

DIFFERENT MODELS FOR IMPLEMENTING PATHS

Our example of DS #34 does not refer to a single school but rather an amalgam of many of the different schools with which we have worked across the United States (and internationally). In our experience, we have found that two different paradigms have both worked very well. One involves direct training of teachers and other school personnel, who then implement PATHS in their classrooms with or without ongoing consultation. In the second model, outside consultants (e.g., counselors, master teachers) learn PATHS and then begin implementation as a joint effort with the classroom teachers. Over time, the consultants slowly withdraw from direct implementation, but remain available for consultation as the teachers take on increased responsibility for PATHS in their classrooms. There have also been many schools in which PATHS has been successfully implemented without any external support. This is not to say, of course, that PATHS implementation has never encountered difficulty. However, the collaborative process we have outlined, as well as a problem-solving orientation when obstacles are encountered, have helped the vast majority of settings that have embarked on PATHS to, if you will pardon the pun, follow a path to success.

FROM DS #34 TO YOUR CLASSROOM

One idea that you might like to *try in your classroom* involves discussing feelings in stories from the news, in history lessons, or from children's literature. Look around for a story or news article to read to the class that contains emotional content (they are everywhere). Choose one to read aloud to your class. After reading it, ask your students to discuss the feelings: "How do you think X felt when Y happened?" "How many of you think that you would feel that way, too?" "Who thinks that they might feel differently?" Similarly, history will become more relevant if you emphasize emotions (e.g., "How do you think the settlers felt when they faced the Oregon Trail?" "How did the colonists feel when the British government wanted them to pay taxes?").

Then ask your students if anything similar has ever happened to them, or if they have ever felt similarly; if so, ask them what happened and to say more about how they felt. Point out the similarities and differences between the various examples: All people feel the same types of feelings, but different people feel differently about different things.

Another idea from PATHS that you can use all year is called the PATHS Kid for Today. The objectives for the PATHS Kid paradigm include developing better self-esteem, improving children's sense of responsibility, using a systematic plan to achieve fairness, teaching self-respect and respect for others, and developing the concept and process of complimenting. This activity should be used on a regular basis (e.g., 2 to 5 times per week) at approximately the same time each day throughout the school year.

Find two large canisters (or boxes) with openings large enough for a hand to fit inside and label them "I have NOT had a turn to be the PATHS Kid" and "I have had a turn to be the PATHS Kid." Write the name of each child in your class on slips of paper (small "stickies" work well for this) and fold them in half so that the names do not show (which means, if you use stickies, that the name has to go on the sticky side, not the front side). Put all of the names in the first jar ("I have NOT had a turn"),

as well as your own name and the names of any other adults who work regularly in your classroom (so you, too, can get a Compliment List).

To introduce the PATHS Kid paradigm, explain to your students that you want to have a class helper (every day, every Tuesday and Thursday, etc., as desired) to be your assistant (during class lessons, specified activities, etc., again as desired). Explain that to be sure that everyone gets a turn in a fair manner, you want to use an orderly plan. "Orderly means that we will do the same thing every time so that it will be fair to everyone." Show them the jars, and explain that everyone will have the same chance to get chosen, so that it is fair to everyone. You will draw the name of the first PATHS Kid, and from then on, the current PATHS Kid will draw the name of the next PATHS Kid. After a child has had a turn, his or her name will go into the second jar, and when everyone who wants a turn has had one, you will start over again. (If a child does not want to be PATHS Kid when his or her name is chosen, he or she can choose to have it put in either jar, although it is usually best to put it back into the "did not" jar so that the child can reconsider in the future.)

Explain that the PATHS Kid will help you during the day. You will need to decide how you want to use your PATHS Kid, but one thing that we have found to be very helpful for improving behavior is to have the PATHS Kid sit or stand next to the teacher in front of the class and help with classroom discipline. For example, if the class is becoming rambunctious, you can say, "Your class is getting out of control. What are you going to do to get them to pay better attention?" (In PATHS, we suggest using a technique we call the Three Steps for Calming Down, but any model that you are currently using can be substituted instead.) When confronted with this role reversal, children with attention difficulties or behavior problems get to experience disruption from the teacher's perspective, and they identify with the goal of attaining control. Shy children, on the other hand, get the chance to take a leadership position. It is very interesting to observe how this affects subsequent behavior for the better. Other suggestions would be passing out papers, calling on quiet students with raised hands to answer questions, holding up pictures, and so on.

Continue to explain to your class that in the afternoon, the class will make a Compliment List for the PATHS Kid, who will also get a special letter to take home to his or her parents. Say, "So, the first thing we need to do is to understand what a compliment is." Encourage discussion with your students, then summarize: "A compliment is a nice thing that we say to someone. We give compliments because we like something about that person and we want him or her to know it."

"There are many different kinds of compliments that you can give. Can anyone think of some examples?"

Elicit responses and record them on the chalkboard. Be sure to include the following five categories if your students do not think of them:

1. Ways people look (e.g., "I like your hair.")
2. Things people have (e.g., "I like your bicycle.")
3. Things people do (e.g., "You run very fast.")
4. The way people are (e.g., "You are a good friend.")
5. The way people behave (e.g., "I like how well you listen," "You're good at sharing.")

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Add students' examples to categories as appropriate and add categories as needed. Review categories following class discussion.

Then continue with discussion of how people respond to getting compliments: "Most of the time when we get a compliment, it makes us feel happy, proud, and important. These are all comfortable feelings. But sometimes getting a compliment can make us feel shy, embarrassed, or even angry. Those are all uncomfortable feelings. Most of the time, though, compliments help people feel good about themselves."

"Sometimes when we get a compliment from someone, we do not know what to say back. 'Thank you' is one thing you can say, but you can say other things too."

Role-play giving an imaginary child a compliment. Then ask your students to exchange compliments with their neighbor or desk mate. Remind them to give compliments to others when they appreciate something that someone has said or done and to give compliments to themselves when they feel proud. Ask them to give compliments to the lunch or playground staff today, and as an optional homework assignment, ask your students to give compliments to their family members and write down or draw what happened (then discuss as a class the following day). The PATHS curriculum also provides a two-page parent information summary entitled "Increasing Self-Esteem" to be sent home, and you might want to consider doing something similar, or at least share with parents what you have done with the students.

Draw the name of the first PATHS Kid from the jar, and after appropriate applause, place the name on a poster or large sheet of paper labeled, "The Next PATHS Kid will be _____." There should also be space on the poster for a Compliment List (make copies of ours or one of your own design to use on an ongoing basis).

On the following day, have the PATHS Kid assist you during the day as desired. Remind your students to observe him or her closely so that they can give him or her really good compliments later that day. For example, think about things like the following: Is the PATHS Kid being helpful? Friendly? A good listener?

Near the end of the day, assemble the class to make the Compliment List (you might also want to invite the child's parents to come in at this time). Ask the PATHS Kid to pick one of the children raising their hands to give him or her a compliment. Have the PATHS Kid choose a second child for another compliment. Then you should give the PATHS Kid a compliment, and finally, the PATHS Kid should give a compliment to himself or herself. Record each compliment on the Compliment List as it is given. After the Compliment List is completed, read it aloud to the class, followed by applause. Then put the Compliment List up on the PATHS Kid poster under the child's name (a Tack a Note nonpermanent adhesive stick works great for this), ask the PATHS Kid to select the name of the next PATHS Kid from the jar, and put the new name up on the poster as well (kids love the anticipation). At the end of the day, give the PATHS Kid his or her Compliment List to take home (we recommend sending an accompanying note for the parents as well) and remind the child to get a compliment added by a parent. This paradigm should be repeated each specified day. Once everyone (including you) has had a chance to be the PATHS Kid, you can start again. You might also consider inviting the school principal and other staff members to come in to get a Compliment List.

At first, you can expect the compliments to be rather superficial in nature (e.g., "I like your shoes"), but as time progresses, you will see sophisticated compliments

emanating from even the youngest students. Also, it should be noted that this procedure takes considerable time when you first begin using it, but it will only take a few minutes after several days. It is an excellent, upbeat way to provide a consistent ending to each school day.

This activity is extremely meaningful for children and can be adapted or tried outside of the context of the PATHS program, although it is most effective as part of the larger skill development process. Rarely do children say hurtful things, but if this happens, you can always remind your students that compliments are nice things we say to people. In general, we have been struck with how powerfully this model affects children, to the extent that their behavior often improves, as does self-esteem.

EVALUATING PATHS IN YOUR CLASSROOM

There are many ways to evaluate how well PATHS is doing in your classroom, including both informal observations and more formal quantitative or numerical data. Monitoring your goals should be an ongoing part of the implementation of PATHS (or of any new curriculum). By ascertaining the amount and quality of implementation and their effects on your students, you will be able to determine which goals and objectives have been met and what changes will be required to make further progress.

The first way to monitor the effects of PATHS is to observe incidents in which students have used or generalized these skills during the remainder of the school day. Noting incidents during the school day that indicate new ways of communicating feelings, managing difficult emotions, and resolving conflict will provide a portfolio of the daily influence of PATHS. You might also want to get feedback from extracurricular staff at school or from parents on changes they see at home.

A second way to assess the influence of PATHS is to complete measures on your students just prior to your use of PATHS and again near the end of the school year. You can then compare changes in behavior, emotional understanding, and so on. One measure that we recommend is the Teacher Child Rating Scale, as it captures many of the behavioral changes that are goals of the curriculum. Copies of this measure and scoring can be obtained at <http://www.prevention.psu.edu/projects/PATHS/html>. Another very simple measure is to ask each child to tell you the names of all of the feelings that he or she can remember. The average number on the lists obtained prior to implementing PATHS can then be compared with the mean obtained at the end of the year. Comparisons can also be made to assess the progress of individual students. This test, however, is not recommended for the subsequent years of PATHS, as the children are likely to begin the year with a high score from having learned the names of feelings during the previous year.

One can also assess the PATHS experience in a more detailed manner that will provide you with ideas for revision and innovation in future years. If you are interested in this type of evaluation, we recommend that you use a form that provides feedback on each lesson, such as the PATHS Lesson Evaluation Form. In addition, it can be useful to take a broader perspective, and one way to accomplish this is to rate the overall quality of the PATHS experience across the school year (e.g., by using the

PATHS End of the Year Rating Form). Both of these forms can be downloaded at <http://www.prevention.psu.edu/projects/PATHS/html>.

CONCLUSION

SEL is beneficial for students in numerous ways, all of which contribute to optimal youth development in general and to school success in particular. Furthermore, not only are these skills needed during childhood, but they are critical for successful adult functioning as well. In other words, emotional intelligence is now as important for adequate preparation for adult life as reading, writing, arithmetic, and computer skills. Thus, teaching curricula such as PATHS on a regular basis, every year, for children of all ages (as well as for their parents) is crucial, both for our students' present and for their future. Fortunately, this is also a subject area that is enjoyable for educators to teach and for children to learn. We hope you now feel inspired to discover this for yourself!

Authors' Note: Ongoing information about all aspects of the PATHS program can be found at www.channing-bete.com/positiveyouth/pages/PATHS/PATHS.html and http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov/template_cf.cfm?page=model&pkProgramID=24.

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