



Promoting Student Well-Being: Simple Classroom Strategies

Educators play a vital role in supporting student mental health and well-being each day. Building mental health literacy in your role includes knowing how to create safe, supportive, and responsive classroom environments. The strategies below offer simple, practical ways to promote connection, regulation, and resilience for all students.

The following strategies are simple, research-based ways to promote positive mental health in your classroom.

1. **Warm and Intentional Greetings:** Stand at the door each morning and greet each student by name. Use a smile, eye contact, or a preferred greeting (wave, fist bump, handshake) to acknowledge them. A consistent greeting fosters a sense of belonging and connection. When students feel seen and valued, they are more engaged in learning (Cook et al., 2018).
2. **Morning Meetings or Daily Check-ins:** Begin the day with a short meeting where students can share a thought, feeling, or goal. Use a structured question like, “What is one thing you’re looking forward to today?” Regular check-ins build emotional awareness and strengthen classroom relationships. They also provide valuable insight into students’ mental well-being, allowing for intervention if needed (CASEL, 2023).
3. **CASEL’s Three Signature Practices:** Start with a *welcoming inclusion activity*, like a check-in or community question, to build connection. Incorporate *engaging strategies*, such as turn-and-talks, to ensure all students feel involved. End with an *intentional close*, like a reflection or takeaway, to leave students feeling valued and accomplished. These simple practices foster belonging, strengthen relationships, and support student well-being (CASEL).
4. **The 2x10 Relationship Strategy:** Identify a student who may need extra support. Spend two minutes each day for ten days engaging them in a personal (non-academic) conversation about their interests, hobbies, or experiences. Intentional, consistent interactions strengthen teacher-student relationships, which lead to improved behavior and academic engagement, especially for students who may be struggling (Gragg et al., 2022).
5. **Emotional Regulation Plans:** Create an individualized plan to help students manage emotions by identifying triggers and selecting coping strategies like deep breathing or movement breaks. Teaching emotional regulation builds self-awareness and resilience, leading to improved behavior, engagement, and academic success (Durlak et al., 2011).

[Emotional Regulation Plans | Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#)

6. **Feelings Check-in Chart:** Use tools like a mood meter, emotion chart, or a simple thumbs-up/down system to have students express how they feel throughout the day. Regular emotional check-ins help students develop self-awareness and provide educators with insight into their well-being, allowing for timely support (Hoffman et al., 2020).
7. **Mindfulness and Breathing Activities:** Incorporate a short mindfulness exercise, such as deep breathing, guided imagery, or the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique, before and or after transitions like lunch, recess, or specials. Mindfulness reduces stress, improves focus, and enhances students' ability to manage emotions, leading to a more positive learning environment (Zenner et al., 2014).
8. **Strength-Based Affirmations and Encouragement:** Give students specific, meaningful affirmations based on their effort, growth, or character (e.g., "I noticed how kind you were to your classmate today. That was thoughtful!"). Affirmations build students' confidence, resilience, and motivation, reinforcing a growth mindset and a sense of self-worth (Dweck, C.S., 2006).

Tips for Implementation ✓

- Start Small:** Choose one or two strategies and build from there.
- Be Consistent:** The impact of these strategies grows with repetition.
- Model Healthy Habits:** Demonstrate emotional regulation and positive self-talk daily.
- Adapt for Your Classroom:** Modify strategies to fit your students' needs and ages.

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