

Start of the Day

Situational Stressor

Triggers:

- Student is nervous about being at school.
- Student does not come to school on time.
- Student carries over issues from home.
- Student has difficulty gathering and organizing materials.
- Student has overwhelming feelings regarding upcoming events.



Thinking Strategies:

Student Positive Affirmations

- Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible.
- I believe in my abilities and myself.
- I have all that I need to make this a great day.
- I can solve any challenges that come up today.
- I am patient and calm and greet the day with ease.

Positive Adult Responses

- One small positive thought in the morning can change your whole day.
- Do something amazing today.
- I'm so glad you came to school today.
- Prior to students coming into the classroom, spend a few moments grounding yourself and set your own intention for the day.

Activities

- Worry Monster/box- "Keeper of the worries." Teacher can decorate a box as complex or as simple as you want. Write or draw a picture of your worries on a piece of paper and feed the worry or fear to the monster. The monster eats the worries. (The teacher can read through the worries and implement adaptations to class or problem scenarios to ease the anxiety.) See Activity Template L
- Grow a thought - Teacher draws a seedling and states, "Today we are going to grow a positive thought. Think of something positive about our classroom." Teacher writes on board "We are good helpers, we are worthy, we are likable, we can ____ ". The class selects one. Teacher states, "Each day we will water our thoughts by listing anything we hear or see that would make our plant grow. We also will look for weeds, any thoughts we have seen or heard that would hurt our thought making it difficult to grow." Each day review and show pictures of the plant growing from a seed to a full plant. (7)





Focusing & Calming Strategies:

- Mental Health Days – Allow for a day without homework, brainstorm with the class positive ways to spend their free time (i.e. Focusing/calming activity, movement, relaxation, do something fun with friends or spending time in nature). Teach them to take time to recharge themselves.
- This Progressive Muscle Relaxation for kids and adults YouTube video provides visuals for relaxing one's muscles. The video can be shortened into single sections for use throughout the day. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aaTDNYjk-Gw>

Movement Poses (See Appendix C)

- A OK
- Shine Bright
- Soar High

Teaching Moment

A Thinking Strategy is learning to change our thoughts in order to change how we feel. One small positive thought can change a whole day. By setting our intention for the day, we can bring awareness to our ability to change our thoughts. By changing our thoughts, we can change our life experiences. Positive thinking is linked to both psychological and physiological benefits. One of those benefits is stress reduction. (20)

Developed by: Alisa Deininger, OTR/L, Sarah Kolic, OTR/L & Denise Young, COTA/L (2016) for Every Moment Counts: Promoting Mental Health Throughout the Day. All of the Calm Moments Cards and supporting materials are free and downloadable in the Embedded Programs tab at www.everymomentcounts.org

