



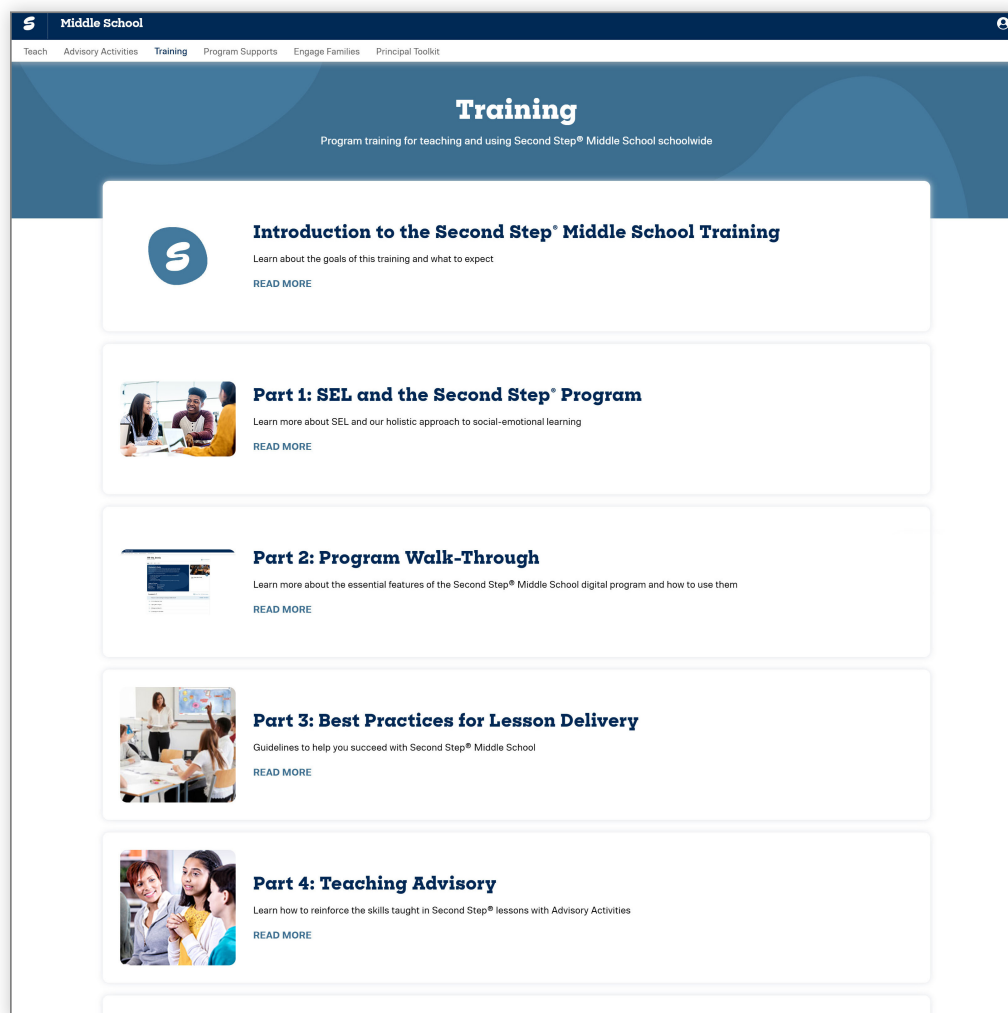
ADVISORY GUIDE

Your School, Your Schedule






■ Second Step® Middle School

Building Blocks for Your Advisory Program

Second Step Middle School was developed with advisory in mind. We know about two-thirds of all middle schools have advisory programs and that no two advisory programs are alike. That's why Second Step Middle School not only helps you teach kids the essential social-emotional skills they need—it also gives you the resources to build an advisory program your way, for your unique situation.



Training
 Program training for teaching and using Second Step® Middle School schoolwide

- 
Introduction to the Second Step® Middle School Training
 Learn about the goals of this training and what to expect
[READ MORE](#)
- 
Part 1: SEL and the Second Step® Program
 Learn more about SEL and our holistic approach to social-emotional learning
[READ MORE](#)
- 
Part 2: Program Walk-Through
 Learn more about the essential features of the Second Step® Middle School digital program and how to use them
[READ MORE](#)
- 
Part 3: Best Practices for Lesson Delivery
 Guidelines to help you succeed with Second Step® Middle School
[READ MORE](#)
- 
Part 4: Teaching Advisory
 Learn how to reinforce the skills taught in Second Step® lessons with Advisory Activities
[READ MORE](#)

Building Skills and Relationships

Weekly lessons are the backbone of Second Step® Middle School and foundational to developing students' social-emotional skills. Building on that foundation, Second Step Middle School advisory activities help nurture the sense of school community and close-knit relationships necessary for students' success and well-being while reinforcing lesson concepts and giving students more opportunities to practice their new skills. There are four different advisory activity types, each designed to meet these goals.



Weekly Check-Ins and Check-Outs

Give students the support they need with Weekly Check-Ins and Check-Outs. Held at the beginning and end of the week, these quick meetings let students reconnect, reflect, and check their progress toward individual and group goals. They also give teachers a chance to help students with individual issues. Second Step Middle School includes templates for both the Check-In and Check-Out meetings, which can be customized to meet the needs of each classroom or group.



Class Challenges

These fun, engaging, and thought-provoking activities are designed to help students get to know their classmates and build strong bonds over time. Class Challenges touch on themes such as growth mindset, planning ahead, and helping others, and each Class Challenge can be used in tandem with Second Step Middle School lessons or as a stand-alone activity. Class Challenges are great for providing additional skill practice, too.



Class Meetings

Build rapport between students in your advisory program with these guided group discussions on topics such as values, handling emotions, and relationships. With each meeting, students are given a safe space to explore and apply the Second Step® skills and concepts they're learning to social and academic situations. Everyone—including the teacher or advisor—is encouraged to participate actively, and full discussion outlines with reflection questions are included.



Service-Learning Projects

Students can make a difference in their school and community through these student-driven group projects. Working together, they plan their project, take on project roles, make group decisions, and complete and present their project. These extended projects are aligned to service-learning best practices and meant to span multiple advisory sessions.

Putting It Together

To supplement your Second Step® Middle School lessons and build out your advisory program, choose from nearly 200 advisory activities that can help give students a sense of belonging and build strong student-staff relationships.

Advisory Activity			
Type	Quantity	Example Activity	Example Theme(s)
Weekly Check-In and Check-Out	2	Templates	Customize to Your Classroom
Class Challenges	67	Strengths and Interests Inventory	Growth Mindset Planning Ahead Starting Right
Class Meetings	96	Digital Friendships	Bullying and Harassment Relationships Values
Service-Learning Projects	17	Making School Better	Helping Others Perspective-Taking Staying Calm

Designed for Flexibility

Teach one Second Step® Middle School lesson per week during an advisory period, then use the program's advisory activities during the week's remaining advisory periods to reinforce Second Step® skills and concepts. Does your schedule lend itself to a daily advisory period, or a Monday-Wednesday-Friday advisory schedule? Our flexible advisory activities, in combination with the concise Second Step lessons, can work in either of those situations and more. We created the materials—now you can create the schedule that suits you best. Below are a few examples.

Sample 5-Day Advisory Schedule				
MONDAY 10 min.	TUESDAY 15 min.	WEDNESDAY 25 min.	THURSDAY 15 min.	FRIDAY 10 min.
Weekly Check-In	Class Challenge	Second Step Lesson	Class Meeting	Weekly Check-Out
Sample 4-Day Advisory Schedule				
MONDAY 10 min.	TUESDAY 15 min.	WEDNESDAY 25 min.	THURSDAY 15 min.	
Weekly Check-In	Class Challenge	Second Step Lesson	Class Meeting	
Sample 3-Day Advisory Schedule				
MONDAY 25 min.		WEDNESDAY 15 min.		FRIDAY 10 min.
Second Step Lesson		Class Challenge or Class Meeting		Weekly Check-Out
Sample 2-Day Advisory Schedule				
	TUESDAY 40 min.		THURSDAY 40 min.	
	Weekly Check-In Class Challenge		Second Step Lesson Class Meeting	
Sample Service-Learning-Focused Advisory Schedule				
MONDAY 25 min.		WEDNESDAY 25 min.		FRIDAY 25 min.
Weekly Check-In Service-Learning Project		Second Step Lesson		Service-Learning Project Weekly Check-Out

Sample Advisory Activities

One of the standout features of Second Step® Middle School advisory activities is their variety. The extensive range of topics provides you with the tools to reach every learner in the room and choose activities that are relevant to them. Here are a few samples.

Middle School

Teach
Advisory Activities
Training
Program Supports
Engage Families
Principal Toolkit

Stress Triptych

Students create art triptychs that represent feelings of stress or anxiety and how they handle them.

Objectives
Create art that shows how you experience and deal with stress

Class Challenge
Time: 15+ min.
Program Themes:
 Staying Calm
 Thoughts and Emotions

Part 1: Prepare

Materials
3 pieces of blank paper and art supplies for each student

Preparation
None

Part 2: Steps

Introduction
Present the activity: Art can be a powerful way to represent and process your emotions. A triptych is a set of three pieces of art that work together to tell a story. Today we're going to create our own triptychs about stress.

Steps

1. Hand out materials to students.
2. For the first image in your triptych, create a picture that represents how stress feels to you, or something that you often feel stressed about. Your drawing can be realistic or abstract.
3. For your second image, create a picture that represents what you do to calm down when you're feeling stressed.
4. For your third image, create a picture that represents how you feel after you've calmed down and you're not stressed anymore.
5. Have students show and describe their triptychs to the class.

Part 3: Wrap-Up

Reflection
Ask: Did you notice any similarities between your triptych and someone else's? What was similar and why?
Give students time to think, then call on them to tell the class their ideas.

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Help & Support

Digital Friendships

Students discuss the benefits, challenges, and risks of online friendships compared to in-person friendships.

Objectives

Participate in a discussion about the benefits and challenges of online friendships

Class Meeting

Time: 10-15 min.

Program Themes:

- Bullying and Harassment
- Relationships
- Values

Part 1: Prepare

Preparation

1. If possible, have the class sit in a circle.
2. Sit where you can participate comfortably in the discussion.

Part 2: Steps

Warm Up

Have everyone in the class (including you) briefly answer the following question:

What are some ways that people spend time with friends online?

Gaming. Social media. Messaging.

Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following questions, as time allows:

- Tell us about something fun you've done with friends that was completely online.
- Do you have any friends that you only spend time with online? How is it different from spending time with friends in person?
- What's difficult about maintaining online friendships? What can make it easier?
- What do you need to be careful about when you're spending time with people online?

Part 3: Wrap-Up

Reflection

Ask: **Do you prefer spending time with friends online or in person? Why?**

Give students time to think, then call on them to tell the class their ideas.

Personal Wellness

Create a personal wellness project for students to use throughout the year

Objectives

- Identify common personal wellness practices
- Investigate where to go for information and guidance on practicing personal wellness
- Create a project that advertises or advocates for the importance of personal wellness and wellness practices

Service-Learning Project

Project Type: School Project

Time: Multiple sessions

Program Themes:

- Decision-Making
- Helping Others

Part 1: Prepare

Materials

Paper and writing utensils or a computer

Preparation

1. Have a list ready of practices or strategies that address physical, psychological, or emotional wellness that students can use to expand their investigation.
2. If multiple classes are collaborating, plan time for them to come together to work.
3. If this project has been done before, have a copy of the old project for students to refer to.

Project Description

Learning how to practice personal wellness is an important part of being successful in school and in life. In this Service-Learning Project, students will first identify what the term wellness means to them (for example, physical, psychological, or emotional) and things they can do themselves to practice or promote it (for example, getting exercise, drinking water, practicing deep breathing, or stretching). Then they will investigate people, services, and practices that can help them maintain their wellness. Finally, students will create a resource, event, or program that advertises or advocates for the importance of personal wellness and wellness practices at school.

Individual classes can create their own projects, or multiple classes can work together to create a single project for all students. If this project has been done before, students can revise an old project to reflect new concerns, or use it as a reference when creating a new one.

Part 2: Steps

Investigation

The class will create a list of practices or strategies that help maintain personal wellness. This list can be created in a number of ways, including:

- Class brainstorm
- Interviewing older students and/or staff
- Polling students in different classes

Students will also investigate where they can go for information and guidance on the personal wellness practices and strategies they have identified.

Planning

Students will create a plan for identifying what people, strategies, and services are available to help them in practicing personal wellness. They may draw from their own experiences, interview other students and staff, or research what services or staff members are available to help at school or in the district.

Students will also need to decide what format their project should take (for example, an online resource, a schoolwide challenge day, or a schoolwide program) and how they will advertise or remind students about it (for example, posters, an ad in the school newspaper, or class presentations). Finally, students will need to create a schedule and assign people to complete each part of the project.

Action

Students will put their plan into action. They'll determine the timeline or refer to the schedule part of the plan and begin. They'll also check the schedule frequently to ensure everyone is on task and meeting milestones.

Part 3: Wrap-Up

Reflection

Students will reflect on what they've learned throughout this process, how what they've done will help all students at school, what challenges they faced, and how they overcame these challenges.

Demonstration

Students will implement their project using the plan they created. If possible, give students the opportunity to formally present their project to peers, staff, or families, and describe how they went about creating it.

Get Started

Reinforce weekly Second Step® lessons, strengthen your existing advisory program, or create an advisory program from scratch: the advisory activities built into Second Step® Middle School are designed to fit your program and your schedule.

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Learn more at secondstep.org/middle-school-program or call Committee for Children at 800-634-4449, ext. 1.