



Middle School SEL Lesson
Lesson: April 20-April 24, 2020

Learning Target:

Students will identify their personal support network and how to access it during school closures.



My Safety Net

An Important Message
from your Counseling
Department

Colo

After this lesson we hope you will walk away with tools to handle stressful situations in a healthy way. Given the current situation with COVID19, it is important, especially now to be mindful of your mental health and your support systems. So, as we're going through this and getting into the purpose of My Safety Net and how to use it, please take this time to explore your own emotions honestly.

Today We Are Going to Cover...

- What “My Safety Net” is
- Where to access it
- When you would use it
- How to fill it out

First, Let's Consider...

- Can you think of some experiences that you or someone you know may face as a middle school student?

Learning to be more independent, changing friendships, meeting new people, changing love interests, body changes, learning how to manage your time/extracurriculars/personal life, family changes, learning how to cope with stress, discovering new interests...

- How do you think this can make you or someone you know feel?

Overwhelmed, excited, confused, emotional, elated, down, stressed out, anxious...

Today's Goal...

- The goal of today's lesson is to leave you with a visual plan specific to YOU to use on those days when you are feeling stressed, overwhelmed or anxious so you know:
 - **Who you can go to for support**
 - **What your warnings signs are**
 - **How to work through or cope with those feelings**

I. Support Network

- Define what go-to people means?
- Who are *your* go-to people?
- What are some ways that you can get in touch with your counselor?

People who you trust, share personal information with, and have your back...

These are the people you can turn to for support when you bombed that test, when your friend shared your secret with someone else, when you had a disagreement with your parents...

- *Send an email*
- *Tell your parent to email*
- *Phone call*

I. Support Network

Take a moment to think about the go-to people in your life and fill in their names and contact information:

Think of a variety of adults in your life! Sports coaches, personal mental health professionals, etc.

I. Support Network

Below, please list who are your go-to people on and off campus.

- School Counselor _____ Email _____
- Teacher _____ Email _____
- Administrator _____ Email _____
- Adult I feel comfortable speaking with _____ Contact Info _____
- Family member _____ Contact Info _____
- Friend 1 _____ Contact Info _____
- Friend 2 _____ Contact Info _____
- Friend 3 _____ Contact Info _____

Consider listing anyone else you feel safe talking with, including friend's parents, or a neighbor.

II. Warning Signs

Our bodies operate in a way that we have a variety of warning signs that communicate to us when we are in need of something.

- Think about why certain warning signs are important? For example, what are some ways that our bodies communicate to us when we need food? Or sleep?

Just as our bodies tell us that it's time to do something when we're feeling tired or hungry, we also have other important warning signs to let you know that either you or your someone you know is having a difficult time.

- Why is it good to be aware of these warning signs?

*Stomach growling,
light-headed, “hangry”
feelings...*

*Heavy eyelids, foggy
brain, irritable, yawning...*

*So you know when you or a someone
you know is in need of support and
that it's time to exercise a coping
strategy*

II. Warning Signs

Please take a moment to select warning signs that are specific to YOU in your Agenda.

II. Warning Signs

These are the typical warning signs that you should lookout for regarding yourself or someone else.



Personality changed?



Agitated?



Withdrawn?



Poor self-care?



Hopeless?

What are my warning signs that tell me it's time for me to practice coping strategies?

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath | <input type="checkbox"/> Disinterested in activities that I normally enjoyed | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping too much or too little |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shakey | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in appetite | <input type="checkbox"/> Headache (frequent) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sweaty palms | <input type="checkbox"/> Stomachache(frequent) | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawing myself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Can't think straight | | |

Other: _____

III. Coping Strategies

- What is a coping strategy?
- Healthy vs. unhealthy coping strategies
- It is important to note that coping strategies are different for everyone, so think specifically about what works best for you

Strategies you can use to reduce an elevated feeling to a manageable level

Healthy: *breathing exercises, talking to a trusted person, taking a break, journaling, etc.*

Unhealthy: *ignoring your feelings, bottling things inside, destructive behaviors like substance abuse, etc.*

III. Coping Strategies

Now take a moment to identify what YOU can do when you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed, nervous, etc...

III. Coping Strategies

When I'm feeling stressed, overwhelmed or low, my healthy coping strategies are:

- Talking to someone from my go-to list
- Physical exercise (playing a sport, dancing, going for a walk or run, etc.)
- Taking a break
- Deep breathing
- Listening to music
- Playing a musical instrument
- Journaling
- Making a list of things I need to do to organize my thoughts
- Coloring mandalas (coloring designs)
- Listening to a Mindfulness App (Calm, Smiling Mind, Headspace, Breathe, Aura, etc.)
- Counting down slowly from 10
- Closing eyes and imaging your peaceful place

Other: _____

Take it a step further!

Click below for an interactive lesson to practice mindful breathing!

[Nearpod Lesson Mindful Breathing](#)

IV. Crisis Support

On a serious note...

- Define “safety at risk”
- What do you do even if a friend asks you not to tell anyone?

This means that someone is thinking of hurting themselves, cutting, or is experiencing suicidal ideation

If you or someone is feeling this way, please tell an adult right away. We're glad that you may have some close friends that you feel comfortable sharing this info with, however your friend is not a trained professional who can support you best. The adults you've identified under your support network who are on-campus, know what to do when someone is feeling this way. Please come to us. If you know about a friend or saw something concerning online, please tell us right away.

If you're ever questioning whether you should tell an adult, even when your friend has made you promise not to tell anyone, please remember that the only wrong thing to do is NOT telling an adult. Why? Because something really bad could happen.

IV. Crisis Support

Here are 2 resources to have in case of an emergency. Some of you may have heard about them. These are not meant to be utilized as pranks, not as a joke or to mess around with. Please be respectful of these resources and the purpose they serve. We have put them here to help anyone or for you to give to a friend in need. If you're thinking of hurting yourself or know someone who is, please encourage them to speak to their counselor or you can come see us. We will not identify you. If it's after school hours, please tell an adult and this number is here for you or someone you know to call or text if you are alone.

IV. Crisis Support

If you or a friend's safety is at-risk, please tell an adult *immediately*.

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255,

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org. Crisis Text Line: text HOME to 741-741.

Final Thoughts

- Please note: It is never okay to joke or use phrases like “Go kill yourself”, “I should just kill myself”, or “I wish I was dead”.
- If you or someone is thinking about hurting themselves, please:
 - Tell an adult *immediately!*
 - Offer to help your friend tell an adult they trust
 - Remember the resources available to you
- Use this...! Remind each other to check their Safety Net, too.
- If you’re comfortable, tell an adult about your Safety Net.