

Challenge Day SEL in Challenge Day

Self-Management

Dream Share, Challenge & Imagine Rap

In our program we encourage students to dream big and challenge themselves to believe in their own power to affect change. There are several activities throughout the day that focus on the students' goals for their futures and goals for personal growth. All afternoon we teach that the conditions and circumstances we're born into do not fully determine who and what we get to be or do in the world. We highlight challenges we may experience to teach that we are not victims of our experiences unless we choose to be.

Dream Share

In pairs, students have a chance to share their dreams for their future. After sharing in pairs we offer the participants a chance to share their dreams with the entire group. After each student shares there's a burst of excitement and support as other participants clap and offer encouraging words.

Social Awareness

Oppression Raps 1 & 2

This portion of the workshop is designed to highlight the larger social issues that shape our lives. We situate violence in schools – bullying, teasing, fighting, etc. – within the larger sociocultural context in which we live and demonstrate that the ways we (mis-) treat each other are linked to our life experiences. We show that we've all been on both sides of oppression and we all share the responsibility of creating safer schools.

Cross the Line

This activity builds compassion and empathy among participants. Everyone stands along a line of tape and crosses the line when the facilitator describes a life situation that applies to them. Participants have both a visual and kinesthetic experience of other people's life stories as they cross back and forth telling their own story. Participants complete the activity with greater awareness of their peers.

Reducing Violence

Cross the Line has the distinct advantage of increasing awareness and enabling students to see they're not alone in their experiences. After CTL students are less likely to be hurtful to their peers.

Self-Awareness

F-Word & Listening Rap

We explore how we've been taught to withhold or partially express our emotions and the personal and social costs of keeping our feelings inside. At CD we call this habitual practice of non/partial expression "blowing feelings into our emotional balloons." We teach that our emotional balloons can only hold so much before the feelings we blow in them begin to leak out on others or the balloon eventually pops. When our balloons are full we tend to numb out to avoid feeling our emotions. Both facilitators model what it looks like for someone to vulnerably talk about what it feels like to live their life.

If You Really Knew Me

This activity provides intentional listening time for each small group participant. Each person has an opportunity to practice noticing how they feel and speaking to their experience.

Improved Academic Outcomes

Studies in adolescent neuroscience demonstrate that emotional and cognitive processes are not isolated phenomena but are intertwined such that cognition is, to a large degree, shaped by emotional states. Emotional well being facilitates cognitive abilities, and emotional dis-ease significantly impairs cognitive functioning. Thus, positive academic outcomes are dependent upon emotional well-being.



Responsible Decision Making

Notice, Choose, Act

We teach students a formula for responsible decision making: Notice, Choose and Act. We offer opportunities for students to notice their behavior and/or their emotional landscape and to choose whether or not they'd like to, or need to, change. We reference this formula throughout the day.

Speak Out

Toward the end of the program we turn the microphones over to the program participants and everyone has a chance to speak out about what they've learned during the program, things they've noticed and the things they'd like to change in their lives and at their schools. During this activity we see the young people use the formula for change that we've taught. They begin to Notice what's happening around them, they Choose how they'd prefer for things to be, and they Act on it by challenging themselves and their peers to do things differently.

Relationship Skills

Validation Cards & Pride

Relationship skills are aided by improved self-awareness, self-management and social-awareness. We teach the importance of gratitude, pride and forgiveness in the second half of the workshop.

Validation Cards

Each participant has an opportunity to reflect on a meaningful relationship with a loved one and write that person a card expressing how they feel.

Pride

In a dyad, students have a chance to celebrate all the things they are proud of. We teach that a healthy relationship with oneself is the foundation for healthy relationships with others.

Social and Emotional Learning Competency Areas in the Challenge Day Program

For 25 years Challenge Day has offered secondary schools in North America and Europe an innovative experiential Social and Emotional Learning program. Program participants report growing personally, learning more about their peers, and feeling empowered to enact changes in their schools and communities as a result of Challenge Day.* The chart below indicates where we teach SEL competencies in our program.

	Self Awareness	Social Awareness	Relationship Skills	Responsible Decision Making	Self Management
Welcome	X	X	X	X	X
Notice, Choose, Act	X	X	X	X	X
Comfort Zone/Thumb Switch	X	X		X	X
Different Game	X	X	X		X
Hug Demo	X	X	X	X	X
Dream Share	X	X	X	X	X
F-Word/Listening Rap	X	X	X	X	X
If You Really Knew Me Shares	X	X	X	X	X
Oppression Rap 1	X	X	X	X	X
Cross the Line	X	X	X	X	X
Validation Cards	X	X	X	X	
Oppression Rap 2	X	X	X	X	X
Speak Out	X	X	X	X	X
Mill & Clear	X	X	X	X	X
Imagine Rap	X	X		X	X
Group Validations	X	X	X	X	X
Pride	X	X	X	X	X
Challenge	X	X		X	X
Closure	X	X	X	X	X

* In a recent study of CD participants in Ohio, 91% of reported having learned more about human relationships than they would have by reading a book.