Social Emotional Learning Assignment

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EDSC 514: Grown, Development, & Learning

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September 25, 2022

Social-emotional learning is very important for mental well-being and general success in school. When students have the ability to connect with others socially they can thrive in academic settings but it becomes even more critical as an employability skill. Considering different personality types and different levels of cognitive development, it is important to develop social skills. This can be very difficult during transition years in school, especially from middle school to high school. As a school counselor I want to help students to recognize what skills they currently have, develop a growth mindset, and lead others when the opportunity arises. A very shy student could be a very good peer tutor if fostered with a leadership mindset. High school students do not like being told what to do but they are very good at solving their own problems when prompted with specific questions. They are surprisingly good at following through with their own suggestions when they know that someone on campus cares about them and will be checking in on their progress.

Part 1: Synthesis

When students transition from middle school to high school they need to be cognitively, socially and emotionally ready for significant changes in their daily lives. For some students the number of classes may change, the class length may also change. They will need to focus for a greater amount of time during block scheduling days. Students who are addicted to their phones, lack self control or motivation towards college and career will especially have difficulty. I substitute teach at a variety of schools and I see a significant difference in the attitudes of students of similar ages. While most students are able to focus, I see a significant difference in the students who are attending the magnet school that requires students to apply to get in. Those students use their time very wisely, as soon as they are done with classwork they start studying

for a test or complete homework from another class. No one is on their phone and they are mentoring their friends to stay focused. The inter-city type of school that serves apartment dwellers has the complete opposite mindset. Most students are on their phones, playing games and texting their friends from other classes. They are cognitively able to do the work but not emotionally ready to make a commitment to their education.

Some students are feeling very overwhelmed by the new demands on their cognitive abilities. They do not have the confidence to persist in the work. One student had no idea how to start the work and refused to talk to his table-mates to collaborate. I facilitated the collaboration and got him started on the assignment but as soon as I walked away he ceased working on the assignment. He was shocked that there was a next step and no one at the table were talking to each other. This group of students lacked the cognitive skills and the social skills to complete a task that nearly everyone else in the class was easily capable of completing. Some of the students only needed the social skills and were able to complete the task with a minimal amount of guidance.

Part 2 Self-Regulation, Self-Efficacy, & Metacognition

Welcome ninth graders to high school. Some of you may not think that you are ready for the high expectations of your school but each of you possess one or more of the following skills: Some of you have a history of good grades while others have high social skills. You might be able to guess who those students are. You might not be able to guess who our emerging leaders might be. These students have the ability to lead peers to positive action. Some of you are highly skilled at figuring out difficult tasks and are very good at logical reasoning. I want to encourage each of you to use these skills to lift one another up so each student can achieve their highest potential.

The goal of this class is to give each student the opportunity to develop their skills by persisting in effort even when the tasks seem difficult. I want you to lead with the skills you already have so you can develop the other skills by working collaboratively with each other. So let's develop some rules that will help you to become proficient in each leadership skill. I want you to work with your group to develop rules for your cell phone, how to keep each other accountable, when and how to ask for help on difficult assignments and what your rewards will be for completing assignments early.

Part 3 Applying Theory to Practice

B.F. Skinner's theory of operant conditioning proposes that children learn best when their efforts are rewarded with pleasant consequences, (McDevitt, Ormrod Child Development and Education (p.497) Pearson Kindle Edition). When teaching social emotional learning I would choose small, fun lessons to help students build their intrinsic reward system. When children transition from middle school to high school they may not be ready to learn about college and career. They may not have the confidence to trust what they are good at. Students are easily distracted by their phones because they are avoiding stressful situations. The first part of my lesson would be using cell phones to take a pre-survey. The survey questions would be questions about school readiness, when and how to put phones away. I would also ask questions guiding students to solve problems about social emotional learning and how to engage other students who might be too shy to make new friends. McDevitt and Ormrod conclude that children will answer the questions in a way that makes them feel successful. I would carefully select questions that would lead students to come up with ways to engage themselves and others socially and emotionally. In this way they would already have ideas in their minds for when situations come up throughout the year. Since students already know what they are good at they

will come up with a variety of answers which I could share out and affirm. This would give students an opportunity to feel successful without being put on the spot.

Conclusion

As a school counselor there will be many lessons for me to teach throughout the year. I want to provide lessons that are meaningful and provide opportunities for students to gain confidence in their abilities to learn with a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset. Every student should feel like they matter and have something to contribute to society. I also want students to feel like they can increase their self-control and ability to good decisions as they grow socially and academically.

Part 4 – Locating Resources on Social & Emotional Health

    1) Topic: Navigating SEL From the Inside Out

Website title: Find Out How to Build Social and Emotional Learning Skills; Compare Leading SEL Programs

Description: Elementary school focus on background, evidence, adapting programs and tools

URL: www.wallacefoundation.org Find Out How to Build Social and Emotional Learning Skills; Compare Leading SEL Programs (wallacefoundation.org)

Implementation notes: I would use this site to develop a program for elementary school. The tools are very helpful and I would subscribe to the site for up-to-date information to keep my school current.

    2) Topic: 5 Ways to Keep Students Off Their Phones

Website title: Teach Hub

Description: Practical advice from teachers for teachers

URL: www.teachhub.com/technologyintheclassroom

5 Ways to Keep Students Off Their Cell Phones in the Classroom - TeachHUB

Implementation notes: I would provide teachers with cell phone agreement templates and support positive reinforcements in the classroom.

    3) Topic: Substance abuse

Website title: Project Youth OC

Description: Juvenile diversion program

URL: www.projectyouthocbf.org

Implementation notes: I would make referrals to this organization to help support substance diversion.

    4) Topic: Making new friends at school

Website title: University of the People

Description: How to step out of your shyness and make new friends at school

URL: https://www.uopeople.edu/blog/how-to-make-new-friends-at-school

Implementation notes: I would use this as a guide for a student workshop to encourage students to be more engaging and inclusive with other students

    5) Topic: Vaping

Website title: Vaping 101 presentation by WDG Public Health

Description: Powerpoint presentation for Vaping awareness

URL: http://wdgpublichealth.ca/vaping-101-presentation

Implementation notes: I would use this presentation at parent/student meetings

    6) Topic: Bullying prevention

Website title: Committee for Children

Description: Bullying Prevention Creating Safe Learning Spaces

URL: https://www.cfchildren.org/resources/bullying-prevention-resources/

Implementation notes: Many helpful resources including videos that could be used during daily announcements or at parent meetings.

    7) Topic: IEP Goals for Social Skills

Website title: A Day in Our Shoes - Social Emotional Learning Activities

Description: Social Emotional Learning Activities for students with IEPs

URL: https://adayinourshoes.com/social-emotional-learning-activities

Implementation notes: I would use this for social-emotional learning activities for all students but especially to help support students with IEPs or 504 plans

    8) Topic: Impulse Control Activities

Website title: Centervention

Description: Elementary school activities to develop impulse control

URL: https://www.centervention.com/impulse-control-activities-for-kids/

Implementation notes: I would use this activity to help elementary school students to develop impulse control

    9) Topic: Suicide Prevention Resources

Website title: Suicide Preventions Resource Center

Description: Ideas for Action

URL: https://sprc.org/sites/default/files/SPM%20Ideas%20for%20Action%202022.pdf

Implementation notes: 14 point guide to take action and complete resources to implement at any age level

    10) Topic: College and Career Readiness

Website title: Achieve

Description: Presentations for College and Career Readiness

URL: www.achieve.org/resources

Implementation notes:I would use these presentations to help students gain confidence and prepare them for college and career choices.

Resources

McDevitt, T. M.; Ormrod, J. E. Child Development and Education (6th Edition) (p. 497). Pearson. Kindle Edition.