Supporting Mental Health Needs in the Classroom: Recognizing, Supporting, and Providing Effective Instruction for Students in all Educational Settings

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3 Diagnostic Centers: North, Central, South

- Diagnostic Center – North
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  - 39100 Gallaudet Dr.
  - Fremont, CA 94538
  - (510) 794-2500
  - www.dcn-cde.ca.gov

California Department of Education - Diagnostic Centers

- 3 Centers: Northern, Central and Southern
- DCN serves 400+ school districts in Northern California
- Provide transdisciplinary assessments
  - All special education students
  - Students ages 3-22
- Provide training and consultations
- No cost to families or LEAs
Diagnostic Center, Northern California
Website www.dcn-cde.ca.gov

Ask A Specialist
Specialists answer questions from you on the following topics:
• Behavior
• Autism Spectrum Disorder
• School-Related Medical Conditions
• AD/HD
• Mental Health
• AAC/AT
• Secondary Issues

http://www.askaspecialist.ca.gov/

Join our growing Special Education Community to find information about:
• What the Diagnostic Center is Doing
• Updates on state policies and announcements
• Information about local professional development
• Information about national professional organizations, new interventions, and the latest research is supporting students in special education

Diagnostic Center-North
@DiagnosticCenterNorth
CAPTAIN
California Action Professional Training and Information Network

CAPTAIN Website
Hosted by DCN!

www.captain.ca.gov
autismebp@gmail.com

CAPTAIN
Social Media Links

Another Diagnostic Center Resource

PENT
Positive Environments, Network of Trainers

California Positive Behavior Initiative that provides information and resources for educators striving to achieve high educational outcomes through the use of proactive positive strategies

www.pent.ca.gov

TODAY'S GOALS

1. Provide Useful Information
2. Provide Tons of Resources
3. Show and tell classroom strategies
The practice of "school mental health" in recent years has taken on a much broader meaning, with an increasing emphasis on the host of possibilities that schools provide for clinicians, teachers, administrators, students, families, and community members to collaborate in promoting the overall well-being of all students.

Schoolmentalhealth.org
Outcomes for students who can learn academic information, but struggle socially and behaviorally

- The most highly-represented percentage of students with disabilities in the juvenile justice system are youth with emotional disturbance (ED).
- 93% of students with ED perform below grade level in math.
- 58% of students with ED perform below grade level in reading.
- Both are strong predictors of dropping out of school.
- 64% of students with ED exit without a diploma.
- Youth with ED commonly have a longer delay before obtaining employment, have lower employment rates, and earn even less than their peers with and without disabilities.
- 70% of youth with ED will be arrested within three years of leaving school.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- Tiered level of supports provided school wide
- Initially created to support decrease of referrals to special education for academic intervention (RtI)
- Expanded to include Positive Behavior Supports

Universal Supports and Interventions

Intensive Individual Supports & Interventions

Targeted/Group Supports & Interventions

School Mental Health - What is Involved?

- Enhancing the environment
- Training all students in promoting social and emotional wellness
- Prevention of EMOTIONAL and BEHAVIORAL problems
  - Early identification
  - Intervention
- Providing intervention for established problems
Tiered Supports Implemented within Special Education

• All supports at Tier 1 should be implemented within every classroom – including every Special Education Classroom

• Supports at Tier 2 should be implemented for most students in special education

• Tier 3 supports will be individualized for those students

Supports for all also means all SPED students

Recognizing Mental Health Symptoms in the Classroom

Depression
• Stress/Trauma
• Anxiety

Teachers & Diagnoses

Avoid:
✓ Labeling
✓ Referring to student issues with names of disorders if not assigned by a mental health professional

Do:
✓ Recognize concerning symptoms
✓ Implement accommodations
✓ Track and refer if necessary
Behavioral Signs & Symptoms of Depression

- Agitation and irritability
- Outbursts
- Somatic complaints
- Fatigue
- Social isolation
- Eating and/or sleeping
- Recklessness
- Psychomotor
- Substance abuse
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

Academic Signs & Symptoms of Depression

- Uncharacteristic poor school performance
- Chronic boredom; sulking
- Concentration
- Initiation
- Motivational deficits
- Processing speed
- Memory
- Working memory
- Planning

Student lives in a world of negative perceptions which cloud all aspects of functioning

Primary approach for depressive symptoms modify demands & teach skills

Classroom Intervention Focus:
- Modify demands to support level of functioning from day to day
- Teach more appropriate coping skills
  - Building self-esteem
  - Positive self-talk
  - Remove or reduce environmental barriers when behaviors arise rather than strict behavioral follow-through
  - Avoid consequences or punishments for behaviors
  - Teach appropriate responses
Common Trauma & Stress Triggers

• Approaching a student
  - From behind
  - Directly face to face
  - Quickly
• Hearing a door shut or a book slam shut
• Seeing a peer with whom a student has had a run in
• Smelling certain foods
• The sound of a school bell indicating that it’s time to transition and the student will see their bully
• The teacher writing with the same pen as a previous aggressor

Behavioral Signs of Trauma and Stress Response

• Exaggerated startle response
• Hyper-vigilance
• Reclusiveness
• Headaches, stomach aches
• Denial
• Poor perspective-taking
• Impaired relationships with primary caregivers, siblings, peers

Academic Signs of Trauma and Stress Response

*Impaired ability to problem solve and analyze*

- Cause-effect relationships
- Frustration
- Perspective-taking
- Depressed executive functions
- Concentration, inhibition, planning
- Organizing narrative material
- Engaging the curriculum
- Attention to classroom tasks
- Language
- Decreased learning
Umbrella strategies for Creating Safety

- Be predictable through routines
  - Greetings
  - Procedures
  - Responses
- Be your authentic self: Smile!
- Nurture:
  - Clearly state: “It is my job to keep you safe”
  - Clearly ask: “How will you know you are safe in my class?”

Behavioral Signs of Anxiety at School

- Avoidance of particular settings or engaging in activities with unfamiliar people
- Extreme sensitivity and fear of criticism
- Avoidance of being the center of attention
- Fear of doing things if people are present and may be watching

  - Often described as *completely different people* or *unrecognizable* in different settings

Behavioral Signs of Anxiety at School

- Often appears preoccupied
- Frequent questions about things that may go wrong.
- Facial expressions and posture reflects chronic apprehension or edginess
- Often appears tired; complains of trouble sleeping
- It is an ordeal to get through the day
Effects of Anxiety on the body and brain

= Hard to learn

Academic Signs of Anxiety

• Perfectionistic
• Chronic boredom; sulking
• Concentration
• Initiation
• Motivational deficits
• Processing speed
• Working memory
• Planning
• Fear of having work evaluated
• Avoidance of social and learning experiences
• Limited participation

Primary approach for Anxiety related symptoms – Reduce stressors

Students excessive fear and anxiety put them into fight/flight/freeze when experiencing discomfort/stressors

Intervention Focus:
- Increase coping skills
- Remove or reduce environmental barriers when behaviors arise rather than strict behavioral follow-through
  - Avoid consequences or punishments for behaviors
  - Teach appropriate responses
Classroom Supports and Strategies

Creating the environment
• Providing accommodations
• Using curriculum to teach SEL

Safe & Supportive Learning Environments

Create Caring Relationships
Implement strategies to reduce stress
Make the classroom safe by creating a culture of respect, trust and support
Promote a calm classroom and help students attend
Safe and Supportive Matters...

Research has indicated that quality of relationships at school are one of the strongest predictors of student academic achievement and teacher career satisfaction.

There are direct correlations to when students feel unsafe at school and their having fewer cognitive resources available for academics.

Schools are perceived as safe by students when the environment is rich in positive, supportive relationships and there is interesting and rigorous learning opportunities.


Creatively and individually greet students each and every morning.

• Connect with each child
• Consider asking several different questions to learn about their lives
  o I.e., include questions about family, friends, and extracurricular activities
• Meet each child where they are at
  o Simplified language/responses based on need
  o Get a heads up about where the student is starting the day

Start the Day Positive

Create an opening activity that is consistent where all students can be successful.

• Free journal writing
• Quick review
• Funny greeting/song/game
• Yoga or relaxation
Make student interest and preferences important

- Student interest surveys
- Reinforcement inventories
- Parents/student completed interest profiles
- Class presentations on favorites or strengths

Likes and dislikes in the classroom
Review accommodations

Creating Caring Relationships

Get to know and share about student culture

Emphasize the Individual
Make it public!

Create Caring Relationships

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Safe & Supportive Learning Environments

Implement Class Meeting

• Supports a positive classroom environment

• Provides opportunities to practice specific vocabulary and social emotional skills

• Builds respect and trust with teacher and peers

• School psychologist, clinical staff or administrators can make a positive presence during class meeting
**How To: Class Meeting**

- Choose a positive name for your class meeting as a class
- Set specific times during each day for class meeting which remain consistent
- Hold class meeting in a space different from academic learning areas if possible
- Set clear expectations for the class meeting:
  - Give specific language to use (target skills from SEL lessons)
  - Focus on positive language – try ending each session with giving compliments
  - Allow opportunities and choice for each child to be heard
  - Develop a structure to deal with conflict resolution
- Monitor the students for those who have a difficulty during this time:
  - Disruptive or angry behavior
  - Shut-down or withdrawn behavior

**Identify & Celebrate Student Strengths**

- Be creative
- Let students be creative
- Post strengths with as much presence as academics
- Change it up! Do it more than at the beginning of the year

**Infuse Positive Outlook into Daily Class Language**

- Compliment Boards
- Catch students being good!
- Increase opportunities to practice positive scripts
Create Student Responsibilities
Provide opportunities for high expectations for student responsibility as a student

Our Cooperative Roles
- Student A: The Student Manager
  - Organize materials
  - Keep the room clean and organized
  - Help keep everyone on track

- Student B: Helper/Respecter and Encourager
  - Breaks the rules
  - Encourage when a student is productive
  - Help the student share their work

- Student C: Class
  - Set the rules
  - Help the student other rules

- Student D: Timekeeper
  - Encourage students to take
  - Help keep track of time

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Safe & Supportive Learning Environments
Reducing Stress for All

- Create a learning environment where mistakes are viewed as part of the learning process
- Provide predictable routines and schedules
- Provide advance warning for changes in the routine
- Embed simple relaxation activities

Creating Safety in Making Mistakes

- Teach language for students to use when they ‘don’t know’
- Take the time to teach not tell
- Take notice of how students respond best to correction: ‘teachable moment’ vs. 1:1 instruction
- If they didn’t get it…RETEACH!!!

Classroom Routines and Schedules

- Supports consistency and follow-through of expectations
- Reduces time and energy students spend concerned with what they have to do

Voice levels:

1. Low Flw: Engage only 1 student or group
2. Normal: Normal conversation
3. Ld: Loud Conversation
4. Ld Cmm: Two students on topic
5. Ld Cmm: Everyone on topic
6. Out of Control: Progression of voice, noise level
Explicitly teach and post procedures for everything!

When students know what is expected of them they have less stress about doing this incorrectly!

Relaxation Strategies

- Explicitly teach to the class
  - Model and practice
  - Implement as part of the class routine at specific times of the day
    - Following recess
    - Unstructured times
    - Conflicts
    - Before stressful activities, such as tests or writing
- Encourage and praise students for using strategies on their own
Safe & Supportive Learning Environments

Create Caring Relationships
Make the classroom safe by creating a culture of respect, trust and support
Implement strategies to reduce stress
Promote a calm classroom and help students attend

Promote Ability to Attend
✓ Provide structure and consistency
  o Rules
  o Procedures
  o Class agenda
✓ Establish procedures for moving from one activity to the next
✓ Provide advance warning of changes
✓ Allow all students equal opportunity to participate

Promoting a Positive Outlook
☐ Encourage class-wide coping skills and problem-solving
☐ Address important topics such as: ways to address peer pressure, building friendships, feeling sad, exercise, sleep, hygiene
☐ Model optimism, positive language, attitude and language
☐ Create student responsibilities
☐ Build on student strengths
☐ Create a calming or relaxing space in the classroom
☐ Provide strategies for ‘chunking’ large assignments preparing for tests
Mindfulness Benefits

- Better focus and concentration
- Increased sense of calm
- Decreased stress & anxiety
- Enhanced health
- Improved impulse control
- Increased self-awareness
- Skillful responses to difficult emotions
- Increased empathy and understanding of others
- Development of natural conflict resolution skills

How it Works

Without Mindfulness: Stimulus → Reaction

With Mindfulness: Stimulus → Mindfulness → Response

MindUP™:
http://thehawnfoundation.org/mindup/

Mindful Schools
www.mindfulschools.org

Encourage Students to Use Coping Skills

- Praise identification of emotions
- Suggest specific strategies to address emotions
- Acknowledge student struggles and effort
- Allow student breaks
- Encourage calming skill
Practice coping and calming strategies when students DON’T need to use them.

Create a culture where feeling stressed, overwhelmed, and upset about academics, learning, or social interactions is accepted.

And teach what to do about it.

Avoid consequences for the need or use of coping strategies...

If they are not appropriate then TEACH something more appropriate.

Label what you see and describe what to do.

“I can see that you are frustrated and having a hard time staying in your desk. Class, let’s stop and take some deep breaths together.”

Provide instructions that are easy to follow.

Opportunities to exercise.

Learn by doing.
**Positive Environmental Supports**

**Effective, Engaging Curriculum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive, Positive, Positive</th>
<th>Classroom reinforcement system</th>
<th>Good Behavior Game</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structure, Routine and Clear Expectations</td>
<td>Classroom rules</td>
<td>Posted agenda, expectations and procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reinforcement</td>
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**Engaging Curriculum**

When students are engaged and interested they experience higher rates of comprehension and retention And FEEL MORE POSITIVE about school

*Bottom line – LESS WORKSHEETS....less emphasis on rote learning*

**Engaging Curriculum**

More interaction and more doing

More experiencing the curriculum

**HOW TO...**

- Use student's areas of interest
- Let students make choices
- Include multi-media and multiple means of experiencing content
- Hands-on, seeing, touching
- Take learning outside of the classroom
- Connect learning to student's personal experiences

**Aligned to foundations of the**

**COMMON CORE CALIFORNIA**

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The Foundation: Classroom Rules

- Choose 3-5
- State rules **positively** – tell the students what you **want** them to do
- Post the rules prominently in the classroom environment (and school!)
- Explicitly teach what is and is not following the rules
- “Catch” students following-the rules
- When rules are not being followed-redirect with what students **should do**

Teach What the Rules Mean

- Positive rules support students feeling of safety because they explicitly know what they are supposed to do
- Publicly identify kids who are following the rules
- Put less emphasis on kids who are not following the rules....they will jump on the ‘positive bandwagon’ if it more fun and exciting!

Miss Agema’s Classroom Rules

Explicitly Posted

Positive Across All Environments

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Prepared

Playground Behavior Expectations

- Walk
- Eat in lines and do recess
- Follow signs and safety rules
- Be Kind
Students with mental health needs benefit exponentially from positive attention called to what they are doing right. Especially when they struggle with:

- Self-regulation
- Emotional reactions
- Sadness and insecurity
- Anger and worry
- Learning difficulties

Provide as much positive as they need to counteract the negative emotions.

Include Students in the creation of the rules which increases their ownership of them.

Reinforce ALL students many times a day.
Use the 5:1 Ratio

Presenting redirection so students can hear it

You can... instead of You loose

I need to practice... but I can do it

Struggling... but still trying

Social Emotional Learning

- What is it?
- Evidence Based Practices & Curriculum
- Be Creative!
- Addressing the Common Core

Agenda
Students need explicit instruction in how to be socially and emotionally WELL.

Learn how to learn before learning as a learner.

Social and Emotional Learning - 5 Core Components

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Skills
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-Making

Why Implement SEL within the Classroom and School?

Reduces:
- Problem behavior
- Aggressive behavior
- Emotional distress

Increases:
- Positive social behavior
- Positive classroom environment
- Academic success
- Emotional coping skills
How to Effectively Implement Social Emotional Learning
- Use evidence-based SEL curriculum
- Work collaboratively as a team within the classroom
- Teach skills systematically and explicitly
- Make SEL a regular part of the curriculum
- Make lessons engaging and multi-model
- Create visuals to support skills that are posted in the learning environment
- Include families whenever possible

How to Choose SEL Curriculum?
www.casel.org
English Language Arts and SEL

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their motivations, traits, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Social-Awareness & Self-Awareness
- Label and recognize own and others' emotions
- Analyze emotions and how they affect others
- Evaluate others' emotional reactions
- Reflect on how current choices affect future

English Language Arts and SEL

- Students can practice reading using books with SEL content
- Use emotions for vocabulary development

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- Label and recognize own and others' emotions
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Speaking, Listening and SEL

Coping with Stress

- Use positive self-talk to change your attitude.
- Write it down if you think you can.
- Three goals to do:
  - Get Support:
  - Use the Action:

ACCOUNTABLE TALK

- I agree with you, lower.
- I disagree with you, lower.
- I think you may, lower.

Self-Awareness

- Teachers can practice reading using books with SEL content
- Use emotions for vocabulary development

Levels of Emotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional State</th>
<th>Physical Symptoms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Euphoric</td>
<td>Euphoric</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxious</td>
<td>Anxious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressed</td>
<td>Depressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>Sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tired</td>
<td>Tired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bored</td>
<td>Bored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested</td>
<td>Interested</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accepting</td>
<td>Accepting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admiring</td>
<td>Admiring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devoting</td>
<td>Devoting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amused</td>
<td>Amused</td>
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<tr>
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Social-Awareness & Self-Awareness

- Label and recognize own and others' emotions
- Analyze emotions and how they affect others
- Evaluate others' emotional reactions
- Reflect on how current choices affect future
Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.

Relationship Skills
- Exhibit cooperative learning
- Work towards group goals
- Cultivate relationships with those who can be resources when help is needed
- Provide help to those who need it
- Demonstrate leadership skills: being assertive and persuasive
- Prevent interpersonal conflict
- Resolve conflict when it occurs

Provide reading comprehension tasks about SEL topics

Writing and SEL
- Use journals!
  - Double entry journal: one side is emotions of characters, the other is emotions of themselves
- Daily SEL write in the morning

Practice grammar, capitalization, punctuation and spelling by using SEL statements for daily correction.
Writing and SEL

Use comic strips to evaluate telling a narrative, sequencing and use of dialogue

- http://bitstrips.com/
- http://www.readwritethink.org

Math and SEL

Students make sense of problems and persevere in solving them

Self-Management

- self-efficacy
- work towards a goal
- attention control
- manage personal stress
- Regulate emotions: impulses, aggression
- seek help when needed
- positive motivation, hope, and optimism
- display determination and perseverance

Math and SEL

Constructing viable arguments, justify conclusions, communicate to others and respond to arguments of others

Social-Awareness & Relationship Skills

- Listen accurately and carefully
- Understand others' point of view
- Identify social cues to determine how others feel
- Predict others' feeling and reactions
- Manage and express emotions in relationships
- Respect diverse viewpoints
Engaging Families in SEL

- Create homework assignments that focus on the children using, explaining, and practicing social and emotional skills at home
- Send home a newsletter, email or classroom notes that outline SEL skills or the week
- Create specific notes home that ask parents to report positive ways they saw their student using SEL skills at home or in the community

Teaching SEL Creatively

Follow your curriculum creatively ... Make it work for your group and you!

Create Personalized Depictions Of Targeted SEL Skills
Art and SEL
Art projects are the perfect time to work in SEL curriculum.

Creative SEL

10 RULES

- STOP: Self-harming, missing, unsafe
- SMILE: Relationships that mean you feel safe and accepted
- Find activities that make you feel good
- Do something that makes you feel well
- Be active, healthy, and safe
- Eat right and drink enough
- Sleep well and feel strong
- Take care of your brain
- Use your full potential
- Find ways to celebrate your life and success
Creative SEL
Using Reinforcement

Have students create the reinforcements that will be used when students USE the new skills!

Using SEL Coping Skills

Establish when student uses skill
- Physiological signs
- Facial expressions
- What emotion and emotional level?
- What skill to use

Using SEL Coping Skills

Create visual depictions for students to access throughout the day
Specific Symptom Based Strategies
Access online Padlet: https://padlet.com/tzombies1/mentalhealthsupports

We did it!!!

Contact:

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