



SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Grade 8 – Social Emotional Skills

Unit 1

SOLs:

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| 8.1.M | Identify the benefits and risks of social networking. |
| 8.1.Q | Analyze the role of tolerance and resilience in coping with stress. |
| 8.1.R | Explain the impact of failing to recognize issues related to emotional and mental health. |
| 8.1.S | Explain why seeking help for mental health issues is important. |
| 8.1.T | Describe the signs and symptoms of depression and suicide. |
| 8.1.U | Explain how individual, social, and cultural differences may increase vulnerability to bullying. |
| 8.2.K | Describe effective coping mechanisms for managing personal and family stress. |
| 8.2.L | Identify the benefits of using resistance, problem-solving, and decision-making skills for addressing health issues at home and at school. |
| 8.2.M | Develop goals to analyze and manage the impact of social networking. |
| 8.2.N | Evaluate the importance of developing relationships that are positive and promote wellness. |
| 8.2.P | Recognize warning signs associated with bullying behaviors (e.g., declining grades, fear of attending school, social withdrawal, lost or destroyed books or technology, self-destructive behaviors). |
| 8.2.Q | Describe signs of self-harm behaviors. |
| 8.3.K | Describe healthy ways to handle the emotional, psychological, and physical consequences of stress. |
| 8.3.L | Design a management plan to reduce stress. |
| 8.3.M | Justify and encourage safe, respectful, and responsible relationships. |
| 8.3.N | Identify resources for helping someone who is exhibiting self-harming behaviors. |

Health/Social Emotional Skills

The following activity ideas and lesson and information resource links address these SOLs and support the social and emotional development of students. The Health Smart Virginia website provides a bank of more detailed lesson plans to meet the Grade 8 Social Emotional SOLs in the *Related Resources* listing under this document on the website. To directly access these on their source sites, click the web links below.

The contribution teachers make to the social and emotional development of students is affected by how teachers themselves role model pro-social and emotional regulation skills; supportive interaction with

students by educators, health, and counseling staff; and the larger community, school, and classroom climates - perhaps even more than implementation of any specific focused lesson.

Lastly, these SOLs should be addressed in concert with the other SOLs, - e.g., healthy relationships and violence prevention, ATOD, and health promotion - that address components of social and emotional development of students – i.e., their ability to experience, express and manage their emotions; to communicate, collaborate, resolve conflicts; and to otherwise develop and maintain positive, supportive relationships with others.

Student Activity Ideas:

1. Implement lessons and activities in resource section.
2. Discuss the differences between constructive and unconstructive criticism, and have students role-play responses to positive and negative criticism.
3. List put-downs and explain why they are inappropriate and make other people angry.
4. Discuss and practice the factors that contribute to group success.
5. Role-play situations where students are teased and laughed at and how to be a helpful bystander.
6. Kindness is the most basic social emotional support. *Nice Compliments Icebreaker* – The teacher has students stand in a circle. The teacher provides the first student with a ball while giving the student a compliment. That student then hands, rolls or throws the ball to the next student and says something nice about that student and so on and so forth (<http://www.partygamespond.com/say-something-nice>). This activity can also be done by tossing bean bags, or as cooperative activity where students unroll a ball of string, passing the string and nice comments from one student to another to co- create a large “spider’s web” (<http://lessons.atozteacherstuff.com/92/group-cooperation>).
7. Communication undergirds social emotional development. Implement the class activity, *Communication Drawing* http://www.educationworld.com/a_tsl/archives/02-1/lesson020.shtml . Pair up students and give them 4 blank pieces of paper and drawing instruments. Have the students sit back to back. Give the first student in each pair 2 minutes to draw a picture on the paper. These students will slowly describe their drawing to their partner and the partner should follow their instructions try to replicate the original drawing – no questions are allowed! Once this is done, the students should compare the two drawings. Discuss what was helpful or challenging in communicating without seeing the drawing. Repeat the activity, but instead have the partner’s switch roles. In this second round, however, the second student can also ask the partner questions (but only questions that have a yes/no answer) to clarify how their partner is telling them to draw. Have the students compare the pictures and discuss. Were the second set of drawings closer to the original? What may have contributed to this? Was additional communication helpful? How so?
8. Self - Esteem/ My Positive Traits http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/self-esteem-positive-character-traits.shtml Students work together to create a class social media or Instagram account with pictures and captions that reflect their positive traits.
9. Stress Management - Discuss stress management strategies and have students exercise a strategy of their choosing for a 2 - 5 minute time period in the class (i.e., physical or creative expression, talking, breathing).
10. Striking Out Stress – A Gallery Walk Activity http://www.educationworld.com/a_tsl/archives/02-1/lesson045.shtml

The teacher puts up several posters around the room. After an interactive discussion about the definition of stress and the impact of the “fight or flight” response on health, students walk around the room and jot down answers to each poster. The teacher and students then discuss the responses and identify positive and negative stressors. When the students return to their seats, the class brainstorms strategies for coping with stress. Following are sample poster headings:

- Situations that make me angry.
- Situations that make me frustrated.
- Situations that make me worry.
- Situations that make me happy.
- Situations that take a lot of time.
- Situations that take money.

11. Help students practice mindfulness. Per Kellie Edwards, Kids Activities Blog <http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/60980/5-mindful-games-kids> , mindfulness is about paying attention to the here and now; rather than being distracted– slowing down and experiencing stillness to quiet the mind. The benefits to children include: improving observational skills and concentration; allowing a time to regroup and wind down – giving brains and bodies time to renew; feeling steady and safe; soothing emotions; feeling kind and connected. The following are examples of activities that focus students on the present and contribute to mindfulness:

- Blowing bubbles – encourage students to breath in deep and out slowly, and focus on the bubbles’ gentle movements.
- Pinwheels – encourage students to breath in deep and out slowly and focus on the pinwheels ‘movements.
- Playing with balloons – each child pushes a balloon gently into the air and tries to keep it afloat and within reach.
- Texture bag – place a sampling of small, familiar objects of various textures (e.g., rock, stick, leaf, acorn, marble, squishy toy, fluffy toys) into a bag; have students take turns touching and feeling the items in the bag without taking them out, describing how the object feels, and guessing what the object is.
- Blindfolded taste test – depending on the school’s policies related to food items, students take turn being blindfolded and then feeling and tasting a variety of fruits, vegetables, or other foods . In turn, students describe how the food items feel and taste – and then remove their blindfolds and describe what they see.

Lesson Plan, Information, and Activity Resources

- An Adolescent Mental Health Curriculum = A Starter Kit for Schools <http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/adolescent-mental-health-wellness-curriculum-starter-kit-schools>
- Canadian Mental Health Association- Mental Health and High School Curriculum Guide: http://www.cibhs.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/mental_health_and_high_school_curriculum_guide.pdf
- CA Media Smarts – Avatars and Body Image <http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/avatars-body-image>
- CA Media Smarts – Gender Body Image <http://mediasmarts.ca/lessonplan/gender-stereotypes-and-body-image-lesson>

- CDC Healthy Relationships Talking Points <http://headsup.scholastic.com/sites/default/files/Relationship-Talking-Points-CDC.pdf>
- CDC Healthy Communication Skills Teachers Guide <http://headsup.scholastic.com/sites/default/files/Healthy-Communication-Guide-CDC.pdf>
- Discovery – Self Esteem <http://www.discoveryeducation.com/teachers/free-lesson-plans/depression.cfm>
- KidsHealth.org Teacher’s Guides for Grades 6-8:
 - Conflict Resolution https://classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/personal/growing/conflict_resolution.pdf
 - Depression <https://classroom.kidshealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/depression.pdf>
 - Empathy <https://classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/personal/growing/empathy.pdf>
 - Eating Disorders https://classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/problems/conditions/eating_disorders.pdf
 - Getting Along http://classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/personal/growing/getting_along.pdf
 - Healthy Relationships http://classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/personal/growing/healthy_relationships.pdf
 - Peer Pressure http://classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/personal/growing/peer_pressure.pdf
 - Self Esteem http://classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/personal/growing/self_esteem.pdf
 - Stress <https://classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/problems/emotions/stress.pdf>
 - Suicide Prevention <http://classroom.kidshealth.org/6to8/problems/emotions/suicide.pdf>
- Mental Health First Aid <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org>
- Mental Health and High School Curriculum Guide , Canadian Mental Health Association <https://www.cmha.ca/highschool/english.htm>
- Mental Health HS Curriculum Guide – Teen Mental Health .org <http://teenmentalhealth.org/curriculum/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Mental-Health-High-School-Curriculum-Guide.pdf>
- Mindful Schools – Lesson- Introduction to Mindful Bodies and Listening- <http://www.mindfulschools.org/resources/explore-mindful-resources/>
- Mindful Schools – <http://www.mindfulschools.org/resources/explore-mindful-resources>
- Mindful Teachers Site - <http://www.mindfulteachers.org/p/free-resources-and-lesson-plans.html> - numerous activities including:
 - *Human Camera to Engage the Senses*
 - *A Cooperative Game for Teaching Mindfulness*
 - *Pebble Meditation to Cultivate Peace*
 - *Rainbow Walk to Move the Body and Rest the Mind*
 - *A Seated Walking Practice*
 - *A Mindful Way to Handle Annoyance*
 - *THINK Before You Speak*
 - *THINK Before You Speak 2*
 - *Developing Mindfulness of Feelings*
 - *Facing Challenges*
 - *Labeling Thoughts, Emotions*
 - *Abdominal Breath Stress Reduction*
 - *Awareness of the Present Moment*
 - *Recognizing and Learning From Mistakes*
- NIDA CDC What Does Respect Mean To You <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/blog/post/love-and-drugs-and-violence>
- Scholastic - Teens and Decision Making - Teachers Edition and Student Magazine

- <http://headsup.scholastic.com/teachers/teens-and-decision-making-lesson>
- Open Up Magazine, Minnesota Association for Children’s Mental Health –*It’s All in Your Viewpoint* - <http://www.macmh.org/open-up-magazine/classroom-activities/>
- PBS- Overview of Mindfulness- <http://www.pbs.org/thebuddha/teachers-guide/>
- PBS – Its My Life - <http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/index.html>
- PBS - Its My Life Dealing with Anger Journal
http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/journal/anger_journal.html
- PBS - Its My Life Depression Journal
http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/journal/depression_journal.html
- PBS - In the Mix, Violence and SE Lesson Plans and Discussion Guides
<http://www.pbs.org/inthemix/educators/lessons/>
- PE Central lessons
 - Emotions in Motion
<http://www.pecentral.org/lessonideas/ViewLesson.asp?ID=9514#.WR3WWmVNFho>
 - Sounds of Music (Stress Management)
<http://www.pecentral.org/lessonideas/ViewLesson.asp?ID=883#.WR8CIWVNFho>
 - What is Stress <http://www.pecentral.org/lessonideas/ViewLesson.asp?ID=9659>
- ProCon.org- Social Networking: <http://socialnetworking.procon.org/>
- Purdue Healthy Body Image Middle School Lessons
<https://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/cfs/cfs-736-w.pdf>
- Reach Out - Asking students if they are okay <http://au.professionals.reachout.com/r-u-ok>
- Rossier USC - Creating Safe Spaces – Social Emotional Lessons-
<https://rossieronline.usc.edu/blog/bullying-prevention-lesson-plans/>
- Samaritans Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening (DEAL) Teaching Resources: <http://www.samaritans.org/your-community/supporting-schools/deal-teaching-resources>
- SCDA Girls Only Toolkit <http://www.sdca.org/office/girlsonlytoolkit/>
- Scholastic 6-8 Social Emotional Lessons
<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/grades-6-8-social-emotional-skills/>
- Scholastic Mind Up Curriculum – brain centered teaching strategies
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/mindup/>
- Scholastic - Social and Emotional Learning: Essential Lessons for Student Success
<https://shop.scholastic.com/teachers-ecommerce/books/social-and-emotional-learning-essential-lessons-for-student-success-9780545465298.html>
- Screening for Mental Health- depression, suicide, and self-injury:
<https://mentalhealthscreening.org/programs/sos-signs-of-suicide>
- Signs of Suicide and ACT <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health/youth-suicide-prevention/student-programs/curriculum>
- Social Networking: <http://socialnetworking.procon.org/>
- Striking Out Stress: A “Gallery Walk” Activity:
http://www.educationworld.com/a_tsl/archives/02-1/lesson045.shtml
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration www.SAMHSA.gov
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center www.sprc.org
- Teen Mental Health- Mental Health & High School Curriculum:
<http://teenmentalhealth.org/curriculum/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Mental-Health-High-School-Curriculum-Guide.pdf>
- Virginia Department of Behavioral Health Services www.dbhds.org

- “Walk in Our Shoes” Lesson Plan:
[http://walkinourshoes.org/content/Classroom Lesson Plans.pdf](http://walkinourshoes.org/content/Classroom_Lesson_Plans.pdf)
- Wall Street Journal - Overview of Mindfulness - <https://www.wsj.com/articles/can-mindfulness-help-students-do-better-in-school-1424145647>
- We Are Teachers: Resources for Social and Emotional Learning
<http://www.weareteachers.com/lessons-resources/social-emotional-learning-classroom-resources>
- Welcoming Schools Guide – Bias, Bullying, Bystanders- [http://www.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/documents/Welcoming-Schools-Bias Bullying Tips for Elementary Educators.pdf](http://www.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/documents/Welcoming-Schools-Bias_Bullying_Tips_for_Elementary_Educators.pdf)
- When Grief Enters the Classroom
http://www.rcsdk12.org/cms/lib04/NY01001156/Centricity/Domain/12/District%20Links%20documents/grief_guide.pdf