



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**PROJECT
CORNERSTONE**
A YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative

MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCIAL + EMOTIONAL LEARNING

A Project Cornerstone Curriculum for Middle Schoolers

Overview:

Project Cornerstone's Middle School Social and Emotional (SEL) Curriculum is a parent and/or staff engagement program designed for middle school. Volunteers and/or staff are trained in the Developmental Relationships model for positive youth development and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) core competencies. Project Cornerstone prepares facilitators to lead a lesson using videos, related activities, and discussions in classrooms for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders.

Structure:

Project Cornerstone's SEL program is a three-year sequence of curriculum modules for middle school. Each yearly strand of curriculum consists of seven lessons per school year. Most school partners choose to deliver lessons on a monthly basis. Lessons are aligned to the CASEL five core competencies of Social and Emotional Learning, the Developmental Relationships, and the Developmental Assets. Module content includes specially selected relevant topics for middle schoolers with a focus on wellness, skill development, and cultivating behaviors and mindsets to help middle schoolers thrive. Each module contains a slide deck with detailed facilitator notes, an embedded high-interest video clip, engaging student-centered activities, a challenge, and a newsletter (in English and Spanish) for parents/caregivers to build the home-school connection.

Implementation:

School sites can determine the implementation option that best fits the needs of their students, staff, and school community. Options include:

- 1. Live Instruction:** Parent volunteers or school staff (teachers, counselors, librarians, administrators, etc.) facilitate live instruction in a classroom using the pre-prepared slide deck and materials. Teachers also have the option of playing the pre-recorded video lesson provided by Project Cornerstone. Each pre-recorded module will be a 20-25 minute video of Debbi Headley, Project Cornerstone's School Partnerships and Middle School Director, teaching the lesson with clear instructions on when to pause the video to begin each embedded student activity. Schools select the course/time period for implementation. For example, some schools choose to have the Project Cornerstone Middle School SEL modules taught in all of their English Language Arts (ELA) courses, during advisory, or PE classes. A 45-minute block of time is recommended for live instruction.

- 2. Asynchronous Instruction:** Schools will have access to pre-recorded modules created by Project Cornerstone. Modules can be posted as an assignment for a specific class or advisory as part of students' assigned out of class work. School sites may also choose to make the modules available to parents and students in the school community to be viewed at a time that is convenient for each family. Modules could be made available through links shared in a school newsletter, online bulletin, PTA communication, or school website.

Support for Schools and Facilitators:

Facilitators receive training via Zoom prior to each module. Training sessions include tips for teaching best practices and suggestions for creative ways to encourage participation and student voice. Trainings will be recorded and will also be available online. School sites and facilitators will receive ongoing support from Project Cornerstone throughout the year.

2022-2023 Module Content:

Module 1: Friendship, Part 1 (The Art of Communication)

- Practice how to start and maintain a conversation
- Differentiate key aspects of verbal vs nonverbal and in-person vs virtual communication

Module 2: Use Your Superpowers

- Practice kindness, gratitude, and service
- Improve happiness

Module 3: Friendship, Part 2 (Friendship Life Cycles)

- Establish core values and characteristics of healthy friendships
- Evaluate and modify friendships

Module 4: Teamwork and Collaboration

- Practice empathy, perspective taking, and tools for group discussions
- Establish group roles, responsibilities, and practice working as a team

Module 5: Conflict Resolution

- Resolve conflict respectfully
- Learn how to make an effective and authentic apology

Module 6: Digital Citizenship

- Navigate social media safely
- Make wise and healthy decisions about digital interactions

Module 7: Review and Survey

Questions? Want to know more? Contact:

Debbi Headley, Project Cornerstone School Partnerships and Middle School Director
debbi@projectcornerstone.org