

# *Second Step*

Student Success through Prevention



# Rationale

- Creating and fostering a **safe, nurturing learning environment** in our school is paramount to student achievement.
- **Connections** between adults and students is a central component of a culture of safety and respect.
- Students who feel connected to **at least one adult** in the school are less likely to commit acts of violence. They also have better attendance records, improved social skills and fewer academic failures

# Background Information for *Second Step*

- Developed by the **Committee for Children** in 1987 (Seattle)
- Most widely used K-8 social skills curriculum in the United States
- Middle School component released in June 2008
- Universal program which provides the foundation for creating a safe, learning environment.
- Highlands School District uses it in elementary and middle school.

# SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL LEARNING

# SEL

- Social and emotional competencies have been shown to increase academic achievement.
- Social and emotional competence leads to increased school connectedness

# SEL by the Numbers

- 2008 CASEL\* study
- 11 percentile-point gain in achievement test scores
- 23% improvement in social and emotional skills
- 9% improvement in attitudes about self, others and school
- 9% improvement in school and classroom behavior
- 9% decrease in conduct problems, such as classroom misbehavior and aggression
- 10% decrease in emotional distress, such as anxiety and depression

\*Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning

# The 5-Themes of the *Second Step* Program

- Empathy and Communication
- Bullying Prevention
- Emotion Management
- Problem Solving/Decision Making/Goal Setting
- Substance Abuse Prevention

# Goals of the Second Step program



## Decrease

- Aggression & Violence
  - Bullying
- Substance Abuse

## Increase

- School Success



# Risk and Protective Factors

<b>RISK FACTORS</b>	<b>PROTECTIVE FACTORS</b>
Peer rejection	Social skills: empathy and communication, emotion management, and problem solving
Impulsivity	School connectedness and engagement
Peer rewards for problem behaviors	Adoption of conventional norms about substance abuse and school success
Friends who engage in problem behaviors	
Favorable attitude toward drug/alcohol use	



# WHERE WILL TEACHERS FIND THE TIME TO TEACH THIS?

- Do schools have to make the painful choice between preparing students to meet rigorous academic standards or preparing them to be responsible successful adults?



# HMS---*Second Step* Program

- *Every* teacher has a mentoring homeroom (10-15 students)
- Students in each homeroom are grouped heterogeneously
  - minimal conflict within the group
  - may not have had the opportunity to interact with each other previously
  - have diverse interests/talents/needs
- Twice each week, teachers facilitate the *Second Step* curriculum (6<sup>th</sup> grade homerooms doing the same lesson each week, 7<sup>th</sup> grade homerooms doing the same lesson, etc.)
- Weekly Grade Level Morning Meetings---community building, recognition, reinforcement of *Second Step* material

# Example

## Grade 7 Lesson--Emotion Management

- Lesson Plan is completely scripted for teachers
- Resources—DVD, hand-outs, worksheets, extension assignments, parent letters, posters

# Partner Activity Example

Grade **7**

Lesson 8  
Handout 8B: Changing Negative Self-Talk to Positive Self-Talk



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### History Grade

Milla received her midquarter grade in history. She found out she was earning a C-. She became very upset, thinking: “History class is stupid! Ms. Bates is so mean! I’m getting a bad grade because she hates me!”

Change her negative self-talk to positive self-talk. Write at least two positive statements:

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### Left Behind

Darius is walking home from school alone when he sees the group of his friends he usually walks with up ahead. He is angry that they didn’t wait for him after school. He thinks, “Those guys are such jerks. They’re always trying to ditch me. I don’t want to be friends with them anyway.”

Change his negative self-talk to positive self-talk. Write at least two positive statements:

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# Homework Example

Grade **7**

Lesson  
Homework: Tracking Your Anger



You feel hot. Your palms are sweating. It's hard to breathe. Your heart is racing. You're having a hard time talking. What's happening? It might sound like you're getting the flu—but these "symptoms" are also the physical and mental signs of anger. Just noticing these as signs of anger is your first step to staying in control.

Discuss all the Steps for Staying in Control with an adult family member. Together, think of a time when you were angry with each other. What was the situation? Is it a situation that happens again and again? Work together to identify which of the Steps for Staying in Control you want to try out next time tempers flare. Write a plan in the space provided.

**Are you feeling angry?  
Remember!**

**To stay in control:**

- Notice.
- Pause.
- Think twice.
- Calm down.
- Reflect.

Describe the situation that made you angry.

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Does this situation happen over and over? If so, when does it usually happen?

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“We can not turn away from the emotional fabric of children’s lives or assume that learning can take place isolated from their feelings.” --Linda Lantieri



# Additional Resources

- [www.cfchildren.org/ssmpig](http://www.cfchildren.org/ssmpig)
- [www.bullypolice.org](http://www.bullypolice.org)