

Course Title: Mental Health and Wellness: Social Emotional Strategies for Students and Teachers	
Number of Content Modules: 5	Grade Levels: PreK-12
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Course Description

This course equips educators with a deep understanding of the mental health challenges students and teachers face. By addressing these challenges through the lens of social-emotional learning, educators develop practical skills to create nurturing, inclusive, and supportive classroom environments. As a result, they will be better prepared to enhance students' well-being and their own, ultimately contributing to a healthier, more productive educational community.

This course delves into the critical intersection of mental health and education, comprehensively exploring the challenges and strategies surrounding mental health and wellness in the educational context. Educators explore the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on students' mental health and well-being, from as young as preschool through high school graduation and beyond. They learn to identify signs of ACEs, gain strategies for creating trauma-sensitive classrooms, and examine the prevalence of mental health challenges among students and the broader educational community.

The course also addresses the stigma surrounding mental health and ways to reduce it within educational settings. Educators will delve into the core concepts of social-emotional learning (SEL) and its role in promoting positive mental health. Through practical strategies for integrating social-emotional learning into classroom activities, educators learn how to implement techniques that promote mental health and well-being for students. For example, the course includes strategies to help young children recognize and name emotions and where they feel them in their bodies, students in upper elementary to understand the complexity of emotions and their causes, middle schoolers make connections between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and high schoolers understand how their expression of thoughts and emotions affects themselves and others.

The course explores the importance of self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and relationship-building in fostering students' well-being and provides a spectrum of age appropriate strategies to support the development of these social emotional skills.

For early learners, the course includes strategies for developing listening skills to identify others' feelings and perspectives. Teachers of upper elementary students learn strategies to help students understand and discuss others' feelings and perspectives. Teachers of middle schooler students learn strategies to help students develop curiosity about the lived experiences of others. High school strategies focus on helping students use curiosity and communication skills to work collaboratively across lines of difference in group contexts.

Educators face many stressors in their profession, and the course includes strategies to help teachers maintain their mental health and wellness. The course concludes with an examination of self-care techniques, stress management, and strategies for building a supportive professional community.

Course Objectives

- CO.1** Identify the prevalence and signs of common mental health disorders identified in students, including anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and post-traumatic stress, and response strategies for supporting students.
- CO.2** Deconstruct socialized perspectives on mental health and social-emotional well-being.
- CO.3** Explain the relationship between mental health, social-emotional learning, and equity in the context of education.
- CO.4** Understand how marginalization both contributes to the development of mental health disorders and exacerbates existing mental health disorders for underserved populations, BIPOC students, members of LGBTQIA+ communities, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness.
- CO.5** Deconstruct social and economic inequities, such as inequities related to economic stability, physical environment, food security, community safety, and health care to determine their impact on the mental health of members of marginalized communities.
- CO.6** Compare social-emotional learning strategies to determine fit for the individual and context.
- CO.7** Critique practices for social-emotional learning through an asset-focused, anti-racist lens.
- CO.8** Evaluate social-emotional learning competencies through an equity-focused lens and set professional goals for improvement.
- CO.9** Apply strategies for supporting the mental health and social-emotional well-being of self and colleagues.

Course Outline

Course Introduction Module

Course available completely online
(24/7 and Self-Paced)

Assignments due by the end of the term.

Module Topics

In this module, you will learn about the course set-up, expectations for learning and collaborating, meet your colleagues, and reflect on your prior knowledge about teaching with artificial intelligence.

- Course Navigation & Methodology
- Course Description
- A Transformative Approach to Education
- Expectations and Community Agreements for Engaging in Brave Dialogue
- Community Building Circle: Course Story
- Course Objectives

Module 1: Mental Health and Adverse Childhood Experiences

Module Topics

In this module, you will explore the many facets of a person's life that impact their mental health and make connections between socialized beliefs and mental wellness.

Section 1: *Beliefs and Assumptions about Mental Health*

- *Reflect on It!* Language Matters: Person-First Recovery Models of Mental Health [80 min]
- *Reflect on It!* Comparing Medical Models and Person-First Recovery Models [45 min]
- *Reflect on It!* Cycles of Socialization: Beliefs About Mental Health [30 min]

Section 2: *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Mental Health*

- *Reflect on It!* Intersection of Mental Health and Marginalization [90 min]
- *Master It!* Mental Health Knowledge Check [10 min]
- *Learn about It!* Overview of Mental Health Challenges [5 min]

Section 3: *Prevalence of Mental Health Disorders*

- *Reflect on It!* Intersection of Mental Health and Marginalization [90 min]
- *Master It!* Mental Health Knowledge Check [10 min]
- *Learn about It!* Overview of Mental Health Challenges [5 min]

Module 2: Mental Health in Education

Module Topics

This module focuses on four of the most common mental health challenges people face in the United States - anxiety, depression, substance use disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder. You will learn about these four conditions, including what to look for and the treatments available. You will also have the opportunity to reflect on how these diagnoses (either for teachers, students, or family members) could impact students' experiences in schools.

Section 1: Anxiety in Children and Youth

- *Learn about It!* Overview of Anxiety [15 min]
- *Learn about It!* Anxiety Signs and Symptoms [30 min]
- *Learn about It!* Strategies to Support Students with Anxiety [30 min]
- *Practice It!* Supporting Students with Anxiety [60 min]

Section 2: Depression in Children and Youth

- *Learn about It!* Overview of Depression [45 min]
- *Learn about It!* Depression in Children and Teens [30 min]
- *Learn about It!* Suicidal Ideation [20 min]
- *Learn about It!* Depression and ACEs [5 min]

Section 3: Substance Use Disorder in Youth

- *Learn about It!* Understanding Substance Use Disorder [45 min]
- *Learn about It!* Teens and Substance Use Disorder [30 min]
- *Reflect on It!* Substance Abuse Statistics [90 min]
- *Learn about It!* Potential Family Impact [45 min]
- *Reflect on It!* Perspective Taking [45 min]

Section 4: Trauma in Children and Youth

- *Learn about It!* Overview of PTSD [30 min]
- *Practice It!* PTSD in Schools [45 min]
- *Learn about It!* Supporting Learners with PTSD [30 min]
- *Reflect on It!* Trauma-Informed Teaching [90 min]

Section 5: District Policies for Responding to Crisis

- *Learn about It!* Mandated Reporting [5 min]
- *Practice It!* Mandated Reporting in Your Workplace [30 min]
- *Master It!* Mental Health Support Scenarios [60 min]

Module 3: Connecting Mental Health and Social Emotional Learning

Module Topics

In this module, educators will learn an overview of social-emotional learning (SEL), why SEL is important, and the CASEL 5 framework for SEL.

Section 1: *An Overview of Social Emotional Learning (SEL)*

- *Learn about It!* Basics of Social-Emotional Learning [60 min]
- *Learn about It!* Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) [44 min]
- *Learn about It!* The Origins of SEL [45 min]
- *Learn about It!* Examples of SEL [40 min]
- *Learn about It!* Social Emotional Learning Practices [15 min]
- *Learn about It!* SEL Research [30 min]

Section 2: *Social-Emotional Learning and Mental Health*

- *Learn about It!* Mental Health Status of Children and Adolescents [30 min]
- *Learn about It!* Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs [20 min]
- *Learn about It!* SEL Facilitates Mental Health [45 min]

Section 3: *SEL Through an Equity-Focused Lens*

- *Learn about It!* The Connection Between SEL and DEI [30 min]
- *Learn about It!* Anti-Racist Approaches to SEL [60 min]
- *Master It!* Using SEL to Promote Equity: Social Awareness [120 min]
- *Master It!* Module 3 Knowledge Check [30 min]

Module 4: Supporting Students' Mental Health through Social Emotional Learning

Module Topics

In this module, educators will learn SEL strategies for promoting students' mental health and wellness.

Section 1: *Assessment of Current Practices*

- *Reflect on It!* Self-Assessment of SEL Practices [30 min]
- *Practice It!* Chats with Students [40 min]

Section 2: *SEL Strategies for Students*

- *Learn about It!* Integrating SEL into Instruction [45 min]
- *Practice It!* Incorporating SEL into Lessons [30 min]
- *Learn about It!* Resources for Teachers [30 min]
- *Learn about It!* Mindfulness in the Classroom [20 min]

- *Reflect on It!* Give One, Get One: Mindfulness Activities [30 min]
- *Learn about It!* Classroom Activities [45 min]
- *Learn about It!* Picture Books that Support SEL [30 min]

Section 3: SEL Strategies for Students

- *Master It!* Using SEL to Promote Equity: Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision-Making [115 min]

Module 5: Supporting Educators’ Mental Health through Social Emotional Learning

Module Topics

In this module, you will assess your current use of SEL practices to support your own wellness and explore why mental health and SEL topics are important for educators.

Section 1: A Mindset for SEL

- *Reflect on It!* Developing a Growth Mindset for SEL [45 min]
- *Practice It!* How SEL Mindsets Influence Practice [40 min]

Section 2: Mental Health Impacts on Educators

- *Reflect on It!* Prevalence of Burnout in Educators [20 min]
- *Learn About It!* The Importance of Addressing Stress and Burnout [60 min]
- *Practice It!* Chats with Colleagues [45 min]

Section 3: SEL Strategies for Educators

- *Learn About It!* SEL is for Educators [20 min]
- *Learn About It!* Strategies for Time Management and Productivity [45 min]
- *Learn About It!* Mindfulness Practices for Educators [30 min]
- *Reflect on It!* Setting Intentions [30 min]

Section 4: Developing a Plan

- *Master It!* Using SEL to Promote Equity: Self-Awareness and Self-Management [115 min]

Course Wrap-Up Module

Module Topics

In the Course Wrap-Up Module, you will reflect on your self-efficacy for mastering the course objectives.

Section 1: Summative Course Reflection

- Master It! Summative Course Reflection [30min]
- Reflect on It! Course Evaluation and Feedback [30min]
- Learn about It! Course Reference List