

School Toolkit for Positive Mindsets

Elementary School

Implementation Guide

We can all do our part to help support the resilience and mental health of children 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 providing students with daily reminders and inspiring notes, we can help them stay positive, foster self-awareness and ask for help when needed.

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

What's Included in this Toolkit:

- Posters
- Mirror clings
- Affirmation stickers for grading
- Textured sensory stickers for desks
- Bookmarks
- Pop-it balls
- Keychains

Online Materials Available at SDBehavioralHealth.gov

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

It's important to emphasize that mental health is part of overall wellness and that students' thoughts and feelings are important. As children start to feel more complex emotions, it can be hard for them to regulate those emotions. Minor outbursts or aggressions are expected. But if you see a prolonged change in behavior, or significant changes happening at home, it could be cause for concern.

Watch for:

- Crying or hyperventilating
- Continued disinterest in food or not wanting to eat
- Constant worry or anxiety
- Persistent sadness, outbursts, or extreme irritability
- Frequent absences
- Sleeping in class
- Changes to a child's home life or support system
- Talking about death, suicide or self-harm

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 SDBehavioralHealth.gov

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

- SDBehavioralHealth.gov
- SDSuicidePrevention.org
- HelplineCenter.org

For more information, visit SDBehavioralHealth.gov or contact dssbh@state.sd.us.