something you would say to a friend, recognize that you may be unnecessarily harsh on yourself. Practicing a self-compassion meditation by repeating these words to yourself, "May I be happy. May I be well. May I be safe. May I be peaceful and at ease."

What are UNHEALTHY strategies for dealing with stress? Why are they unhealthy?

Discuss the following:

- Drugs or alcohol
- Unhealthy food
- Caffeine
- Smoking
- Venting without action
- Bottling up your emotions
- Physical violence
- Taking it out on others
- Not being able to say no

Secondary Lesson Plan 1.3: How to Get Help

Asking for help is a skill. The next section will examine several different ways to ask for help, but the major decisions in asking for help are all the same (Newman, 2008): the necessity, the target, and the content of the request.

When we think about asking for help, we should ask ourselves three questions:

4. Do I need help?
5. Whom should I ask for help?
6. What exactly should I ask this person to do?

Let's talk about each question and how to make that decision. The first question is, **"Do I need help?"** We might need help with information that we can't find, like a solution to a problem; help with feelings, like when they are too big or strong to manage; or help from an adult because someone is being hurt or we are concerned that a situation is not safe. Remember, consider whether we can try to solve the problem on our own. Ask yourself, "Have I tried other strategies that have worked in the past?"

If you decide you do need help, the second question is, **"Whom should I ask for help?"** There are some situations where you have to ask an adult for help, like when the situation isn't safe. Asking a trusted adult for help is also a good idea when you think they can provide the most useful help. Most of the time, though, we can ask another student for help. We might want to ask a friend for help if the task is something they are good at doing, if it can help you to be better friends, or if you need help right away and an adult is not there.

Lead the students in an activity to identify helpers in the school or community.

The third question is, **"What exactly should I ask this person?"** To ask for help in an effective way, clearly explain the kind of help you need. Try to do this in a calm and polite voice so the other person can hear everything you say.

Some students may find it difficult to talk through their requests clearly or calmly. Provide multiple ways for students to approach you if they need help. For example, you might want to create a template like the Asking for Help Note handout. At this point in the lesson, talk through other options students can use when they need to ask for help.

The remainder of this section is practice and conclusion. Because there were several steps listed in the process of asking for help, you should review these steps prior to or during skill practice. Write or draw them somewhere for students to reference.

4. Do I need help?
    i. Get information
    ii. Need support with feelings
    iii. Stop someone from being hurt
5. Whom should I ask for help?
6. What exactly should I ask this person?

> Let's practice the skills of asking for help. Who can give me an example of a time in school when you might need to ask for help?

Work through 3-5 examples provided by students. As they show increased capability with the steps, introduce examples of times when they would NOT need to ask for help and discuss. Continue discussing more examples until students seem comfortable.

> There are different ways to follow through on asking for help. If the problem is solved, thank the person for helping, and let them know how it turned out. If the problem is not solved, you may need to go back through the steps again. The next time, try changing parts of asking for help, like whom you choose to ask for help or what you ask that person to do.

Apply these changes to an example that was previously provided by a student.

As a summary activity, ask students to explain from beginning to end how to get help in the school setting. Provide immediate feedback on any corrections that need to be made to the procedures.

Lesson Supplements

Websites

- For Teens: A Personal Guide for Managing Stress: https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Building-Resilience/Pages/For-Teens-A-Personal-Guide-for-Managing-Stress.aspx
- Calm: https://www.calm.com/schools
- Teenline: https://teenlineonline.org/

Books

- *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson (Ages 10-14)
- *Stress 101: An Overview for Teens* by Margaret O. Hyde and Elizabeth H. Forsyth, M.D. (Ages 12-17)
- *Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds (Ages 12-17)
- *Anxiety Sucks! A Teen Survival Guide (Volume 1)* by Natasha Daniels (Ages 12-18)
- *The Anxiety Survival Guide for Teens: CBT Skills to Overcome Fear, Worry, and Panic* by Jennifer Shannon LMFT (Ages 13-17)
- *A Still Quiet Place for Teens: A Mindfulness Workbook to Ease Stress and Difficult Emotions* by Amy Saltzman MD (Ages 13-17)
- *Do Hard Things: A Teenage Rebellion Against Low Expectations* by Alex Harris, Brett Harris (Ages 13-17)
- *The Stress Reduction Workbook for Teens: Mindfulness Skills to Help You Deal with Stress* by Gina M. Biegel (Ages 13-18)

- *Get Out of Your Mind and Into Your Life for Teens: A Guide to Living an Extraordinary Life* by Joseph V. Ciarrochi, Louise Hayes, and Ann Bailey (Ages 13-18)
- *Mindfulness for Teen Anger: A Workbook to Overcome Anger and Aggression Using MBSR and DBT Skills* by Mark C. Purcell and Jason R. Murphy (Ages 13-18)
- *Mindfulness for Teen Anxiety: A Workbook for Overcoming Anxiety at Home, at School, and Everywhere Else by Christopher Willard* (Ages 13-18)
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas (Ages 14-17)
- *We Are Okay* by Nina LaCour (Ages 14-17)
- *Dumplin'* by Julie Murphy (Ages 14-17)
- *More Than We Can Tell* by Brigid Kemmerer (Ages 14-17)
- *Night* by Elie Wiesel (Ages 14-18)
- *What We Saw* by Aaron Hartzler (Ages 14-18)

Other Lesson Plans

- KidsHealth - Empathy (6-8): http://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/growing/empathy.pdf
- PBS - Managing Anger (9-12): http://www.pbs.org/inthemix/educators/lessons/schoolviol3/

Lesson Handouts

- Asking for Help Note handout
- Body Outline handout
- Bee Breathing handout
- Deep Breathing handout
- Relaxation in Under 5 Minutes handout
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation handout

Secondary Lesson 1 Fidelity Checklist

Implementer: Please complete after delivering the **Stress and Mood** lesson.

Component	Check if Yes	Check if No	Describe lesson modifications (e.g., deviations, additions)
Facilitator and implementer met to prepare for lesson delivery	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized additional resources to learn about the content	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Section 1.1 (What is Stress?) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 1.2 (Emotion Regulation Techniques) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 1.3 (How to Get Help) of the lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized extension opportunities	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	

Other notes:

Name of *facilitator*: _____

Name of *implementer:*_____

Implementation Guidance

Content Introduction

A chapter in the book Handbook of Drug Abuse Prevention by Gilbert Botvin and Kenneth Griffin provides the basis for this lesson plan. Broadly, drug-abuse prevention curricula in schools have moved away from information dissemination about the consequences of drug abuse, affective education (i.e., increasing self-esteem, responsible decision-making, and interpersonal growth), or a focus on alternatives to drug use due to the limited effectiveness of these approaches. The field has moved toward "prevention approaches that focus on psychosocial factors associated with drug use initiation and/or drug abuse. These approaches emphasize teaching *social resistance skills*, either alone or in combination with *generic personal and social skills*" (Botvin & Griffin, 2006, p. 69, emphasis added).

Botvin and Griffin explain that the focus of *social resistance skills* is to

- increase awareness of social influence to smoke, drink, or use drugs;
- develop skills for resisting substance-use influences;
- increase knowledge of immediate negative consequences; and
- establish nonsubstance-use norms.

Examples of the kind of *generic personal and social skills* typically included in this prevention approach follow:

- decision-making and problem-solving skills;
- cognitive skills for resisting interpersonal and media influences;
- skills for enhancing self-esteem (e.g., goal-setting and self-directed behavior-change techniques);
- adaptive coping strategies for dealing with stress and anxiety;
- general social skills (e.g., complimenting, conversational skills, skills for forming new friendships); and
- general assertiveness skills.

Inclusion of all of these strategies is beyond the scope of the Modular SEL Lesson Plans. The evidence-based strategies that we will utilize include establishing nonsubstance-use norms, increasing knowledge of immediate negative consequences, and practicing adaptive coping strategies for dealing with stress and anxiety. In addition, the content on substances will follow a developmental progression as specified by Botvin and Griffin (2006).

For the second Secondary Modular SEL Lesson Plan, "Alcohol, Drugs, and Risks," the content will focus on alcohol, drugs, and risks and will include more in-depth information on substance use

and mental health and a discussion on how to get help when adolescents may be struggling with any of these issues. Opportunities for modeling and practice are built into the lesson plan, and continued practice through extension opportunities and lesson supplements are recommended. In addition, it is recommended that schools review the list of social-resistance skills and generic personal and social skills and compare these to current skills that are taught through other schoolwide initiatives such as positive behavior support, character education, and/or socioemotional learning initiatives to determine whether current efforts can be integrated to support student development and substance-use prevention more comprehensively.

Further Content Resources

Botvin, G. J., & Griffin, K. W. (2006). Drug abuse prevention curricula in schools. In *Handbook of drug abuse prevention* (pp. 45-74). Springer. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226070760_Drug_Abuse_Prevention_Curricula_in_Schools

National Institute on Drug Abuse (2017). *Monitoring the Future 2017 Survey Results.* https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/infographics/monitoring-future-2017-survey-results

Content Delivery

This lesson can be delivered in three 10-minute sessions or one 30- to 35-minute lesson. The subsections of this lesson plan follow:

1. Introduction to Alcohol, Drugs, and Risks
2. Substance Use and Mental Health
3. How to Get Help

Extension Opportunities

- Incorporate suggestions from "Alcohol, Drugs, and Risks" into PBIS, SEL, or other behavior programming (e.g., teaching of other social resistance skills and generic personal and social skills).
- Create structured opportunities for students to seek or provide help to others, such as through student groups or volunteering.
- Utilize teaching guides from NIDA, such as using blog posts during classroom activities: https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/parents-educators
- Post visible signs with procedures for finding help throughout a school.

School Procedures

Before beginning the lesson, clarify the point of contact (e.g., the school counselor) to whom you may refer a student(s) if you have any concerns for your student(s). Recognize that substance use can be a painful topic if students or school personnel have currently or previously had a loved one struggle with addiction, and other emotional support may need to be provided for students who are affected.

The third section of this lesson plan requires the following information to be gathered **ahead of time**:

- School contact(s) for referrals about substance-use issues (name, title, and how to contact)
- Community-based resources for treatment (organization names and contact information)
- Hotlines for confidential help during a crisis (phone numbers and/or other ways to contact within your area)

This information should be ready to share with students in a usable format.

For a brief, 10- to 15-minute training that provides evidence-informed guidance to schools for preventing and responding to substance use by students, please see the training below:

https://learning.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/school-resources/modules/students-with-substance-use-disorder/#/lessons/5uX6q2hhw1D_yw-QWJddkE8Cl2tWt1_L

Lesson Plan

Introduction

Remember, the drug abuse prevention you might have received in school is not the drug abuse prevention of the current literature. Current literature has moved away from providing information, ideas for alternatives, and affective education or using fear-based strategies. Understanding the brain science behind substance use and teaching social resistance skills, alone or in combination with generic personal and social skills, are the main components of drug abuse prevention today. This lesson plan aims to prevent substance use by establishing nonsubstance-use norms, increasing knowledge of immediate negative consequences, and practicing adaptive coping strategies for dealing with stress and anxiety. The content on substances should follow a developmental progression based on how drug use typically occurs at different ages.

Knowledge Checklist

- Consider the general results from the most recent Monitoring the Future survey
- Understand why people take risks or use substances
- Consider recommendations for healthier coping strategies
- Know where to locate school- and community-based resources for substance-use issues

Materials Checklist

Middle School (6-8)

- Section 1: Monitoring the Future Survey Results
    - Focus on 8th grader's use of cigarettes, e-vaporizers, alcohol, and marijuana
- Section 2: Student computers and internet access
- Section 2: Student computers and internet access
- Section 3: School-specific resource form

High School (9-12)

- Section 1: Monitoring the Future Survey Results
    - Focus on 10th and 12th graders' use of cigarettes, e-vaporizers, alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs (e.g., prescription/over-the-counter drugs, illicit drugs like cocaine or heroin)
- Section 2: Student computers and internet access
- Section 2: Student computers and internet access
- Section 3: School-specific resource form

Secondary Lesson Plan 2 Content

Student Learning Objectives

- Describe negative consequences of risky behaviors.
- Identify healthy methods for managing stress.
- Review the decision-making process for asking for help.

Secondary Lesson 2.1: Introduction to Alcohol, Drugs, and Risks

This section will cover prevalence of alcohol and drug use and the realities of risk-taking. For the first activity, students may write their guesses for each as percentages on a piece of paper that they keep to themselves. Tell students to compare the number(s) they guessed with the correct statistical information they will be provided from the Monitoring the Future (MTF) 2017 Survey Results.

Middle School (6-8):
Ask students to estimate how many teenagers around their age smoke cigarettes, how many use e-vaporizers, how many binge drink alcohol, and how many smoke marijuana.

High School (9-12):
Ask students to estimate how many teenagers around their age smoke cigarettes, how many use e-vaporizers, how many binge drink alcohol, and how many use different kinds of drugs (e.g., prescription/over-the-counter drugs and illicit drugs like marijuana, cocaine, or heroin).

After students write their guesses, introduce the MTF survey:

> Monitoring the Future is an annual survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders that is conducted by researchers at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Since 1975, the survey has measured how teens report their drug and alcohol use and related attitudes in 12th graders nationwide; 8th and 10th graders were added to the survey in 1991.

See the most recent Monitoring the Future Survey Results. These results are updated annually during December of the survey year. Review the infographics in video or picture form with your students: https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/infographics/monitoring-future-2017-survey-results

Point out where your students should make their comparisons. For example, middle school students who guessed that 20% of teenagers their age binge drink would compare this response to the correct statistic: in 2023, 2% of 8th graders binge drank. *Note, although the information may be available, it is not recommended for Middle School teachers to focus on the use of depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, or other dependency-producing drugs now unless the use of these drugs is brought up in discussion.*

We know teens and young adults take risks, and risk-taking can be good or bad. Risk-taking involves a release of the chemical dopamine into certain pathways in your brain, which feels good and becomes associated with whatever activity you just did. For example, think about when you get a lot of "likes" on an Instagram post and how it feels in your brain to see a new notification. When activities like this make us feel good, we are more likely to repeat them. When does this become a problem?

- When the activity is life-threatening or dangerous
- When our brains want us to repeat something so much that we can't control it—that situation is an addiction

The brain's circuit for risk-taking and other reward behaviors is particularly sensitive during the teen years; therefore, wanting to take risks can outweigh the knowledge teens have about risks and negative consequences, especially when they are with their peers.

Let's review some of the risks and negative consequences.

Use the instructions to complete a jigsaw classroom activity on the risks and negative consequences of drugs and alcohol. If internet access is available for all students, they should navigate to https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/publications/research-reports

1. Divide students into 5- or 6-person jigsaw groups.
2. Appoint one student from each group as the leader (preferably the most mature student in the group).
3. Assign one student from each group a category of drugs to research and use the following list of categories. The NIDA website provides additional categories as well. Use judgment about the developmental and regional appropriateness of different categories.
    i. **Alcohol**
    ii. **Tobacco, Nicotine, & E-Cigarettes**
    iii. **Marijuana**
    iv. **Spice**
    v. **Prescription Drugs (general category)**
4. Tell students they are to focus on how the substance affects the brain and/or body and what the risks/negative consequences of using the substance are. Give students time to read over their category at least twice and become familiar with it.
5. Form temporary "expert groups" by having one student from each jigsaw group join other students assigned to the same segment.
6. Give students in these expert groups time to discuss the main points of their segment and to rehearse the presentations they will make to their jigsaw group.
7. Bring the students back into their jigsaw groups.
8. Ask each student to present their segment to the group. Encourage others in the group to ask questions for clarification.
9. Float from group to group and observe the process. If any group is having trouble (e.g., a member is dominating or disruptive), make an appropriate intervention or instruct the group leader on how to intervene.

Secondary Lesson Plan 2.2: Substance Use and Mental Health

This section will delve more deeply into substance use and mental health. The main takeaway for your students is people often use substances to avoid other emotions or to try to feel something; however, in reality, the substance use will compound whatever problems individuals are having and will make symptoms of mental health problems worse.

> Why do teens drink or use drugs? They may want to experience new things or feel something, they may feel pressured by peers, or they may be looking for a way to avoid certain emotions or cope with stress or other problems. However, substance use will only make any problems a person has worse—never better.
>
> What were the four main ways we talked about managing stress in the last lesson?

Let students respond, and ensure the following ways are named:

- Breathing/ relaxation
- Positive social support
- Self-compassion
- Hobbies and extra-curricular activities

> A key idea for any of these or other activities you engage in is to make sure you spend some time every day doing something you find **meaningful** to help you deal with stress and anxiety. The activities could be helping others, learning skills, taking on leadership roles or pursuing artistic endeavors. Let's do a think-pair-share: what are some activities that you find meaningful and why?

Allow students to think about the question, talk about it with a neighbor (if they choose), and then share with the larger group (if they choose). Reflect on themes that you notice as different students respond.

> Sometimes, there are reasons why it can be hard for people to engage in these types of coping skills, or the coping skills are not enough to address the problems. For example, when people are dealing with mental health issues, which include emotional, psychological, and social well-being, this situation can affect how that person will think, feel, and act. Problems with drugs and mental health often happen together.

Students should explore https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/mental-health-substance-use-co-occurring-disorders. When students are done reading, discuss the content by asking the questions below.

Discussion Questions

- What information did you find that you didn't know before?
- Does this information change your views? If so, how?
- How might the information be useful to you?
- If there was one concept you would want others to understand, based on what you've learned, what would it be?
- What are some of the risks involved in doing drugs? Do you think about these risks? Why or why not?
- Discuss what happens when an illegal drug becomes legal. Who benefits from the use of legal drugs? Who suffers? Why?
- How does media play a role in drug use and addiction? Consider all types of media, including television and movies, social media, and advertisements.

Secondary Lesson Plan 2.3: How to Get Help

This section begins with a reflection on the "asking for help" process and where substance use fits within this framework.

> The web page that we read ends by providing resources for where to find help if you think that you or someone you know may have a drug or other mental health problem. But first, we need to decide if it might be a problem. Remember our decision-making process for asking for help?

Refer to the anchor chart made in an earlier lesson:

1. Do I need help?
    i. Get information
    ii. Need support with feelings
    iii. Stop someone from being hurt
2. Whom should I ask for help?
3. What exactly should I ask this person?

> Using drugs falls under the category of needing help to *stop someone from being hurt*. We already talked about the risks and negative consequences of drug use, which can involve having short- and long-term serious physical and mental health problems, being hurt in an accident, or experiencing trouble with the law. These consequences are likely to happen when a person is (1) **not in control of their behavior** after using a substance or is (2) **not in control of whether they use the substance**. In either of these cases, drug use would be a problem. Let's think through what these two instances mean and what they would look like.

In the first instance, when someone is **not in control of their behavior** in the short term after using a substance, the parts of the brain that control thinking and decision-making are temporarily impaired. Concentration and memory may also be affected while the substance is active in a person's system. What this means is there is a higher likelihood of the person engaging in risky behavior because the parts of the brain that usually warn a person to make good decisions are not working how they usually do. So, for example, someone who usually wouldn't get into a car with a driver who has been drinking might not be able to enforce their good decision-making skills after a few drinks themselves. In other words, they are **not in control of their behavior** and **might get hurt**, so they need help.

For the second instance, we need to learn a little more about addiction. NIDA defines addiction as

> "a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences. It is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain—they change its structure and how it works. These brain changes can be long-lasting and can lead to the harmful behaviors seen in people who abuse drugs." (NIDA, n.d.)

Further,

> "The initial decision to take drugs is typically voluntary. However, with continued use, a person's ability to exert self-control can become seriously impaired; this impairment in self-control is the hallmark of addiction. Brain imaging studies of people with addiction show physical changes in areas of the brain that are critical to judgment, decision-making, learning and memory, and behavior control. Scientists believe that these changes alter the way the brain works and may help explain the compulsive and destructive behaviors of addiction."

So, what does this mean? Not only are there short-term changes right after taking a substance and while it is in a person's system, but a person's continued use of the substance can actually change a person's brain. Sometimes, this means that a person becomes addicted to substances.

Let's review some tips from NIDA for what to do when you think a friend's substance use might be out of control.

> **Listen.** If they talk to you, just be there for them. Admitting you have or may have a problem—never mind talking to someone about it—is really hard. Listen to what they say about their drug use without making judgments.
>
> **Encourage.** Suggest that your friend talks to an adult they trust—a coach, a teacher, a school counselor, a relative, or a doctor.

Share. Maybe your friend doesn't see their drug use as a bad habit or activity. Show them the NIDA website because this website contains a lot of real scientific information about what drugs can do to a person's body and mind. After your friend understands how drugs can affect their brain, body, and life, they may realize their drug use is severely detrimental to them and those around them.

Inform. When they are ready to make a change and seek treatment, help them find a doctor, therapist, support group, or treatment program. You can use SAMHSA's Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator or call 1–800–662–HELP.

Support. Don't give up on your friend even if they aren't ready to get help. Keep reaching out. Encourage them to get treatment and support them along the way—that's the best way to help someone you care about who is struggling with addiction.

Turn to an adult for immediate help if the problem looks to be too big for you to handle alone or if you're worried your friend may have suicidal thoughts.

The remainder of the lesson plan will focus on school- and community-based supports and this information will be followed by a lesson on role-playing for how students can ask for help for themselves or a friend. Use the school- and community-based resource lists compiled prior to the lesson to fill in the blanks for your specific area.

The last part of today's lesson on alcohol, drugs, and risks is to practice the skills of asking for help for yourself or a friend when substance use is determined to be a problem. We'll talk about who, what, and how you should ask.

When I need help with a drug problem, whom should I ask? It's okay to ask friends for their support, understanding, and listening ears, but recognize that asking a friend to keep your drug problem a secret when you are not getting other help or treatment is unfair to your friend. They will likely be worried about your health and safety and might need to tell a trusted adult, even if that would affect your friendship.

Telling a trusted adult might be scary, but it is the best way to stay safe. A trusted adult is someone who is available, caring, and listens to concerns about safety. This adult should be sensitive about your privacy but may not be able to keep what you say confidential if you are harming yourself with substances. There are adults in our school and community who have training in working with students who are dealing with addiction. These people are (*fill in name and title*):

_____

_____

_____

_____

What exactly should I ask this person, and how? You should explain that you are talking to a trusted adult because you are using substances and need help. They will ask questions about what substances you use, how often, and other risky behaviors you might be engaging in. It's okay to ask what that adult will keep private and what information they have to share (mandated), and with whom. To talk to this person (*fill in procedure for self-referral or finding the contact people*):

_____

_____

_____

_____

The procedures are the same for asking for help from a friend. However, you might be thinking about what the consequences of getting help would be for your friendship.

If a friend agrees that they need help, you can support them by offering to go with them to talk with a trusted adult.

If a friend does not agree that they might need help, you'll have to decide whether to tell your friend that you are getting help from an adult or to tell the adult without warning your friend. In most situations, it's best to tell your friend—even if they will be mad—because you will be more likely to keep their trust over time.

Sometimes, our friends won't appreciate advice they don't want to hear—especially if they're using drugs—but telling the truth to help someone close to you is part of being a real friend, even when that is hard to do.

If you or your friend do not/doesn't feel comfortable talking to a trusted adult but are ready to seek help, then you can check out treatment resources in your community(*fill in local treatment organization names and contact information*):

_____

_____

_____

_____

If you or your friend are in crisis, then they (or you) can call a hotline to talk confidentially to a professional who can help (fill in if US-based: 1-800-273-TALK)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Lesson Supplements

Apps

- Character Playbook (Grade 6+): https://www.commonsense.org/education/website/character-playbook

Websites

- Rice University - The Reconstructors: http://webadventures.rice.edu/stu/Games/Reconstructors/_601/Game-Overview.html
- University of Utah - Mouse Party: http://learn.genetics.utah.edu/content/addiction/mouse/
- NIDA: https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/parents-educators
- Partnership to End Addiction: https://drugfree.org/

Books

- *Bird* by Zetta Elliot (Ages 8-12)
- *The Beast* by Walter Dean Myers (Ages 12-14)
- *Living with Substance Addiction* by Melissa Higgins (Ages 12-17)
- *True Confessions* by John Diconsiglio (Ages 12-17)
- *The White Horse* by Cynthia D. Grant (Ages 12-17)
- *Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous (Ages 12-17)
- *That Was Then, This Is Now* by S. E. Hinton (Ages 12-17)
- *Recovery Road* by Blake Nelson (Ages 12-18)
- *Tears of a Tiger* by Sharon M. Draper (Ages 12-18)
- *Pure Sunshine* by Brian James (Ages 12-18)
- *Far from You* by Tess Sharpe (Ages 13-17)
- *Drug Abuse* by Katie Marsico (Ages 13-17)
- *Addiction* by Wyatt S. Schaefer (Ages 13-17)
- *Alcohol Information for Teens* by Joyce Brennfleck Shannon (Ages 13-17)
- *Alcoholism* by Justin Karr (Ages 13-17)
- *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers (Ages 13-17)
- *Last Night I Sang to the Monster* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz (Ages 14-17)
- *The Spectacular Now* by Tim Tharp (Ages 14-17)
- *Clean* by Amy Reed (Ages 14-17)
- *On the Rocks* by David Aretha (Ages 14-17)
- *A Hero Ain't Nothin' but a Sandwich* by Alice Childress (Ages 14-17)
- *White Lines* by Jennifer Banash (Ages 14-18)
- *The Game* by Teresa Toten (Ages 14-18)
- *Crosses* by Shelley Stoehr (Ages 14-18)
- *Smack* by Melvin Burgess (Ages 14-18)
- *Angel Dust Blues* by Todd Strasser (Ages 14-18)

Other Lesson Plans

- KidsHealth – Alcohol (Grades 6-8): https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/drugs/alcohol.pdf
- KidsHealth – Drugs (Grades 6-8): https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/drugs/drugs.pdf
- KidsHealth – Smoking (Grades 6-8): https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/drugs/smoking.pdf
- KidsHealth – Alcohol (Grades 9-12): https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/drugs/alcohol.pdf
- KidsHealth – Drugs (Grades 9-12): https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/drugs/drugs.pdf

- KidsHealth – Smoking (Grades 9-12): https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/drugs/smoking.pdf
- NIH Lesson Plan and Activity Finder: https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/parents-educators/lesson-plans-and-activities

Secondary Lesson 2 Fidelity Checklist

Implementer: Please complete after delivering the **Alcohol, Drugs, and Risks** lesson.

Component	Check if Yes	Check if No	Describe lesson modifications (e.g., deviations, additions)
Facilitator and implementer met to prepare for lesson delivery	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized additional resources to learn about the content	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Section 2.1 (Introduction to Alcohol, Drugs, and Risks) of lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 2.2 (Substance Use and Mental Health) of lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 2.3 (How to Get Help) of lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized extension opportunities	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	

Other notes:

Name of *facilitator:* _____

Name of *implementer:* _____

Implementation Guidance

Content Introduction

Study results released by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) indicate that suicide rates increased by 37.5% between 2000- and 2021. Importantly, more than half of the people who died by suicide did not have a known mental health condition. Issues identified to contribute to the risk for suicide included relationship problems or loss, substance misuse, physical health problems, and job, money, legal, or housing stress. While these circumstances can be unavoidable, the results of the CDC's study emphasize the importance of responding to signs of distress as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, students do not always share feelings of distress with adults. They are more likely to share this information with their peers. Therefore, the goals of this lesson plan are two-fold:

- First, help secondary students better recognize distress in their peers and identify positive coping skills and the need for adult intervention.
- Second, demonstrate an open and caring classroom environment where students may feel more comfortable approaching adults for support.

Peer support and school connectedness are protective factors that can lessen the effects of risk factors (NASP, 2015).

When warning signs are recognized, the following information from NASP provides guidance on how to respond:

> Youth who feel suicidal are not likely to seek help directly; however, parents, school personnel, and peers can recognize the warning signs and take immediate action to keep the youth safe. When a youth gives signs that they may be considering suicide, the following actions should be taken:
>
> - Remain calm.
> - Ask the youth directly if he or she is thinking about suicide (e.g., "Are you thinking of suicide?").
> - Focus on your concern for their well-being and avoid being accusatory.
> - Listen.
> - Reassure them that there is help and they will not feel like this forever.
> - Do not judge.
> - Provide constant supervision. Do not leave the youth alone.
> - Remove means for self-harm.

- ***Get help***: No one should ever agree to keep a youth's suicidal thoughts a secret, and they **must** tell an appropriate caregiving adult, such as a parent, teacher, or school psychologist. Parents should seek help from school or community mental health resources immediately. School staff should take the student to a school-employed mental health professional or administrator.

The last point is a major message embedded throughout this lesson: school personnel and students should **never ignore or keep information a secret.** Easy access to effective medical and mental health resources is another protective factor against suicide risk. Ensuring students know how to reach mental health support in schools **and** ensuring that school mental health providers are made aware of concerns are necessary components of this protective factor.

For the third Secondary Lesson Plan, "Dealing with Distress," the content will focus on identifying distress, coping strategies, and how to get help when concerned about oneself or a friend. Opportunities for modeling and practice are built into the lesson plan, and continued practice through extension opportunities and lesson supplements are recommended.

Further Content Resources

CDC. (2018). *Suicide data and statistics.* https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/suicide-data-statistics.html
NASP. (2015). *Preventing youth suicide.* http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/preventing-youth-suicide

Content Delivery

This lesson can be delivered in three 10-minute sessions or one 30- to 35-minute lesson. The subsections of this lesson plan are:

1. Stress vs. Distress
2. Strength-Based Skills for Coping
3. How to Get Help

Extension Opportunities

- Incorporate suggestions from "Dealing with Distress" into PBIS, SEL, or other behavior programming (e.g., reaching out to trusted adults for help).
- Create structured opportunities for students to seek or provide help to others, such as through student groups or volunteering.
- Create additional opportunities for students to engage in projects related to mental health.
- Post visible signs with procedures for finding help throughout a school.
- Utilize resources from reputable suicide-prevention organizations, such as the Suicide Prevention Research Center.

School Procedures

Key feelings to look for during discussions include feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, or depression and mood swings.

Before beginning the lesson, clarify the point of contact (e.g., the school counselor) to whom you may refer a student(s) if you have any concerns for your student(s). **Be sure to notify this contact before conducting this lesson with your class so you can communicate regarding their availability to see students.**

Touch base on general suicide-prevention materials to hand out to students.

Lesson Plan

Introduction

Remember, all emotions/feelings are valid. It's important to practice healthy coping skills and stay aware of signs of distress for yourself and for others. When you notice signs of distress, follow the CLUES framework: Connect, Listen, Understand, Express concern, and Seek help. An individual who uses adaptive help-seeking must be able to implement fairly sophisticated procedures that are related to an ability to make decisions and use skills to carry out the request, and these procedures can be complicated by social concerns around friendship and privacy. Students benefit from instruction about how to seek help in ways that are effective and safe.

Knowledge Checklist

- Understand the difference between tolerable stress and distress, including warning signs
- Understand and use the CLUES steps (Connect, Listen, Understand, Express concern, and Seek help) so you can support a friend in distress
- Realize common thinking traps and know how to challenge them
- Inform students about where they can find help in your school/community

Materials Checklist

- Section 1: Student computers and internet access
- Section 1: Suicide Prevention Lifeline Wallet Card OR other school-selected resource
- Section 3: Suicide Prevention Lifeline Wallet Card OR other school-selected resource
- Section 3: Student computers and internet access

Lesson Plan Content

Student Learning Objectives

- Review the three-step process of response modulation.
- Identify suicidal warning signs.
- List the CLUES action steps to help someone in distress.
- Review the decision-making process for asking for help.

Secondary Lesson Plan 3.1: Stress vs. Distress

This section begins with a review of feelings/stress and then addresses the differences between stress and distress.

> Think about when we talked about feelings. Remember, all feelings are OK to feel—even if they don't always feel good. For example, no one likes to feel frustrated, but feeling frustrated is a natural part of life and may come in waves of feeling more positive or more negative or more or less intense. When a feeling is too big or too strong, we might feel out of control, like we might feel unable to change anything or make the feeling go away. Sometimes, we need help dealing with those big or strong emotions.
>
> We talked about one way to manage our feelings with a three-step process:
> 1. Name the feeling,
> 2. Take a deep breath, and
> 3. Let it go.
>
> We have also talked about stress. Stress comes from the **tension between a person's reaction to a challenge and their skills to handle the challenge**, which differs based on the situation, like what resources are available to help them. Remember, stress can be *acute* (short term) or *chronic* (long term). Stress can even be helpful for our motivation if it is not overwhelming. What are some of the healthy ways we have talked about for dealing with the tough or strong feelings that can come with stress?

Cover the following:

- Breathing and relaxation
- Social support
- Hobbies and extra-curricular activities
- Self-compassion

> What are UNHEALTHY coping strategies for dealing with stress? Why are they unhealthy?

Discuss the following, and note that these strategies avoid but do not solve the problem:

- Drugs or alcohol
- Unhealthy food
- Caffeine
- Smoking
- Venting without action
- Bottling up your emotions
- Physical violence
- Taking it out on others
- Not being able to say no

Discuss unhealthy ways to react to problems:

Showing aggression and anger gets attention. Striking out at whoever seems responsible for the problem can bring temporary relief. However, aggressive actions, like drinking too much, driving recklessly, swearing at people, and breaking things, can cause trouble in the long run. They do not usually solve the problem.

Withdrawal can also be destructive. It's normal to react, "Just leave me alone!" But if it goes on for a long time, we are without what we need most—sharing, understanding, and help. When we are alone with a problem, we may feel like no one cares. The depression and anger could become worse, and we begin to make bad choices instead of healthy ones.

Discuss the warning signs of distress:

Be aware of real trouble signs. Any one of these signs exhibited alone and lasting only a short time is normal. However, if you know a friend who has several of these problems and they last more than a couple of weeks, your friend may be nearing a crisis. They need help. The warning signs can include the following:

- avoiding friends, activities, school, social events
- totally unable to think of anything but the problem
- unexpected outbursts of anger or crying
- unable to sleep; always feeling exhausted, irritated
- unable to eat or eating and vomiting
- escaping by sleeping or daydreaming all the time
- severe behavior change, such as a quiet person becomes wild or active
- person becoming withdrawn
- excessive use of drugs or alcohol

There are four other signals that should be taken particularly seriously because they are suicide danger signals:

- Threats or talk of killing themselves
- Preparing for death - giving away prized possessions, making a will, writing farewell letters, gathering pills, or saying good-bye
- Talking like there is no hope even in the future
- Acting or talking like not a single person cares; completely giving up on themselves and others

When we notice any of these changes in others or ourselves, we want to respond in helpful ways: start by listening and stay healthy.

Students should review the thinking trap cards at https://www.madison-schools.com/cms/lib/MS01001041/Centricity/Domain/5344/Culprit%20Cards.pdf. If time allows, students can follow the directions to create the cards. When students are ready, discuss the content by following the directions below.

When you listen carefully to someone who is in distress, you might realize that you or the other person perceives the main problem in different ways. You might even notice that when an individual is in distress, they can have "heat-of-the-moment" thoughts that are unhelpful or inaccurate. This is important to understand because thoughts, feelings, and behavior go together, so if someone keeps having unhelpful or inaccurate thoughts, this situation will affect how they feel and behave. So, we need to become more *aware* of thoughts and how ways of thinking might cause distress, so we can then utilize positive thinking. We want to become more aware of "thinking traps," which are overly rigid patterns in thinking that can cause us to miss critical information about a situation or individual. Let's review six thinking traps and consider how to respond to or change those patterns of thinking.

THINKING TRAP	DEFINITION	CRITICAL QUESTIONS
1. JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS	Believing that you are certain about a situation despite little or no evidence to support your thoughts.	**Slow down** - What is the evidence?
2. MIND READING	Assuming that you know what another person is thinking or expecting another person to know what you are thinking.	**Speak up** - Did I express myself? Did I ask for information?
3. ME, ME, ME	Believing that you are the sole cause of every problem you encounter.	**Look outward** - How did others and/or circumstances contribute to your problem?
4. THEM, THEM, THEM	Believing that other people or circumstances are the sole cause of every problem you encounter.	**Look inward** - How did I contribute to my problem?
5. ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS	Believing that negative events are unchangeable and that you have little or no control over them.	**Grab control** - What's changeable? What can I control?
6. EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING	Believing that you can judge one's worth/character based on a single event or believing that what caused the problem is going to negatively affect many areas of one's life.	**Get specific** - What is the specific behavior that explains the situation? What specific area of my life will be affected?

Next, you'll go through examples of each thinking trap. Return to the definitions above, if necessary, to explain why an example falls under a specific thinking trap.

> Let's practice identifying these thinking traps using a scenario. Imagine that you heard about an argument between a peer who is in a school club with you and their friend, and the argument escalated into a big drama within their friend group.
>
> I'm going to read an example thinking trap that your friend might have, and then we will talk through which of the six thinking trap categories this example falls under, and we will consider how to address the thinking trap.

EXAMPLE THOUGHT	THINKING TRAP	HOW TO HELP ADDRESS IT
"I'M A JERK; I LET MY FRIENDS DOWN."	3. Me, Me, Me	**Look outward** – Question how the friends and/or circumstances contributed.
"I ALWAYS SCREW UP WITH MY FRIENDS."	5. Always, Always, Always	**Grab control** – Recognize that a person can control their behavior even if they can't always control the outcome.
"EVERYONE IN SCHOOL IS ON THEIR SIDE."	2. Mind Reading	**Speak up** – Point out that this is an assumption if they haven't asked others.
"I'LL NEVER HAVE FRIENDS AGAIN."	1. Jumping to Conclusions	**Slow down** – Remind them that they have made up after fights or made new friends many times before.
"EVERYONE HERE IS SO SENSITIVE."	4. Them, Them, Them	**Look inward** – Gently challenge the person to see how their actions played a role in the argument.
"THEY JUST WANT TO BE POPULAR AND DON'T CARE ABOUT MY FEELINGS."	6. Everything, Everything, Everything	**Get specific** – Concentrate on specific contributions to the problem, not generalizations.

> More broadly, you can ask yourself or others the following questions to restructure thoughts:
>
> - Are there other ways to think about this situation? Am I missing something?
> - How might other people see and deal with this situation?
> - What would I tell a friend who was in the same situation?
> - How can I grow from the situation?

Hand out the Suicide Prevention Lifeline Wallet Card OR other school-selected resource following this section.

Secondary Lesson 3.2: Strength-Based Skills for Coping

Create an anchor chart with the CLUES steps, which are summarized below.

C ***Connect.*** Make contact. Reach out and talk to them. Notice their pain.
L ***Listen.*** Take the time and really pay attention. You do not have to have all of the answers. Just listen.
U ***Understand.*** Nod, pay attention, and let them know you appreciate what they are going through.
E ***Express Concern.*** Say that you care, you are worried, and you want to be helpful.
S ***Seek Help.*** Tell them you want to go with them to talk to a third person, preferably an adult who has experience and the ability to help. Do not agree to be secretive. Enlarge the circle of support.

Let's learn a framework of action steps to help someone in distress; this framework is called CLUES.

The first letter, C, stands for **Connect**. This means you reach out to the person in distress and make contact; you can do this in person, by phone, online, or whatever avenue you choose. Notice the person's pain, and let them know you care. They may try to put you off or ignore you. Stay in touch. Reach out. Invite them to do things with you, especially some activity they normally enjoy; they might need a chance to have some fun and get their mind cleared. Do not force them to be cheerful. Stick with them. While it may feel awkward or hurtful, try not to take it personally if someone who is struggling doesn't seem engaged or appreciative. They are probably doing the best they can.

L stands for **Listen.** Take the time, and really pay attention using your listening skills. We often want to jump in and fix problems when we hear about them, but most of the time, with problems that cause real distress, there is not just one solution or quick fix. You do not have to have all of the answers. It usually doesn't help to say things like, "Things will be better tomorrow" or "Keep your chin up!" because these might make the problem seem insignificant or as if it isn't OK to be upset. Remember, all feelings are valid, and often, we need to sit with them for a while before we feel ready to take action.

The third letter, U, stands for **Understand.** It's OK if the person is having a problem you have never dealt with before. Use your good listening skills, and show empathy. Nod, pay attention, and let them know you appreciate what they are going through. Take the problem seriously. Even if the problem doesn't seem important to you, it is important to them. Other challenges and/or feelings may be piling up. Show them you understand.

E stands for **Express concern.** Say that you care out loud to the person. Tell them you are worried and you want to be helpful. Let them know you care they are alive, especially if you are dealing with someone who may have suicidal thoughts. Do not try to call their bluff. It may not be one. Reinforce the fact that you care about them and insist they get help.

The last letter, S, stands for **Seek help.** We will talk more about where and how to get help in the next section, but as a starting point, tell them you want to go with them to talk to a third person, preferably an adult who has experience and the ability to help. Do not agree to be secretive. Enlarge the circle of support.

The CLUES framework will serve as a basis for the next activity, which is to role-play the action steps with someone in distress. All students will discuss a fight with a friend together. Narrate a model scenario using the table with suggested dialogue below. Then, middle schoolers will discuss parents divorcing, physical bullying, and body image. High schoolers will consider financial problems, a break-up, and substance use.

Alternative scenarios can be substituted for any reason, but especially if any of these situations pinpoint a specific student. Other scenarios could include school or study problems, family conflict, feeling deserted and alone, or eating issues. Use your judgment when deciding whether a specific scenario is appropriate for the classroom.

We're going to practice these steps with some scenarios. The first one we will do together, and then we'll break up into groups of three.

Scenario 1: Fight with a Friend

Imagine that you heard about an argument between a peer who is in a school club with you and their friend, and the argument escalated into a big drama within their friend group. Let's think through each of the steps in CLUES, starting with **Connect**.

Connect	Invite your acquaintance to sit with you at lunch or on the bus. You could say, "Hey! We never get to hang out outside of our club. Want to sit here?"
Listen	Listen to the person if they want to talk about the argument. You don't have to take sides or give advice, but you can reflect on how the person seems to be feeling. You could say, "It seems like you feel pretty misunderstood."
Understand	Nod, pay attention, and let them know you understand. You could say, "I bet it feels pretty lonely not to have your best friend to talk to."
Express concern	Say that you care and want to be helpful. You could say, "I know this has been really hard for you. I'm here to talk through it or help you think about what to do next."
Seek help	Enlarge the circle of support. You could say, "I wonder if other people from our club would have some good advice. Coach P usually knows what to do in tough situations. Would you want to talk about this situation with them?"

Middle School (6-8)

Scenario 2: Parents divorcing

Imagine your friend has been irritated and angry for the past few days. You overhear a phone call and learn that one of her parents is moving out of the house that weekend with the finalization of a divorce. In your groups, ask one pair of students to act out a CLUES conversation.

Scenario 3: Body image

Imagine that your best friend is going on a cruise and has become obsessed with looking good in their bathing suit. All of your conversations lately have been about dieting and weight loss tricks. You have noticed your friend skipping meals. Ask a new pair of group members to act out a CLUES conversation.

Scenario 4: Bullying

Imagine that you see a post on social media that mocks the younger sibling of a friend. When you tell your friend, they say their sibling has been withdrawn recently. On further investigation, this has happened repeatedly. Ask the remaining pair of group members to act out a CLUES conversation with the sibling.

High School (9-12)

Scenario 2: Family financial problems

Imagine that a friend tells you they have to quit after-school sports in order to get a job. You know that one of their parents has been dealing with health issues and can no longer work. A conversation about college leaves your friend feeling down. In your groups, ask one pair of students to act out a CLUES conversation.

Scenario 3: Broke up with a boyfriend or girlfriend

Imagine that your best friend just broke up with their significant other. This is their first real breakup, and they tell you they are devastated. You know your friend tends to blame and punish themself pretty harshly when things go wrong. Ask a new pair of group members to act out a CLUES conversation.

Scenario 4: Substance use

Imagine that your friend has been struggling with school and "coping" by taking stimulant pills prescribed to another mutual friend. Your friend says they just need some energy boosts to stay on top of their work, but you notice your friend is experiencing big mood swings. Ask a new pair of group members to act out a CLUES conversation.

End the activity with a brief discussion about key takeaways from the practice if time allows. Ask students what they learned, how they felt when they were the person in distress, and how they felt when they were the helper. Emphasize to your students when they reach the point of needing to seek help from a trusted adult or professional. This would be any time when safety may be an issue.

Secondary Lesson Plan 3.3: How to Get Help

This section begins with a brief review of the "asking for help" process. Refer to the anchor chart made in an earlier lesson:

1. Do I need help?
    i. Get information
    ii. Need support with feelings
    iii. Stop someone from being hurt
2. Whom should I ask for help?
3. What exactly should I ask this person?

How to get help for different issues might look slightly different from problem to problem, but getting the help will follow the same basic decision-making process:

When deciding if you need help for yourself, you may have difficulty asking for many different reasons. You might have some ideas about wanting to be independent or strong, so asking for help is a sign of weakness. On the contrary, asking for help and demonstrating self-awareness are signs of maturity and courage. Another common concern is being a burden to other people. You are not a burden**.** I want everyone to repeat after me – ready? **I am not a burden.**

Feeling pain is part of being alive, just like every other emotion, and everyone will need help with this emotion at some point in their lives. You and your experiences matter. You are a valuable person and deserve to tell your story.

Let's reflect on a quote: "You are not a burden. You HAVE a burden, which by definition is too heavy to carry on your own." – Pravinee Hurbungs.

Think about this quote for a few minutes, and then share what it means to you with a partner.

You may choose to have a larger class discussion if students are open to sharing.

If you or someone else feels like a burden to others, feels trapped, is in unbearable pain, or feels hopeless, it's time to get professional help. The CLUES steps are still important for supporting a friend! Listening to others and ensuring they feel heard are very important. There are adults in our school who have training in working with students who are dealing with distress. They are (*fill in names and titles*):

_____

_____

_____

To talk to them (*fill in procedure for self-referral or finding the contact people*):

_____

_____

_____

Share the information for 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, which provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress: https://988lifeline.org/. Ask students to explain from beginning to end how to get help in the school setting if they are worried about themselves or a friend. Provide immediate feedback on any corrections that need to be made to the procedures. Emphasize this final piece of information before ending the lesson plan series with one of the three debriefing activity briefing options.

Remember, you cannot be responsible for another person's actions when they are stressed, depressed, or suicidal. Whether they are crying out for help or suffering silently in despair, only they can help themselves. What you can do is be the most caring and responsible friend possible during the hard times. This means listening to their concerns, supporting them, and helping them get skilled help from a trusted and capable adult friend.

This is the end of our sections on stress and mood, alcohol, drugs, and risks, and dealing with distress. To wrap up, let's read a short essay.

The essay is available at https://youmatter.988lifeline.org/ok-not-ok/.

With these points in mind and all we have learned throughout these discussions, let's take a few minutes to reflect.

Choose one of the following prompts for students:

1. On a piece of paper, write "Start. Stop. Continue. Change."
    a. Based on what you have recently learned, what are you going to start doing and stop doing? What will you continue doing? How will you change what you're doing?
2. On a piece of paper, draw a big circle, square, and triangle. Then fill in the following:
    a. Circle: What's still going around in your head? What do you still not understand?
    b. Square: What's squared away? What do you really understand?
    c. Triangle: What three things could you use in your life?
3. On a piece of paper, answer: "What is the one thing I learned which, if I start doing now, can make a big difference in my life?"

Lesson Supplements

Apps

- Crisis Text Line (Grade 7+): text HOME to 741741 or visit https://www.crisistextline.org/
- MilTeen Chat (Grade 8+): https://www.milteenchat.com/

Websites

- 99 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: https://988lifeline.org/
- Born This Way Foundation: https://bornthisway.foundation/
- JED Mental Health Resource Center: https://www.jedfoundation.org/mental-health-resource-center/
- TeensHealth: http://teenshealth.org/en/teens/your-mind/

Books

- *Finding Audrey* by Sophie Kinsella (Ages 12-14)
- *A World Without You* by Beth Revis (Ages 12-14)
- *Highly Illogical Behavior* by John Corey Whaley (Ages 13-17)
- *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon (Ages 13-17)
- *The Memory of Light* by Francisco X. Stork (Ages 13-17)
- *The Downside of Being Charlie* by Jenny Torres Sanchez (Ages 13-17)
- *Mosquitoland* by David Arnold (Ages 14-17)
- *Challenger Deep* by Neal Shusterman (Ages 14-17)

- *The Rest Of Us Just Live Here* by Patrick Ness (Ages 14-17)
- *Turtles All the Way Down* by John Green (Ages 14-17)
- *I Have Lost My Way* by Gayle Forman (Ages 14-17)
- *Hold Still* by Nina LaCour (Ages 14-17)
- *Schizo* by Nic Sheff (Ages 14-17)
- *All the Bright Places* by Jennifer Niven (Ages 14-17)
- *Every Last Word* by Tamara Ireland Stone (Ages 14-17)
- *I'll Give You the Sun* by Jandy Nelson (Ages 14-17)
- *The Impossible Knife of Memory* by Laurie Halse Anderson (Ages 14-17)
- *Fangirl* by Rainbow Rowell (Ages 14-17)
- *It's Kind of a Funny Story* by Ned Vizzini (Ages 14-17)
- *The Sky Is Everywhere* by Jandy Nelson (Ages 15-18)
- *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* by John Green and David Levithan (Ages 15-18)
- *Looking for Alaska* by John Green (Ages 16-18)
- *The Sea of Tranquility* by Katja Millay (Ages 16-18)
- *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky (Ages 16-18)

Other Lesson Plans

NOTE: Consider the following recommendation from Whitlock & Rodham regarding instruction related to self-injury (2013, p. 102, emphasis added):

Schools must know that, while it is strongly encouraged that school staff be very aware of the specific signs and symptoms of NSSI (e.g., specific forms, signs and symptoms, prevalence), detailed education on NSSI, particularly related to NSSI forms is not advisable for students. While it is ideal to provide students with basic education on how to recognize and respond to a friend in distress and how to deal with common mental and emotional health challenges in themselves (e.g., feeling depressed, anxious, overly taxed), **providing detailed information on how people self-injure and its prevalence is not advisable.**

- Mental Health & High School Curriculum Guide (Grades 7-10): http://teenmentalhealth.org/product/mental-health-high-school-curriculum/
- KidsHealth – Depression (Grades 9-12): https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/emotions/depression.pdf
- KidsHealth – Suicide Prevention (Grades 9-12): https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/emotions/suicide.pdf

Lesson Handouts

- Suicide Prevention Lifeline Wallet Card

Secondary Lesson 3 Fidelity Checklist

Implementer: Please complete after delivering the **Dealing with Distress** lesson.

Component			**Describe (deviations, barriers, additions, etc.)**
Facilitator and implementer met to prepare for lesson delivery	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized additional resources to learn about the content	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	
Section 3.1 (Stress vs. Distress) of lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 3.2 (Strengths-Based Skills for Coping) of lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Section 3.3 (How to Get Help) of lesson plan was delivered	☐ Yes Date: Time required:	☐ No	
Implementer utilized extension opportunities	☐ Yes Date:	☐ No	

Other notes:

Name of *facilitator*: _____

Name of *implementer:* _____