

Group Counseling - Grade 6-8
Content Area: Social Skills / Friendships
Time Period: Ongoing

Essential Questions:

- How do our words and actions impact our relationships with others?
- Does our perception of certain scenarios negatively influence how we respond to others?
- How can we become more aware of the social cues given by others?

Big Ideas: Students can learn and develop social skills through conversations, activities, and role playing. Participation will guide students to develop and practice these skills with the goal of improved social interactions and the ability to build lasting relationships with others. Students can demonstrate understanding of these concepts by:

- Demonstrating an improvement in their social interactions.
- Recognizing the ways in which others send us messages (verbally and non verbally).
- Understanding how respecting the boundaries and feelings of others improves their relationships with them.
- Understanding how being flexible and understanding is a big part of problem solving.

SEL Competencies:

-Self Awareness: Recognize the impact of one's feelings and thoughts on one's own behavior. Recognize one's personal traits, strengths, and limitations. Recognize the importance of self-confidence in handling daily tasks and challenges.

- Social Awareness: Recognize and identify the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of others. Demonstrate an awareness of the differences among individuals, groups, and others' cultural backgrounds. Demonstrate an understanding of the need for mutual respect when viewpoints differ. Demonstrate an awareness of the expectations for social interactions in a variety of settings.

-Responsible Decision-Making: Identify the consequences associated with one's actions in order to make constructive choices. Develop, implement, and model effective problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

-Relationship Skills: Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others. Identify ways to resist inappropriate social pressure.

****Note:** Social skills groups can be altered based on the needs of each participant - focusing more heavily on the skills that seem to be an area of concern for that specific group of students.

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

Unit 1: Conversation skills

- Active listening
- Taking turns in conversation giving others a chance to speak
- Not interrupting
- Staying on topic
- How to keep conversations going
- Appropriate conversation topics

Unit 2: Boundaries

- Setting Boundaries
- Respecting others personal space
- Respecting others belongings
- Minding your business

Unit 3: Being flexible

- How to compromise with others
- Taking turns
- Adjusting to changes in routine

Unit 4: Friendship qualities

- What do we look for in a friend?
- Do we treat others the way we want to be treated?
- What do we not like to see in a friend?
- How do we make and maintain friendships?

Unit 5: Empathy

- How would you feel if you were in that situation?
- Can you name a time you felt sad, angry, left out, disappointed etc.?
 - What helped you feel better?

Unit 6: Problem Solving / Decision Making

- Identifying the problem
- Seeing from others point of view
- Compromise
- Anger management and keeping calm

Unit 7: Communication

- Identifying feelings in ourselves and others
- Keeping calm
- Body language / facial expressions (our own and others)
- I statements