

Small Counseling - Grade 6-8

Content Area: Social Emotional Learning - Coping Skills

Time Period: Ongoing

**Essential Questions:**

- How do emotions help us understand ourselves and others?
- What do emotions try to tell us?
- How can we tell how someone is feeling?
- How do we calm down?
- Why is calming down important?

**Big Ideas:** Students can learn and develop coping skills and emotion regulation through conversations, activities, and role playing. Participation will guide students to develop and practice these skills, with the goal of improved emotional regulation, and decreased negative expressions of emotions. Student can demonstrate understanding of these concepts by:

- Recognizing emotions gives us information about what we want or need.
- Recognizing what emotions look and feel like in ourselves helps us calm down faster.
- Recognizing calming down helps us think clearly.
- Recognizing that looking at facial expressions and body language can help us tell how someone feels.
- Demonstrating use of healthy coping skills when needed.

**SEL Competencies:**

- Self Management: Understand and practice strategies for managing one's own thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.
- Responsible Decision Making: Identifying the consequences associated with one's actions in order to make constructive choices.

**\*\*Always hold the first 1-2 group sessions as ice breakers / getting to know you, and group rules review.**

**Unit 1: Identifying and Understanding Emotions**

- *By now students may already have a grasp on common emotions like happy, sad, angry, bored etc. If so, you can focus more heavily on identifying complex emotions such as jealousy, anxiety, guilt etc.*
- Learning how each emotion affects our body, and how to differentiate between emotions.
- Students learn how to identify emotions in themselves and others and apply strategies to manage their emotions.

**Unit 2: Expressing Emotions**

- Reflecting on how we express our emotions and discussing if it is positive or negative

#### Unit 3: Coping with the Emotions

- Learning and practicing positive ways to cope with various emotions

#### Unit 4: Identifying Triggers

- Exploring what triggers strong emotions in us and identifying how to avoid triggers. For triggers that cannot be avoided, students will learn how to shift their thinking about them or how to cope when faced with them.
- Learning early signs of strong emotions (ex: anger) and how being aware of it early on can prevent it from escalating further

#### Unit 5: Making Responsible Decisions

- Learning decision making skills, (stop, think, act) and exploring possible consequences. Then practicing how to make good decisions when responding while experiencing strong emotions.
- Exploring how the way we express our emotions (negative or positive) can impact our relationships with others