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Addressing Self-Esteem: A Counseling Group Manual for Upper Elementary Students

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Addressing Self-Esteem: A Counseling Group
Manual for Upper Elementary Students

A Plan B Project Presented to
the Graduate Faculty of
Minnesota State University Moorhead

By

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Abstract

An individual's self-esteem is the lens through which that person views themselves in all aspects of their life. Self-esteem is present throughout the lifespan but generally fluctuates and is impacted by various internal and external factors. The self-esteem of children and adolescents, however, is especially critical because it sets the foundation for self-esteem throughout adulthood and is related to both positive and negative life outcomes. Counseling interventions from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, positive psychology and mindfulness have been shown to be effective for improving self-esteem in this population (Zhong et al., 2021; Su & Swank, 2019; Larking & Thyer, 1999; Wisner et al., 2010; Marshall et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2021; Owens & Patterson, 2013; German, 2013). The Elementary Students Self-Esteem Group discussed in this paper strives to increase the self-esteem of group members by utilizing a combination of psychoeducation, positive psychology, mindfulness, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy techniques. This group curriculum is 8 weeks in length with each session taking place during the school day for 30 minutes. Psychoeducation at the start of the group will help students understand what self-esteem is, what impacts self-esteem and examining their own self-esteem. Subsequent sessions use various interventions to help challenge negative self-concepts, positively reframe thoughts and behaviors relating to self-esteem and pinpoint unique characteristics that students like about themselves. Other interventions that will be addressed include social skills development and emotion regulation.

Keywords: self-esteem, children, school counseling interventions

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Literature Review	6
What is Self-Esteem	6
Importance of Self-Esteem in Youth.....	7
Factors that Influence Self-Esteem.....	8
Self-Esteem Interventions.....	14
Benefits of Group Counseling in Schools.....	17
Conclusion.....	19
Group Overview	20
Weekly Overview	22
Evaluation of Group	32
References	34
Appendices	40
Appendix A	40
Appendix B	41
Appendix C	42
Appendix D	43
Appendix E	45
Appendix F	60
Appendix G	65

Introduction

Self-esteem is an important part of daily life for all individuals, but it can be especially important for children and adolescents. There are numerous factors that can influence an individual's level of self-esteem. Some of the factors that impact self-esteem include academic achievement, subjective well-being, school connectedness, parental and peer influences and experiencing bullying or victimization (Yang et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2021; Birkeland et al., 2014; Leeuwis et al., 2015; Zhong et al., 2021; Rostiana et al., 2018). Self-esteem has also been associated with both positive and negative life outcomes and satisfaction. For instance, low self-esteem has been linked to various negative consequences such as increased risk of drug/alcohol use, suicidal ideation/attempts, mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression as well as behavioral disruptions in school (Ozturk & Acikgoz, 2021; Marshall et al., 2013; Metsapelto et al., 2020; Arens et al., 2013; Velez-Grau & Lindsey, 2022; Wood et al., 2014). Conversely, youth with too high self-esteem run the risk of developing narcissism and increased aggression (Diamantopoulou et al., 2008). However, in general, high self-esteem has been shown to have positive outcomes for youth such as increased academic achievement, good social skills, greater levels of responsibility, leadership, and self-management skills (Larkin & Crumb, 2017; Ozturk & Acikgoz, 2021). As a result, helping youth find a balance between too low self-esteem and too high self-esteem is critical for development and long-term life outcomes.

Elementary school counselors have a unique opportunity to identify signs of low self-esteem in students and offer interventions to increase students' self-esteem during important developmental milestones. Research has identified several interventions that can help increase self-esteem in elementary aged children. Including: positive psychology interventions, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) interventions like teaching coping skills and utilizing mindfulness

practices such as meditation and relaxation techniques (Zhong et al., 2021; Su & Swank, 2019; Larking & Thyer, 1999; Wisner et al., 2010; Marshall et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2021; Owens & Patterson, 2013; German, 2013). All of these interventions can be used or modified for use in individual sessions and in small groups.

The Elementary Students Self-Esteem Group discussed in this paper aims to help improve the self-esteem of members through a mixture of mindfulness, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy and positive psychology interventions. This group will meet once a week for 8 weeks for 30 minutes a session. Sessions will take place during the school day in the school counselor's office. This is meant for elementary students in 4th and 5th grade who have been screened for low self-esteem using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, acting as a pre-test assessment for members as well. Halfway through the group after the 5th group session participants will take the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale again to observe any changes at the half-way mark. Final student outcomes will be assessed at the conclusion of the group where students will take the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale two weeks after the final group session.

Literature Review

What is Self-Esteem

Self-esteem has been described as an individual's negative and positive evaluations of themselves (Yang et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2021). High self-esteem indicates an individual feels worthy and respects themselves while low self-esteem implies self-dissatisfaction, self-rejection, and self-contempt (Lim, 2020; Zhong et al., 2021; Davis-Kean & Sandler, 2001; Yang et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2021). Individuals with low self-esteem are more likely to report feelings of loneliness, indifference, anxiety, and depression (Moloud et al., 2022). These individuals are also reported to have poor self-management skills and disruptive classroom behaviors (Larkin & Crumb, 2017; Larkin & Thyer, 1999). On the other hand, students with high self-esteem typically demonstrate characteristics of responsibility, leadership, and self-management (Larkin & Crumb, 2017). Self-esteem can influence many areas of an individual's life and is thus an important component of an individual's overall well-being throughout the life span (Ozturk & Acikgoz, 2021; Yang et al., 2018).

An individual's self-esteem emerges from the combination of interactions with family members, friends or peers and society as a whole (Yang et al., 2018). These external interactions are then internalized by the individual and mediated by their self-conceptions (Yang et al., 2018). There are a variety of factors that influence self-esteem in children; for example, children's self-esteem is enhanced when they are able to meet goals that are achievable and reasonable for their age (Larkin & Crumb, 2017). Similarly, working with others like parents, peers and other role models like teachers or school counselors can result in personal affirmation and thus the development of positive self-esteem (Larking & Crumb, 2017).

It is also important to note that self-esteem fluctuates throughout the lifespan and a critical period of transition is between childhood and adolescence or between elementary and middle school. Self-esteem is usually higher during childhood and then lowers during adolescence but eventually increases throughout adulthood peaking around 50 or 60 years of age (Helwig & Ruprecht, 2017). As a result, it is important to help children and adolescents build and maintain positive self-concepts and self-esteem at the end of their elementary years, between 4th and 5th grade, and into their middle school years.

Importance of Self-Esteem in Youth

Self-esteem is an important aspect of all people's lives, but especially for youth because the self-esteem levels of children and adolescents have been linked to numerous life outcomes—both positive and negative. For example, low self-esteem in youth has also been associated with adverse consequences; including, alcohol/drug use, teenage pregnancy, suicide, juvenile delinquency, loneliness, social anxiety, depression, and other mental illnesses (Ozturk & Acikgoz, 2021; Marshall et al., 2013; Metsapelto et al., 2020; Arens et al., 2013; Velez-Grau & Lindsey, 2022; Wood et al., 2014). Whereas high levels of self-esteem in youth have been associated with high academic achievement, good social relationships, characteristics associated with responsibility, self-management and leadership (Ozturk & Acikgoz, 2021; Larkin & Crumb, 2017). It is then important to encourage positive self-esteem and improve self-esteem in children for long-term mental health (Wood et al., 2014).

It is theorized that children's self-esteem is contingent on their self-concept in multiple areas of their life such as physical appearance, academic ability/achievement, behavioral competence such as performance ability in sports and social ability (Slutzky & Simpkins, 2009). Self-concept is the sum of all our experiences across the lifespan that influence our behaviors,

opinions, social interactions, and our evaluations of these experiences (Davis-Kean & Sandler, 2001). The elementary years in particular are critical for individuals because experiences during this time are a foundation for their current and future achievement in school in addition to their sense of engagement and belonging in school (Liu et al., 2021). Experiences in elementary school also significantly impact developing self-esteem and life-long subjective well-being (Liu et al., 2021). Moreover, self-esteem interventions may be particularly helpful during the elementary years because as children's brains transition to puberty, their grey matter volume in their prefrontal cortex peaks. This results in dramatic reorganization of the pre-frontal systems associated with an individual's capacity for self-reflection and self-regulation (Lewis et al., 2021). Elementary school counselors then have a unique opportunity to encourage positive self-concepts and as a result, self-esteem in their students during this developmental milestone before they transition to middle school and adolescence.

Factors that Influence Self-Esteem

Academic Achievement

Several studies have found a positive relationship between academic achievement and self-esteem, including that academic achievement can predict self-esteem (Yang et al., 2018). One study conducted by Yang et al., (2018) found that elementary students with better academic achievement reported higher levels of self-esteem which also predicted higher levels of subjective well-being in school. Another study conducted by Metsapelto et al., (2020) found that higher grades in 5th grade positively predicted a higher global self-esteem in the 6th grade for both males and females. Lower self-esteem on the other hand was related to an increase in both emotional and internalizing problems in the overall sample and an increase in peer problems for males (Metsapelto et al., 2020). Internalizing problems are described as disturbances of emotion

and mood like anxiety and depression. Generally, this is observed as isolation and withdrawal from peers (Metsapelto et al., 2020). In addition, positive or negative academic achievements can impact how children develop a sense of self-esteem or self-worth (Davis-Kean & Sandler, 2001). Poor academic performance in particular may lead to compromised peer relationships due to peer rejection or social stigmas surrounding low grades which leads to more pronounced internalized problems (Metsapelto et al., 2020). Children often internalize feedback about their academic performance from others and if they perceive they are struggling or failing academically, they are more likely to form negative self-perceptions and self-concepts, thus lowering their self-esteem (Metsapelto et al., 2020).

Subjective Well-Being and School Connectedness

Subjective well-being in regards to school is defined as a student's emotional experiences and subjective cognitive evaluations in their school lives based on their personal standards (Liu et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2018). Prior research has found significant connections between school-aged children's subjective well-being in school and their future educational outcomes, school behavior and school expectations including self-esteem (Liu et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2018). For example, Liu et al., (2021) reported that individuals who report higher levels of self-esteem also typically experience higher subjective well-being. Suggesting that addressing the subjective well-being of students could also influence their self-esteem.

A similar connection between self-esteem and social or school connectedness has been found. Social connectedness is the subjective emotional sense of belonging to, feeling understood, valued, and cared for by others. This can be seen in multiple contexts including in the family unit and in organizations like school (Velez-Grau & Lindsey, 2022). School connectedness is described as a student's perception and belief that adults and peers in the school

care about both their learning and personal identities (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009, as cited in Liu et al., 2020, p. 391). Connectedness to school has direct and indirect effects on students' academic success (Bryan et al., 2012, as cited in Liu et al., 2020, p. 391). For example, school connectedness contributes to decreases in risky behaviors like substance abuse by students and is a predictor of mental health and psychological adjustment in students. In fact, one study found that a sense of school connectedness and teacher support were associated with fewer depressive symptoms (Joyce, 2019). Conversely, a lack of school connectedness can be a factor for at-risk situations like bullying, social isolation, and suicidal ideation (Liu et al., 2020).

As for what influences school connectedness, there are two contextual factors that are associated with school connectedness including school support for learning and acceptance of diversity (Liu et al., 2020). School support for learning refers to a student's perception that they are supported by adults at the school while acceptance of diversity refers to a student's perception that the school is accepting and fair to all students (Liu et al., 2020). Other factors that can influence school connectedness can include smaller school size, opportunities for students to provide meaningful input into school policies, effective classroom management and moderate or less harsh school discipline policies (Joyce, 2019). In classrooms that experience connectedness, students are more able to enhance their social and academic connections which in turn promotes self-regulation and executive functions that are necessary for both learning and social success broadly (Bowers et al., 2019). In addition, feelings of mutuality that are created in a school with high levels of connectedness can also go beyond the classroom and can impact the school climate at large.

School connectedness has numerous implications for school counseling practices including helping students learn and master social skills, self and social awareness, interpersonal skills, and empathy. Supporting students' subjective well-being at school can be just as important for the development and maintenance of positive self-esteem. School counselors can then assist in supporting school connectedness and the subjective well-being of students by utilizing classroom lessons, individual student meetings, or small group sessions.

Parental Influences

Parents can influence a child's self-esteem development not only during childhood and adolescence but across the lifespan (Lim, 2020). When parents are emotionally available, supportive and loving towards their child's attempts at mastering various tasks, the child as a result may view themselves as competent and valuable, indications of high self-esteem (Birkeland et al., 2014). According to Birkeland et al., (2014), children who expressed having close relationships with their parents had higher global self-esteem in adolescence. Conversely, children with low levels of closeness to parents are more likely to experience symptoms of depression, loneliness, and fewer opportunities to learn social skills; all of which may be associated with development of negative global self-esteem (Birkeland et al., 2014). Suggesting that low levels of closeness to parents increases the risk of developing a more negative global self-esteem (Birkeland et al., 2014). Finally, parent-child cohesion is believed to have a significant impact on the development of children's self-esteem and has been shown to be closely related to academic achievement (Wang et al., 2021). Parent-child cohesion refers to the emotional bond between a parent and child and the degree of supportive interactions in a parent-child system (Wang et al., 2021). Such as the parent and child talking about worries having joint conversations etc. (Wang et al., 2021). In one article by Wang et al., (2021), the authors mention

that parent-child cohesion, academic achievement, and self-esteem are so closely related that they can be described as a dynamic and mutually beneficial system. So, what impacts one will impact or influence the other. When a parent is more sensitive to a child's concerns, this may improve the child's self-esteem, which in turn may strengthen the bond or cohesion between the parent and child (Wang et al., 2021).

Peer Influences

Several models and studies on self-esteem have shown that an individual's self-esteem is strongly connected to the quantity and quality of their social networks or relationships (Lim, 2020; Birkeland et al., 2014; Marshall et al., 2013). With some studies suggesting that social relationships can predict and influence self-esteem (Lim, 2020; Liu et al., 2021). Peer acceptance in particular has been linked to self-esteem, feelings of loneliness, engagement in school, and perceived friendship quality (Antonopoulou et al., 2019). For instance, if a child often perceives that their interactions with friends are a failure that results in ridicule that child will feel more anxious and begin to feel inferior thus lowering their self-esteem (Nihayati et al., 2020).

On the other hand, friendship can result in numerous positive consequences for individual's social and emotional well-being such as their self-worth, self-esteem, and sense of acceptance or belonging (Laursen et al., 2021). This may be because when an individual has high self-esteem, they are more likely to actively develop and maintain social networks because they believe they have social worth and will consequently engage in behaviors to build that social support (Marshall et al., 2013). However, children with low self-esteem tend to minimize their interactions with peers and self-isolate due to anxiety and to avoid rejection thus failing to build or maintain social supports (Lim, 2020; Marshall et al., 2013).

Research has suggested that mastering social skills or social competencies and helping children foster friendships with their peers can promote and maintain positive global self-esteem (Birkeland et al., 2014). The elementary years in particular are considered important for shaping and promoting prosocial behavior which in turn would promote social relationships going forward (Liu et al., 2021). In fact, in one study, teachers' ratings of kindergartners' social competencies were associated with life outcomes at 25 years-old; more specifically in domains such as educational success, employment, criminal activity, mental health and substance use or abuse (Lewis et al., 2021). Not only this but engaging in prosocial behavior can promote positive self-images and social development (Liu et al., 2021). As a result, these positive social interactions and relationships will influence a child's self-worth and thus their self-esteem.

Bullying and Victimization

While positive experiences can influence self-esteem, so do negative experiences in childhood and adolescence like experiencing bullying and victimization. Bullying and victimization are associated with increases in symptoms of anxiety, depression, and damaged self-esteem in elementary children (Leeuwis et al., 2015; Zhong et al., 2021; Rostiana et al., 2018). When children with higher self-esteem are bullied or victimized in elementary school, their self-esteem can be damaged and begin to develop negatively. The damaged self-esteem could then transfer the negative effects associated with victimization to feelings of anxiety thus resulting in the development of internalizing problems (Leeuwis et al., 2015). Similarly, children reporting low self-esteem can have negative beliefs and expectations surrounding their future peer acceptance which puts them at an increased risk of more isolation and bullying by peers (Metsapelto et al., 2020). This could in turn become a vicious cycle of experiencing bullying by

peers, internalizing the victimization, socially isolating oneself from peers which would then lead to more social rejection by peers.

Individuals with damaged self-esteem also often set high standards for themselves and are overly critical of themselves. When they are unable to meet these high self-expectations, they begin to experience an increase in internalizing problems such as depression (Leeuwis et al., 2015). Moreover, the elementary years are a critical period for the development and onset of internalizing problems (Leeuwis et al., 2015). A study with 11-year-old children found that damaged self-esteem at 11 predicted an increase in internalizing problems for those children over the ages 11 to 12 (Leeuwis et al., 2015). A damaged self-esteem in adults and adolescence has been shown to be a predictor of increases in childhood internalizing problems (Leeuwis et al., 2015; Zhong et al., 2021; Metsapelto et al., 2020).

Self-Esteem Interventions

Mindfulness Interventions

Mindfulness is best described as a form of attention training that helps participants focus on the present moment and pay specific attention to their environment and themselves in a non-judgmental way (van de Weijer-Bergsma et al., 2014). Mindfulness interventions can be used with individuals or small groups and have been shown to reduce anxiety symptoms as well as attention and behavioral problems in children and adolescents (van de Weijer-Bergsma et al., 2014). Some mindfulness interventions that school counselors use include mindful breathing, sensory awareness, and meditation (Su & Swank, 2019). Meditative practices are one of the mind-body practices that are most frequently used, including in school settings (Wisner et al., 2010). In addition, meditative practices have numerous benefits for adolescents including cognitive benefits, emotional and behavioral self-regulation and improving self-esteem (Wisner

et al., 2010). Meditation can also help improve social relationships in adolescents due to the practice with self-regulation and coping skills that meditation utilizes (Wisner et al., 2010). Furthermore, when practiced regularly meditation can be learned quickly and has been shown to be effective for use in brief group, generally 4-8 weeks (Wisner et al., 2010). By teaching and practicing mindfulness techniques with students who struggle with low self-esteem they could learn crucial skills to help increase and maintain positive self-esteem.

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy Interventions

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is an effective treatment model for adolescents with internalizing problems or disorders whether it is delivered in an individual or group format (Ngo et al., 2020). One study by Moloud et al., (2022) also found that utilizing Cognitive-Behavioral Group Therapy was effective for improving levels of optimism and self-esteem in patients with Major Depressive Disorder. CBT is a structured form of treatment that uses a variety of strategies to change a client's behavior, thoughts, and feelings; this type of intervention generally requires the client to practice skills in and out of sessions (Ngo et al., 2020). Several cognitive-behavioral approaches have been shown to be useful with young children; including, problem-solving strategies, modeling, roleplay, alternative thinking, social skills training, self-instruction, and covert imagery (Larking & Thyer, 1999). For example, teaching coping and problem-solving skills specifically in relation to bullying or victimization like supportive strategies, reactions towards bullies and avoiding emotion-focused strategies can also help maintain healthy levels of self-esteem in victimized children and give them tools to work through conflicts with their peers (Zhong et al., 2021).

Self-management techniques also help children increase their ability to reduce anxiety, manage their attention and increase self-awareness (Su & Swank, 2019). Effective self-

management is one way school counselors can help students identify and regulate negative emotions that may influence their self-esteem. Alternative thinking work can also be beneficial for children experiencing low self-esteem because it addresses the cognitive mechanisms by restructuring negative core self-beliefs into adaptive schemas. Such as focusing on cognitive areas that maintain negative beliefs and self-critical rumination which is common for individual's experiencing low self-esteem (Ngo et al., 2020). By helping students understand their thoughts as well as how thoughts can influence their emotions and behavior, they are able to change and replace negative thoughts that can be detrimental to self-esteem.

Positive Psychology Interventions

Positive Psychology is a counseling and psychological theory that focuses on an individual's positive subjective experiences; specifically, their well-being, satisfaction (Flora, 2019). According to Owens and Patterson (2013), positive psychology interventions have been shown to increase the subjective well-being of adolescents; in particular, practicing gratitude and using the possible selves intervention. There are various interventions to practice gratitude, but they typically take one of two forms: counting blessings or a direct act of gratitude that involves a direct interpersonal connection. For instance, an individual could make a list of things they are grateful for in a journal or write a letter to someone they are grateful for and give them the letter (Owens & Patterson, 2013).

Another intervention strategy that has been shown to help improve self-esteem, personal affect and life satisfaction is the possible selves intervention. Possible selves refers to views that a person has about themselves that may not be true at the moment but could be true in the future (Owens & Patterson, 2013). It is theorized that this intervention helps participants identify a goal which increases motivation, self-improvement behaviors and self-regulation and as a result

greater self-esteem and life satisfaction (Owens & Patterson, 2013). In fact, in one study conducted by Owens and Patterson (2013), they found that elementary aged children experienced significant increases in their global self-esteem post-intervention. Owens and Patterson (2013), mention in their discussion that focusing on an ideal imagined future self may have helped to reduce participants' current insecurities and boosted their self-confidence. Furthermore, the children made connections between their desired selves and some of the positive characters that they currently possess which emphasized their positive personal strengths and improved their self-esteem (Owens & Patterson, 2013). During the possible selves intervention, participants are asked to discuss their negative and positive possible selves and their strategies for achieving their desired possible selves while avoiding their undesired possible selves. One study found that students who participated in the possible selves intervention that targeted academic possible selves had higher standardized test scores, improved grades, increased academic initiative and decreased absences, school misbehavior and depression symptoms (Owens & Patterson, 2013).

It is also important to note that positive psychology interventions often involve a lot of writing which can be difficult for younger children, an alternative for younger children might include drawing and coloring. Drawing is frequently used in interventions with children and can help children participate in the activity without potential language limitations that could be present with writing activities (Owens & Patterson, 2013). For example, children who are very shy or have learning disabilities or other challenges that impact their verbal abilities drawing is a non-threatening way for participants to express themselves (Owens & Patterson, 2013; German, 2013).

Benefits of Group Counseling in Schools

Group counseling is considered an efficient and effective intervention to help support children and adolescents (Shechtman, 2014). It is also recognized as an integral part of comprehensive school counseling programs by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) as it has numerous applications in schools and several unique benefits in a school setting (Steen et al., 2007). For example, school counselors can use small groups to help address specific areas of concern such as friendships, problem solving, emotional or behavioral concerns to name a few (Shechtman, 2014; Steen et al., 2007). School group counseling is also optimal for prevention practices as they allow youth to access counseling services that they otherwise may not because of outside barriers like cost, stigma or transportation (Young et al., 2019). Benefits of utilizing small groups includes improvements in a variety of outcome criteria including grades, academic achievement, anxiety symptoms, self-esteem, externalizing and internalizing behavior and self-control (Shechtman, 2014). Elementary students who have participated in small groups have also reported increases in asking for help, openness, self-awareness, and positive attitudes related to school because of their participation in small groups (Larkin & Crumb, 2017). Working with elementary students in small groups has proven to help children increase their ability to trust and resolve problems with their peers and teachers (Larkin & Crumb, 2017).

Small groups also allow for interpersonal learning because the group process is designed to promote self-disclosure and encourage both positive and constructive feedback (Shechtman, 1993). Furthermore, small groups allow for a social atmosphere that fosters elements that are associated with friendship like support, empathy, care and sensitivity (Shechtman, 1993). By utilizing a small group format, participants are likely to build a sense of belonging and trust over time that would ultimately reduce defensiveness, improve communication, deepen self-

awareness and enhance self-acceptance and self-esteem (Shechtman, 1993). The skills taught and picked up in small group will also carry over into student's relationships and interactions outside of group (Wei et al., 2021). Students would also be exposed to various ways of thinking and problem solving between group members which could help expand a student's own thoughts, vision and ultimately their actions (Wei et al., 2021). This could have broad impacts in all areas of students' lives including the broader school climate and environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, self-esteem is an important aspect of an individual's development and life satisfaction. Youth with low self-esteem may experience adverse consequences in both the short and long term. There are a variety of factors that can influence an individual's level of self-esteem such as academic achievement, subjective well-being, parental and peer influences and bullying or victimization (Yang et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2021; Birkeland et al., 2014; Leeuwis et al., 2015; Zhong et al., 2021; Rostiana et al., 2018). There are also numerous interventions that have been successful in improving self-esteem in elementary aged children like mindfulness practices, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, and positive psychology interventions (Zhong et al., 2021; Su & Swank, 2019; Larking & Thyer, 1999; Wisner et al., 2010; Marshall et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2021; Owens & Patterson, 2013; German, 2013). School counselors have a unique opportunity to see early signs of low self-esteem in students and facilitate interventions to help support students.

Implementing a self-esteem small group in a school would be beneficial to help foster self-esteem understanding, development and maintenance at a critical developmental period for 4th and 5th graders. The main goal of the Elementary Students Self-Esteem Group Manual is to help improve the self-esteem of students who have been identified with symptoms of low self-

esteem through a mixture of psychoeducation, positive psychology, mindfulness, and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy interventions. Interventions described throughout this paper are versatile and can be adapted for use in individual sessions, small group sessions, or classroom lessons.

Group Overview

Type of Group

This group will operate as a closed group for students who have been identified as having low self-esteem. Participants will initially be referred to the facilitator by either self-referral or staff and teacher referral. Students will then be screened for group participation by being administered the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Students who score for low self-esteem using the scoring key for the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale will be invited to join the group and their parents or guardians will receive an informational handout explaining the group. Closed group status was chosen to maintain consistency of members and promote a more cohesive therapeutic group environment. This group will be in alignment with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model for Comprehensive School Counseling. Including following ASCA's Ethical Standards for school counselors and utilizing the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success to guide the goals of each group session. The ASCA Standards met and covered each session are listed under each session in the Weekly Overview.

Purpose

The purpose of this group is to increase the global self-esteem of elementary children between the ages of 9 to 11 or 4th and 5th grade. Helping students understand self-esteem and how to manage it early on will help prepare them for adolescence and maintain their self-esteem throughout their education and adulthood. Furthermore, it is important to start self-esteem

psychoeducation and maintenance early because of long-term effects of both positive and negative self-esteem.

Facilitator Qualifications

The facilitator of this group will be a Licensed School Counselor who holds a master's degree in counseling or school counseling. Other professionals that could lead this group include a Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor, Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker, or a Licensed Independent Social Worker. This program could also be run by a school counseling or social work master's student who is in their final semester of internship and working under the supervision of a licensed mental health professional.

Group Format

This counseling group is intended to be facilitated for 5 to 7 students for a duration of 8 weeks. The frequency of meetings for the group will be once a week for a total of 8 group sessions. Each session will take place in the school counselor's office and will be 30 minutes in length; the rationale for this is because 30 minutes is the typical time allotted for school counselors to facilitate small groups during the school day (Su & Swank, 2019).

Group Membership

The Elementary Students Self-Esteem group will consist of 5 to 7 students and is best served to those in fourth or fifth grade or between the ages of 9 to 11 years old. Participants will be screened for low self-esteem using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a 10-item self-reported inventory that measures an individual's global self-esteem (Metsapelto et al., 2020; Rosenberg, 1965). This assessment is commonly used to identify self-esteem in children, adolescents, and adults (Rosenberg, 1965). The facilitator(s) of

the group will also send parents/guardians a letter explaining the group and how to proceed if parents/guardians do not want their child to participate. An example template of this letter can be found in Appendix A.

Group Goals

The main goal of this group is to improve participant's self-esteem and how they view themselves through psychoeducation, peer support and encouragement from the school counselor. This group strives to create an environment where students can expand their understanding of self-esteem, explore their own self-esteem and learn practical skills to support their self-esteem going forward. By the end of this group, participants should be able to understand what self-esteem is, express their feelings about themselves and effectively use coping skills to regulate their emotions.

Weekly Overview

Week One

ASCA Standards: M1, M2, B-SS 2, B-SS 4, B-SS 9

Content Covered and Goals: This first session will be an introduction to the group; participants will be introduced to what group is and expectations of being a part of the group. Participants will also spend time getting to know one another through ice breaker activities.

Lesson of the week: This week will cover a variety of early group topics such as general group expectations, informed consent, and confidentiality. The facilitator of the group will lead these conversations but include student participation in the discussion of group rules and expectations by utilizing the social contract document described below and found in Appendix B. The conversation on confidentiality will also include the facilitator explaining confidentiality, limits

to confidentiality and stressing the importance of confidentiality of members outside of group but that complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Activities for the week:

1. Students will work with the facilitator to establish group rules and norms using the Social Contract document found in Appendix B. Each student could have a copy of the social contract if the facilitator deems appropriate; however, a copy should be kept by the facilitator to bring out at subsequent sessions to review rules and expectations as needed. Facilitators could also bring the social contract out and place in view of the participants during sessions and file it away after the sessions have ended.
2. The group will then participate in ice breaker activities to help students get to know one another and start to establish group cohesion. The group will play two games: The food name game and This or That.
 - a. The food name game—Have the group sit or stand in a circle. Participants will take turns sharing their name and a food that starts with the same letter of their name. However, students have to say the name and food of the students who went before them; so, by the end of the circle, the last person will have to name every participants' name and food. (Example: “Paul, Pasta,” next student in the circle “Pasta Paul, Strawberry Shaina!” etc.)
 - b. This or That: The facilitator will read the group two options (Ex: I prefer salty foods or I prefer sweet foods) and students have to choose which option they would prefer. If the room you are using has enough space, have one side of the room be option one and the other side of the room represent option two. Participants will then have to walk to the side of the room that represents the

option they choose. If the room used for group doesn't have a lot of space, students can raise their hand or stand up from their seat to choose their option. For a list of questions for this game see Appendix C.

Week Two

ASCA Standards: M1, M2, B-SS 1, B-SS 2, B-SS 4,

Content Covered and Goals: This week the group will explore what is self-esteem and some of the internal and external factors that influence self-esteem. The goal is to give participants a better understanding and working definition of self-esteem.

Lesson of the week: The facilitator will start the group session by asking participants to raise their hand if they have heard of self-esteem before, then ask the students what does self-esteem mean? The facilitator should then allow students to offer ideas about what self-esteem is. Next, the facilitator will show the video described below and the facilitator can ask the video discussion questions found in Appendix D. Finally, the group will conclude the session with a positive psychology activity.

Activities for the week: Activities this week include a video by RocketKids that explains self-esteem and offers some examples of low and high self-esteem as well as what can contribute to our self-esteem. There are discussion questions for the facilitator to read through and discuss with the group found in Appendix D. Finally, the group will use a positive psychology intervention that has the participants make a list of what they like about themselves which can be found on page 3 of the student's Self-Esteem Workbook found in Appendix E.

1. RocketKids Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6H0w03GJrQ&t=28s>
2. Facilitators will then lead the group in a discussion on the video; discussion questions and answer key can be found in Appendix D.

3. Participants will then complete the What I Like About Me in their Self-Esteem Workbook found in Appendix E. Participants will make a list of the things they like about themselves. They can write, draw, or color this list as they see fit!

Week Three

ASCA Standards: M1, M2, B-SS 1, B-SS 2, B-SS 4

Content Covered and Goals: Participants this week will learn about how our thoughts influence our feelings and behaviors as well as how to challenge negative thoughts and replace them with more adaptive or positive thoughts. Participants will then complete two worksheets in their Self-Esteem Workbook.

Lesson of the week: This week the facilitator will start off by explaining the Cognitive Behavioral (CBT) Triangle of how our thoughts influence our feelings and our behaviors. On pages 4 and 5 in the Self-Esteem Workbook there is a diagram of the CBT triangle to show participants. On the next page, there are examples of how negative and positive thoughts can impact our feelings and behaviors. The facilitator will go over these examples with the participants and then ask if there are any questions. Next, the participants will complete the Thoughts I have about Myself activity from the workbook. After that activity, the facilitator will talk about challenging negative thoughts and replacing them with more positive thoughts. This process starts with identifying whether a thought is negative or positive, then challenging the thought by asking questions such as “Is this true,” and then replacing the thought with a more adaptive or positive thought. Finally, the group will complete the Replacing Negative Thoughts worksheet found in the Self-Esteem Workbook.

Activities for the week: There will be two worksheets for participants to complete this week: Thoughts I have About Myself and Replacing Negative Thoughts found on pages 6 and 7 in the Self-Esteem Workbook.

1. For the Thoughts I have about Myself Worksheet, have the students write down some of the thoughts that they have about themselves in the thought bubbles. Next, the students will color in the thought bubbles that are positive thoughts in blue, negative thought bubbles in grey and neutral thought bubbles in purple.
2. The next worksheet, Replacing Negative Thoughts, will have the student take the negative thoughts they have about themselves from the previous worksheet and replace them with more positive thoughts. If a student didn't list any negative thoughts about themselves, they can either use their neutral thoughts from the previous activity or here are two example thoughts that one member or the whole group can analyze. It is up to the facilitator!
 - a. I failed my spelling test again; I'm never going to get better.
 - b. James made three baskets during the game, and I missed every shot, maybe I should just quit basketball.

Week Four

ASCA Standards: M1, M2, M5, B-SMS 2, B-SMS 7, B-SS 8

Content Covered and Goals: This week the group will address how to cope with low self-esteem and the facilitator will teach some coping techniques students will try out and then can use going forward.

Lesson of the week: The coping activity that will be taught today will be the Possible Selves Intervention from the theory of positive psychology. Students will complete the Best Possible

Selves worksheet in their Self-Esteem Workbook. Finally, students will practice a Body Scan Meditation inspired by mindfulness interventions.

Activities for the week: The facilitator should start by explaining that one way to cope with low self-esteem is to imagine your best possible self. This means thinking about who you want to be at your best, what you envision for yourself in the future. Participants will then complete the Best Possible Selves worksheet in their Self-Esteem Workbook. Next, the group will conclude with the facilitator reading a Body-Scan Script and having student participate. Finally, the facilitator will teach the group the Alternate Breathing Technique and practice it together. If time allows, the facilitator can lead a short discussion on how the students feel after the body scan and breathing exercise, what they liked about them or what they didn't like about them etc.

1. Worksheet directions: Have students write about their best possible future self, more specifically, what that best self looks like in three domains—their personal, social, and professional life. What are your hobbies? Do you have a pet? What are your friends like? What do you do with your friends? What is your job? Are you successful at that job? Etc. Students should be as detailed as possible and should write for at least 10-15 minutes.
2. Body Scan Directions: Facilitators will then ask students to sit still in their spots or find an appropriate spot in the room to lay down if the facilitator allows and close their eyes. The facilitator will then read the Body-Scan Script found on page 10 in the Self-Esteem Workbook. There is also a link to an audio version of the Body Scan if the facilitator would prefer that can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mGNXsHg22w>
3. Alternate Breathing Explanation: Facilitators will want to demonstrate this breathing method to help students better visualize and understand how it works. Here are the

instructions for the Alternate Breathing or Nostril Technique: For this exercise, you will breathe like normal except you plug one side of your nose at a time. Start by plugging your right nostril with your thumb then inhale through your open nostril. Next, release your left nostril and plug your left nostril with your pointer finger and exhale through your right nostril. Repeat for five cycles.

Week Five

ASCA Standards: M1, M2, M5, B-SMS 2, B-SMS 7, B-SS 8

Content Covered and Goals: Similar to the previous week the group will learn about other coping techniques for low self-esteem. Participants will have an opportunity to try out several coping strategies and discuss them as a group. Finally, at the end of the session facilitators will administer the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to gather information on self-esteem levels at the halfway point of group.

Lesson of the week: This week the group will be looking at other coping skills to help with low self-esteem starting with the facilitator playing an audio recording of a guided imagery script found below. Next, the facilitator will teach Flower Breathing to the group and try it together as a group. After that the participants will discuss Self-Care options found in their Self-Esteem Workbook. Finally, the facilitator will administer the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to gather data on self-esteem levels halfway through the group.

Activities for the week:

1. Facilitator should play this Guided Imagery video for the group:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TywQETck8E>

2. Flower Breathing Explanation: Have the students imagine they are smelling a flower and taking a deep breath in through their nose. Hold your breath for 3 seconds then exhale

through your mouth for 5 seconds. Repeat for 5 cycles. Resource from:

<https://www.mindfulmazing.com/10-breathing-exercises-for-kids-with-anxiety-or-anger/>

3. Self-Care Ideas: On page 10 of the Self-Esteem Workbook, there are various examples of self-care ideas for upper elementary students. Facilitators should go over a few examples from each column and explain that self-care refers to things we do to help keep ourselves healthy and happy. Self-care looks different for everyone, so it is important to try new self-care options to see what works best for you. The facilitator could then ask the students what from the list they have already tried and like, what they don't like, and what are new options they may want to try out.
4. Finally, the facilitator will administer the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. This is for the facilitator to score and keep after the session to track data after the group concludes.

Week Six

ASCA Standards: M1, M2, M4, M5, B-SS 4, B-SS 9,

Content Covered and Goals: The group will explore how to identify their strengths and use positive affirmations to speak kindly to themselves. Students will then participate in activities related to identifying strengths and using positive self-talk which can be found in the Self-Esteem Workbook in Appendix E.

Lesson of the week: At the start of the session the facilitator should remind students that there will be two more groups after this session to help students prepare for termination of the group. The facilitator will then start the lesson by explaining that they will be exploring how to identify their strengths, they will read a book together or watch a short film and then complete two worksheets in the Self-Esteem Workbook.

Activities for the week: The activities this week include playing the short film: “The Reflection in Me” by Marc Colagiovanni. The other activities will be the Mirror worksheet which connects with the video and the Positive Affirmations worksheet found in the Self-Esteem Workbook in Appendix E.

1. Here is a link to the short film “The Reflection in Me” by Marc Colagiovanni
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9OOXCu5XMg&t=83s>
2. Mirror Worksheet: This worksheet can be found on page 15 of the Self-Esteem Workbook and has the students draw and color a picture of themselves in the mirror then write 3 compliments about themselves on the lines below the mirror.
3. Positive Affirmations: After the students complete the mirror worksheet have them go to page 13 of their Self-Esteem Workbook. The facilitator should talk about what positive affirmations are and why they are helpful for our self-esteem. Then, the students will write a positive affirmation that they can repeat to themselves on the sticky notes.

Week Seven

ASCA Standards: M1, M2, M5, B-SS 1, B-SS 2, B-SS 4, B-SS 7, B-SS 8, B-SS 9

Content Covered and Goals: This week the group will cover how to encourage self-esteem in others through kindness as well as how gratitude can improve their self-esteem. Students will practice these skills by watching a video on spreading kindness and then complete an activity around showing kindness to others. Students will also practice gratitude by completing the Gratitude Jar Activity in their Self-Esteem Workbook.

Lesson of the week: The facilitator should start this group by reminding students that there will only be one more group after this session to help participants process and prepare for the termination of the group. After this, the facilitator will explain that the group will be talking

about how to encourage other's self-esteem through kindness. The group will watch a video about random acts of kindness and complete a kindness inspired activity. The group will also complete the Gratitude Jar worksheet in their Self-Esteem Workbook. The gratitude jar is meant to help students recognize the positives in their lives and ways others have been kind to them.

Activities for the week: There will be three activities this week: Life Vest Inside "One Day" video, spreading kindness coloring pages found in Appendix F and the gratitude jar on page 15 of the Self-Esteem Workbook.

1. Play the Life Vest Inside "One Day" video and talk about how being kind to others can increase both your self-esteem and their self-esteem. Here is the video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU>
2. Next, have the participants complete a spreading kindness activity; this involves the students either coloring one of the coloring pages found in Appendix F or writing a note to someone they appreciate. After the session is done, encourage the students to give the note or coloring page to the person they created it for.
3. Finally, the third activity is based around gratitude. The facilitator should explain that showing others kindness is one way that we can show our gratitude and that gratitude can help support your self-esteem. Then the facilitator should ask students if they know what gratitude is and offer this definition to the group: gratitude is being able to identify things that we are grateful for, things we appreciate in our life and world. The students will then complete the Gratitude Jar Activity found on page 15 in their Self-Esteem Workbook. They will list things they are grateful for inside the jar and color it as they desire!

Week Eight

ASCA Standards: M1, M2, M4, M5, B-SMS 10, B-SMS 7, B-SS 1, B-SS 2, B-SS 8, B-SS 9

Content Covered and Goals: This week will be the final session of the group. It will focus on reviewing what was covered, discussing strategies that helped students the most, and interventions participants can continue to do on their own going forward. The group will also play a final game together to celebrate the progress they have made.

Lesson of the week: The facilitator will start off the group by reminding participants that this will be the final group session and then review the work accomplished during the group. The facilitator will start with reviewing what self-esteem is and what high self-esteem looks like versus low self-esteem. Next, the facilitator will remind students of the various interventions taught throughout the group and lead a conversation to revisit what students liked or disliked about the activities and which ones were the most helpful for them.

Activities for the week: The activities for this week will be a discussion on the group and a self-esteem dice game to celebrate and support the group cohesion that has grown over the past seven sessions.

1. The facilitator will first review the work accomplished throughout the group then lead a discussion on what students found helpful or unhelpful.
2. The Self-Esteem Dice Game from the Cheerful Counselor on Teachers Pay Teachers can be found in Appendix G. Facilitators will create the dice by cutting out the template found in Appendix G. Participants will take turns rolling the dice, reading the question they roll and answering the question. There are also discussion questions that the facilitator can pose to the group after a roll, but it is up to the facilitator!

Evaluation of Group

To evaluate the effectiveness of this group, students participating will take the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale at 3 points during the group process. First, the participants will be

administered the scale during the initial screening for the group. This will act as a pre-test for each participant. At the end of the 5th group session students will take the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale again to examine progress half-way through the group. Finally, two weeks after the conclusion of the group students will be asked to complete the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale one more time. This allows the facilitator to have three assessments from each participant to see how self-esteem was impacted by the group experience and interventions.

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Appendix A

Example Parental Form

[Insert Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As a school counselor, my job is to help *all* students at [Insert School Name] succeed academically and socially at school and in life. One way I can do that is by offering small groups, which provide an opportunity to share and grow with fellow students.

A Fourth and Fifth-Grade small group focusing on **self-esteem** will be starting next week. The group will meet once a week for eight weeks. Discussions, activities, games, and videos will be used to teach concepts.

This group should give your child valuable skills in improving and maintaining positive self-esteem and help promote social skills through interactions with peers and being a part of a group. If you DO NOT wish to have your child to participate, please email or call me as soon as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel to contact me at **[Insert School Counselor's School Email]** or **[Insert School Counselor's School Phone Number]**

Thank you!

Sincerely,

[Insert School Counselor's Name]

[Insert School Name] School Counselor

Appendix B
Social Contract

We can create
our own social contract!

Work together to identify which rules you think are important to follow when you're in group:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

By signing this contract, you agree to follow these rules and expectations.

Name(s): _____

@IKC_thatschoolpsych

Appendix C

This or That Questions

This or That Questions

1. Fall or Spring
2. Watch the movie or Read the book
3. Visit the Mountains or Visit the Beach
4. Music or Physical Education
5. Get up Early or Stay up Late
6. Board Games or Color a Picture
7. Cat or Dog
8. Smoothie or Milkshake
9. Cookie or Cake
10. Camping or Hotel
11. Sour or Salty
12. Chocolate or Vanilla
13. Swimming Pool or Ocean
14. Fruits or Vegetables
15. Dancing or Running
16. Vacuum or Dishes
17. Watch a Sunrise or Watch a Sunset
18. Watch a Movie at the Theatre or Watch a Movie at Home

Appendix D

Video Discussion Questions

RocketKids Video Discussion Questions

1. What is self-esteem?
2. What does low self-esteem look like?
3. What does high self-esteem look like?
4. What 5 things does Vivian mention that you can do to feel good about yourself and raise your self-esteem?
5. Out of the 5 tips Vivian mentions, which would you most like to try?

RocketKids Video Discussion Questions Answer Key

1. What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself; it can be positive or negative.

2. What does low self-esteem look like?

When you have low self-esteem, you may focus on the times you failed instead of succeeded. You might feel like you aren't as good as others and be hard on yourself. You may also give up on things easier.

3. What does high self-esteem look like?

When you have high self-esteem we feel good about who we are, proud of ourselves and believe in ourselves. You can accept yourself and your good qualities.

4. What 5 things does Vivian mention that you can do to feel good about yourself and raise your self-esteem?

- Try your best
- Pitch in
- "I Can" Attitude
- Practice
- Make a list

5. Out of the 5 tips Vivian mentions, which would you most like to try?

Answers can vary! 😊

Appendix E

Self-Esteem Workbook

_____ 's

Self-Esteem Workbook



Picture from <https://www.freepik.com/free-photos-vectors/self-esteem>

What is Self-Esteem?

- Self-Esteem is how we feel about ourselves! It can be negative or positive ●

What does High or Positive Self-Esteem Look Like?

- You feel good about who you are
- You are proud of yourself
- You accept yourself for who you are
- You believe in yourself and your abilities

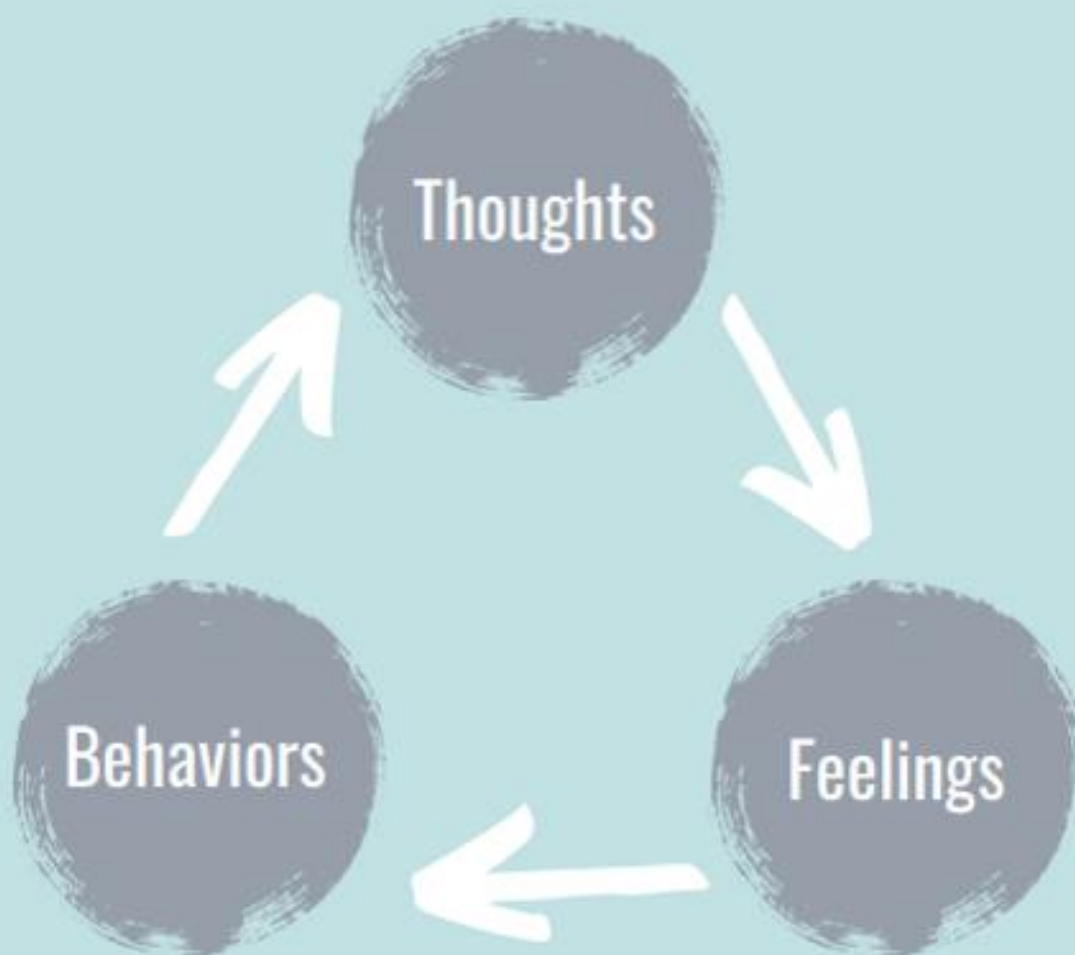
What does Low or Negative Self-Esteem Look Like?

- You may focus on times you failed instead of succeeded.
- You may be more hard on yourself
- You may feel like you aren't as good as others

In this Workbook, you will learn several techniques on how to improve and maintain your self-esteem!

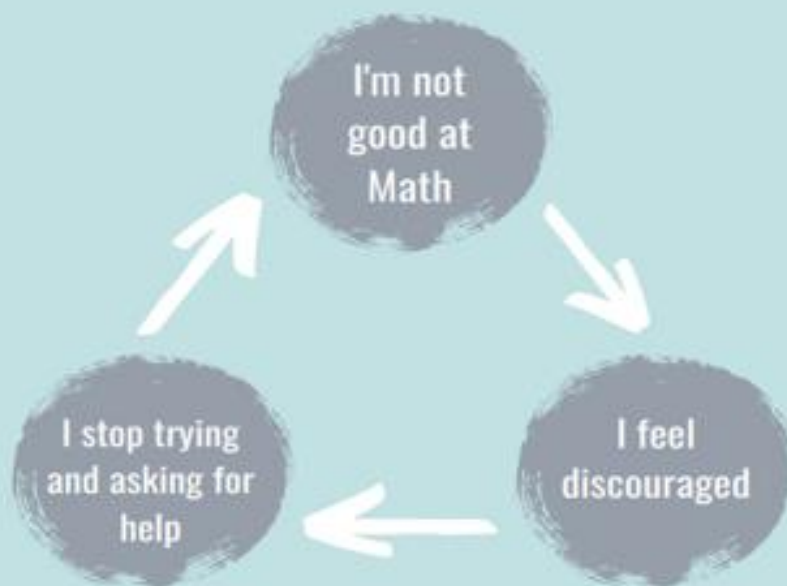
Things I like about Me!

Thoughts, Feelings, Behaviors Triangle

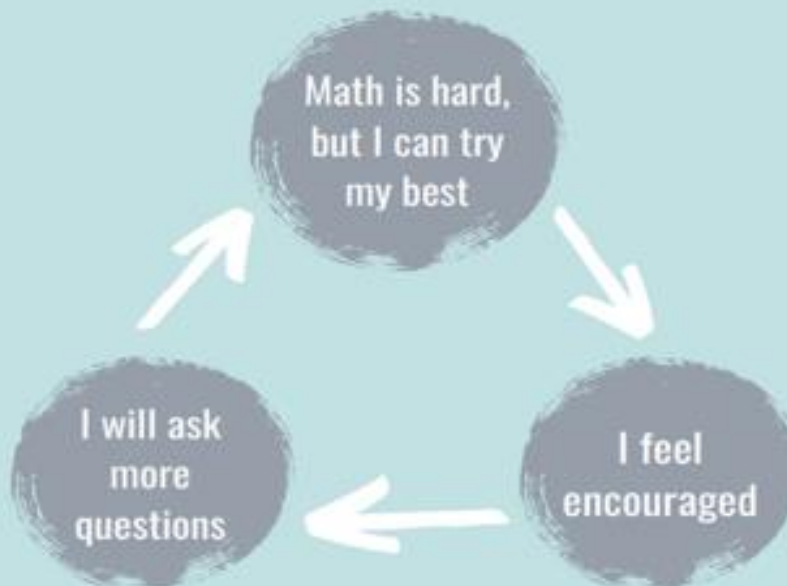


Our thoughts can impact how we
feel and what we do!

Negative Outlook



Positive Outlook



Thoughts I have about Myself:

Directions: Write a thought you have about yourself in the thought bubbles. Next, color the thoughts that are **positive in blue**, **neutral thoughts in purple**, and **negative thoughts in grey**. Challenge your negative thoughts on the next page or write a positive thought around the grey thought bubbles.



Replacing Negative Thoughts

Directions: Identify a negative thought, (could be from the thought bubbles on the last page) challenge the thought, then replace the negative thought with a more positive thought about the same situation.

1. Negative Thought:

Challenge the Negative Thought:

Positive Thought Replacement:

2. Negative Thought:

Challenge the Negative Thought:

Positive Thought:

Best Possible Selves

Directions: Imagine your best possible future self; what are they like? What does your **personal** life look like? Your **social** life? Your **professional** life? Work on this for at least 10 minutes and give as many details as possible.

A large rectangular area defined by a dashed border, containing 20 horizontal lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across most of the width of the dashed box.

Body Scan Script

“We are going to practice “Body Scan.” Rest your head on your desk or sit up straight and comfortably in your chair. Close your eyes. Feel your feet flat on the floor. Feel the air moving in and out of your nose. [Wait 10 seconds] If you notice any thoughts passing through your mind, let them float away. Without moving them, feel and relax your feet. Bring your attention to your legs. Relax your legs. Move your attention to your belly. Relax your belly. Notice your lower back. Relax your lower back. Bring your attention to your shoulders. Relax your shoulders. Feel your arms, hands, and fingers relaxing. Feel your jaw, eyes, and forehead relaxing. Notice your whole body. Let your whole body relax. [Wait 20-30 seconds] Now, slowly wiggle your toes. Slowly wiggle your fingers. Keeping your eyes closed, gently sit up straight and comfortably in your chair. Now, take a deep breath in, hold and exhale slowly. Notice how you feel. [Wait 10 seconds] Slowly open your eyes.”

Resource from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mGNXsHg22w>

Breathing Techniques


1. **Alternate Breathing:** For this exercise, you will breathe like normal except you will plug one side of your nose at a time. Start by plugging your right nostril with your thumb then inhale through your open nostril. Next, release your left nostril and plug your left nostril with your pointer finger and exhale through your right nostril. Repeat for five cycles.
2. **Flower Breathing:** imagine you are smelling a flower and taking a deep breath in through your nose. Hold your breath for 3 seconds then exhale through your mouth for 5 seconds. Repeat for 5 times.
3. **Belly Breaths:** Lay on the floor and put your hands on your belly. Take a slow deep breath in through your nose and you should feel your belly raise and expand. Then slowly exhale through your mouth as if you are blowing out a candle. Repeat 5 times.

Resource from: <https://www.mindfulmazing.com/10-breathing-exercises-for-kids-with-anxiety-or-anger/>



Self-Care Ideas

If you're having a hard day, try out these self-care ideas!



Things to do Inside

- Read a book
- Color a picture
- Play a board game
- Watch a movie
- Listen to music
- Play with a pet
- Drink Water
- Take a nap
- Journal

Things to do Outside


- Go for a walk with a family member
- Run around the block
- Soak up some Sunshine
- Play at a playground
- Exercise
- Stretch

Breathing Exercises


- Alternate Breathing
- Belly Breaths
- Flower Breathing

Talk to Someone

- A Parent
- A Sibling
- A Teacher
- A Counselor
- A Friend
- Other Family Members

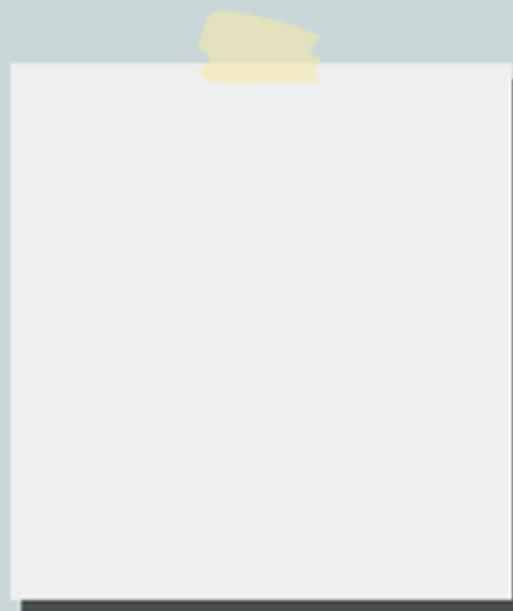


Spend time with Someone you care about!



Positive Affirmations

In the sticky notes below, write one positive affirmation in each note. A positive affirmation is a positive phrase or statement we can repeat to ourselves when we are feeling down.



“The Reflection in Me” Activity

Directions: Watch the short video “The Reflection in Me” by Marc Colagiovanni. Draw a picture of yourself in the mirror and write three compliments to yourself on the lines below.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Gratitude Jar

Directions: Think about the different things in your life that you are grateful for! It can be a person, a thing, an event, or anything you are grateful for! Write these things inside your "Gratitude Jar" below!



Appendix F

Kindness Coloring Sheets

be

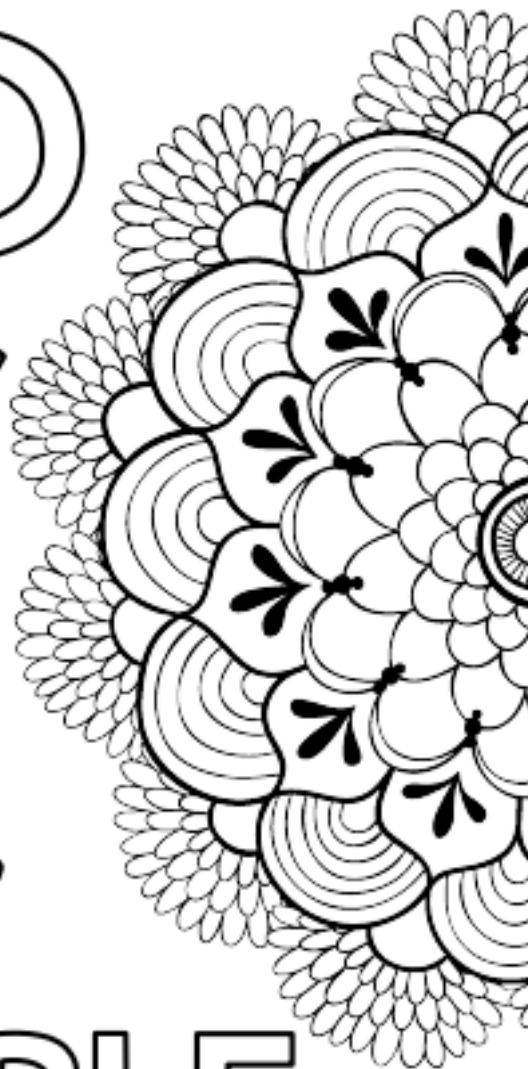
KIND

whenever
possible.

it is

always

POSSIBLE.



-Dalai Lama

K. Coners, 2017 www.ToTheSquareInch.com

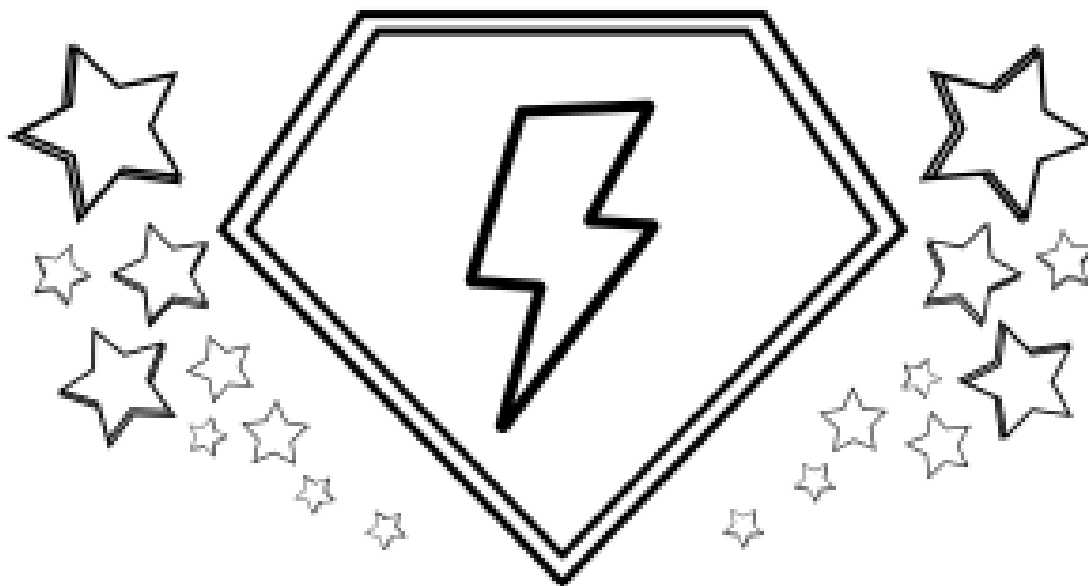
Resource from: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Kindness-Coloring-Pages-KindnessNation-WeHoldTheseTruths-2972838?st=c0522c89998dbf78b692ca71bce0f28>



KINDNESS

IS MY

SUPERPOWER.



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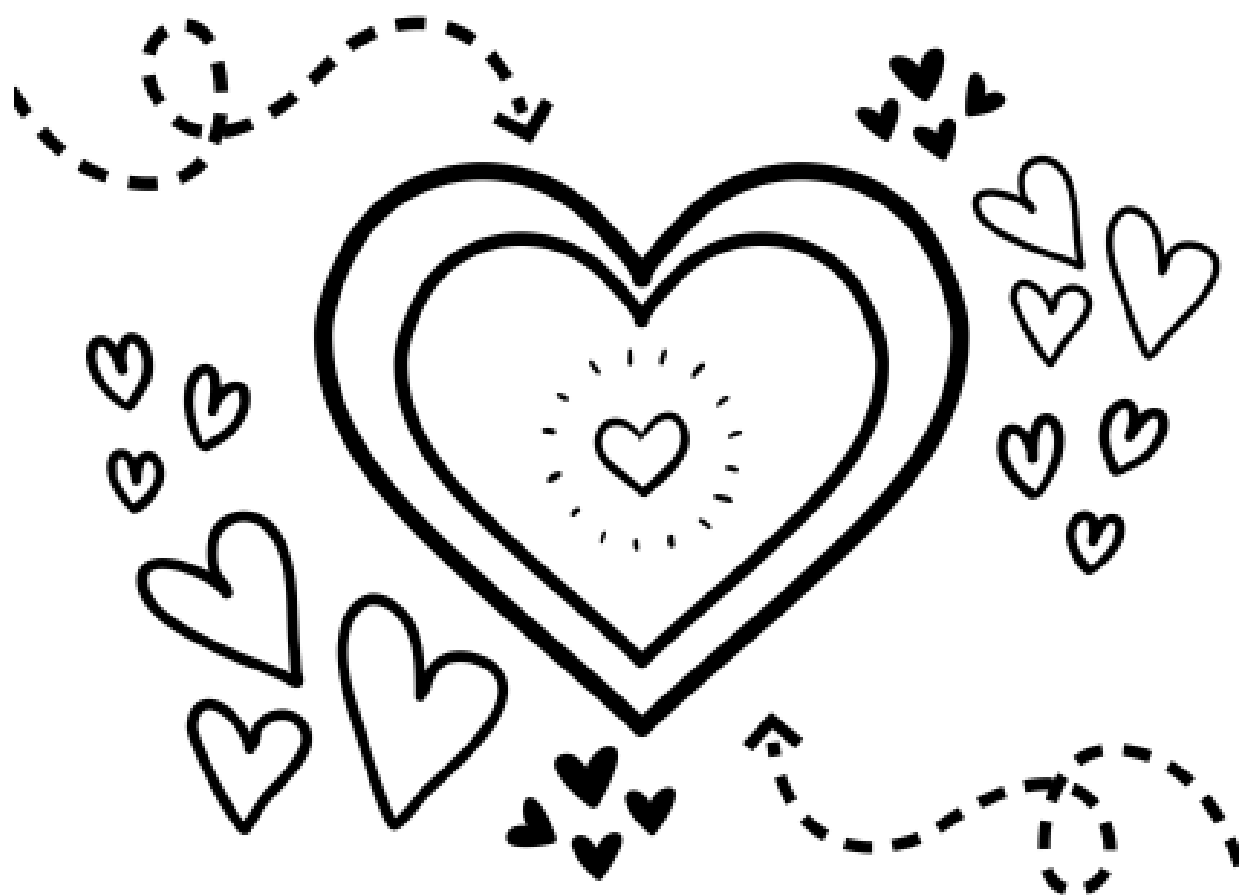
Resource from: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/FREE-Kindness-Coloring-Pages-10-Printable-Easy-to-Color-Pages-on-Kindness-9155092?st=c0522c89998dbf78b692ca71bcec0f28>

IN A WORLD
WHERE YOU CAN
BE ANYTHING,
BE KIND



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Resource from: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/FREE-Kindness-Coloring-Pages-10-Printable-Easy-to-Color-Pages-on-Kindness-9155092?st=c0522c89998dbf78b692ca71bcec0f28>



CHOOSE
KINDNESS

copyright 2022 teach to little white lie

Resource from: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/FREE-Kindness-Coloring-Pages-10-Printable-Easy-to-Color-Pages-on-Kindness-9155092?st=c0522c89998dbf78b692ca71bcec0f28>

Appendix G

Dice Game Template & Questions

What nice things would your friends say about you?

Name one good thing that has happened to you this week?

Name 1 compliment that you received that made you feel happy.

Who is your role model? How are you like your role model?

Talk about 2 things that you are good at!

Talk about a good deed that you have done for someone.

Possible Follow-Up Discussion Questions

1. **Name one compliment that you received that made you feel happy!**
 - Can you explain the feeling the compliment gave you?
 - If you give compliments to others, how do you think it will make them feel?
2. **Discuss a good deed that you have done for someone.**
 - How did the good deed make you feel?
 - How do you think it made the other person feel?
 - How do you feel when others do a good deed for you?
3. **Talk about 2 things that you are good at.**
 - What do you love the most about these things?
 - Are you happy when you are doing these things? Do you feel proud of yourself? Would others be proud of you?
4. **Name one good thing that has happened to you this week!**
 - How did that amazing thing feel?
 - What can you do to have more awesome things happen each week?
5. **What nice things would your friends say about you?**
 - What kind of person do your friends and family think you are? Do you agree with them?
 - Why would they think those nice things? What have you done?
6. **Who is your role model? How are you like your role model?**
 - What can we do to have more qualities like our role model?
 - If you don't have a role model, think of someone you admire, and how those qualities make you feel.

