Caring & Connected Communities Playlist Guide

Getting Started

Welcome to the Caring & Connected Communities Playlist! Building a strong sense of community in classrooms and schools is the essential first step in supporting students' learning. Community and connection are even more important now, as the pandemic brings isolation and hardship to many. Teachers constantly must keep Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) factors in mind to plan instruction that meets each student's needs and incorporates the soft skills required to succeed in life. We have more Tracks in the works for this Playlist, so stay tuned.

Navigating this Playlist

The Tracks in this Playlist are arranged in a suggested path that has proven successful many times over, and so we recommend you view them in the order presented. That said, each Track stands on its own. Explore what is here, and we're confident that you will find something of value, wherever you are along the journey. Each of the current Tracks can be modified to work in a virtual setting, and the first Track, Advisory, will get you started.

To help with your exploration, we've included a brief description of each of the Caring & Connected Communities Tracks below, along with suggestions for use. As you move through the Playlist and the individual pages where the Tracks reside, you'll find more details and supports.

The Tracks

1) [Advisory & Digital Advisory](). Our young people are growing up in a time of profound crisis, and supporting them now means doubling down on the social and emotional supports that are the foundations of deeper learning. This Track discusses why SEL is at the center of education and shares ideas like Advisory for maintaining critical connections during the pandemic with students and their families.

2) [Community Circles](). Looking to foster a positive class culture and build emotional intelligence in students? The Community Circles Track shows the power of this tool in a Restorative Practices framework. Students gain a sense of belonging and voice while learning to manage conflict and honor the experiences of others. This Track introduces the steps to build Community Circles into classroom culture and assists educators seeking tools to create more accepting, supportive environments.

3) [Relationship Mapping](). "Without connection there is no education." The Relationship Mapping Track explains how to assess the connections between students and adults in a school. This is a low-cost, high-yield, easily replicated strategy for identifying concerns and positive relationships for each student. School personnel develop a plan to increase positive relationships and maintain connections over time. This Track is meant for an

entire school. Although the video shows relationship mapping occurring during an in-person faculty meeting, it's easy to do online with surveys. That's good news, because positive relationships with adults now are more critical than ever for our students.

Additional Resources:

We will add these wonderful resources to a future Track page, but they are worth your attention now.
[Second Step (SEL)](#)
SEL-specific programs that break down units and learning plans for grade-specific audiences

[Second Step Covid Support](#)
A free SEL resource for educators during the pandemic. Free guides to remote and hybrid learning, and free webinars discussing how best to connect with students

The Promise

Thank you for your vision and your mission. We believe in you. We believe in the urgency of this work and in your desire and ability to innovate and make change happen. You know that life-ready is not an outcome on a standardized test. It is what happens when we prioritize student agency, voice, creativity, and engagement. We are here to support your efforts to prepare your students for their futures, not our past. We want to hear from you. Contact us at WeCare@whatschoolcouldbe.org.