

# Social Emotional Learning Group

Life Tools Group



**Self-Awareness**

**Self-Management**

**Social Awareness  
Relationship Skills**

## What the Life Tools Group *IS*

The Life Tools group provides a safe place in which children learn practical skills for their day-to-day lives, called Tools. The group will consist of 8 meetings with topics organized in 3 categories. Categories include:

- **Self-Awareness** (learning about their brain and how their life impacts their thoughts, feelings and behavior)
- **Self-Management** (learning how to be mindful and present in the moment by sharpening our senses and sense of control)
- **Social Awareness, Relationship Skills** (identify what kids or others are feeling, state their feelings appropriately and handle them appropriately, learn about their connections, discuss how to be treated and how we should be treated by others, handling mistakes appropriately, compromise effectively, and problem solve without argument).

We believe each child has strengths they bring to their “work” of growing, exploring and learning. Our goal is to help them develop tools to be more successful in their “work.” As children try out and practice tools (i.e., at home, school and with other children), they will see themselves becoming more capable and more successful. Thus, the Life Tools journey provides children with social and emotional regulation tools for their daily toolkit!

## What the Life Tools Group *IS NOT*

The Life Tools group is not psychotherapy. We do not ask personal questions about what goes on at home or with family members. We do not evaluate or diagnose participants. Life Tools are based on respect for each other and ourselves. These tools are based on universal beliefs, which should blend with any school environment or parenting style.

# Life Tools Curriculum Guide

## Table of Contents

### Curriculum Sessions

- Session 1: Introduction to Group and Tools
- Session 2: Stress Response
- Session 3: Mindful Awareness
- Session 4: Mindful Movement
- Session 5: Identifying our Feelings
- Session 6: Having an Anger Plan
- Session 7: Making Repairs
- Session 8: Reviewing and Practicing Life Tools

### Session Structure

- Settling In
- Review Concepts
- New Concepts
- Reflect on New Tools
- Try Outs
- Rate your Attitude
- Session Summaries

### Tools

- Tool 1: Settling In
- Tool 2: Three Good Things
- Tool 3: Each Child is VIVID
- Tool 4: Knowing the Parts to My Self
- Tool 5: Stress Response
- Tool 6: Feelings are Powerful
- Tool 7: Having an Anger Plan
- Tool 8: Making Repairs and Building Healthy Relationships

## **Session Activities**

### **Session 1**

- Beginning before Settling In
  - Session Activity 1: Life Tools Book Cover
- Settling In
  - Session Activity 2: Attitude Word Bank
- New Concepts
  - Session Activity 3: 3 Good Things #1
  - Session Activity 4: 3 Good Things #2
  - Session Activity 5: VIVID

### **Session 2**

- New Concepts
  - Session Activity 6: Fight Flight or Freeze
  - Session Activity 7: 5 parts to My Self

### **Session 3**

- New Activity
  - Session Activity 8: Mindfulness
  - Session Activity 9: Mindful or Unmindful
  - Session Activity 10: Mindful or Unmindful Answers

### **Session 4**

- New Activity
  - Session Activity 11: Hot and Cold Buttons
  - Session Activity 12: Raise or Lower Heart Rate

### **Session 5**

- New Activity
  - Session Activity 13: Feeling Guess and Rate

### **Session 6**

- New Concepts
  - Session Activity 14: Noticing Our Anger

### **Session 7**

- New Tools
  - Session Activity 15: Making a Repair

### **Session 8**

- New Activity
  - Session Activity 16: Journal Pages Book
  - Session Activity 17: End of Group Certificate

## **Handouts**

Handout 1: Life Tools Video Script 1

Handout 2: Life Tools Session 1: Group Summary for Adults at Home

Handout 3: Life Tools Video Script 2

Handout 4: Life Tools Session 2: Stress Response and Calm Mind

Handout 5: Life Tools Video Script 3

Handout 6: Life Tools Session 3: Mindful Awareness

Handout 7: Life Tools Video Script 4

Handout 8: Life Tools Session 4: Mindful Movement

Handout 9: Life Tools Video Script 5

Handout 10: Life Tools Session 5: Feelings are Powerful

Handout 11: Life Tools Video Script 6

Handout 12: Life Tools Session 6: Having an Anger Plan

Handout 13: Life Tools Video Script 7

Handout 14: Life Tools Session 7: Making Repairs

Handout 15: Life Tools Video Script 8

Handout 16: Life Tools Session 8: Review and Practice Tools/Concepts

## **Appendix**

Life Tools: Teachers

Life Tools Group: Parents

Referral Form

SEL Videos

## **Surveys**

Social Emotional Learning Student Pre-Survey

Social Emotional Learning Student Post-Survey

Social Emotional Learning Staff Pre-Survey

Social Emotional Learning Staff Post-Survey

Social Emotional Learning Parent Pre-Survey

Social Emotional Learning Parent Post-Survey



## **Program Success**

Social Emotional Learning Group: Life Tools Group: Assurances

Social Emotional Learning Group: Life Tools Group: Recommendations for Program Success

SEL Core Competencies

## **References**

# Life Tools Video Script 8

Today was our last meeting of the Life Tools Group!

We met eight times and whether your child attended all or a few of the sessions, we believe the tools and concepts we practiced will help your child feel more capable in handling emotions and behavior. It's been a pleasure to get to know your child and see him or her try out the ideas we discussed.

Thank you for having your child participate in the group. Here's a recap of tools and concepts and how you can use them with your family!

## **Tool 1: *Settling In***

- At the beginning of each meeting, we did a number of *Settling In* activities to help children calm down and focus. *Settling In* helps children de-stress and let go of the school day by allowing them to focus and relax in a safe space.
- The more we make *Settling In* a routine in our daily lives the more easily we can generalize those skills across settings.

## **Tool 2: Each child is VIVID**

- VIVID stands for Valuable, Imperfect, Vulnerable, Immature, Dependent. Practicing VIVID helps us remember this. Your child memorized this over the sessions and can easily tell you what each letter stands for. VIVID can be helpful when your child feels down or has made a mistake. For example, you might say, "Hey, I know you are VIVID. We all make mistakes. And you can handle this."

## **Tool 3: 3 Good Things.**

- 3 Good Things is the daily review of three good things that happened. They are best done in the evening as part of winding down the day and getting ready for bed. Doing this helps your child end the day on a good note, even when tough things may have happened.
- You can sit with your child in the evening and ask him or her to tell you three good things. If your child says nothing good happened, then remind him or her of the 5 parts to My Self hand to prompt three good things. Small good things count!

## **Tool 4: Knowing the 5 Parts to My Self is important**

- Each child has at least five major parts of his or her life: Family, School, Activities, Friend and Body. Knowing and identifying good things about ourself in each part is important to our mood and feelings. It is also important to realize each part can influence each other.

## **Tool 5: Stress Response**

- The Stress Response tool focuses on our fight, flight or freeze response. The goal is to help children identify their alarm responses and be in control of their reactions. We can use *Settling In* tools to help us calm down and control our behaviors so we do not do something that could get us in trouble, harm others or harm ourselves.

Thank you for your interest in the Life Tools Group. Your support has a huge impact on whether your child will practice and use the skills!

## Tool 6: Feelings are powerful

- We reviewed the core feelings of happy, sad, anger and fear. We encourage children to own and rate their feelings as they talk about both positive and negative events and feelings of the day.
- Essential for a child to handle feelings is a sense of safety with their feelings. When a child shows/says a feeling it is best to identify it, give permission for it and offer support for it.
- Remember the feeling rules:
  - I have a right to all my feelings, a right to say all my feelings and no one can tell me what to feel.
- You play a critical role in helping your child see that feeling rules apply to them in the home and with you.

## Tool 7: Having an Anger Plan

- Anger happens so having an Anger Plan to handle it is important. The three steps to an Anger Plan are stop, breathe and take a break.
- You can help your child use an Anger Plan by asking her if she would like a break when she is upset. Don't follow her or lecture her as she goes to take her break. After she has used the Anger Plan then you can discuss with her what is going on.

## Tool 8: Making a Repair

- VIVID reminds us that we all make mistakes and we can Repair those mistakes.
- Making a Repair is a critical life skill. When we have confidence that we can face our mistakes, we are more likely to do just that. Therefore, making a Repair takes courage and includes the following steps:
  - **Admit what you did:** "Mom, I dropped the dish and it broke."
  - **Apologize for what you did:** "I'm sorry I broke the dish."
  - **Amend (make up for) what you did:** "I'd like to make up for it. Can I do something for you?"
- You play a role in helping children learn they can make Repairs. Have confidence that they can do all three parts and require each part be made as part of the consequence for their misbehavior. Then when they have made the Repair, let them know you see they were responsible and took care of their mistake.

## Concepts: Mindful and Unmindful Behavior

- We learned how we could use mindful behavior to suspend judgment by keeping an open mind and thinking about a situation before making a decision or reacting.
  - Mindful behavior is when a response happens after our mind has thought about it
  - Unmindful behavior is when a reaction happens before the mind thinks about it.

That wraps up the Life Tools group. Thank you again for having your child participate. Your support and encouragement has a huge impact on whether your child will use the tools at home, at school and in the community.

Your interest and support for what your children do in the Life Tools Group has a huge impact on whether they will use the tools at home and school!