

HOW DOES FISH! FOR SCHOOLS™ SUPPORT THE SAFE AND HEALTHY STUDENT INITIATIVE?

FISH! For Schools can be utilized as a framework to support the six elements of the Safe and Healthy Schools initiative.

ELEMENT 1: SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

FISH! For Schools provides essential tools for open communication and collaboration among and between students and staff. It is critical that students and staff listen to the concerns of one another to determine and address fears and areas of danger. Through experience-centered activities students are a part of determining the behavior standards in the school and classroom and taking personal responsibility for creating supportive and safe schools. FISH! For Schools fosters consistent, open conversation among students and staff.

ELEMENT 2: ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

FISH! For Schools is a framework for communicating successfully with children and young adults. The common language of FISH!® provides students with opportunities and the language needed to invite the help of others, it emphasizes the value and responsibility that each individual brings to the learning community, and provides tools for students to talk about hard issues in ways that would otherwise be difficult. The family involvement tool helps parents and care-givers by giving them the same language for hard conversations in the home environment. It allows parents to open up discussions in non-threatening ways and helps them to realize the need to BE THERE for their children.

ELEMENT 3: SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PREVENTIVE AND TREATMENT INTERVENTION SERVICES

The collaborative framework of FISH! For Schools encourages children and adults to have honest, open discussions about how things are going, how they are feeling and what is happening in the lives of one another. FISH! For Schools also offers family involvement tools to educators so they can invite parents into these open, honest, discussions in an emotionally safe manner. Secure relationships are at the heart of FISH! For Schools. If staff and parents feel safe talking and sharing with the well-being of the child in mind, early recognition of mental issues is more likely.

ELEMENT 4: EARLY CHILDHOOD PSYCHOSOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

FISH! serves as an excellent platform for interaction between caregivers and educators. Once all are introduced to The FISH! Philosophy®, the common language can help bridge difficult discussions that must take place in order to address the needs of children early on. When all four of the FISH! principles are practiced, honest, open, respectful, and direct communication occur regularly among all concerned.

ELEMENT 5: SUPPORTING AND CONNECTING SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

FISH! For Schools focuses on creating strong, supportive learning cultures through shared ownership, effective classroom management strategies, collaboration, and encouraging students to realize their full responsibility to the learning community. Each grade level Expedition Pack outlines a framework for taking on community service learning projects identified by the students themselves. Behavior standards are identified in developmentally appropriate ways at all grade levels. Positive and proactive behavior structures lead educators to point out the positive actions in classrooms and not focus on solely on the negative. In addition, FISH! For Schools also focuses on creating strong, supportive professional communities and collaboration among educators as they model what collaborative, supportive environments look like!

ELEMENT 6: SAFE SCHOOL POLICIES

FISH! For Schools contains both student activities for use in classrooms and staff development materials for us in staff training. ChartHouse Learning also provides in-service training to guide staff in creating effective, safe, and rewarding classrooms. The combination of student and educator materials are designed to foster learning, healthy interaction, and the co-creation of a dynamic and positive class/school culture so all students can be successful!

