



ALIGNMENT CHART

Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies

- Second Step® Elementary Digital Program**
- Second Step® Middle School Digital Program**

About Second Step® Programs

The research-based Second Step Elementary and Second Step Middle School digital programs are universal, web-based classroom programs designed to promote social-emotional competence, which can help increase students' school success and decrease problem behaviors.^{1,2} The programs help students learn how to cope with challenges, create positive relationships, and succeed both socially and academically. Skills are reviewed and expanded each year, gradually becoming more complex as students get older. Lessons provide tools for students to develop the mindsets, knowledge, and skills to handle strong emotions, show kindness and empathy, build and strengthen friendships, make and follow through on good decisions, and solve problems with their peers.

How the Programs Meet the Montana Competencies

The following tables indicate which specific Second Step grade-band lessons and related materials can help students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to meet the Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies.

Boxes are checked to indicate that the Second Step digital programs meet a given Montana competency within the identified grade or grade-band (for instance, Grades K–5) when:

1. Students have clear opportunities to actively process the knowledge or practice the skills described in the competency through discussion, writing, drawing, or other related activities.
2. There are opportunities for teachers to gather evidence of student learning in relation to the competencies.

1. Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*(1), 405–432. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x>

2. Taylor, R. D., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: A meta-analysis of follow-up effects. *Child Development, 88*(4), 1156–1171. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12864>



Grades K-2

Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies

Second Step® Elementary Digital Program

		Key Skills and Concepts																				
		Brain Builders (Executive-Function Skills)			Unit 1: Growth Mindset & Goal-Setting				Unit 2: Emotion Management				Unit 3: Empathy & Kindness				Unit 4: Problem-Solving					
		Attention	Working memory	Inhibitory control	Focus attention and ignore distractions	Persevere through challenges while recognizing mistakes are part of learning	Recognize unhelpful thoughts and replace with helpful thoughts	Recognize that skills improve with practice and effort	Identify and name one's own emotions	Recognize and identify emotions in others	Recognize strong emotions	Manage strong emotions by using strategies to feel calm	Recognize kindness and act kindly toward others	Take others' perspectives	Develop empathy for others	Recognize that empathy can lead to kind acts	Manage strong emotions to feel calm before solving problems	Apply strategies to solve problems	Recognize accidents and make amends	State the problem without blame or name-calling	Think of many solutions to a problem	
Area	Competency																					
Self-Awareness	1. Identify and label basic emotions (e.g., happy, sad, mad, scared) and identify situations that cause those emotions.					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	2. Describe one's basic emotions and how they may be the same as or different from others.									✓				✓	✓	✓						
	3. Identify ways to seek help when needed (including help with personal, cultural, and linguistic problems).							✓				✓					✓					
	4. Differentiate between likes and dislikes and how they may be the same as or different from others.													✓								
	5. Recover from simple mistakes by using strengths to recognize, acknowledge, and address those mistakes.					✓													✓			
	6. Identify and state a simple goal or an area of improvement.							✓														
Self-Management	1. Identify physical responses to strong emotions and apply simple coping strategies (e.g., simple breathing techniques) to defuse the emotional stressor.											✓					✓					
	2. Identify the difference between wants and needs while beginning to increase capacity for self-regulation (including impulse control and delaying gratification).																					
	3. Recognize that different environments have varying expectations (e.g., routines, behaviors).																					
	4. Begin to develop and use physical and mental strengths for academic achievement and behavioral resilience.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓										
	5. Demonstrate independent organizational skills during simple routines and strategies to focus attention on short-term personal and academic goals.	✓			✓																	
Social Awareness	1. Identify simple feelings, opinions, and perspectives of others.									✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	2. Recognize that others' feelings are expressed in various ways.									✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3. Acknowledge and appreciate individual differences in others.									✓				✓	✓	✓						
	4. Describe strengths and positive qualities in others.																					
	5. Express gratitude to others and receive it from others.																					
	6. Understand there are different ways to express gratitude depending on background, culture, and contexts.																					
	7. Recognize the connections between words, gestures, and emotions and how they can vary based on context, family, culture, and relationships.								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Grades K-2

Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies

Second Step® Elementary Digital Program

		Key Skills and Concepts																			
		Brain Builders (Executive-Function Skills)			Unit 1: Growth Mindset & Goal-Setting				Unit 2: Emotion Management				Unit 3: Empathy & Kindness				Unit 4: Problem-Solving				
		Attention	Working memory	Inhibitory control	Focus attention and ignore distractions	Persevere through challenges while recognizing mistakes are part of learning	Recognize unhelpful thoughts and replace with helpful thoughts	Recognize that skills improve with practice and effort	Identify and name one's own emotions	Recognize and identify emotions in others	Recognize strong emotions	Manage strong emotions by using strategies to feel calm	Recognize kindness and act kindly toward others	Take others' perspectives	Develop empathy for others	Recognize that empathy can lead to kind acts	Manage strong emotions to feel calm before solving problems	Apply strategies to solve problems	Recognize accidents and make amends	State the problem without blame or name-calling	Think of many solutions to a problem
Area	Competency																				
Relationship Skills	1. Identify a trusted adult and ask for help when needed for self or for others.					✓	✓				✓					✓					
	2. Communicate effectively by initiating conversations, listening actively, responding to a conversation, and staying on topic during multiple exchanges.																				
	3. Describe and practice simple approaches to making and keeping friends (e.g., showing gratitude).												✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4. Engage in healthy and rewarding social interactions and play (e.g., setting boundaries).												✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5. Recognize and respond to social cues in a manner that is sensitive to self and others in collaborative settings.												✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6. Develop skills to collaboratively problem-solve (e.g., negotiation and compromise) when resolving conflicts in a manner that is sensitive to self and others.																✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Responsible Decision-Making	1. Begin to develop the ability to make simple decisions based on information and to understand the impact of those decisions on self and others.				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2. Recognize that choices and personal behavior impact others both positively and negatively.												✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3. Develop imagination, originality, and interest while problem-solving, exploring, and experiencing new things.																				
	4. Demonstrate understanding, apply rules, and show simple responsibility related to personal health and safety in different contexts and situations.				✓							✓					✓				



Grades 3-5

Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies

Second Step® Elementary Digital Program

		Key Skills and Concepts																										
		Brain Builders (Executive-Function Skills)				Unit 1: Growth Mindset & Goal-Setting					Unit 2: Emotion Management					Unit 3: Empathy & Kindness					Unit 4: Problem-Solving							
		Attention	Working memory	Inhibitory control	Cognitive flexibility	Understand that the brain can grow and change	Recognize that skills improve with practice, effort, help from others, and trying a new way	Set goals	Make plans	Monitor progress toward goals	Reflect to inform future goals	Recognize that strong emotions make it hard to think clearly	Identify and label similar emotions with different intensity levels	Recognize that regulating emotions is necessary to make decisions	Apply reappraisal as an emotion-management strategy	Apply planning ahead to manage recurring strong emotions	Recognize kindness helps them make friends and strengthen relationships	Recognize that people can have different points of view about the same thing	Recognize that empathy and perspective-taking can help them get along with others	Apply perspective-taking strategies to empathize with others	Apply perspective-taking strategies to make their community a better place	Explain the importance of being calm before problem-solving	Explain the importance of speaking up for oneself when solving a problem	State the problem without blaming and from all points of view	Generate solutions to take all points of view into consideration	Evaluate possible outcomes of solutions to a problem based on all points of view	Pick a solution that is safe, respectful, and could work for everyone	Identify when, where, and with whom they think it would be best to work on the problem
Area	Competency																											
Self-Awareness	1. Label and describe emotions using a growing vocabulary (e.g., happy, excited, mad, furious, worried, scared).											✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓
	2. When prompted by adults, understand the link between emotions and physical responses and behavior in self and others.											✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
	3. Identify and reflect upon personal self-interests and skills to develop simple goals to pursue.							✓	✓	✓	✓																	
	4. Identify strategies, such as asking for help, to persevere through undesirable tasks.					✓			✓	✓	✓																	
	5. Identify strengths and limitations when faced with a challenge.								✓	✓	✓																	
	6. Identify and examine their role in family and community in terms of how they view themselves and others.																											
	7. Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and self-compassion while acknowledging mistakes as opportunities to learn.																											
Self-Management	1. Use simple techniques (e.g., breathing, counting to five) to regulate reactions to personal stressors and reduce the negative effects of stress.														✓	✓						✓						
	2. Use simple self-monitoring strategies to regulate and express emotions to self and others.			✓											✓	✓						✓						
	3. Demonstrate self-regulated emotions while displaying behaviors in a manner sensitive to self and others.														✓	✓				✓	✓	✓						
	4. Apply oneself to personal and/or collective goals demonstrating courage, initiative, and self-discipline.							✓	✓	✓	✓																	
	5. Identify simple strategies for planning, prioritizing, motivating oneself, and managing time when working toward short- and long-term goals (personal and/or collective).							✓	✓	✓	✓																	
Social Awareness	1. Use others' points of view to describe how personal behavior affects the emotions of others.										✓								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	2. Recognize the need for empathy, compassion, and a concern for others.																✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3. Demonstrate strategies for working and playing in a manner sensitive to self and others.																✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	4. Recognize different characteristics and points of view across cultural and social groups, identifying strengths of diversity.																				✓							
	5. Understand the benefits of expressing gratitude for self and others.																											



Grades 3-5

Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies

Second Step® Elementary Digital Program

Key Skills and Concepts																										
Brain Builders (Executive-Function Skills)				Unit 1: Growth Mindset & Goal-Setting						Unit 2: Emotion Management					Unit 3: Empathy & Kindness				Unit 4: Problem-Solving							
Attention	Working memory	Inhibitory control	Cognitive flexibility	Understand that the brain can grow and change	Recognize that skills improve with practice, effort, help from others, and trying a new way	Set goals	Make plans	Monitor progress toward goals	Reflect to inform future goals	Recognize that strong emotions make it hard to think clearly	Identify and label similar emotions with different intensity levels	Recognize that regulating emotions is necessary to make decisions	Apply reappraisal as an emotion-management strategy	Apply planning ahead to manage recurring strong emotions	Recognize kindness helps them make friends and strengthen relationships	Recognize that people can have different points of view about the same thing	Recognize that empathy and perspective-taking can help them get along with others	Apply perspective-taking strategies to empathize with others	Apply perspective-taking strategies to make their community a better place	Explain the importance of being calm before problem-solving	Explain the importance of speaking up for oneself when solving a problem	State the problem without blaming and from all points of view	Generate solutions to take all points of view into consideration	Evaluate possible outcomes of solutions to a problem based on all points of view	Pick a solution that is safe, respectful, and could work for everyone	Identify when, where, and with whom they think it would be best to work on the problem

Area	Competency	Attention	Working memory	Inhibitory control	Cognitive flexibility	Understand that the brain can grow and change	Recognize that skills improve with practice, effort, help from others, and trying a new way	Set goals	Make plans	Monitor progress toward goals	Reflect to inform future goals	Recognize that strong emotions make it hard to think clearly	Identify and label similar emotions with different intensity levels	Recognize that regulating emotions is necessary to make decisions	Apply reappraisal as an emotion-management strategy	Apply planning ahead to manage recurring strong emotions	Recognize kindness helps them make friends and strengthen relationships	Recognize that people can have different points of view about the same thing	Recognize that empathy and perspective-taking can help them get along with others	Apply perspective-taking strategies to empathize with others	Apply perspective-taking strategies to make their community a better place	Explain the importance of being calm before problem-solving	Explain the importance of speaking up for oneself when solving a problem	State the problem without blaming and from all points of view	Generate solutions to take all points of view into consideration	Evaluate possible outcomes of solutions to a problem based on all points of view	Pick a solution that is safe, respectful, and could work for everyone	Identify when, where, and with whom they think it would be best to work on the problem				
Social Awareness	6. Recognize and understand when social or community norms are directly or indirectly unfair to individuals or a group of people.																															✓
	7. Identify social norms that are (directly or indirectly) unfair to individuals or a certain group of people and show courage in expressing those insights.																															
Relationship Skills	1. Identify a trusted adult and advocate for self and others.																															
	2. Describe the difference between a healthy and unhealthy relationship (e.g., setting boundaries).																															
	3. Build healthy relationships by recognizing the strengths and points of view of others.																			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	4. Demonstrate the ability to consider other points of view using empathy, compassion, and active listening skills to engage in conversation during times of agreement and/or conflict across settings.																					✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	5. Use reflection strategies and social norms that are sensitive to self and others while providing and/or receiving feedback.																							✓	✓							
	6. Recognize and respond to social cues across settings in a manner that is sensitive to self and others.																	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7. Work cooperatively, problem-solve, and negotiate conflict constructively to accomplish a goal.																								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8. Express gratitude to promote genuine and sustained relationships.																															
Responsible Decision-Making	1. Make simple choices and decisions based on information and understand the impact of those choices and decisions on self and others.							✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	2. Demonstrate curiosity and open-mindedness by asking questions and accepting either the unknown or another viewpoint.																				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3. Predict the potential consequences of one's behavior and actions for personal, social, or collective well-being.						✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	4. Analyze information to arrive at the best solutions for working toward social and academic goals.							✓	✓	✓	✓															✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	5. Demonstrate safe and caring choices (physical and emotional) about personal and social behavior within diverse settings and perspectives.															✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	6. Reflect on how personal behavior impacts the well-being of self and others (in both school and non-school settings).						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	



Grades 6-8

Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies

Second Step® Middle School Digital Program

		Key Skills and Concepts																				
		Unit 1: Mindsets & Goals					Unit 2: Recognizing Bullying & Harassment					Unit 3: Thoughts, Emotions & Decisions				Unit 4: Managing Relationships & Social Conflict						
		Recognize that social challenges are common and get better in time	Understand that the brain can grow and change	Set personal goals and create plans to achieve them	Determine how to adjust and persist after making a mistake	Apply personal strengths to develop an interest or get better at something new	Recognize common types of bullying and harassment	Understand the negative impacts of bullying and harassment	Determine the best upstander strategy for a situation	Understand students' responsibility to create a positive school climate	Recognize how social and environmental factors contribute to bullying and harassment in their school	Prepare to take action to disrupt factors that contribute to bullying and harassment at school	Understand how emotions influence decision-making in positive and negative ways	Recognize and reframe unhelpful thoughts	Recognize the signs of stress and anxiety	Apply stress- and emotion-management strategies	Recognize how conflicts escalate	Describe the different perspectives of the people involved in a conflict	Apply the four-step conflict resolution process	Identify ways to make amends	Recognize the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships	
Area	Competency																					
Self-Awareness	1. Recognize, label, and describe emotions linked to physical responses and behavior in self and others across different settings.	✓										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
	2. Identify and prioritize personal strengths, skills, and interests to develop personal goals.			✓		✓																
	3. Examine how family and culture impact thoughts, prejudices, biases, and actions.																					
	4. Describe the relationship between effort, attitude, and achievement.			✓	✓	✓																
	5. Identify strategies and resources to pursue help for achieving goals.			✓	✓	✓																
	6. Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and self-compassion while using strategies to acknowledge mistakes as opportunities to learn.				✓																	
	7. Recognize if behaviors are reflective of personal values and goals.																					✓
Self-Management	1. Apply self-monitoring strategies to regulate physical responses to emotions.												✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
	2. Identify multiple ways to regulate stress constructively and manage emotions that are sensitive to self and others.												✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
	3. Determine consistent, attainable, and realistic personal and/or academic goals.			✓		✓																
	4. Develop and demonstrate courage, initiative, and self-discipline while monitoring progress and effort to meet goals on a short-term basis.			✓	✓	✓																
	5. Identify strategies for persistently planning, prioritizing, motivating oneself, self-regulating, and managing time when working toward short- and long-term goals (personal and/or collective).			✓	✓	✓																
Social Awareness	1. Demonstrate respect, empathy, and compassion for other people's perspectives and feelings.																		✓	✓		
	2. Reflect how cross-cultural experiences can influence the ability to build positive relationships.																					
	3. Demonstrate strategies to support working and playing in a manner sensitive to self and others across settings.											✓						✓	✓	✓		
	4. Practice activities that promote and express gratitude for self and others.																					
	5. Recognize strengths of diversity by understanding different characteristics and points of view across cultural and social groups.																					



Grades 6-8

Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies

Second Step® Middle School Digital Program

Key Skills and Concepts																			
Unit 1: Mindsets & Goals					Unit 2: Recognizing Bullying & Harassment					Unit 3: Thoughts, Emotions & Decisions				Unit 4: Managing Relationships & Social Conflict					
Recognize that social challenges are common and get better in time	Understand that the brain can grow and change	Set personal goals and create plans to achieve them	Determine how to adjust and persist after making a mistake	Apply personal strengths to develop an interest or get better at something new	Recognize common types of bullying and harassment	Understand the negative impacts of bullying and harassment	Determine the best upstander strategy for a situation	Understand students' responsibility to create a positive school climate	Recognize how social and environmental factors contribute to bullying and harassment in their school	Prepare to take action to disrupt factors that contribute to bullying and harassment at school	Understand how emotions influence decision-making in positive and negative ways	Recognize and reframe unhelpful thoughts	Recognize the signs of stress and anxiety	Apply stress- and emotion-management strategies	Recognize how conflicts escalate	Describe the different perspectives of the people involved in a conflict	Apply the four-step conflict resolution process	Identify ways to make amends	Recognize the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships

Area	Competency	Unit 1: Mindsets & Goals	Unit 2: Recognizing Bullying & Harassment	Unit 3: Thoughts, Emotions & Decisions	Unit 4: Managing Relationships & Social Conflict
Social Awareness	6. Identify social or community norms that are (directly or indirectly) fair or unfair for certain individuals or a group of people and show courage in expressing those insights.			✓	✓
	7. Recognize, identify, and use family, school, and community-based support networks.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Relationship Skills	1. Identify a trusted adult and advocate for self and others, understanding how community and school norms impact behavior.			✓	✓
	2. Describe the difference between a healthy and unhealthy relationship and understand how relationships impact emotional, physical, and social well-being (e.g., setting boundaries).				✓
	3. Use empathy, compassion, active listening, and a respect for other points of view to build healthy relationships and express thoughts and ideas.				✓
	4. Recognize and respond appropriately to constructive feedback and use the feedback to improve performance.				
	5. Work cooperatively and productively in a group while overcoming setbacks and disagreements.				
	6. Express gratitude to promote genuine and sustained relationships.				
Responsible Decision-Making	1. Generate solutions and potential consequences to personal and social problems with consideration for the well-being of oneself and others.	✓		✓	✓
	2. Identify the impact of decisions on personal safety and relationships while recognizing unsafe situations and using strategies to remove oneself from those situations.			✓	✓
	3. Develop skills in analyzing information, data, and facts to inform future decisions in both school and non-school settings.		✓	✓	✓
	4. Evaluate how external influences such as social, community, and/or cultural norms influence personal behavior.			✓	✓
	5. Demonstrate curiosity and open-mindedness by asking questions and accepting either the unknown or other viewpoints.				✓
	6. Explore prosocial emotions (e.g., forgiveness, patience, generosity, humility) and promote ethical responses toward self and others.			✓	✓