

School Toolkit for Positive Mindsets

Middle School

Implementation Guide

We can all do our part to help support the resilience and mental health of students in South Dakota. Encouragement and positive messages can open doors to discussions about self-care, asking for help, the importance of mental health and empowering students to build resilience. By fostering conversations and providing students with resources and tools, we can help them prioritize their wellbeing and seek help when needed.

Let's pave the way for healthier, more resilient students in South Dakota.

What's Included in this Toolkit:

- Posters
- Mirror clings
- 988 floor clings
- Affirmation stickers for grading
- Textured sensory stickers for desks
- Bookmarks
- Pop-it Balls
- Breakaway lanyards
- Pencils
- Post it note pads
- Magnets
- Keychains

Online Materials Available at [SDBehavioralHealth.gov](https://www.sdbehavioralhealth.gov)

- Handout for parents to take at parent-teacher conferences
- Social media posts for schools to share on their social media channels
- Email content blocks that can be sent to parents and guardians
- Text alert content blocks that can be sent to parents and guardians

How to Use These Items

Use these items in a school setting to promote resilience and normalize mental health. Depending on the type of item, you may use it for purposes such as:

- "Brain breaks" between course concepts or activities.
- Calm-down tools in the classroom to help students re-center and regulate themselves.
- Build awareness throughout the school about resilience and mental health.
- Provide resources for parents and guardians to support their children's well-being.

Know the Signs: When a Student Might Need Help

Keeping an open, nonjudgmental dialogue with teens is critical. Listen, ask questions and try to frame scenarios as hypothetical from an outside or third-party perspective instead of using first- or second-person language. Watch for patterns. And if you see a prolonged change in behavior, know that it can be a warning sign.

Watch for:

- Steady decline in school performance
- Changes in eating habits or weight loss
- Constant worry or anxiety
- Persistent sadness, outbursts, or extreme irritability
- Avoiding social interactions
- Frequent absences
- Talking about death, suicide, or self-harm
- Changes to a child's home life or support system

If you notice any of these signs, early intervention is important. Refer the student to the school counselor for more assistance.

Support Your Well-Being

Being a teacher is stressful at times. As you read this, you're probably on your fourth cup of coffee. Remember to take time for yourself and prioritize self-care so you can return to your classroom feeling refreshed and ready to give it your all.

Enclosed you will find a desk calendar with positive affirmations to incorporate into your daily routine.

More Free Materials from SD Behavioral Health

To order more free materials for your classroom, you can visit:

- [SDBehavioralHealth.gov](https://www.sdbehavioralhealth.gov)
- [SDSuicidePrevention.org](https://www.sdsuicideprevention.org)
- [HelplineCenter.org](https://www.helplinecenter.org)

For more information, visit [SDBehavioralHealth.gov](https://www.sdbehavioralhealth.gov) or contact dssbh@state.sd.us.