



School Mental Health Communities of Practice

Self-Awareness Micro-Skills

Identify and acknowledge students' personal strengths, talents, interests, qualities, and skills

Micro-skills are moment-to-moment activities that K-12 building and district administrators, educators and classroom personnel, school psychologists, counselors, and social workers (among other school personnel) can use to promote mental health, behavioral health, and academic success among K-12 students. Micro-skills are designed to assist you in knowing how to respond and intervene directly with students in need (e.g., those who are experiencing MH/BH concerns). Micro-skills are strength-based and asset-driven in nature, and can be used by individuals without formal MH/BH training (e.g., micro-skills are NOT clinical strategies that must be delivered by formally trained MH/BH professionals). Identifying actionable strategies that all school personnel can take to support students spreads the onus of responsibility for addressing the MH/BH needs of students to the entire school staff, providing a broad (and needed) level of support for students.

SEL Standard: Self-Awareness is the ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions and thoughts, understand how emotions and thoughts relate to one's identity and culture, and recognize how they influence behavior. Self-awareness is the ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations with a sense of integrity, confidence, and optimism.

Self-Awareness Micro-Skill: Identify and acknowledge students' personal strengths, talents, interests, qualities, and skills

Self-Awareness Resources:

- Act for Youth's Self-Awareness Resources:
http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/sel/self-awareness.cfm
- CASEL's Self-Awareness Video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZL2eZBe4Ew&list=PLqSvevVI2ir-MthHDHyBhgEvWVsjgqbzO&index=2&t=0s>
- Landmark School Outreach's Self-Awareness (Social Emotional Learning):
<https://www.landmarkoutreach.org/strategies/sel-self-awareness/>
- Positive Psychology's What is Self-Awareness and Why is it Important?
<https://positivepsychology.com/self-awareness-matters-how-you-can-be-more-self-aware/>



The following are micro-skills that school personnel can use to identify and acknowledge students' personal strengths, talents, interests, qualities, and skills:

Help
students to
identify their
own personal
strengths

- School personnel can:
 - Ask students to identify their own positive personal attributes and strengths
 - Assist students in identifying their strengths (if they have difficulty self-identifying)

Encourage
students to
share their
own personal
talents

- School personnel can:
 - Ask students to identify their own personal aptitudes or natural abilities for something (e.g., athletic, creative, artistic)
 - Assist students in identifying their talents (if they have difficulty self-identifying)

Learn about
the personal
interests of
each of your
students

- School personnel can:
 - Ask students to identify things that stimulate their curiosity, concern, and attention (e.g., things they pay special attention to)
 - Assist students in identifying their interests (if they have difficulty self-identifying)



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Acknowledge
personal qualities
and skills you
notice in each of
your students

- School personnel can:
 - Acknowledge the inherent and distinguishing qualities that you notice in each of your students
 - Acknowledge your students' abilities to carry out specific tasks in order to achieve specific goals (e.g., their personal skills)

Showcase
students'
strengths,
talents, interests,
qualities, and
skills during
school

- School personnel can:
 - Create opportunities during school for students to showcase their strengths, talents, interests, qualities, and skills, such as:
 - Special events (e.g., concerts, plays, talent shows)
 - Team-based opportunities in which each team member brings a unique talent or skill to the group
 - Student membership on committees based on strengths, talents, interests, qualities, and skills

Make a special
effort to engage
students at a
personal level

- School personnel can:
 - Engage students at a personal level based on their strengths, talents, interests, qualities, and skills
 - Use the Search Institute's Developmental Relationships Framework to build and maintain supportive relationships with students: <https://www.search-institute.org/developmental-relationships/developmental-relationships-framework/>