Mentoring For Success
PROJECT ARRIVE
Group Mentoring Curriculum
# Mentoring For Success/Project Arrive
## Group Mentoring Curriculum

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Overview

When students reach high school, they must interact with a new set of peers and teachers. Social and academic experiences are affected, including the disruption of friendship and support networks, requiring them to adjust to new settings, structures, and expectations. All of this comes at a time when they are also experiencing a host of developmental changes. Additionally, family and home dynamics may shift as caregivers and youth struggle with redefining roles and relationships.

This complicated period of transition has often been associated with a decline in academic achievement and self-perceptions. It is a time when young adolescents are most likely to experiment with at-risk behaviors. It is also the point at which they begin to make pivotal decisions regarding their academic and career choices. The better prepared they are for these life transitions the more successful they will be.

In addition, this transition can feel especially challenging for students who have a history of low attendance, low academic success, and feelings of disengagement from school. This group will follow a group mentoring model where one to two adults will work with a cohort of students. Through the group mentoring model, participants will be able to build relationships with other peers in a directed and respectful manner as well as with an adult at the school.

Getting Started

The following group curriculum is designed to support 9th grade general education students who have a history of challenges related to attendance, academics, and connectedness to school. This curriculum is intended to target the social, emotional, and logistical needs of these students, and offer a safe space for them to explore their thoughts and feelings.

The first half of the curriculum focuses on understanding the social and emotional side of transitioning to high school, while the second half focuses more on their academic needs and future goals. The goal of the group is for students to experience an increased sense of connection to school and at least one adult on campus, particularly the group Mentor who will act as a mentor.

Although the curriculum is designed for twelve sessions, the Mentor may add other activities as needed. Other activity ideas include; community mapping, filed trips to outside groups, researching summer jobs, and resume building to name a few. The mentoring group will last for at least two semesters, thus allowing the second semester activities to be driven by the group members.

Selecting Participants

In considering participants for group, the Mentor should focus on students previously identified as needing additional attendance, academic and social support services [e.g., students referred to the Student Attendance Review Team (SART), Student Assistance Program (SAP), students eligible for Foster Youth services and/or those referred through the Mentoring and Transition Programs]. However, it is also important to have a balance of participants with different needs and abilities so members can learn different skills from each other.

Mentor(s) will meet with students one-on-one to assess his/her fit for the group, gain consent, and evaluate the student’s current perception around school engagement and transitioning to high school. This is also an opportunity for the student to begin considering his/her feelings about high school. The Mentor should explain the logistics of the group: size, length of sessions, duration, and general expectations.
It is imperative that the Mentor be cognizant of ethnic, racial, gender, and sexual identity differences among group members and incorporate these aspects into the group sessions. This includes consideration of developmental levels.

Mentors will conduct at least one home visit per group member with appropriate school staff following SFUSD’s Home Visit Protocol. Other home visits can be arranged on an as needed basis.

**Group Facilitation**

The role of the facilitator is that of a mentor…someone who can support students with feeling connected to the school and community. This person will have access to community resources as well as staff at the school. Mentors can be an LSP, Wellness Coordinator, GEAR Up Coordinator, School Counselor, School Nurse and/or a CWAL, Student Advisor, Parent Liaison or other staff member as permitted by the administration. The Lead Mentor will be a central office staff member from SSSD and will help with facilitation of all groups.

Please refer to a Wellness Coordinator/ Counselor or other mental health professional as needed.

**Logistics**

**Group Size:** approximately 8-10 students, 2 group mentors, with the addition of an older student mentor when possible

**Length of Sessions:** Depending on the number of participants and the developmental level, the time frame for each group is estimated at 45-50 minutes or 1 class period

**Materials:** The materials needed for each group will vary depending on the number of group participants; plan accordingly. Please be environmentally responsible in printing out materials; use transparencies, blackboard, and double-sided copies whenever possible.

**Additional Resources**

*Book:* The Best of Building Assets Together


[http://advancementoring.org/resources](http://advancementoring.org/resources)

**Material Adapted From:**

[http://arkansased.org/parental_involvement/transitions/elem-mid.ppt](http://arkansased.org/parental_involvement/transitions/elem-mid.ppt)

[http://www.nmsa.org/AboutNMSA/PositionStatements/TransitioningStudents](http://www.nmsa.org/AboutNMSA/PositionStatements/TransitioningStudents)

*Social Skills Lesson and Activities* by Weltman.


Session One – Welcome! What’s This Group All About?

Goals

Participants will be able to:

• State the purpose, goals, and expectations of the group
• Get to know other members of the group
• Begin identifying and expressing thoughts and feelings regarding the transition to high school

Pre-group preparation

• Prepare a sample of group agreements, group consequences, and group goals
• Obtain a paper bag with about 50 pennies inside
• Preparation for Next Session: contact the Wellness Coordinator, Dean/ Head Counselor, Nurse, College to Career Counselor (if you have one), and GEAR Up Coordinator (if you have one) to prepare them for office visits or group panel

Materials

• Tape
• Markers
• Pens or pencils
• Butcher paper
• Bag of Pennies (about 50)
• Index cards (one per participant)

Icebreaker – Pennies for Your Thoughts

• Pass around the bag of pennies.
• Ask each participant to take some pennies; do not instruct them on how many to take. Mentor should participate as well.
• After each student takes their pennies, explain that for each penny participants have to tell the group something about themselves. You can offer prompts, such as favorite food/activity/color, number of siblings, zodiac sign, etc. Make sure participants state their names.

Discussion

You’re all here because you have made the transition to high school. When we experience big changes in our lives, it’s often helpful to plan ahead and think about the challenges we may face, and the anxiety and excitement we might feel. Although change can be difficult we can learn from each other and support each other along the way. This is our Mentoring Group. We will get a chance to learn about each other, our school, and our community. Sometimes we will share stories, do activities together, and as time goes on, hopefully we can plan some field trips together.

Briefly review the logistics of the group: structure and length of each session, and group duration. Answer any questions participants may have.
Activity 1 – Group Norms

- Explain to participants that when working in a group it is helpful to develop some agreements about what we expect from each other, so everyone can feel safe and so the group can be productive.
- Tape two pieces of butcher paper on the wall, and label them “Group Agreements,” and “Group Goals.”
- Ask group to brainstorm Group Agreements. Further explain the concept if the group seems confused; provide examples as needed. Make sure list includes confidentiality, right to pass, and mutual respect.
- Ask each participant to sign his/her name.
- Explain to members what the Group Goals are, write these down, and ask for additional goals. For example, feel better prepared for high school, know where to go to ask for help/support, learn how to get involved in activities, etc. Make sure all members understand and agree with group goals.
- Bring all Group Norms to every session.

Activity 2 – Question/Fear/Goal

- Distribute index cards and pencils to group members.
- Ask participants to anonymously write one question about high school, one fear about high school, and one personal goal for the group (i.e.: describe something they hope to learn or get out of participating in this group).
- Collect cards and read them aloud, normalizing thoughts and feelings expressed, and describing how the group will address these questions, fears, and goals
- Keep “Question/Fear/Goal” index cards for future sessions.

Check Out – One Word Check Out

- Explain that at the end of each session there will be a check out activity.
- Since everyone is still getting to know each other, have each person check out with one thing they are looking forward to this coming week.
  - Thank each person for being there and being willing to try something new.
Session Two – Where am I? High School 101

Goal

Participants will be able to:

- Describe what to expect from high school.

Pre-group preparation

- Contact the following staff: Wellness Coordinator, Dean/Head Counselor, Assistant Principal, Nurse, Parent Liaison, Peer Resources, CWAL, including the following staff if they are onsite: College to Career Counselor, Student Advisor, and GEAR Up Coordinator

- Inform the staff of Plan A: a group visit to their office so they can describe their role and how they support the students at the school to succeed or Plan B: a group panel where each staff member attends the panel and describes their roles, their background, how they support students, where their office is, their hours, etc.

- “Who’s Got My Back?” Handout (one per participant)

- Prompts for Staff Speakers/Visits (one per staff member)

- Plan C: If possible, reserve access to Internet-ready computers for group session and obtain the website address for the high school

- Plan D: If no computers are available, prepare folders with information regarding the school (i.e., school location and bus routes, school map, school rules, school population, school programs and resources, mission, classes offered, etc.); this information should be available online either on the school’s website or their profile page at http://portal.sfusd.edu/template/default.cfm?page=school_info.profiles

- Obtain a prize

- Obtain SFUSD Student/Parent Handbooks (one per participant)

- “This is My School, Y’all!” handouts (one per participant)

Materials

- Pens or pencils

- Prize

- Plan B: Folders with school information

- “This is My School, Y’all!” handouts

- SFUSD Student/Parent Handbooks

- “Who’s Got My Back?” Handouts

- Post group agreements and goals for the session

Icebreaker – Human Knot

- Ask participants to stand in a circle facing each other. Each person reaches out with one hand and grabs the hand of another person who is not on either immediate side. Then, members do the same with their other hand. The group then tries to untangle itself without letting go of hands until they form a circle again.
Discussion

We can all get pretty tangled up in each other’s lives sometimes, and it’s often helpful for us to work together to get out of those tough knots. For this reason, we’re going to explore today all of the different resources, programs, and people here at the school that can help you out figure out the solution you’re stuck in a knot.


- Explain that it is important to not only learn what programs your school has to offer but also what resources there are on campus when you need support
- Pass out the “Who’s Got My Back?” Handout
- **Plan A:** a group visit to their office so they can describe their role and how they support the students at the school to succeed
- **Plan B:** a group panel where each staff member attends the panel and describes their roles, their background, how they support students, where there office is, their hours, etc.
- For either **Plan A** or **Plan B:** Prepare staff with a copy of the “Who’s Got My Back?” handout to prompt them and inform students to fill out their handouts

**Discussion**

Ask participants to share some things they learned about the resources and staff members at the school. Would you feel comfortable accessing these staff members if you needed help? Who would you go to if you needed transportation support? A lunch card? Information about college? Someone was picking on you? You needed to change your schedule? Etc.

**If time allows….**

Activity 2 – School Scavenger Hunt

- Distribute “This is My School, Y’all!” handouts, and pens or pencils. Give participants a certain amount of time to find out as much as they can about their school. Whoever has the most points, wins the prize!
- **Plan C:** Take participants to computer lab. Ask them to find the school’s website and fill out handout. Provide students with SFUSD website address.
- **Plan D:** Distribute folders; ask students to fill out handouts with information provided.

**Discussion**

Ask participants to share some things they found out about the school.

Anything you’re excited about? Any surprises? Worries or concerns? Will this help you prepare to succeed in high school?

Distribute SFUSD Student Handbook and encourage members to look through it in their own time.

**Check Out – Who do you know?**

Share one thing they learned about a staff member.
### This is My School, Y’all!

**School spirit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 point each</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission/Motto:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mascot/Colors:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**This is where it is**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 point each</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print out directions from your house to your school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the address and cross streets?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the bus routes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long does it take to get there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s in the neighborhood?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**This is what it looks like**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 points each</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print out a map of your school building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find the following places and write down what building and/or floor they’re at.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Office:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathrooms:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness Center:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Office:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is what they offer me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool Electives:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clubs:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Resources:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College and Career:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This is what they expect of me</th>
<th>2 points each, be specific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dress Code:</td>
<td>Hours:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework:</td>
<td>Bell Schedule:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation requirements:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Campus:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This is who I can go to for help</th>
<th>2 points each, be specific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Total Points:                                                   |                            |
## Who’s Got My Back?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Name</th>
<th>Office Location</th>
<th>Hours at the School</th>
<th>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</th>
<th>How Can They Help?</th>
<th>Notes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session Three – Who am I? Developing a Sense of Self

Goals

Participants will be able to:

• Identify multiple ways of learning (multiple intelligences)
• Better understand their own learning style

Pre-group preparation

• Create a grid on butcher paper with participants’ names on one side and each multiple intelligence category on the other (see example in this section)
• Label 5 pieces of butcher paper as “In Class,” “Tests,” “Studying,” “Making Friends,” “Activities/Clubs”
• Copy “People Bingo” handouts and cut them in half (one half for each participant)
• Copy “Bingo Key” for reference
• Copy “Multiple Intelligences” handout (one per participant)

Materials

• Tape
• Pens or pencils
• Markers
• Blank Sheets of Paper
• Assorted Magazines
• Scissors
• Glue or glue sticks
• Grid butcher paper
• Labeled butcher papers
• “Bingo Key” reference
• “People Bingo” handouts
• Post group agreements and goals for the session

Icebreaker: “This is ME” Collage

• Ask participants to spend 5 minutes flipping through magazines and cutting out photos or words that represent or describe them in some way
• Students should cut out words and photos that represent who they are
• Ask them to paste the images on to their paper. They can arrange the images and words in anyway they would like to create a collage that describes who they are
• Have students take turns presenting their collages

Discussion

What does your collage say about you? Would your family say this is accurate? Would your friends? How have you changed since middle school? What things have stayed the same?
Activity 1 – People Bingo

- Distribute “People Bingo” cards, and pens or pencils.
- Have participants find members who meet one of the criteria in the boxes and have that person write his/her name in the box; the center space is a “free” space. The first member to fill all the boxes in one row, horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, yells “Bingo” and wins the game. Give the group no more than 5-10 minutes for this activity. Depending on the number of participants, members should not use the same person more than twice.
- Mentor: each box on the bingo card represents a Multiple Intelligence (MI) category. See “Bingo Key.”
- Post butcher paper with grid on the wall. Go through each one of the “icons” on the bingo sheet, and have members say who wrote their name in boxes with that “icon.” Place tally marks under participants’ names and the corresponding MI category.

Discussion

Distribute “Multiple Intelligences” handouts.

There are many ways of learning and different types of “smart,” or intelligences. These intelligences are about the way we learn things and the things that come naturally to us. Some folks can play instruments easily and maybe learn best when they make a song out of something, others can control their bodies really well and prefer hands-on learning. Knowing your strengths and areas where you need more help can help you succeed in school and in life.

The boxes in the bingo sheets represent a different type of intelligence: word smart (linguistic), number smart (logical-mathematical), picture smart (spatial), body smart (bodily-kinesthetic), music smart (musical), people smart (interpersonal), self-smart (intrapersonal), and nature smart (naturalist).

Where are your strengths? Where are your challenges? How can you apply this to learning in the classroom or at home? How have you applied it already?

Refer to the sheets of butcher paper on the walls as students think of which intelligences help them in which areas of their lives at school. Record the intelligences on the sheets of butcher paper.

Check Out – One Word Check Out:

Share one thing you have in common with someone else in the group.

*Mentor Note:* Guidance may be necessary to show how members can be different from each other and yet have something in common. Share that sometimes when people realize they have something in common it can be easier to ask that person for support.
### People Bingo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loves to hang out with friends</th>
<th>Plays an instrument</th>
<th>Doodles</th>
<th>Likes to daydream</th>
<th>Goes to the science museum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="People" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Instrument" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Doodle" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Daydream" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Science Museum" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loves the zoo</th>
<th>Talks with his/her hands</th>
<th>Likes science</th>
<th>Loves debating/arguing</th>
<th>Is involved in the community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Zoo" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Hands" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Science" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Debate" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Community" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whistles or hums to themselves</th>
<th>Gardens</th>
<th>Belongs to a sports team</th>
<th>Sings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Whistle" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Garden" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Sports Team" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Sing" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefers to be alone</th>
<th>Likes word games</th>
<th>Is a leader</th>
<th>Makes videos or takes pictures</th>
<th>Is an environmentalist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Alone" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Word Games" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Leader" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Video" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Environmentalist" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likes comic books</th>
<th>Is good at math</th>
<th>Knows him/herself well</th>
<th>Loves reading</th>
<th>Is an actor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Comics" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Math" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Self" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Reading" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Actor" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes to take care of plants</td>
<td>Draws</td>
<td>Gives advice</td>
<td>Likes to conduct experiments</td>
<td>Loves the art museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⏳</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⛰️</td>
<td>⛰️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays sports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays an instrument</td>
<td>Likes to reflect on life</td>
<td>Loves karaoke</td>
<td>Is an environmentalist</td>
<td>Keeps a journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td></td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions everything</td>
<td>Dances</td>
<td>Loves to tell stories</td>
<td>Loves animals</td>
<td>Likes to use logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loves reading</td>
<td>Is a social butterfly</td>
<td>Is good at Tetris</td>
<td>Sets goals for the future</td>
<td>Listens to music while working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
<td>⚽️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bingo Key

- “People Smart” – Interpersonal
- “Word Smart” – Linguistic
- “Picture Smart” – Spatial
- “Self Smart” – Intrapersonal
- “Music Smart” – Musical
- “Body Smart” – Body-Kinesthetic
- “Nature Smart” – Naturalist
- “Number Smart” – Logical-Mathematical
## Grid Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maria</th>
<th>Devon</th>
<th>Julie</th>
<th>Marcus</th>
<th>Ebony</th>
<th>Jose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intraperonal</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body-Kinesthetic</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical-Mathematical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Intelligences</strong></td>
<td><strong>You Think…</strong></td>
<td><strong>You Love…</strong></td>
<td><strong>You Need…</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Word Smart (Linguistic)</td>
<td>in words</td>
<td>reading, writing, telling stories, playing word games</td>
<td>books, tapes, writing tools, paper, diaries, dialogue, discussion, debate, stories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Smart (Logical-Mathematical)</td>
<td>by reasoning</td>
<td>experimenting, questioning, figuring out logical puzzles, calculating</td>
<td>materials to experiment with, science materials, trips to the planetarium and science museum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture Smart (Spatial)</td>
<td>in images and pictures</td>
<td>designing, drawing, visualizing, doodling</td>
<td>art, video, movies, imagination games, mazes, puzzles, illustrated books, trips to art museums</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Smart (Bodily-Kinesthetic)</td>
<td>through body sensations</td>
<td>dancing, running, jumping, building, touching, gesturing</td>
<td>role play, drama, movement, things to build, sports and physical games, hands-on learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Smart (Musical)</td>
<td>via rhythms and melodies</td>
<td>singing, whistling, humming, tapping feet and hands, listening</td>
<td>sing-along time, trips to concerts, music playing at home and school, musical instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Smart (Interpersonal)</td>
<td>by bouncing ideas off other people</td>
<td>leading, organizing, relating, manipulating, mediating, partying</td>
<td>friends, group games, social gatherings, community events, clubs, mentors/apprenticeships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Smart (Intrapersonal)</td>
<td>in relation to your needs, feelings, and goals</td>
<td>setting goals, meditating, dreaming, planning, reflecting</td>
<td>secret places, time alone, self-paced projects, choices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Smart (Naturalist)</td>
<td>through nature and natural forms</td>
<td>playing with pets, gardening, investigating nature, raising animals, caring for planet earth</td>
<td>access to nature, opportunities for interacting with animals, tools for investigating nature (e.g., magnifying glass, binoculars)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session Four – Who Supports Me? Developing a Sense of Connection

Goals

Participants will be able to:

- Identify and articulate some of the social fears associated with high school
- Identify ways of managing these fears
- Identify a support system

Pre-group preparation

- Using “Question/Fear/Goal” index cards from Session One, make a list of at least five social fears generated by participants; supplement these as needed with others listed in the “Social Fears” handouts in this section and adapt them to group’s needs as necessary
- Create three signs: “I’m Not Scared,” “Butterflies in My Stomach,” and “Get Me Out of Here!” (Words should be large enough to read from far away.)
- “Facing My Fears” handouts (one per participant)

Materials

- Tape
- List of social fears
- Three signs
- “Facing My Fears” handouts
- “Life Concerns” and “Supports” butcher papers
- Extra butcher paper
- Post group agreements and goals for the session

Check In – Support Systems

- Ask participants to share one way they like to help others, can be as simple as saying “hi” to someone in the hallway

Icebreaker – Scaling Fears

- Post the three signs on the wall.
- One by one, read a social fear from the list and have participants stand next to the sign that best represents how it makes them feel: “I’m Not Scared”/ Not fearful; “Butterflies in the Stomach”/ A little scared; “Get Me Out of Here!”/ Very fearful. Participants may stand in between signs.
- After each one, ask for volunteers to share. Ask participants who are not fearful of a particular item to share how they feel about it.
Discussion

Each of you probably has different fears about high school. Some of these fears might be about classes and homework, and some of them might be about social stuff, like interacting with students and teachers, doing something embarrassing, etc.

Today we are going to look at who you have in your life that supports you through these challenges and transitions, and who you can go to either here at school or outside of school for support.

Activity 1 – Facing My Fears

• Ask students to think about one fear they have about high school that gets in the way of success
• Pass out the “Facing My Fears” Handout
• Instruct the students to write their biggest/greatest fear of high school in the center
• Instruct the students to write the steps they are willing to take to combat that fear in the outer circles
• Invite students to share out with the group

Discussion

Ask participants if the activity was easy or hard and why. What did they learn about their fears? What are they willing to do to ensure they succeed in high school and conquering their fears? How can they use what they learned today in the future?

Activity 2 – Support System Brainstorm

• Post “Life Concerns” and “Supports” butcher paper on the wall.
• What things do you have to balance in your life right now? Are these the same in high school as they were in middle school? How are they different? Do you have more? Write responses on butcher paper.
• Who or what is in your current support system? Are these the same from middle school? How are they different? Are there more? Write responses on butcher paper.
• Give examples as needed and encourage discussion around each response.
• Make sure “Supporters” list contains people or things in the following categories: self, home, friends and family, school, and community. In particular, ensure students discuss how each one can support him/herself and consider programs offered at schools (Peer Resources, Afterschool for All, Beacon Centers, Wellness Programs, Academic Counselors, etc.).
• Optional: For a fun way to list supports- refer to activity 32 “Wall of Support” (page 42) in The Best of Building Assets Together book

Activity 3 – Support Map (Optional, if time)

• Distribute pens or pencils, and “My Support Map” handouts
• Brainstorm with group members what a support system is and who might be included in that. Read the first paragraph on the handout
• Instruct group members to either write their name or draw a picture of themselves in the center circle

• Have members begin writing the name and phone numbers of people and organizations they can turn to for support, or would like to be able to use

• Encourage group members to draw more circles if needed

• Are there different people that are easier to ask for help for more personal stuff?

Discussion Questions

• How easy or difficult is it to ask for help and support for various issues?

• If time allows- ask a volunteer to choose a situation in which it is difficult to ask for help, and role-play asking for help in that situation. Mentor may want to provide hints on how to ask for help.

Check Out – Support Systems

Describe in one word a quality you look for in a supportive person.
Social Fears

- The first day of high school
- Getting teased or picked on
- You can’t find your classroom
- Your locker gets stuck
- Your teacher calls on you in class
- Walking through the hallway
- Someone tries to pick a fight with you
- Getting into a fight
- Deciding where to eat during lunch
- You have to give a presentation in front of your class
- You don’t know anyone
- No friends
- Losing friends from middle school
- You need to ask your teacher a question because you don’t understand something
- Seniors
- Trying out for sports or a club after school
- Going to your first high school dance or school event
Facing My Fears

In the center circle, write what your biggest fear is about high school. In the outer circles, write what you are willing to do to combat that fear, such as ask for help.
My Support Map

Below you can begin to create a map of your support system. In the center circle, write your name or paste a picture of yourself. In the circles connected to you, write the names and telephone numbers of the people or organizations who are or could be a part of your support system. Feel free to draw extra circles if you need to.
Examples of people and places you might have in your support system . . .

- Parents
- Caregivers
- Siblings
- Extended family members
- Your counselor
- A teacher you trust

- Your dating partner
- Youth center
- Crisis hotline or health clinic
- A club or team you belong to
- Your co-workers
- Your church or temple
Session Five – Where Have I Been? The Middle School Years…

Goals

Participants will be able to:

• Reflect on their middle school experiences and determine the positive changes they would like to make in high school
• Understand the concept of boundaries
• Better set and keep personal boundaries

Pre-group preparation

• Copy and cut Fish for Thought strips and place in basket
• “Where Have I Been and Where Am I Going” handout (one per participant)
• Optional: Obtain A quote book, a Billboard Top 100 Song List, magazines

Materials

• Pens or Pencils
• “Fish for a Thought” slips, cut into strips with one thought per slip
• Basket
• Blue scarf or blue construction paper
• “Where Have I Been and Where Am I Going” handouts
• Construction paper, different colors
• Markers
• Scissors, glue
• Blank sheets of paper
• Poster board
• Optional: A quote book, a Billboard Top 100 Song List, magazines
• Butcher paper or white board
• Post group agreements and goals for the session

Check In – Middle School

• Ask participants to share one fun thing they remember about middle school

Icebreaker: Fish for a Thought

• Place basket full of slips in the center of the circle, cover it with a blue scarf or blue construction paper
• Ask for a student to volunteer and “fish” a thought out of the basket, read the thought out loud and complete the sentence
• Generate discussion regarding the thoughts and let students comment on any similarities they notice
• Go around the circle until all students have “fished” at least once
Discussion

What was it like to be the one who was fishing? What was it like to complete the thought? Did people notice any similarities or differences in how they feel? Did you like this activity? Why or why not?

As we look towards the future and deal with transitions, changes, and growth it is important to know where we stand, how we feel, our strengths, our areas for improvement, our confidence level, our fears etc. Change often brings all of these things to the surface and it is important to take time to recognize how we feel so we can deal with the changes successfully.

Activity 1 – Where have I been, and Where am I going?

- Pass out the “Where Have I Been and Where Am I Going” handouts to each participant
- Ask them to reflect on the Middle School Column and record where they were in middle school with their Attendance, Academics/ Grades, Behavior, Activities, Family Life, Friendships, Relationships etc.
- Give examples for the students if they need more direction (i.e. like science class, on basketball team, my family is living together, like spending time with my grandma, etc.)
- Ask them to record where they are now with all of those aspects of their life and record that in the Present Column
- Ask them to reflect on the future, the remainder of High School and beyond, where do they want to be
- Then ask each student to circle or underline those items that they see in two or more columns (i.e. good grades in Math, playing soccer, my friend ________, etc.)

Discussion

What were the activities or aspects of your life that stayed the same? Are they positive aspects or negative/challenging aspects in your life? Do you have any power to change them? What are some things about school that you can change? About friendships and/or relationships? About family? How would changing those things in a positive way affect your success in high school?

Change is an important part of our growth. Now that we have identified some areas of change and some parts of our life that we would like to keep the same, we will look at who will support us through these changes.

Activity 2 – My Mantra

- Sometimes when we are confronted with challenging situations we can use our own mind and the power of positive thought to turn a situation around
- Athletes and people who have survived major disasters, accidents, and other traumatic situations have often talked about how they held onto hope by using positive thoughts, also known as a mantra
- Mantras can be a song, a quote, a saying, or just a simple positive message that means a lot to you
• We are going to think about our own mantras today
• Optional: Read some examples from a quote book or Top 100 song list
• Pass out blank sheets of paper and give the students 5 minutes or so to brainstorm a mantra, a song lyric, a quote, or something someone once said to them that brings them comfort and relief
• Once the students have chosen a mantra they can write their mantra on another blank sheet of paper
• When all students are done have them read their mantra to the group and tape it to the big poster board to create a collage of mantras to display

Discussion

Take a few moments to look at our group collage. What is powerful about your mantra? How can you use it to help you in difficult times? How will you use your mantra to help you succeed in high school?

Check Out – Share your mantra

Have group member share one positive word about the collage of mantras
Fish For A Thought

Unfinished Sentences...

(Copy, cut on dotted line, and fold up)

My Biggest Fear is...

When Others Put Me Down ...

What I Distrust Most in Others Is...

I Get Angry when Someone...

One Thing I Really Dislike About Myself Is...

I Feel Sad When...
I Wish My Parents/Family Knew…

When I Like Someone Who Doesn’t Like Me …

If I Had to Label Myself as Passive or Aggressive, I …

The Hardest Thing About Being Male/Female Is …

I Wear the Kind of Clothes I Do Because …

One thing I Like About Being in This Group Is …

Things Would Be Better In My Family If Only …
One of My Scariest Moments Is …

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One of My Proudest Moments Is …

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The Person in This Group I Feel Safest With Is… Because …

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The Happiest Time …

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In School …

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I Failed …

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I Need…

I Am Best When…

I Hate …

I Secretly …

If I Could Change One Thing About Myself …
Where Have I Been And Where Am I Going?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The past:</th>
<th>The present:</th>
<th>The future:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My middle school years</td>
<td>Transitioning to high school</td>
<td>High school and beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Describe your attendance,</td>
<td>(Describe your attendance,</td>
<td>(Describe your attendance,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academics, behavior,</td>
<td>academics, behavior,</td>
<td>academics, behavior,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activities, family,</td>
<td>activities, family,</td>
<td>activities, family,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friendships etc. In middle school)</td>
<td>etc. In the present)</td>
<td>friendships etc. For the future)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session Six – Where Have I Been? The Middle School Years…

Goals

Participants will be able to:

• Reflect on their middle school experiences and determine the positive changes they would like to make in high school
• Understand the concept of boundaries
• Better set and keep personal boundaries

Pre-group preparation

• Review “Boundaries” diagram in this section
• Copy "Signs of Healthy and Unhealthy Boundaries" handout (one per participant)
• Copy Activity 52 “Say Yes to Saying No” (page 57) in The Best of Building Assets Together book (one per participant)

Materials

• Pens or Pencils
• Construction paper, different colors
• Markers
• Scissors, glue
• Blank sheets of paper
• Poster board
• Butcher paper or white board
• “Boundaries” diagram for reference
• “Signs of Healthy and Unhealthy Boundaries” handouts
• Post group agreements and goals for the session

Check In – Friends

• Name a quality you look for in a good friend.

Icebreaker – Balloon Support

• Ask participants to stand in a circle. Explain that you will be tossing balloons into the middle of the circle and they must all work together to keep the balloons in the air, inside the circle, and off the floor.
• Allow participants to get comfortable with one balloon as you slowly start tossing in the other balloons, one at a time.
Discussion

Imagine trying to balance all of those balloons by yourself! Chances are, you’d get exhausted and you might decide to pick ones to keep up and ones to drop. In the activity, those balloons represented some of the issues and concerns you all face in life and at school, and all of you were part of a “support system,” working together to keep things in place. These last few weeks we’ve been discussing who supports you in life.

- Who helps you keep your “balloons,” or life concerns, up?

Activity 1 – Setting Limits and Establishing Boundaries

- Introduction: Last group we talked about our personal mantras that help us to make healthy decisions and get through difficult times. Another tool we have to help ourselves get through challenging times and situations are to develop boundaries.

- We are going to talk about different types of relationships (familial, friendships, intimate) and the various boundaries within them. More specifically, we will explore what boundaries are, how to set them, and how to keep them.

- What are boundaries? Ask for thoughts. Boundaries are like an invisible line around you. It is what separates you physically and emotionally from other people. It is the line between what you are comfortable and uncomfortable with and what is acceptable and unacceptable with. Boundaries help protect not only our physical safety, but also our emotional well-being. Healthy boundaries are flexible.

- On butcher paper or white board, using the “Boundaries” diagram as reference draw a person with a happy face, and four boxes around it. As you are drawing each box (starting with the box closest to the person) describe each box as boundaries for different parts of one’s life (e.g., family, friends, school, community, etc. —do NOT label the boxes).

- Ask why it is important to have these boundaries? Because it is a way to protect ourselves.

- Is it easier to maintain boundaries with strangers or people who are close to us? Why?

Discussion

As we enter into new friendships and relationships, we have more boundaries until we get to know the person better. In a healthy friendship or relationship, we let some of those boundaries down on our terms. In an unhealthy friendship or relationship, the other person is able to chip away at some of your boundaries, sometimes without you even realizing what is happening.

Activity 2 – Erasing Boundaries within Friendships or Relationships

- Using the same diagram, scribble out each box (or erase if using white board), explaining as you go.

- In an unhealthy friendship or relationship, here are examples of how our boundaries may get chipped away:
  - (Starting with the outer most box, scribble as you explain) In the beginning, maybe your friend asks to copy off of your homework
  - When hanging out with your friend they ask you to hold something they stole for them and keep it in your backpack for them so they don’t get caught
And then, your friend pressures you into using drugs or alcohol at a party even though they know you don’t really want to (scribble as you go).

And finally, your friend spreads a rumor about you that makes you lose all of your other friends and has the whole school talking about you, (scribble out the last box closest to the person).

Turn the smile into a frown.

- What happens when we don’t set boundaries or when people step over them? We feel taken advantage of, resentful, or maybe react in passive-aggressive ways.

- This is what happens in unhealthy friendships or relationships. The other person chips away our boundaries until we don’t have any. This is when it’s even harder to protect ourselves.

Discussion Questions

- What are some boundaries you have drawn in other friendships or relationships?

- How do you make sure other people are aware of your boundaries?

- Do you think it would be helpful to practice setting boundaries?

- Quickly brainstorm ways to set boundaries with others: Knowing how to say “no” to someone and not making excuses as to why. For example, a friend asks to borrow your last $5, you say “not this week” instead of “no, sorry, I really need that money so I can buy lunch.” When we give excuses for our answer, it leaves the door open for someone else to say “but, …”

Activity 3 – Putting it Into Practice (Optional, if time)

- If time allows, refer to Activity 52 “Say Yes to Saying No” (page 57) in The Best of Building Assets Together book

- Encourage group members that it takes practice to say “no” to people that are close to us. For example, if someone wants you to drink alcohol, you can say “I’m good” instead of saying “no”

Discussion Questions

Have groups members share creative ways to say “no.” Is it easier to say “no” to acquaintances, friends or family? What makes it harder for one than the other?

Check Out – Saying “No”

What do I get from other people saying “no” to me?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signs of Healthy Boundaries</th>
<th>Signs of Unhealthy Boundaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate trust</td>
<td>Trusting no one – trusting anyone – black and white thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revealing a little of yourself at a time, then checking to see how the other person responds</td>
<td>Tell all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving step by step into intimacy</td>
<td>Talking at an intimate level on the first meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting a new acquaintance on hold until you check for compatibility</td>
<td>Falling in love with a new acquaintance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider whether a potential relationship will be good for you</td>
<td>Falling in love with anyone who reaches out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighing the consequences before acting on sexual impulse</td>
<td>Being overwhelmed by a person – preoccupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being sexual when you want to be sexual, concentrating largely on your own pleasure rather than monitoring reactions of partner</td>
<td>Acting on impulses/ urges without thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining personal values despite what others want</td>
<td>Being sexual for partner, not self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noticing when someone else displays inappropriate boundaries</td>
<td>Going against personal values or rights to please others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saying “NO” to food, gifts, touch, sex that you do not want; asking a person before touching them</td>
<td>Not noticing when someone invades your boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for others – not taking advantage of someone’s generosity</td>
<td>Accepting food, gifts, touch, sex that you don’t want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-respect – not giving too much in hope that someone will like you</td>
<td>Touching a person without asking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not allowing someone to take advantage of your generosity</td>
<td>Taking as much as you can for the sake of getting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting your own decisions</td>
<td>Giving as much as you can for the sake of giving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining your truth, as you see it</td>
<td>Allowing someone to take as much as they can from you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing who you are and what you want</td>
<td>Let others direct your life or define you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizing that friends and partners are not mind-</td>
<td>Letting others describe your reality</td>
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<tr>
<td>readers</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clearly communicating your wants and needs; recognizing you may be</td>
<td>Believing others can anticipate your needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turned down, but you can ask</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking to yourself with gentleness, humor, love &amp; respect</td>
<td>Expecting others to fill your needs automatically</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Falling apart to someone who will take care of you</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-abuse, food abuse, chemical abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual and Physical Abuse</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Session Seven – Dealing with Peer Pressure and Healthy Decision Making

Goals

Participants will be able to:

- State the differences between minor and important decisions
- Summarize the Six Steps of Decision Making

Pre-group preparation

- Prepare a copy of each of the three “Scenarios” handout
- Copy for each participant
  - Activity 87 “Powers of Persuasion” (pg 86) in The Best of Building Assets Together book
  - Six Steps of Healthy Decision-Making Handout
  - Decision Making Worksheet

Materials

- Dry erase board and markers or
- Flip chart and markers
- Pens/Pencils
- Individual scenarios
- Post group agreements

Ice-Breaker

- Think, Pair, Share. What are three decisions you’ve made since you woke up this morning?
- Debrief: You make decisions from the moment you wake up in the morning to the time you head for bed. Many decisions are minor, such as what to have for breakfast, or what to wear today. Other decisions are important, for example, decisions about whether to stay in school, what kind of job you are interested in, and what kind of relationships you want to have. You are starting now to make many decisions that will affect your health and wellness. It’s important to learn techniques for making good decisions.
- Review Group Agreements

Discussion

Some of the areas in which you have choices are:

- What foods to eat, when to eat, how much to eat
- How to stay physically fit/ manage weight
- Whether to try alcohol, tobacco, or drugs
- How to stay safe
• How to handle relationships with family and friends
• How to organize your time to meet your obligations

How do you usually make the choices that you face each day? Do you:

• Just let things happen without thinking much about them?
• Do what you think will please others, for example, your friends?
• Act on impulse, or do what you feel like at that moment?
• Act out of habit – do what you always have done?

Not thinking about decisions can be harmless for making simple everyday decisions like what to wear and whether to take the bus or walk to school; important decisions require more thought and planning. Learning to use the steps for making healthy decisions gives each of us a sense of our own ability to take control of our choices and our lives.

Activity 1: Powers of Persuasion

• Review Activity 87 “Powers of Persuasion” (pg 86) in The Best of Building Assets Together book.
• Review discussion questions with group.

Activity 2: Healthy Decision-Making

• Read and discuss Six Steps for Healthy Decision Making Handout
• Read a sample scenario – brainstorm responses to the Six Steps, using Scenarios Handout
• Write on board/chart the pros and cons of each option discussed and label appropriately

Activity 3: Teamwork (Optional, if time)

• Divide students into pairs; give a copy of a second scenario (Scenarios can be chosen by topic or interest)
• Give students 5 minutes to write out group responses on Decision Making Worksheet
• After 5 minutes, share out responses

Discussion

Can you share one thing you have learned about the process of healthy decision-making? What kinds of decisions do you think this method might work best with? Is it necessary for all kinds of decisions or choices?

Check Out

Share one thing you learned today about healthy decision-making.
Six Steps of Healthy Decision Making

1. Identify the problem
   This sounds easy, but sometimes the easiest problem to identify is NOT the real or most significant problem.

2. List the options
   Think of as many ways as possible to solve the problem and write down your choices. Ask for suggestions from people you trust; it is good to have as much information as possible before you make a decision.

3. Weigh the consequences or results of each of your options
   Think about the following considerations:
   - The positives (pros) and negatives (cons)
   - The risks of each option
   - The short-term and long-term effects of each option

4. Consider your values
   Values are the beliefs that you consider to be of great importance. It’s important to know your values before you face problems because they influence your decisions and the way you feel about yourself.
   How do you determine your values? Think about your beliefs about right and wrong, and about the kind of person you admire and want to be. Also, think about what your parents would think and want you to do. A person with strong positive values is more confident in decision-making.
   Some examples of values are: honesty, courage, good judgment, self-discipline, responsibility, respect for self and others.

5. Decide and act
   Review the options and their consequences, in relation to your values.
   Decide which option is best for you and the people you care about. Then act on your choice.

6. Evaluate your choice
   After acting on your decision, evaluate your choice. Decide whether your solution worked and if the outcome was what you expected. How did your decision and its results make you feel about yourself?
Decision Making Worksheet

1. Identify the problem. What decision do you have to make?

2. List the options. What possible actions could you take?

3. Weigh the consequences. List the pros and cons of each option.

4. Consider your values. What is important to you?

5. Decide and act. Describe what you will do. Explain your decision.

6. Evaluate your choice. How do you feel about the action you took? Did you make a good decision? Would you take a different action if faced with the same scenario again? What did you learn?
Scenarios

Goal-setting – Your goal is to make the school track team. To do that, you feel you need to run after school every day. Two friends, Cesar and Erin, constantly put down your efforts. They make fun of you for practicing, for working hard. One afternoon, they walk up just as you are getting ready for your run. They laugh together about you, and then say they are going to the park to hang out, and ask you to join them. How do you make your decision?

Pressure to experiment with drugs – Jo’nishia is worried because her friend Gloria has been hanging out with students who are pressuring her to try marijuana. One of the boys in the group, Keith, has asked Gloria to come to a party on Friday. No adults will be at the party. Gloria knows her family would not approve. If you were Jo’nishia, how would you help Gloria make a good decision?

Healthy eating – In between doing your homework and going to football practice, you decide to have a snack. The last slice of apple pie is on the kitchen counter and your favorite ice cream is in the freezer. You aren’t really hungry but you want to munch on something to help boost your energy. You head to the kitchen to fix a snack, but you notice next to the pie is a bowl of fresh fruit. What decision do you need to make?

Fear of being teased versus seeing in class – Your dad noticed you were squinting when you were watching TV. He made you an appointment with the eye doctor, and sure enough, the eye doctor said that you need glasses. Your family thinks you look great in your new glasses, and you can see much better, but you are worried that your friends will tease you when they see you with glasses. You don’t want to wear your glasses at school. What should you do?

Smoking – When you visited your grandfather during school vacation, you noticed that he had difficulty breathing. Your grandmother told you he had emphysema. His doctor said that the disease was caused by smoking cigarettes. It made you sad to see how smoking had made life so difficult for a person you love dearly. You remember this experience when your friend Malik invites you and Sabrina to smoke with him. Sabrina accepts his invitation, expecting that you will, too. What should you do?

Contagious disease – You wake up on a Saturday morning with congestion, a sore throat, and a cough. You’re pretty sure you have a cold, and your family agrees. You have plans for later that day to attend a party to celebrate your best friend Jamal’s birthday. You know that the party is important to Jamal, and that your attendance will mean a lot to him. After having a bowl of soup for lunch, you’re feeling pretty good – except for your sore throat. You’ve also noticed that your nose has started to run. While you’re washing your bowl, the phone rings. It’s Jamal. What decision do you have to make?
Session Eight – Stress Relief and Self Care

Goals

Participants will be able to:

- Define stress
- Use self assessment skills to identify personal stressors and responses
- Identify and practice specific healthy techniques to reduce stress

Pre-group preparation

- Review session
- Copy Handouts for each participant
  - Coping With Stressors
  - Self Care Survey
  - Self Care

Materials

- A heavy book
- Handouts:
  - Handout Coping With Stressors
  - Self Care Survey
  - Self Care
- Pencils
- Post group agreements and goals for the session

Icebreaker

- List 3 issues that you were concerned or worried about last week?
- Write 1-3 questions/comments about teens and stress
- Review Group Agreements

Discussion

- Adolescence is a period of significant change, including physical, emotional, social, and academic changes; many teens are under more stress than at any other time of life.
- It is very important for teens to learn to handle stress, as long-term build-up of stress that is not handled effectively may lead to problems, including physical illness, anxiety or depression, which call for professional help.
**Discussion: What is Stress?**

What exactly is stress? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), stress is the body’s physical and psychological response to anything perceived as overwhelming. This may be viewed as a result of life’s demands—pleasant or unpleasant—and the individual’s lack of resources to meet them.

While stress is a natural part of life, it often creates imbalance in the body, especially a teen’s body, which is already experiencing so many changes. A certain amount of stress can be helpful as a way of staying motivated. But, too much or too little may render us ineffective and interfere with our relationships at home and socially, as well as our physical well-being.

*Surprise the group/class by slamming a book down on a desk hard and loud!*  

The fact that you just jumped in your chairs in response to the loud noise, is the body’s natural adjustment to sudden or immediate changes ---the fight or flight syndrome.

**Discussion: Invisible Tigers - Stressors and Responses**

Our reaction to stress is a primitive response, dating back thousands of years when humans faced life-threatening dangers every day. Surprising a saber-toothed tiger in the wild, humans needed that quick rush of adrenaline to help them fight or run.

Today our stressful situations rarely involve saber-toothed tigers, but the bodily reaction to things that concern, frighten, alarm or anger us are very similar. However, today it might be a text message from an angry friend or an unexpected classroom assignment which provokes the stress response. These hormonal reactions cause:

- Heart to pound rapidly
- Muscles to tighten
- Blood pressure to rise
- Breath to quicken
- Senses to sharpen

Stressors are circumstances or events that trigger a stress response. Stressors affect people in different ways. Many researchers believe that the effects of stress are related more to an individual’s reactions to it than to specific stressors themselves.

Example: flat tire (some might react with anger, kicking the tire, using profanity, while a different person might just shrug off the incident and immediately start changing the tire).

**Activity 1. Helpful…Not so Helpful**

- Using the Handout 2, *Helpful…Not so Helpful*, work in same group or pairs to identify responses to stressors under the different categories.
- Debrief activity
Activity 2: Self-Care Survey

- Pass out Self Care survey to students
- Give them 5 minutes to fill out
- Share out answers; discuss

Activity 3: Brainstorm

- Have participants brainstorm ways to take care of themselves in stressful situations
- Examples: Go for a walk; listen to music
- Refer to Self Care Handout for more ideas

Check Out – Self Care this week:

What is one thing you are willing to do this week to take care of yourself?
Coping with Stressors

If stress becomes unmanageable, we may find our own ways of coping. Sometimes these coping mechanisms involve healthy and unhealthy behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpful</th>
<th>Not so Helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talking to friends on the phone for 20 minutes</td>
<td>Talking to friends on the phone for 2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking a 20 minute nap</td>
<td>Sleeping for three hours after school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write your own....
Self Care Survey

1. I get at least 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night.  
   Yes  No

2. I try each day to eat healthy foods, including at least five fruits and vegetables a day.  
   Yes  No

3. I exercise every day, walking and/or playing sports for an hour.  
   Yes  No

4. I spend less than 2 hours a day with video games/Internet/TV.  
   Yes  No

5. I drink 6-8 glasses of water a day.  
   Yes  No

6. I have at least two personal goals (do well in school, go to college, and become good at a skill).  
   Yes  No

7. I wash my hands regularly, especially after using the bathroom.  
   Yes  No

8. I brush my teeth at least twice a day.  
   Yes  No

9. I protect myself from the body fluids of others (blood, semen, vaginal fluids)  
   Yes  No

10. When I’m upset, I practice ways to calm myself, to relax, to let go of my anger.  
    Yes  No

11. I practice safe sex by using a condom (and other forms of birth control)  
    Yes  No
12. I eat breakfast everyday       Yes  No
13. I limit eating fast food and sugary drinks       Yes  No
14. I make positive changes and choices in my life       Yes  No
15. I hang around people who make me feel positive about myself       Yes  No
16. I go for a regular check-up or visit my doctor yearly       Yes  No
Self Care

Here are some ways you can practice taking care of yourself, most are free. Add your own ideas and share with your friends and family.

1. Take deep cleansing breaths
2. Listen to your favorite music
3. Go for a walk
4. Exercise
5. Give/Receive a hug
6. Relax outside
7. Laugh
8. Read a book or magazine
9. Sing/hum/whistle a happy tune
10. Meditate/reflect
11. Rent or go to a movie
12. Watch my favorite TV show
13. Eat healthy
14. Go out to dinner
15. Take a bubble bath
16. Enjoy a relaxing nap
17. Go outside in nature
18. Stargaze
19. Daydream
20. Window shop
21. Journal
22. Write a poem or a song
23. Play with pets
24. Play in the park
25. Reflect on what I value most in life
26. Imagine myself achieving my goals and dreams
27. Phone or spend time with a good friend
28. Watch the sunrise/set
29. Relax with a cup of tea
30. Practice my favorite hobby
31. Get a massage or give yourself one
32. Blow bubbles
Add your own...
Session Nine – Making Changes: Strategies for Success

“If you always do what you’ve done, you’ll always get what you’ve gotten…”

Goals

Participants will be able to:

• Identify organization and study skills for high school.

Pre-group preparation

• Create a grid on butcher paper with participants’ names on one side and each multiple intelligence category on the other (see example in this section)
• Label 3 pieces of butcher paper as “In Class,” “Tests,” and “Studying”
• Copy “Student Success Study Guide” handout (one per participant)

Materials

• Tape
• Pens or pencils
• Markers
• Half Sheets of scratch paper
• Grid butcher paper
• Labeled butcher papers
• “Student Success Study Guide” handouts (one for each participant)
• Index cards
• Blindfolds
• Post group agreements and goals for the session

Check In – Weather Report

• Ask participants to share one thing they did this past week to take care of themselves (or encourage friends to take care of themselves)

Icebreaker – Brainstorm Clouds

• Review Activity 58 “Brainstorm Clouds” (pg 62) in The Best of Building Assets Together book
Discussion

It really does take practice to be a successful student. You are preparing yourself to become successful in life. The fact that you are here today tells me that you want to be successful in what you put your mind to. Today we’re going to talk about strategies that will help you.

Activity 1 – Gettin’ Mad Skills

- Post the 3 labeled butcher papers on the wall. Ask participants to share skills and strategies they currently use in the classroom, around test preparation and taking, and around homework. Ask them to be as specific as possible.
- Integrate ideas from “Student Success Study Skills” guide.
- Distribute “Student Success Study Guide” and review with students

Discussion

What are some strategies that you learned about from the other participants? Are there any that you think you can use right away? Which ones will be especially helpful for you? How can you remember to use some of these strategies to be more successful?

Activity 2 – Motivating Walk

- Review Activity 98 “Motivating Walk” (pg 96) in The Best of Building Assets Together book

Check Out – One Word Check Out

Group members check out on one positive word they heard shared in group today- no repeats!
Student Success Guide

In Class

- Taking notes
  - Write the date on every page
  - Use an organizational system that works for you and stick with!
  - Use abbreviations or shorthand to write quicker
  - If a teacher repeats something several times, write it down
  - See note taking formats below

- Write down homework clearly and in the same place everyday
- Ask questions and clarification
- Think about your learning style and how to use that in class
- If you miss a class, make sure to get information from teacher or a classmate

Two Note Taking Styles

Outline: Try to keep this simple; avoid long sentences

- topic teacher wrote on the board
- mes, things the teacher repeated several times
- under above topics
Bullet points: You may need to go through these at home and write other notes or questions in the margins

Homework

- Don't procrastinate
- Try to find a place where you have a lot of space to spread out
- Some people like to start with harder assignments and others with easier ones; figure out what you like to do
- Take SHORT breaks
- Eat and drink water!

Test Preparation

- Ask teacher:
  - What kind of test will you have: short answer, multiple choice, long essay, open book, matching, fill in the blank, etc.?
  - What percentage of your grade will it be?
  - What information will be covered: which assignments, chapters, from what date to what date?
  - Is there anything else you can do to help study for the test?
- Compare notes with classmates and add or correct information as needed

Studying

- Go through your notes and reorganize; write in the margins, cross out ideas that are not necessary
- Review other assignments: in class, quizzes, reading, etc., and add this information to your notes
- Remember what the teacher thought was important
- Answer questions at the end of chapters
- Make index cards from all this information
  - Put main topic/theme/event/word on the front of the index card and all the information about it on the back
  - Go through them over and over again
  - Take index cards with you everywhere!
- Use memory techniques: make up a song, rhyme, or acronym (initials that make another word, like ROY G. BIV: colors of the rainbow; red, orange, yellow, green, etc.)
- Make up questions the teacher might ask
- Use several types of learning
Test Taking

- Use slow breathing to relax
- Look over the whole test first, and answer easy questions first
- Go back to your hard items; look for clues; eliminate wrong answers; take educated guesses
- Don’t run out of time

Helpful Websites

http://kidshealth.org/teen/school_jobs/school/starting_high_school.html

http://teenadvice.about.com/od/schoolstuff/u/school_job_advice.htm

Session Ten – Where Do I Want to Be? Goal Setting for High School and Beyond

Goals:

Participants will be able to:

- Articulate some of their academic and career goals.
- Identify strategies to reach their goals.

Pre-group preparation

- Obtain chairs (one less than the number of participants)
- Copy “Goals for Your Future” handouts (one per participant)
- *For next week: Plan A- Reserve Computer Lab; Plan B- Ask each participant to write down their top 3 career interests on an index card and turn in to you.

Materials

- Pens or pencils
- Index cards (at least one per participant)
- “Goals for Your Future” handouts
- High School Graduation Requirements from 2010-2011 SFUSD Student Handbook handouts
- High School A-G Requirements from 2010-2011 SFUSD Student Handbook handouts
- Post group agreements and goals for the session
Icebreaker – “I Wish…”

- Arrange chairs in a circle.
- Have participants stand in front of the chairs, with one participant in the middle.
- Middle participant makes an “I wish…” statement; for example, “I wish I could fly,” “I wish everyone was nice,” “I wish I had a pet,” etc., and all participants who wish the same thing must find a new chair. Participants cannot take the seat immediately next to them. Whoever does not have a chair goes to the middle.
- Mentor can go first to provide a demonstration.

Discussion

Having wishes and dreams is one way we start planning for our future. Once we have an idea of what we want to do, we can start taking small steps to reach it. For most of you, doing well in school, graduating, and going to college will be part of making your dreams a reality. This group has spent a lot of time talking about how to prepare for high school and last session we talked about skills for doing well in school; today, we’re going to spend time visualizing goals for the future, for high school and beyond, and thinking about strategies that will help you reach those goals.

Activity 1 – Dare to Dream

- Ask participants to close their eyes, if they’re comfortable, and picture themselves walking into a time machine that shoots them way into the future. They walk out of the time machine and they are 30 years old. They quickly realize all of their dreams have come true!
- Give participants time to visualize what that would look like. Slowly ask them to picture specifics about his/her life: Where do you live? What do you do each day? Do you have a family, kids, pets? What do you do for fun? What kind of clothes do you wear? What do you look like? Who do you spend time with?
- Have participants close their eyes again. Somehow, they got back into the time machine and it shot them 10 years into the past where they are 20 years old. Knowing where they will be in 10 years, ask them to think about what steps they are taking or have taken to get them on the path to their 30 year old life.
- Give participants time to visualize what that would look like. Slowly ask them to picture specifics about this life: What kind of education have they had or are they pursuing? Did they graduate high school? Are they in college? What are they studying? What kind of work are they doing to prepare for the future? What’s your support system like? Are they saving money? What’s your community like?
- Distribute “Goals for Your Future” handout, and pens or pencils. Ask participants to write some goals in the top box, using their 30 year old self as inspiration.
- Then, ask them to fill out the bottom portion of the handout. In reaching their goals, what steps or resources will they need in their education, employment, and community? Go through handout and provide examples as needed.
- Ask participants to share.
Discussion

What was their 30 year old life like? Is that future life possible? What steps did you have to take to get there (short term, medium term, and long term)? If this is your ideal future, what can you start doing now to plan for it? What are you already doing to get there?

Activity 2 – A-G Popcorn

- Let’s take a look at what you are already doing here in High School to accomplish your goals and dreams
- Pass out the High School Graduation Requirements and the CSU/ UC A-G Requirements
- Review the requirements with the students and let them ask you questions “popcorn” style by raising their hands in random order as they come across something they don’t understand

Discussion

Just by coming to school every day on time, participating in your classes and getting passing grades you are moving closer towards your goals.

What are some SFUSD requirements of graduating high school? How many credits in English do you need to complete? Math, etc.? What grades are considering “passing”? How does this differ if you want to go to a CSU/ UC? What additional coursework do they recommend you to take?

Check Out  Identify one thing you learned about graduation requirements.
Goals for Your Future

“A goal is a dream written down.”

Break Them Down

Education

Short-term

Medium-term

Employment

Short-term

Medium-term

Community

rm

-term
Session Eleven (Optional) –

Looking Into the Future… Exploring My Options

Goals

Participants will be able to:

- Identify some of their potential career interests
- Research and understand the career path and trajectory of at least 1 career of their interest

Pre-group preparation

- Plan A: If possible, reserve access to Internet-ready computers for group session and obtain website addresses for participants’ assigned high schools
- Plan B: if no computers are available, poll students in the previous group session and prepare folders with information regarding each participant’s career interests, this information can be accessed by: http://www.collegegrad.com/search/searchcareers.shtml

Materials

- Pens or pencils
- “Careers for Your Future” handout
- Plan B: Folders with career information
- Post group agreements and goals for the session

Icebreaker- What Interests You?

- Group members take turns sharing one thing they would definitely want to have in a future job. Such as: working outdoors, with computers, with kids, etc.
- Encourage members to not choose a particular occupation.

Activity 1 – Looking into the Future

- Pass our “Careers for Your Future Handouts”
- Plan A: If possible, reserve access to Internet-ready computers for group session and obtain website addresses for participants’ assigned high schools
- Plan B: if no computers are available, poll students in the previous group session and prepare folders with information regarding each participant’s career interests, this information can be accessed by: http://www.collegegrad.com/search/searchcareers.shtml

Discussion

Ask participants to share out what they learned about the different careers of interest.

Optional Activity 2 – Visit College to Career Counselor (in one is onsite)
Prepare students for an office visit and ask each student to prepare at least 5 questions

Check Out – One Word Check Out & Deep Breathing

Conduct One Word Check out and Deep Breathing exercise.
Careers for Your Future

My Top 3 Career Interests

Break Them Down

Nature of the Work:

Training, Education, and Qualifications:

Nature of the Work:

Training, Education, and Qualifications:

Nature of the Work:

, Education, and Qualifications:
Last Session – Graduation and Next Steps

Goals

Participants will be able to:

- Experience closure/ termination
- Say goodbye in a healthy way
- Reflect on what they have learned
- Identify the tools and skills they have gained
- Celebrate their accomplishments

Pre-group preparation

- Decide with the group how they would like to celebrate the end of the group (i.e., share a meal, play a game, go on a field trip, listen to music, etc.)
- Plan for the celebration (i.e. order the food and have all supplies needed for the meal, plan the games, organize the field trip, etc.)
- Prepare an index card per participant, punch a hole through the top of the index card, loop a long strand of yarn, string, or ribbon through the hole and tie a small knot at the end – Each participant should be able to slip the “necklace” over their head easily

Materials

- Pens or pencils
- Index Cards (enough for 5 per participant)
- Markers
- Hole Punch
- Yarn, string, or ribbon
- Inflated balloons
- Empty tool box or a decorative box

Icebreaker

- Ask each participant to take turns going around the circle saying one thing they learned or enjoyed about the group

Activity 1 –: “Something to Remember Us By”

- Pass out one index card “necklace” and a pen/ pencil to each participant
• Ask each participant to write their name on one side of the index card and then slide the “necklace” over their head with the index card hanging in the back

• Place a basket of pens, pencils, or markers on a table

• Ask each participant to go around to each of the other participants and write 1 positive word or phrase on the index card they can think of about that participant. The messages should be positive and can be about the group, something they like or appreciate about the participant.

• Tell the group that each participant should write on every index card

• Once everyone is done ask the group to take their necklaces off and read what the group has written about them

Discussion

Ask participants to share what it feels like to read their “necklace”. What stands out to them? How will the necklace help them remember the group? What will they think of when they look back on the group? What lessons have they learned from each and how can this help them to be successful in the future?

Activity 2 – “My Tool Box”

• Ask the participants to sit back down in a circle

• Place the empty tool box or a decorative box

• in the middle of the circle

• Pass out a pen or pencil to each participant

• Pass out 3-5 index cards to each participant and ask them to write one skill they learned from the group, one tool they will use in the future, or one lesson they learned on each index card

• Once all of the participants have finished writing ask them to go around in a circle and read their “tools” aloud to the group then place them in the tool box

Discussion

Ask participants to share what it was like to hear everyone read their “tools” aloud. What are some of the lessons or tools that most people seemed to find useful? Did the group miss anything? How can we as a group continue to support each other to be successful even though group is ending?

Activity 3 (Depends on what is planned for the celebration)

• If the group has planned for food or music or any other celebratory activity the group can enjoy that at this time

Check Out – One Word Check Out

End the group with members sharing one thing they hope for others for the future, Mentor can begin and end check out
Suggestions for Additional Activities or Second Semester

• Ongoing Attendance, Academic, and Socio-Emotional Support Meetings: Meet with the group every 6 weeks (at the end of each Academic Marking Period) to reflect on progress, review goals, review students’ attendance and report cards, and troubleshoot any issues

• Career Shadowing: Set up a time for each student to meet with or shadow a professional in a career of the student’s interest either in their neighborhood or near the school, brainstorm with the student ahead of time questions they would like to ask, the appropriate behavior, dress, etc. for the meeting, and any information they need to know if they wanted to pursue that career

• College Tours/ Visits: Set up at least 1 College Tour for the group to attend, provide the students with district Field Trip Permissions Slips prior to attending the tour and arrange transportation to and from the school

• Home Visits: Use the SFUSD Student Support Services protocol to help set up effective home visits for each of the participants in the group to help connect with their family, monitor their progress, and provide further support as needed.

• Route Planning: Meet with group in the computer lab at lunch or after school to help students learn about public transportation system in San Francisco, how to trip plan, researching routes, fares, and time schedules so they can create effective back up plans to help get to school, appointments, etc. on time.

• Parent/ Caregiver Workshops: Work with Parent Liaisons and other support staff at the school site to develop a series of workshops for parents and caregivers that align with the students’ group curriculum.

Additional Resources

Books:

The Best of Building Assets Together


Girls in Real Life Situations: Group Counseling Activities for Enhancing Social and Emotional Development, Julia V. Taylor & Shannon Trice-Black, Champagne, IL, USA , 2007

• Friendships/ Peer Pressure (GIRLS p.103)
• Relationships (GIRLS p. 120-)
• Dealing with Emotions in a Healthy Way (GIRLS p.84, GROUP p. 123)
• Dealing with Stress (GIRLS p. 158 & 164)