



Second Step[®] Middle School Advisory Activity Starter Pack

To access all the advisory activities referenced in the Second Step Middle School Remote Learning Advisory Guide, you must have a subscription to the Second Step Middle School program. If you don't have a subscription but would like to start building a remote advisory program, you can use the activities in this free Starter Pack as a place to begin.

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Middle School Program

Preparation

1. Have basic school supplies available for students who may need them during the week.
2. If possible, seat the class in a circle.
3. Sit where you can participate comfortably in the discussion.
4. Allow 10–15 minutes for this Check-In.

Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question: **What's one thing you did this weekend that you'd like to tell us about?**

Check-In

1. Announce any important dates, schedule changes, or special events (such as birthdays) coming up during the week.
2. Check in with students:
 - Have them make any announcements
 - Have them discuss what assignments they anticipate working on this week
 - Ensure they have the basic school supplies they need
3. Provide students who are missing supplies with what they need, or help them create a plan to get the supplies.
4. (Optional) Set class attendance goals, or review students' attendance records for the previous week and track their progress.

Reflection

1. Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt: **What's one thing you're looking forward to at school this week?**
2. Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

Middle School Program

Preparation

1. If possible, seat the class in a circle.
2. Sit where you can participate comfortably in the discussion.
3. Allow 10–15 minutes for this Check-Out.

Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question: **What's one challenge you encountered and one success you experienced this week?**

Check-Out

1. Have students discuss what homework they have to work on over the weekend.
2. Have students discuss what they need to do over the weekend to be ready for school next week.
3. Meet with students individually to discuss any school-related issues they need help with.
4. (Optional) Set class attendance goals, or review students' attendance records for the week and track their progress.

Reflection

1. Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt: **What's one thing you're looking forward to this weekend?**
2. Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS MEETING

Coping with Emotions

Objective

Identify ways to cope with emotions



Thoughts and Emotions

Preparation

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

Class Meeting Instructions

Warm-Up

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

Tell us about a time you felt nervous or worried. What did you do to help yourself feel better?

(Spoke to a mentor. Told myself I could do it.)

Discussion

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

- **If you feel frustrated, what do you do to help yourself feel better?**
- **If you feel sad, what do you do to help yourself feel better?**
- **If you feel lonely, what do you do to help yourself feel better?**

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
Pick another uncomfortable emotion. Think about what makes you feel better when you experience that emotion.
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS MEETING

Digital Friendships

Objective

Analyze online friendships and identify their challenges



Bullying and Harassment



Relationships



Values

Preparation

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

Class Meeting Instructions

Warm-Up

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

What are some ways that people socialize online?

Discussion

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

- **Tell us about something fun you did with friends completely online.**
- **Do you have any friends that you mostly socialize with online? How is it different from the way you socialize when you're not online?**
- **What can make it difficult to maintain a friendship online? What can you do to help make it easier?**
- **What are some things you need to be careful about when you socialize online?**

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
Which do you prefer, socializing online or in person? Why?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS MEETING

Feeling Anxiety

Objective

Recognize causes of anxiety and ways to respond to it



Staying Calm



Thoughts and Emotions

Preparation

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

Class Meeting Instructions

Warm-Up

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

What's one thing here at school that makes you feel anxious or stressed out?

(Tests. Making friends. Fitting in. Math.)

Discussion

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

- **What things outside of school make you feel anxious?**
- **Would you describe yourself as highly anxious, moderately anxious, or rarely anxious, and why?**
- **Explain how you feel anxiety in your body and your mind.**

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
What's one thing you do to feel better when you're anxious?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS MEETING

Getting Calm

Objective

Recognize that calming down can help you when you're angry



Staying Calm



Thoughts and Emotions

Preparation

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

Class Meeting Instructions

Warm-Up

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

What are some things that can make you upset?

(Failing at something. People being rude. Embarrassment.)

Discussion

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

- **How can feeling angry help you?**
- **How can feeling angry make things more difficult for you?**
- **Is it okay to show that you're angry when you feel angry? What are some safe and respectful ways you can show you're angry?**
- **What are some things that aren't okay to do when you're angry?**

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
How can calming down help you when you feel angry?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS MEETING

Happy Thoughts

Objective

Identify things that make you happy



Thoughts and Emotions

Preparation

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

Class Meeting Instructions

Warm-Up

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

Tell us about the last time you felt happy.

Discussion

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

- **What are some things that make you feel happy?**
- **When you're happy, how do others around you seem to feel?**
- **What do you do when you're feeling sad, but you want to be happier?**

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
Why is it useful to think about things that make you happy?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS MEETING

Online Bullying

Objective

Increase students' awareness about online bullying



Bullying and Harassment



Relationships



Values

Preparation

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

Class Meeting Instructions

Warm-Up

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

Have you ever witnessed people being mean online? Have you ever joined in?

Discussion

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

- **Tell us about a time you witnessed someone getting picked on online. What happened and what caused it to stop?**
- **Online bullying is when someone keeps being mean to someone else on purpose online. How can the effects of bullying be amplified when they happen online?**
- **Who can you go to for help if you witness online bullying? Why would you go to that person?**

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:

Many times, people bully others online because they think they're anonymous and no one will know who they are. In reality, nothing you do online is ever really anonymous. What do you think could happen to people who are discovered to be secretly bullying others online?

- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS MEETING

Recognizing Emotions

Objective

Recognize different emotions and how they affect us



Thoughts and Emotions

Preparation

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

Class Meeting Instructions

Warm-Up

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

In one word, describe how you're feeling today.

(Happy. Sad. Excited.)

Discussion

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

- **Why are you feeling the way you feel today?**
- **Tell us about something that makes you happy. Describe why it makes you happy.**
- **Tell us about something that makes you angry. Describe why it makes you angry.**
- **Have you ever cheered someone up who was feeling sad? How did you do it?**

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
What do you do to cheer yourself up when you're feeling sad?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS MEETING

Social Media Experiences

Objective

Discuss how social media affects us and those around us



Decision Making



Planning Ahead



Relationships



Values

Preparation

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

Class Meeting Instructions

Warm-Up

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

- **Who here has one social media account? Who has two? Three or more?**
- **What do you enjoy about using social media?**
(I can keep in touch with friends who live far away. I can find out what's going on with people.)

Discussion

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

- **How can you use your social media profiles to show your values?**
- **What can make a social media experience negative?**
- **Do you think it's easier for people to be mean to each other online than it is in person?**

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
Think of one to two things you can do online to make using social media better for you and your friends.
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS MEETING

Try Something New!

Objective

Analyze how purpose, trying new things, and improving your skills are connected



Growth Mindset



Planning Ahead



Resilience

Preparation

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

Class Meeting Instructions

Warm-Up

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

Think of a time when you tried something new. What happened? Did you succeed? Did you struggle?

Discussion

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

- **Why is it important to try new things?**
- **Have you ever discovered you have a strength from trying something new?**
- **How can trying new things influence your sense of purpose?**

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
Think of one new thing you want to try this year. How will you handle the challenges that might come with it?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS CHALLENGE

Anxiety Triptych

Objective

Use art to explore ways to handle stress and anxiety



Staying Calm



Thoughts and Emotions

Materials

3 pieces of blank paper and art supplies for each student

Preparation

Allow at least 15 minutes for this activity. If time runs out, continue when time allows.

Activity Instructions

Introduction

Present the activity: **A triptych is a set of three illustrations that tell a story. Today, each of you will create your own triptychs about anxiety.**

Steps

- 1 Hand out materials to students.
- 2 Have students create a picture that represents how they feel when they're anxious, or something that can cause them to feel anxious or stressed. These illustrations can be in any form, and can be realistic or abstract.
- 3 On a separate piece of paper, have students create a picture that represents what they do to stay calm when they're feeling anxious, using the same style as the first picture.
- 4 On a third piece of paper, have students create a picture that represents how they feel after they've calmed down, or what it looks like when they're no longer anxious, using the same style as before.
- 5 Have students show their triptychs to the class.

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
What are some similarities you see between your triptych and someone else's? Why do you think these similarities exist?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS CHALLENGE

Calm Preserver

Objective

Identify coping strategies for stress



Staying Calm



Thoughts and Emotions

Materials

1 sheet of blank paper and drawing supplies for each group

Preparation

- 1 Divide the class into groups of 3 to 4.
- 2 Allow at least 10 minutes for this activity. If time runs out, continue when time allows.

Activity Instructions

Introduction

Present the activity: **Many things can cause you to feel stressed or frustrated. Being aware of what those things are and what you can do to handle stress can help you when it happens.**

Steps

- 1 Hand out materials to each group.
- 2 Have the groups draw a life preserver (a large circle with a smaller circle inside) on their papers. This will be their "Calm Preserver."
- 3 Outside the Calm Preserver, have groups list or draw pictures of things that cause them stress.
- 4 Near the stressors, but on the Calm Preserver itself, have students list or draw pictures of things that help them cope with or reduce stress.
- 5 Have groups show and explain their drawings to the class.

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
What's one new strategy to handle stress you heard about today that you might try in the future?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS CHALLENGE

Conflict Word Web

Objective

Work together to identify the underlying causes of common conflicts and possible solutions



Conflicts

Materials

- 1 large sheet of blank paper and markers for each group
- Wall space where large sheets of paper can be posted temporarily

Preparation

- 1 Before class, choose a conflict you see students at your school get into (for example, pushing in the hall, name-calling, or taking other people's stuff) and write it on the board.
- 2 Write the same conflict in the center of each of the large sheets of paper.
- 3 Divide the class into groups of 3 to 4.
- 4 Allow at least 15 minutes for this activity. If time runs out, continue when time allows.

Activity Instructions

Introduction

Present the activity: **Take a look at the conflict on the board. This is a conflict I see often here at school. You're going to work in groups to create word webs that identify the possible causes of this conflict.**

Steps

- 1 Hand out materials to each group.
- 2 Have each group create a word web by brainstorming causes of the conflict, writing them down, and connecting them to the words in the middle of the paper. If time allows, have groups identify causes for the causes and add those to the sheet as well.
- 3 Post each group's sheet of paper on a wall or the board. Give students a few minutes to quietly review what the other groups wrote.

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
Now that you've identified the possible causes for this conflict, what's something you could do to help prevent it, and conflicts like it, from happening in the future?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS CHALLENGE

Goal Boards

Objective

Create a picture to help you identify long- and short-term goals



Decision Making

Materials

- 1 piece of blank paper and art/collage supplies for each student
- Empty wall space where students' artwork can be posted
- (Optional) A computer and graphic design software for each student

Preparation

- 1 Create wall space where students' art can be posted.
- 2 Allow at least 15 minutes for this activity. If time runs out, continue when time allows.
- 3 (Optional) Write a sample If–Then Plan on the board (see Reflection).

Activity Instructions

Introduction

Present the activity: **Your goals are an important part of who you are. Each of you will create a picture or collage that represents a goal you have for yourself. You can pick a big goal you want to achieve during your life, or a smaller goal that you want to achieve soon. The only rule is that you can't use any words. Don't tell anyone else the goal you've chosen, because the class is going to try to guess based on what you've created.**

Steps

- 1 Hand out materials to students.
- 2 Have students quietly think of a goal and create pictures or collages reflecting that goal.
- 3 Have each student present his or her collage while the rest of the class tries to guess which goal he or she chose.
- 4 Hang students' art on the wall to create a gallery of goals.

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
Creating goals is only the first step. Think of an If–Then Plan to help you achieve the goal you chose. If necessary, remind students that in an If–Then Plan:
If is a specific cue you can react to quickly.
Then is a specific action or actions you can do immediately.
- 2 (Optional) Write a sample If–Then Plan on the board using the following format:
Goal: _____
If (or when): _____,
Then: _____.
- 3 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS CHALLENGE

Learn Something New

Objective

Teach each other things so everyone can grow their brains



Growth Mindset



Helping Others

Materials

A note card or paper and a writing utensil for each student

Preparation

Allow at least 15 minutes for this activity.

Activity Instructions

Introduction

Present the activity: **Challenging yourself to learn new things helps your brain grow. You're all going to learn something new from each other right now.**

Steps

- 1 Hand out a note card to each student.
- 2 Have students write their names and one skill or talent they can teach the rest of the class in 5 minutes or less. This can be simple, like a phrase in another language, how to make a paper airplane, or a card trick.
- 3 Collect the note cards.
- 4 Pick a card (you can choose or pick one randomly) and have the student who wrote it come to the front of the class and teach his or her skill or talent.
- 5 Give students a chance to practice what they've learned.
- 6 If students are having trouble learning the skill, encourage them to ask questions.
- 7 After 5 to 10 minutes, draw a new card. Repeat Steps 4 to 6, as time allows.

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
What did it feel like to try to learn something new? How did it help you grow your brain?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS CHALLENGE

On a Positive Note

Objective

Practice turning a negative concept into a positive one by looking at it from a different perspective



Perspective Taking

Materials

1 large sheet of blank paper and art supplies for each group

Preparation

- 1 Divide the class into groups of 3 to 4.
- 2 Allow at least 10 minutes for this activity. If time runs out, continue when time allows.

Activity Instructions

Introduction

Present the activity: **Sometimes what seems like a bad thing can actually be a good thing. It's all about your perspective. Today we'll try to use positive terms to define a word that is usually seen as negative.**

Steps

- 1 Hand out materials to each group.
- 2 Have each group pick a word that represents something people often view as negative (for example, "anger," "mistakes," "emotional," or "conflict"). Have each group write the word down at the top of the paper.
- 3 Have each group decide on a typical, negative definition for the word and write it on the sheet of paper.
- 4 Have each group cross out the first definition and write a new, positive definition.
- 5 If time allows, have the groups create illustrations to accompany their new definitions.
- 6 Have the groups share their definitions and illustrations with the class.

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
How do the words used in a definition affect the way we think about the word?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

CLASS CHALLENGE

The Art of Values

Objective

Create an image that represents an important value



Values

Materials

- Paper and art/collage supplies for each student
- Empty wall space where students' art can be posted
- (Optional) A computer and graphic design software for each student

Preparation

- 1 Create space on the wall to hang students' art.
- 2 Allow at least 15 minutes for this activity. If time runs out, continue when time allows.

Activity Instructions

Introduction

Present the activity: **Each of you will choose a value that's important to you and create a picture or collage that represents that value. The only rule is that you can't use any words. Don't tell anyone else the value you've chosen, because the class is going to try to guess based on the image you've created.**

Steps

- 1 Hand out art supplies to students.
- 2 Have students choose a value and create their pictures or collages.
- 3 Have each student show his or her collage while the rest of the class tries to guess which value it represents.
- 4 Hang students' art on the wall to create a gallery of values.

Reflection

- 1 Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:
What values did other students choose that you also think are important?
- 2 Call on students to tell the class their ideas, as time allows.

SERVICE LEARNING: COMMUNITY PROJECT

Community Health

Objectives



Helping Others

- Identify pressing health issues in the community
- Investigate the organizations and services that are focused on these issues
- Create a plan of action to help an organization or entity address a local health issue

Materials

Paper and writing utensils or a computer

Preparation

- 1 Have a short list ready of some pressing health issues, either in the community or in the world, to help get students thinking.
- 2 If multiple classes are collaborating, plan time for them to come together to work.
- 3 If this project has been done before, have copies of previous projects for students to refer to.

Project Description

Getting involved in important issues is a great way to help students feel more engaged in their community. In this Service-Learning Project, students will investigate local health issues and create a plan of action to help with one of those issues in a concrete way.

Individual classes can create their own projects, or multiple classes can work together to complete a single project. If this project has been done before, students can refer to previous projects as examples if they need ideas.

Project Steps

Investigation

Students will begin by identifying a diverse list of health issues affecting their community. This list will help guide them as they settle on one issue they'd like to address. Next, students will investigate organizations that focus on this issue and choose one they'd like to help. They should identify what kind of help is needed (for example, a drive to collect supplies or a fundraiser), making sure to follow any guidelines or parameters the organization provides.

Planning

Students will create a plan to help with a community health issue through their chosen organization. They will need to identify peers, staff, and community members they can ask to help with the project. 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.

Reflection

Students will reflect on what they've learned throughout this process, what their successes and challenges were, and how they've helped their community.

Demonstration

If possible, give students the opportunity to formally present their project to peers, staff, or families (for example, at a community event, school assembly, or in a documentary posted on the school or district website).

SERVICE LEARNING: SCHOOL PROJECT

Positive School Relationships

Objectives



Relationships

- Identify common types of relationships students have at school
- Investigate strategies to establish and maintain positive relationships at school
- Create a resource, project, or program summarizing the ways students can establish and maintain positive relationships at school

Materials

Paper and writing utensils or a computer

Preparation

- 1 Have a list ready of some positive relationship strategies to help students 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 previous project for students to use as a reference.

Project Description

Learning how to interact positively at school is an important part of creating a successful learning community. In this Service-Learning Project, students will first identify the types of relationships they have at school (for example, peer-to-peer, student-to-teacher, player-to-coach, or friend-to-friend). Next, students will investigate people, practices, and services that can help them establish and maintain positive relationships at school. Finally, students will create a resource, project, or program that communicates strategies that help create and maintain positive relationships at school.

Individual classes can create their own projects, or multiple classes can work together to create a single resource for all students. If this project has been done before, students can revise and update an old project to reflect new concerns.

Project Steps

Investigation

Students will create a list of common relationships at school. This list can be created in a number of ways, including:

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

Planning

Students will create a plan to identify ways of establishing and maintaining positive relationships at school. They may draw from their own experiences, interview others, or research common positive relationship-building strategies. Students will also have to decide how they want to share the resources and strategies they come up with (for example, an online resource, schoolwide event, or schoolwide campaign), how they will create the project, and what details will need to be included. 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.

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

If possible, give students the opportunity to formally present their project to a wider audience, whether in person or online, and describe how they went about creating it.

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