



MIAMI UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR SCHOOL-BASED
MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

School Mental Health Communities of Practice

Social Awareness Micro-Skills

Model respectful and inclusive behaviors for your students and give authentic praise to students who display respect and inclusion toward others

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: *Social Awareness:* The ability to consider diverse perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. It also reflects the ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior across settings and to be able to identify and use resources and supports from one's family, school, and community.

Social Awareness Micro-Skill: Model respectful and inclusive behaviors for your students and give authentic praise to students who display respect and inclusion toward others.

Social Awareness Resources:

- Act for Youth's Social Awareness Resources:
http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/sel/social_awareness.cfm
- CASEL's Social Awareness Video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lflLzG_Jc&list=PLqSvevVI2ir-MthHDHyBhgEvWVsjqzbO&index=7&t=2s
- Landmark School Outreach's Social Awareness (Social Emotional Learning):
<https://www.landmarkoutreach.org/strategies/social-awareness-sel/>
- Ripple Kindness: <https://ripplekindness.org/>
- Start Empathy: <https://startempathy.org/>
- Teaching Tolerance: <https://www.tolerance.org/>
- Transforming Education's Social Awareness Toolkit:
<https://www.transformingeducation.org/social-awareness-toolkit/>



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The following are micro-skills that school personnel can use to model respectful and inclusive behaviors for your students and give authentic praise to students who display respect and inclusion toward others:

Teach students respectful and inclusive behaviors

- School personnel can teach students about respect and inclusion by encouraging students to:
 - Show kindness and compassion toward others
 - Value each others' feelings, perspectives, and opinions (especially when they are different from your own)
 - Show respect for others' property and possessions
 - Be helpful and contribute to the common good
 - Include others in your activities and conversations

Model respect and inclusion for your students

- School personnel can model respect and inclusion by:
 - Using respectful language (e.g., please, thank you, excuse me, you're welcome, good job, I'm proud of you)
 - Being accepting of others who have different feelings, attitudes, opinions, and values than you
 - Being kind and compassionate toward others
 - Including others in your activities and conversations
 - Celebrating the strengths, talents, and virtues of people who are different from you

Create opportunities for respect and inclusion at school

- School personnel can create opportunities for respect and inclusion at school by:
 - Providing students with opportunities to identify and celebrate the strengths, talents, and virtues of people who are different from them
 - Promoting activities and assignments in which teamwork and inclusion are highlighted
 - Encouraging students to use active listening skills when others share their feelings, attitudes, and opinions



Give students authentic and specific praise for being respectful and inclusive

- Examples of ways school personnel can give authentic and specific praise to students who are being respectful and inclusive include saying things like:
 - "Great job making sure that everyone in your group had a turn to share their ideas for the team project! I'm proud of each of you for being respectful and actively listening to your peers' ideas."

Teach students how to recognize stereotypes, prejudice, and bias

- School personnel can teach students how to recognize stereotypes, prejudice, and bias by:
 - Having students identify when they make assumptions about people based on certain identifiable characteristics (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, religion) rather than individual traits, including any negative reactions they have toward others based on those assumptions
 - Encouraging students to avoid acting on their stereotypes, prejudice, and bias toward others

Encourage students to respect and celebrate differences

- School personnel can encourage students to respect and celebrate those who are different from them by encouraging students to be:
 - Respectful, courageous, fair, honest, responsible, trustworthy, virtuous, caring, and compassionate toward others
 - Accountable for their actions toward others while at school, at home, and in life (in general)