Friendship Workshop

- A conscious approach to helping children identify and regulate their emotions so they can make choices that support their relationships and their schooling.

- A fresh way of observing students and using their actions to drive your teaching. It reframes how you react to their behaviors in order to support the literacy work you are already teaching.

- By teaching the emotional language with the social skills, we can layer on the academic content and have successful and rigorous discussions, questions, discoveries, and achievements that go far beyond any scripted curriculum.

Stress is…

State of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from very demanding circumstances

Person perceives that the demands exceeds their personal and social resources

What might be going on?
Stress triggers the need to avoid danger. The amygdala sends oxygen to arms and legs to prepare for “fight / flight /freeze” reaction. This focus denies oxygen to the frontal cortex. This is the part of the brain where our ability to make logical and reasonable decisions originates.

During stress our capacity to make sound decisions is biologically limited. We must explicitly teach our students WHAT a calm and peaceful body feels like BEFORE we ask them to “Make a good choice”.

**Reactions:**

**Stimulus** – 5 senses

**Label** – words for stimulus

**Story** – past experiences and perceptions

**Reaction** – physical in nature

Often our students often jump right over Label and Story and react with ineffective, unproductive and disruptive behaviors.

**Ways to Calm Down**

3 deep breaths – deep breath in through the nose and filling the belly (diaphragmatic breathing), slow breath out through mouth triggers our parasympathetic nervous system, neutralizes stress and creates a calming sensation throughout the body.

Coordinating the rising of hands up and down with breath can release some of the excess chemicals (adrenaline, cortisol) that builds with stress reactions.

**Sharing the Blue Crayon: How to Integrate Social, Emotional and Literacy Learning**

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