Adaptation Note
The *El Camino: The Road to Health Relationships* curriculum and related materials have been adapted from *El Camino*—a goal-setting teen pregnancy prevention curriculum.\(^1\)\(^2\)\(^3\) In September 2017, the DC Office of Human Rights partnered with Child Trends to adapt an existing evidence-informed curriculum, *El Camino*, for use with DC middle school youth to improve healthy relationship skills and prevent bullying and other forms of interpersonal conflict. The original *El Camino* curriculum is a comprehensive, goal-setting teen pregnancy prevention program developed by Child Trends with an aim to reduce teen childbearing and increase educational achievement among adolescents, particularly Latino youth. The program helps teens to personally identify their goals and develop their own camino, or road, to pursue their goals. To adapt this curriculum to support DC middle school youth in developing healthy relationships, Child Trends engaged in a rigorous development and testing process to develop a DC-specific curriculum that can be implemented in youth serving agencies, including schools, youth groups, and after-school programs. The curriculum was piloted with students in a total of five different classrooms. Information gathered through feedback forms completed by youth participants in each pilot session suggest they enjoyed the activities and were applying what they learned about healthy relationships and decision-making. However, logistical challenges in collecting pre/post evaluations resulted in small sample sizes; thus, we are not able to conduct more formal analyses of the effects of participation in the program.

A Word about Implementation Planning
This curriculum is intended to present developmentally-appropriate information for early adolescents to learn about healthy relationships and decision-making skills in an in-person setting. While the characters presented throughout the curriculum were chosen to represent a variety of personal characteristics, they were limited to avoid overly complicated storylines. However, the activities and discussions are youth-driven and intended to reflect participants’ own personal experiences. Facilitators should consider ways to use questions, prompts, and examples inclusive of other salient personal characteristics of their youth participants. Please review Appendix D: Facilitation Suggestions within the Front Matter for more guidance as you tailor the curriculum activities and discussions to meet the needs of youth in your community.

Funding Note
This project is funded wholly or in part by DC Department of Health (DC Health).

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Training Manual Overview

This training toolkit is designed to provide staff in DC educational institutions and after-school programs with information to support the implementation of *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this training, participants will be able to:

- Summarize the core concepts taught in the curriculum;
- Locate specific curriculum information (e.g., materials needed, key messages, script guidance);
- Identify their level of comfort with key teacher competencies; and
- Practice facilitating student-led discussions and activities.

Training Design

This training is designed to be used in a group setting with school and after-school staff (including teachers, administrators, and educational support staff). A facilitator should review all materials and instructions prior to delivering the training. The training will take approximately 8 hours to deliver. An abbreviated agenda for a 2.5 hour training is also provided.

Preparation

Before the training, make sure all supplies and materials are available. This training requires:

- a computer, projector, and screen to display the training PowerPoint slides;
- printed copies of handouts as follows:
  - a copy of the curriculum front matter and lesson plans for each participant;
  - a copy of the Key Competencies: Facilitator Self-Assessment for each participant (pp. 47-49);
  - Activity 1C: Value and Definition Cards (pp. 50-54);
  - a copy of Activity 2H: Identity Profiles worksheet for each participant (p. 55);
  - a copy of Activity 7F: Role Play Activity handout per participant (p. 56);
  - Agree/Disagree signs (p. 57).
- pens or pencils for each participant; and
• blank paper, index cards, post-it notes, flip charts, and markers.

Prior to the training, ask all participants to review the curriculum front matter and lesson plans in full and assign each participant to a lesson to mock facilitate (selected activities are outlined in the discussion guide). If there are more than 10 participants, you may assign multiple people to a lesson and ask for a volunteer from that group to facilitate the activity.

Prior to the training, read through all materials and instructions for facilitating the training. Ensure training is scheduled with sufficient time to complete all elements. The training can be split into multiple training sessions or the abbreviated training agenda may be used to cover key material.

**Facilitation Notes + Tips**

• Maintain confidentiality of students and training participants. During the training, participants may refer to specific incidents that they have experienced or that students have experienced. It is critical to maintain confidentiality of all stories. **Should an incident be revealed that needs further investigation based on the requirements of mandated reporting, it should be reported to the appropriate entities.** Visit [https://cfsa.dc.gov/service/report-child-abuse-and-neglect](https://cfsa.dc.gov/service/report-child-abuse-and-neglect) for more information.

• The training covers a set of key facilitator competencies, using a Facilitator Self-Assessment (pp. 47-49). This assessment is a tool for internal use only and is not part of any formal accountability system.

• The training can be delivered all at once, in shorter two-hour separate trainings, or using the abbreviated 2.5 hour agenda. Choose whichever format best fits your school’s schedule. If you break the training up, at the beginning of each new session it is helpful to review content from the previous training.

• The discussion notes and PowerPoint slides are meant as a guide and should be modified as needed to fit with your school or program setting’s needs.

Notes for trainers are included inside a blue box and should not be read aloud.
# Training Workshop Agenda (8 hours)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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Discussion Guide (8 hours)

Introductions + Objectives + Agenda (5 minutes)

INTRODUCTIONS

If participants are not familiar with each other, ask everyone to introduce themselves:

- How long have they been at the school or after-school program?
- What grade/classes/programs do they teach?
- Do they have experience with SEL curricula or student-led learning?

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to...

1. Summarize the core concepts taught in the curriculum;
2. Locate specific curriculum information (e.g., materials needed, key messages, script guidance);
3. Identify their level of comfort with key teacher competencies; and
4. Practice facilitating a student-led discussion or activity.

AGENDA

- Opening Discussion
- Overview of Front Matter
- Key Competencies Self-Assessment
- Lesson Overviews + Mock Facilitations + Debrief Discussions
- Curriculum Overview + Q&A

Opening Discussion (10 minutes)

- In advance of this training, we shared a copy of the curriculum and front matter to give you some time to look over each. Does anyone have any initial questions on either the curriculum or front matter?
- Based on what you have read in the front matter, and your knowledge of your students, what are some of the challenges your students are facing and what elements of El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships could address those challenges?
Overview of Front Matter (15 minutes)

Background

Why and How the Curriculum Was Developed

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* is a values-based curriculum designed to prevent bullying and other forms of interpersonal conflict in schools and online. This program is designed to help youth in DC middle schools—grades 6 through 8—develop knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors that support their ability to make values-based decisions that foster healthy relationships with peers, parents/family, and partners, both in-person and online. The curriculum focuses on decision making and personal values and includes lessons and activities on coping with strong emotions, teen brain development, empathy, assertive communication, and boundary setting.

Bullying and other forms of interpersonal violence are a significant problem in the District. According to the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)\(^4\), just under 12 percent of high school students (about 8,200 students) and just under 33 percent of middle school students (about 8,700 students) reported being bullied at school in the previous school year. Additionally, 31 percent of high school students and just under 68 percent of middle school students reported being in a physical fight in the previous year. For middle school students, DC’s rate of physical fighting is higher than any other city, territory, or state that participated in the 2017 YRBS. Clearly, the District’s youth need support to not only gain the skills to prevent and resolve conflicts and engage with peers more productively but to also understand how engaging in such violence could prevent them from reaching their goals and aspirations. Preventing bullying and other forms of interpersonal violence requires an approach that directly addresses technology and social media as a context in which to have healthy relationships.

In September 2017, the DC Office of Human Rights (which is charged, through the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012, with overseeing the Citywide Bullying Prevention Program) partnered with Child Trends to adapt an existing evidence-informed curriculum, *El Camino*, for use with DC middle school youth to improve healthy relationship skills and prevent bullying and other forms of interpersonal conflict. The original *El Camino* curriculum is a comprehensive, goal-setting teen pregnancy prevention program developed by Child Trends, with an aim to reduce teen childbearing and increase educational achievement among adolescents, particularly Latino youth. The program helps teens to personally identify their goals and develop their own camino, or road, to pursue their goals. To adapt this curriculum to support DC middle school youth in developing healthy relationships, Child Trends engaged in a rigorous development and testing process to develop a DC-specific curriculum that can be implemented in youth serving agencies, including schools, youth groups, and after-school programs.

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* was informed by a series of focus groups conducted by Child Trends with DC educators, parents, and near-peers (high school students who could

reflect on their own middle school experiences) to understand the challenges youth face related to healthy relationships and what they wanted youth to learn from a new curriculum. Participants viewed social media as one reason today’s generation might struggle more with interpersonal relationships, and they recognized the interdependence between in-person relationships and social media. Participants identified middle school, particularly 7th grade, as a period of heightened identity development for youth, without much explicit scaffolding. Combined with another common theme—that youth this age lack effective decision making skills—participants generally felt that this sometimes leads to heightened drama, conflict, and bullying. After conducting a brief scan of the literature to identify existing programs and practices focused on developing healthy relationships for youth, Child Trends developed the curriculum from insights gleaned from the focus groups and aligned the lessons to the El Camino approach and DC health curricular standards.

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* is based on the following theory of change:

A program that develops teens’ self-identity and understanding of their personal values as a lever for strengthening teen social skills (e.g., decision making, conflict resolution, communication, boundary setting) and promoting positive digital citizenship will help teens to develop and maintain healthy peer, parent/family, and partner relationships.

**Core Components of the Curriculum**

The *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum includes core components which are essential to the success of the program.

- The curriculum is youth driven (teachers do not tell the youth what to think, believe, or do).
- Teachers use a positive, strengths-based orientation and a focus on skills (focus on what to do, not what not to do).
- Youth identify their personal values and consider how these values influence their decisions.

In *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*, a range of methods are used to deliver and reinforce the core components. These include:

- Individual and group activities;
- Novellas (stories);
- Role plays;
- Class discussions and opportunities for students to ask questions; and
- Use of a decision making framework (STAR: Stop. Think. Act on your values. Reflect.) to support youth in values-based decision making.
It is important for facilitators to recognize that many youth do not yet have the skills and knowledge they will learn in *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* before starting the program. This is likely new information to the youth; therefore, it is necessary to provide sufficient time for them to ask questions and to talk through what they are learning. Again, we want the youth to talk about what they think, believe, and experience. We recognize that youth have the awareness to make good decisions for themselves.

**Unique Features**

The *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum incorporates several unique features that distinguish it from other evidence-based/evidence-informed social-emotional curricula designed to prevent bullying and other forms of interpersonal conflict in schools and online.

- **Anchored in a strengths-based approach to youth learning.** This curriculum was developed out of a need for bullying prevention and to help youth navigate interpersonal conflict both in-person and on social media. However, rather than adopt a discipline-oriented lens that may patronize or alienate youth, the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum adopts a universal tier strengths-based approach to youth learning. Respecting teens’ ability to think and do things independently, the curriculum helps youth identify the values that are most important to them and consider how those values make them feel like their best selves and can help them make decisions they feel proud of.

- **Incorporates a decision making framework throughout the curriculum.** *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* designed a comprehensive decision making framework called STAR (Stop. Think. Act on your values. Reflect.), which is a major focus in the curriculum. Youth are introduced to the tool and have ample opportunity to apply it throughout the lessons of the curriculum. They reflect on their own values and personal experiences and how STAR might help them decide how to respond to interpersonal conflict or relationship challenges as they learn new information about coping with strong emotions, teen brain development, empathy, assertive communication, and boundary setting.

- **Introduces key concepts and fosters discussion through a series of novellas.** The *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum introduces youth to a group of DC middle school teens in the context of a novella/story. These characters and their experiences are used throughout the curriculum to provide a means for youth to talk about real life issues and relationship challenges that they may face. The novellas also provide examples of characters using skills such as empathetic listening, assertive communication, and boundary setting to support youth who may not have had the

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5 In the Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework, universal tier (Tier 1) refers to interventions or supports that are available to all students in a classroom or school, as opposed to Tier 2 and Tier 3 which are targeted interventions for students with specific needs. Learn more at [https://www.pbisrewards.com/blog/what-is-mtss/](https://www.pbisrewards.com/blog/what-is-mtss/)
personal experience or a real-life example to have practiced these skills themselves or seen them used.

- **Designed with a focus on the needs and cultural context of DC youth.** Bullying and other forms of interpersonal violence are a significant problem in the District. *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* is informed by focus groups conducted by Child Trends with DC educators, parents, and near-peers to understand the challenges youth face related to healthy relationships and what they wanted youth to learn from a new curriculum. Educators and parents noted that youth use technology to seamlessly transition between in-person and online interactions and mentioned the need to help youth build decision making, boundary setting, and communication skills as a way to promote healthy relationships. All focus group participants provided anecdotes of youths’ experiences with interpersonal conflicts, “drama,” and bullying. These anecdotes were particularly valuable in the development of the curriculum to ensure scenarios presented in the novellas and lesson plans are relatable for current DC middle school youth.

**About El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships**

**Overall Goal and Key Messages of the Curriculum**

The **overall goal** of *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* is to help middle school aged youth build the skills to create healthy relationships both in person and online.

To support this goal, *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* has four **programmatic key messages**:  

- Know yourself inside and out by identifying your driving values—what you stand for and what makes you your best self.
- Use a decision making tool—STAR—that will help you to make good decisions that are in line with the values that drive you.
- Understand how your relationships with friends, peers, and family influence the direction of your life “path.”
- Practice skills that will help you avoid and deal with challenges that can get in the way of developing healthy relationships.

In addition, each lesson has **specific key messages**:  

- **Lesson 1:** Knowing your values will help you be the best version of yourself.
- **Lesson 2:** Deciding what, and how much, to share about yourself can affect your relationships.
- **Lesson 3:** The STAR decision making tool can help you make decisions that are in line with your values.
- **Lesson 4:** Noticing how you feel can help you STOP so that you can take the time to make a decision you feel good about.
• **Lesson 5:** Learning to manage your emotions can help you make decisions that are in line with your values.

• **Lesson 6:** Empathy means understanding or identifying with another person's feelings or experiences.

• **Lesson 7:** Assertive communication is an important tool for solving conflicts and maintaining healthy relationships.

• **Lesson 8:** Setting boundaries and respecting others’ boundaries is part of building healthy relationships.

• **Lesson 9:** Start with YOU. Your own words and actions can be a positive influence on others.

• **Lesson 10:** Taking the time to reflect on past decisions helps us know what we should do differently in the future.

**Scope and Sequence: Grades 6-8**

Our Scope and Sequence consists of two units for the grade band 6-8. The curriculum contains ten 60-minute lessons, which may also be split in half and delivered across twenty 30-minute sessions. The lessons build upon one another by reinforcing previously introduced topics. Each unit contains five lessons. The curriculum may be used within any grade level within the band, but it is not designed to be used at every grade level (i.e., delivered in consecutive years). Activities within the lessons contain teachers notes to identify when and how teachers might adapt the discussion based on the grade they are teaching within the grade band.

**How El Camino Lessons Are Organized**

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*’ lesson plans follow a consistent format. The lessons are divided into two main components: **Lesson Overviews** and **Procedures**. Each of the sections under these two components are briefly described below.

• **Lesson Overview.** The Lesson Overview section is designed to help you plan and organize for the lesson prior to class.
  - **Lesson Title:** At the top of each lesson in *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* you will find the number of the lesson (1-10) and title of the lesson.
  - **Lesson-at-a-Glance:** The Lesson-at-a-Glance section provides a list of the major activities in the lesson; associated time estimates; and materials needed, including specific teacher resources and student handouts. Common lesson components include:
    - **Welcome, review, lesson overview:** The start of each lesson reminds students of key takeaways from earlier lessons and introduces the topic of the current lesson.
    - **Group agreements and key messages:** Students should be reminded of group agreements at the start of every lesson and read the key messages together.
- **Exit tickets**: At the end of each lesson, students will receive an exit ticket. Exit tickets encourage students to reflect on the lesson through a range of short activities.

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* lessons are timed at 60 minutes. Schools may choose to cover each lesson in two 30-minute sessions. See “Student Handouts and Materials Package” and “Facilitator PowerPoint Slide Deck” packages for additional materials needed to implement the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum.

- **Additional Information**: Following the lesson title, you will find a brief lesson synopsis summarizing the lesson, the specific key messages and learning objectives for that lesson, and any DC Health Standards for grades 6-8 to which the lesson aligns.

- **Procedures**: The Procedures section provides step-by-step instructions on how to facilitate each of the activities in *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*’ lessons and the estimated time it will take to facilitate each activity. The Procedures section provides language that the teacher can use to describe activities, give mini-lectures, and ask discussion questions. Teachers can follow this language verbatim or put it in their own words as long as the essence of the instruction is not changed.

- **Teacher’s Notes**: Throughout each lesson in *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*, you will find shaded boxes titled “Teacher’s Note.” Yellow text boxes provide teachers with examples, additional language to facilitate an extended discussion, or suggested adaptations based on the grade they are teaching within the grade band. Green text boxes provide teachers with tips on how to facilitate a particular activity, background information, and/or advice on how to avoid potential pitfalls in facilitating the activity.

- **Visual Resources and Handouts**: Each activity includes a list of materials required, including specific teacher resources and student handouts. This content is generally incorporated into the lesson procedures for teachers to reference. The corresponding resources for each activity are also listed under the Lesson-at-a-Glance in the Lesson Overview section. See “Student Handouts and Materials Package” and “Facilitator PowerPoint Slide Deck” packages for additional materials needed to implement the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum.

Training participants are encouraged to review the appendices within the Front Matter to learn more about the curriculum and facilitation resources. Appendices include a theory of change and logic model; information on the guiding theories and research that informed the curriculum development; lesson summaries; a fidelity monitoring tool; background resources for facilitators to learn more about behavior change theory, working with LGBTQ youth, positive youth development, using a trauma-informed approach to teaching, and healthy and unhealthy relationship characteristics; and facilitation suggestions for curriculum delivery, classroom management, learning management, and behavior management.
Fidelity to the Curriculum

Curriculum fidelity refers to the faithfulness with which a practitioner implements a curriculum as it is written and designed. To maintain fidelity to a curriculum, a facilitator must implement it without compromising its core components, which are responsible for the program’s effectiveness. The core components of the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum include:

- The curriculum is youth driven (teachers do not tell the youth what to think, believe, or do).
- Teachers use a positive, strengths-based orientation and a focus on skills (focus on what to do, not what not to do).
- Youth identify their personal values and consider how these values influence their decisions.

Facilitators should consider these three elements to maintain fidelity to the curriculum: 1) content (what is being taught in the curriculum), 2) pedagogy (how that content is being taught), and 3) implementation (the logistics of how the curriculum is implemented, such as teacher-to-student ratio and class size). Facilitators can still maintain fidelity to a curriculum while using knowledge of their students’ strengths, needs, and cultural backgrounds to guide their approach to implementation.

Key Competencies: Facilitator Self-Assessment (10 minutes)

The facilitator self-assessment is included on pages 47-49 of this training manual for easy printing/prep.

High-performing facilitators of *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* should be able to demonstrate mastery of the key content and the facilitator skills (pedagogical methods) described within the facilitator self-assessment tool on page 16 of the curriculum Front Matter. In addition, they need to have a professional set of values and beliefs, and a comfort level that is consistent with implementing *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* effectively.

Take the next 10 minutes to complete the facilitator self-assessment. These responses are yours to keep. We do, however invite you to discuss areas that you’ve learned from the self-assessment.

Break (10 Minutes)
Lesson 1 – Program Introduction and Values

Overview (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 1 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 1 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 1 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 1, students will learn about the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* program. They will be introduced to the model of *life as a road* and to the concept of values as something that drives us to be our best selves. They will begin to identify the values that are most important to them and consider whether their actions reflect their values. This lesson includes a small group activity and an activity that gets students to move around the room.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students to the program and tell them about the goals of the program.
- Then, you will introduce students to the group agreements and read the key message for Lesson 1.
- After that, students will be introduced to the concept of “values” and do the “What are Values?” activity to learn about some specific values and match them with their definitions.
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 1.1 will conclude with an exit ticket asking students to share what they find confusing about values or would like to know more about. Lesson 1.2 will begin with a quick review of the group agreements and the key message for Lesson 1. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- You will lead a “Vote with Your Feet” activity where students get up and move around based on a set of statements they might agree or disagree with.
- Students will then sort their values into three groups: very important to me, somewhat important to me, and not important to me.
- Finally, as an exit ticket, students will reflect on the values they identified as “very important to me.”
Mock Facilitation – Activity 1C: What are Values? (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 1C: What are Values?
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Value and Definition Cards (pages 50-54 of this training manual)
  - Values and Definitions slide (training PowerPoint slide deck)

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator(s):** Please select 1 or 2 items from your facilitator self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”:** Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 1 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.
Lesson 2 – Personal Identity: What Drives You?

Overview (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 10 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 2 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 2 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 2, students will continue learning about values and thinking about how to demonstrate the values that are important to them. A major focus of this lesson will be examining how students portray themselves to others online and reflecting on how their personal values might influence their online behavior. Students will read the first two chapters of the novella, which will be a continuous thread throughout the program, and consider the values demonstrated by the characters.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students back to the program and read the key message for Lesson 2.
- Then, students will identify one of the values that is important to them and draw what the value makes them think or feel.
- After that, students will read Novella Chapter 1, which will introduce them to the story characters.
- Students will work in small groups to complete the “Characters Values Chart” for an assigned character.
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 2.1 will conclude with an exit ticket asking students to identify one thing about themselves that their friends know and another that friends do not know about them. Lesson 2.2 will begin with a quick review of the concept of values and the key message for Lesson 2. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- You will introduce students to the concept of “identity” and proceed to read Novella Chapter 2.
- Students will then complete an “Identity Profile” by drawing/writing three things they would post on their social media profile to communicate their identity to the world.
- Finally, as an exit ticket, students will identify one thing they might share online that demonstrated their identity or a personal value, and one thing that they want to either stop sharing or viewing online.
Mock Facilitation – Activity 2H: Identity Profiles (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 2H: Identity Profiles.
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Identity Profiles worksheet (page 55 of this training manual)
  - Values and Definitions Slide (training PowerPoint slide deck; for reference when facilitator and “students” are referencing values identified as “important to me”)

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator:** Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”**: Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 2 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.

Break/Split Training Session (10 minutes)
Lesson 3 – Introducing STAR

Overview (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 20 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 3 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 3 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 3, students will be introduced to a decision making tool: Stop. Think. Act on your values. Reflect (STAR). Students will practice considering choices and potential consequences (good and bad), potential influences on their decisions, opportunities to ask for help or advice, and how their decision could impact others. This lesson will include a small group activity and the next chapter of the novella.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students back to the program and read the key message for Lesson 3.
- Then, you will introduce students to the STAR decision making tool and walk them through each step: Stop. Think. Act on your values. Reflect.
- After that, students will work in small groups to complete the “STAR Activity.”
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 3.1 will conclude by asking students to practice using the STAR decision making tool. Lesson 3.2 will begin with a quick review of the STAR decision making tool and the key message for Lesson 3. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- Students will read Novella Chapter 3 in which one of the characters is facing a decision. You will lead a discussion to help students think through what the character should do.
- Finally, as an exit ticket, students will identify one thing they find most difficult when making a decision, and one thing they find most helpful when making a decision.
Mock Facilitation – Activity 3C: STAR Activity (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 3C: STAR Activity.
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Sticky notes, grocery bag, flip chart posters, and markers
  - STAR Activity slide (training PowerPoint slide deck)

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator**: Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”**: Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 3 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.
Lesson 4 – First: Stop

Overview (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 28 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 4 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 4 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 4, students will learn about the physiological signs of stress and how noticing when they feel stress can help them stop and think about the situation they are in. Students will brainstorm different strategies they can use when experiencing stress. This lesson will include a group activity and the next chapter of the novella.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students back to the program, review the STAR decision making tool, and read the key message for Lesson 4.
- Then, you will lead students through a breathing exercise to help them slow down their thoughts and practice noticing how they feel.
- After that, you will lead the “Stress Responses” activity. Students will complete this activity in a small group and then individually.
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 4.1 will conclude without an exit ticket. Lesson 4.2 will begin with a quick review of stress responses and the key message for Lesson 4. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- You will lead a discussion to help students identify “stopping strategies” to use when experiencing stress.
- Then, you will split students into two groups to complete the “Reacting Online vs In-person” activity where students will reflect on how they would react and feel in a given situation.
- Students will read Novella Chapter 4 and discuss how the characters are feeling and reacting.
- Finally, you will ask students to practice noticing their stress responses and using stopping strategies before reacting for the next class.
Mock Facilitation – Activity 4F: Reacting Online vs In-person (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 4F: Reacting Online vs In-person.
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- No materials are needed for this activity.

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator**: Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”**: Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 4 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.

Break (10 minutes)
Lesson 5 – Biology, Emotions, and Decision Making

Overview (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 37 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 5 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 5 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 5, students will learn about aspects of brain development that influence decision making, practice identifying emotions, and evaluate a range of coping strategies. This lesson includes a video, a group role play activity, and a chapter of the novella.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students back to the program and read the key message for Lesson 5.
- Then, you will review the stop strategies discussed in Lesson 4.
- After that, students will watch a short video on the teen brain and discuss key messages from the video.
- You then will lead a discussion on emotions and divide the class into groups of 3. Each group will be assigned an emotion to examine more in-depth and act out through a short skit or mime.
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 5.1 will conclude with an exit ticket where students will identify an emotion that they have a hard time managing and could use one of the stopping strategies next time they experience it. Lesson 5.2 will begin with a quick review of emotions and the key message for Lesson 5. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- You will lead the “How Would You Feel?” activity where students will walk towards a sign with the emotion that best describes how they would feel in a given situation.
- Students will read Novella Chapter 5 and discuss the emotions the characters may be feeling.
- Finally, you will ask students to complete one of two tasks related to the STAR decision making tool and emotions for the next class.
Mock Facilitation – Activity 5D: Exploring Emotions (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 5D: Exploring Emotions.
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Flip chart paper or white board

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator**: Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”**: Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 5 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.

Lunch Break/Split Training Session (60 minutes)
Lesson 6 – Empathy

Overview (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 45 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 6 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 6 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 6, students will learn what empathy means, discuss behaviors that can demonstrate empathetic listening, and practice being empathetic with their peers. This lesson includes a novella chapter and a role play activity.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students back to the program, review the Stop and Think steps in the STAR decision making tool, and read the key message for Lesson 6.
- Then, you will introduce students to the concept of “empathy.”
- After that, you will lead the activity “Take Your Pulse – Am I Empathetic?” to help students identify how often they act in empathetic ways.
- Students will read Novella Chapter 6, Part 1 and discuss how the characters show empathy for each other.
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 6.1 will conclude with an exit ticket asking students to reflect on how using empathy could change their interactions with other people. Lesson 6.2 will begin with a quick review of empathy and the key message for Lesson 6. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- Students will read Novella Chapter 6, Part 2 and discuss how the characters show empathy for each other.
- Students will work in pairs to practice being empathetic in a given situation.
- Finally, as an exit ticket, students will reflect on how being empathetic could help them use the STAR decision making tool.
Mock Facilitation – Activity 6B: Introduction to Empathy + Activity 6C: Take Your Pulse – Am I Empathetic? (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 6B: Introduction to Empathy and Activity 6C: Take Your Pulse – Am I Empathetic?
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activities.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Am I Empathetic? Statements slide (training PowerPoint slide deck)

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator:** Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”:** Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 6 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.
Lesson 7 – Assertive Communication

Overview (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 53 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 7 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 7 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 7, students will learn about assertive communication and practice using assertive communication skills to communicate important information. They will consider how assertive communication demonstrates respect for another person and why it’s a key part of healthy relationships. This lesson includes a novella chapter and a role play activity.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students back to the program, review the Stop, Think, and Act steps in the STAR decision making tool, and read the key message for Lesson 7.
- Then, you will introduce students to assertive communication.
- After that, students will be assigned one of two scenes in Novella Chapter 7 and work with a partner to determine how the characters could respond assertively.
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 7.1 will conclude with an exit ticket asking students to identify an assertive communication technique they want to use more or one situation where they could have used assertive communication. Lesson 7.2 will begin with a quick review of assertive communication and the key message for Lesson 7. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- Students will work in pairs to complete the “Role Play and Discussion” activity where they will create a script for a given scenario and practice using assertive communication.
- Finally, students will reflect on a few questions regarding assertive communication.
Mock Facilitation – Activity 7F: Role Play and Discussion (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 7F: Role Play and Discussion.
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Role Play Activity handout (page 56 of this training manual)
  - Blank paper

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator**: Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”**: Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 7 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.

Break (10 minutes)
Lesson 8 – Boundary Setting

Overview (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 61 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 8 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 8 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 8, students will learn about personal boundaries and boundaries in relationships. They will discuss and identify examples of boundaries being crossed and practice navigating these situations by assertively communicating their boundaries. This lesson includes a video, a novella chapter, and a role play activity.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students back to the program, review the STAR decision making tool and assertive communication, and read the key message for Lesson 8.
- Then, you will introduce students to the concept of “boundaries.”
- After that, students will read Novella Chapter 8 and discuss any boundaries that the characters had to set.
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 8.1 will conclude with an exit ticket asking students to think of a boundary they might need to set in their lives. Lesson 8.2 will begin with a quick review of boundaries and the key message for Lesson 8. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- Students will watch a video where the character has to decide whether or not to set a boundary.
- Students will then work in pairs to create a skit based on the video they just watched and practice setting boundaries.
- Finally, students will reflect on the way they might feel before and after setting a boundary.
Mock Facilitation – Activity 8B: What are Boundaries? (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 8B: What are Boundaries?
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Setting Strong Boundaries slide (training PowerPoint slide deck)

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator**: Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”**: Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 8 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.

Break/Split Training Session (10 minutes)
Lesson 9 – External Influences on Decision Making

Overview (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 68 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 9 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 9 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 9, students will continue to practice acting on their values, using assertive communication, and boundary setting, in response to interpersonal conflict, or as a bystander to conflict, and to promote positive digital citizenship. They will consider how external influences, such as peer pressure, might affect their decision making. This lesson includes a novella chapter, a video, and a movement activity.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students back to the program, review the STAR decision making tool and boundary setting, and read the key message for Lesson 9.
- Then, you will lead a discussion on “External Influences on Decision Making.”
- After that, students will watch a short video where a character is facing outside pressure.
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 9.1 will conclude with an exit ticket asking students to identify an external influence that might have a negative impact and one that might have a positive impact. Lesson 9.2 will begin with a quick review of external influences and the key message for Lesson 9. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- Students will read Novella Chapter 9 and discuss any external influences that may have impacted that character’s decision.
- You will lead the “Green Light/Red Light” activity where students will identify and discuss positive and negative influences on their decisions.
- Finally, students will reflect on how assertive communication or boundary setting might help them to respond to external influences.
Mock Facilitation – Activity 9H: Green Light/Red Light (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 9H: Green Light/Red Light.
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Poster paper
  - Sticky notes

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator:** Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”:** Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 9 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.
Lesson 10 – Bringing It All Together

Overview (5 minutes)

- Begin the lesson by congratulating participants on making it to the final lesson of the El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships training.
- Ask participants to flip to page 75 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 10 Synopsis.
- Review the Lesson 10 Lesson-at-a-Glance.

Synopsis: In Lesson 10, students will reflect on what they’ve learned over the course of the El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships program. They will learn how they can use reflection to prepare themselves to approach future difficult decisions in their own lives.

Lesson-at-a-Glance:

- First, you welcome students back to the program, review the STAR decision making tool, and read the key message for Lesson 10.
- Then, you will lead the “Vote with Your Feet” activity where students get up and move around based on a set of statements they might agree or disagree with.
- After that, students will reflect on a relationship decision they have made and how it impacted their relationship with that person.
- For those teaching in 30-minute increments, Lesson 10.1 will conclude with an exit ticket. Lesson 10.2 will begin with a quick review of the Reflect step in the STAR decision making tool and the key message for Lesson 10. Those teaching the entire hour will skip straight to the next activity.
- Students will read Novella Chapter 10 and reflect on the decisions the characters have made throughout the novella and the impact it has had on their relationships.
- Finally, students will reflect on what they have learned throughout the El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships program.
Mock Facilitation – Activity 10B: Vote with Your Feet (15 minutes)

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 10B: Vote with Your Feet.
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Agree/Disagree signs (page 57 of this training manual)
  - Vote with Your Feet slide (training PowerPoint slide deck)

Before the activity begins:

- **Prompt for facilitator**: Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- **Prompt for “student”**: Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 10 Debrief Discussion (10 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.

Break (10 minutes)
Curriculum Debrief + Q&A (20 minutes)

- Thank participants for reviewing all ten lessons with you.
- Ask participants if they have any questions about any of the lessons. Please refer to the curriculum and front matter for any questions related to the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* program.
- Ask participants to take 5 minutes to reflect on the discussion questions below. Then, bring the group together to discuss their responses.

Debrief Discussion

- Do you feel comfortable with the content?
- Is there a lesson or activity that you can anticipate being challenging for students?
  - How do you think you would/could handle that?
- What are some challenges you anticipate when implementing this program?
  - What are some ways you could handle that?
# Abbreviated Training Workshop Agenda (2.5 hours)

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<td>Debrief Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>Curriculum Debrief + Q&amp;A</td>
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Discussion Guide (2.5 hour)

Introductions + Objectives + Agenda (5 minutes)

INTRODUCTIONS

If participants are not familiar with each other, ask everyone to introduce themselves:

- How long have they been at the school or after-school program?
- What grade/classes/programs do they teach?
- Do they have experience with SEL curricula or student-led learning?

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to...

1. Summarize the core concepts taught in the curriculum;
2. Locate specific curriculum information (e.g., materials needed, key messages, script guidance);
3. Identify their level of comfort with key teacher competencies; and
4. Practice facilitating a student-led discussion or activity.

AGENDA

- Opening Discussion
- Overview of Front Matter
- Key Competencies Self-Assessment
- Lesson Overviews + Mock Facilitations + Debrief Discussions
- Curriculum Overview + Q&A

Opening Discussion (10 minutes)

- In advance of this training, we shared a copy of the curriculum and front matter to give you some time to look over each. Does anyone have any initial questions on either the curriculum or front matter?
- Based on what you have read in the front matter, and your knowledge of your students, what are some of the challenges your students are facing and what elements of *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* could address those challenges?
Overview of Front Matter (15 minutes)

Background

Why and How the Curriculum Was Developed

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* is a values-based curriculum designed to prevent bullying and other forms of interpersonal conflict in schools and online. This program is designed to help youth in DC middle schools—grades 6 through 8—develop knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors that support their ability to make values-based decisions that foster healthy relationships with peers, parents/family, and partners, both in-person and online. The curriculum focuses on decision making and personal values and includes lessons and activities on coping with strong emotions, teen brain development, empathy, assertive communication, and boundary setting.

Bullying and other forms of interpersonal violence are a significant problem in the District. According to the 2017 *Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)*, just under 12 percent of high school students (about 8,200 students) and just under 33 percent of middle school students (about 8,700 students) reported being bullied at school in the previous school year. Additionally, 31 percent of high school students and just under 68 percent of middle school students reported being in a physical fight in the previous year. For middle school students, DC’s rate of physical fighting is higher than any other city, territory, or state that participated in the 2017 *YRBS*. Clearly, the District’s youth need support to not only gain the skills to prevent and resolve conflicts and engage with peers more productively but to also understand how engaging in such violence could prevent them from reaching their goals and aspirations. Preventing bullying and other forms of interpersonal violence requires an approach that directly addresses technology and social media as a context in which to have healthy relationships.

In September 2017, the DC Office of Human Rights (which is charged, through the *Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012*, with overseeing the *Citywide Bullying Prevention Program*) partnered with Child Trends to adapt an existing evidence-informed curriculum, *El Camino*, for use with DC middle school youth to improve healthy relationship skills and prevent bullying and other forms of interpersonal conflict. The original *El Camino* curriculum is a comprehensive, goal-setting teen pregnancy prevention program developed by Child Trends, with an aim to reduce teen childbearing and increase educational achievement among adolescents, particularly Latino youth. The program helps teens to personally identify their goals and develop their own camino, or road, to pursue their goals. To adapt this curriculum to support DC middle school youth in developing healthy relationships, Child Trends engaged in a rigorous development and testing process to develop a DC-specific curriculum that can be implemented in youth serving agencies, including schools, youth groups, and after-school programs.

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* was informed by a series of focus groups conducted by Child Trends with DC educators, parents, and near-peers (high school students who could

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reflect on their own middle school experiences) to understand the challenges youth face related to healthy relationships and what they wanted youth to learn from a new curriculum. Participants viewed social media as one reason today’s generation might struggle more with interpersonal relationships, and they recognized the interdependence between in-person relationships and social media. Participants identified middle school, particularly 7th grade, as a period of heightened identity development for youth, without much explicit scaffolding. Combined with another common theme—that youth this age lack effective decision making skills—participants generally felt that this sometimes leads to heightened drama, conflict, and bullying. After conducting a brief scan of the literature to identify existing programs and practices focused on developing healthy relationships for youth, Child Trends developed the curriculum from insights gleaned from the focus groups and aligned the lessons to the El Camino approach and DC health curricular standards.

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* is based on the following theory of change:

> A program that develops teens’ self-identity and understanding of their personal values as a lever for strengthening teen social skills (e.g., decision making, conflict resolution, communication, boundary setting) and promoting positive digital citizenship will help teens to develop and maintain healthy peer, parent/family, and partner relationships.

**Core Components of the Curriculum**

The *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum includes core components which are essential to the success of the program.

- The curriculum is youth driven (teachers **do not** tell the youth what to think, believe, or do).
- Teachers use a positive, strengths-based orientation and a focus on skills (focus on what **to do**, not what **not** to do).
- Youth identify their personal values and consider how these values influence their decisions.

In *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*, a range of methods are used to deliver and reinforce the core components. These include:

- Individual and group activities;
- Novellas (stories);
- Role plays;
- Class discussions and opportunities for students to ask questions; and
- Use of a decision making framework (STAR: *Stop. Think. Act on your values. Reflect.*) to support youth in values-based decision making.
It is important for facilitators to recognize that many youth do not yet have the skills and knowledge they will learn in *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* before starting the program. This is likely new information to the youth; therefore, it is necessary to provide sufficient time for them to ask questions and to talk through what they are learning. Again, we want the youth to talk about what they think, believe, and experience. We recognize that youth have the awareness to make good decisions for themselves.

**Unique Features**

The *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum incorporates several unique features that distinguish it from other evidence-based/evidence-informed social-emotional curricula designed to prevent bullying and other forms of interpersonal conflict in schools and online.

- **Anchored in a strengths-based approach to youth learning.** This curriculum was developed out of a need for bullying prevention and to help youth navigate interpersonal conflict both in-person and on social media. However, rather than adopt a discipline-oriented lens that may patronize or alienate youth, the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum adopts a universal tier\(^7\) strengths-based approach to youth learning. Respecting teens’ ability to think and do things independently, the curriculum helps youth identify the values that are most important to them and consider how those values make them feel like their best selves and can help them make decisions they feel proud of.

- **Incorporates a decision making framework throughout the curriculum.** *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* designed a comprehensive decision making framework called STAR (Stop. Think. Act on your values. Reflect.), which is a major focus in the curriculum. Youth are introduced to the tool and have ample opportunity to apply it throughout the lessons of the curriculum. They reflect on their own values and personal experiences and how STAR might help them decide how to respond to interpersonal conflict or relationship challenges as they learn new information about coping with strong emotions, teen brain development, empathy, assertive communication, and boundary setting.

- **Introduces key concepts and fosters discussion through a series of novellas.** The *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum introduces youth to a group of DC middle school teens in the context of a novella/story. These characters and their experiences are used throughout the curriculum to provide a means for youth to talk about real life issues and relationship challenges that they may face. The novellas also provide examples of characters using skills such as empathetic listening, assertive communication, and boundary setting to support youth who may not have had the

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\(^7\) In the Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework, universal tier (Tier 1) refers to interventions or supports that are available to all students in a classroom or school, as opposed to Tier 2 and Tier 3 which are targeted interventions for students with specific needs. Learn more at [https://www.pbisrewards.com/blog/what-is-mtss/](https://www.pbisrewards.com/blog/what-is-mtss/)
personal experience or a real-life example to have practiced these skills themselves or seen them used.

- **Designed with a focus on the needs and cultural context of DC youth.** Bullying and other forms of interpersonal violence are a significant problem in the District. *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* is informed by focus groups conducted by Child Trends with DC educators, parents, and near-peers to understand the challenges youth face related to healthy relationships and what they wanted youth to learn from a new curriculum. Educators and parents noted that youth use technology to seamlessly transition between in-person and online interactions and mentioned the need to help youth build decision making, boundary setting, and communication skills as a way to promote healthy relationships. All focus group participants provided anecdotes of youths’ experiences with interpersonal conflicts, “drama,” and bullying. These anecdotes were particularly valuable in the development of the curriculum to ensure scenarios presented in the novellas and lesson plans are relatable for current DC middle school youth.

**About El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships**

**Overall Goal and Key Messages of the Curriculum**

The **overall goal** of *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* is to help middle school aged youth build the skills to create healthy relationships both in person and online.

To support this goal, *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* has four **programmatic key messages**:

- Know yourself inside and out by identifying your driving values—what you stand for and what makes you your best self.
- Use a decision making tool—STAR—that will help you to make good decisions that are in line with the values that drive you.
- Understand how your relationships with friends, peers, and family influence the direction of your life “path.”
- Practice skills that will help you avoid and deal with challenges that can get in the way of developing healthy relationships.

In addition, each lesson has **specific key messages**:

- **Lesson 1**: Knowing your values will help you be the best version of yourself.
- **Lesson 2**: Deciding what, and how much, to share about yourself can affect your relationships.
- **Lesson 3**: The STAR decision making tool can help you make decisions that are in line with your values.
- **Lesson 4**: Noticing how you feel can help you STOP so that you can take the time to make a decision you feel good about.
• **Lesson 5**: Learning to manage your emotions can help you make decisions that are in line with your values.

• **Lesson 6**: Empathy means understanding or identifying with another person's feelings or experiences.

• **Lesson 7**: Assertive communication is an important tool for solving conflicts and maintaining healthy relationships.

• **Lesson 8**: Setting boundaries and respecting others’ boundaries is part of building healthy relationships.

• **Lesson 9**: Start with YOU. Your own words and actions can be a positive influence on others.

• **Lesson 10**: Taking the time to reflect on past decisions helps us know what we should do differently in the future.

**Scope and Sequence: Grades 6-8**

Our Scope and Sequence consists of two units for the grade band 6-8. The curriculum contains ten 60-minute lessons, which may also be split in half and delivered across twenty 30-minute sessions. The lessons build upon one another by reinforcing previously introduced topics. Each unit contains five lessons. The curriculum may be used within any grade level within the band, but it is not designed to be used at every grade level (i.e., delivered in consecutive years). Activities within the lessons contain teachers notes to identify when and how teachers might adapt the discussion based on the grade they are teaching within the grade band.

**How El Camino Lessons Are Organized**

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*' lesson plans follow a consistent format. The lessons are divided into two main components: **Lesson Overviews** and **Procedures**. Each of the sections under these two components are briefly described below.

• **Lesson Overview.** The Lesson Overview section is designed to help you plan and organize for the lesson prior to class.

  - **Lesson Title**: At the top of each lesson in *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* you will find the number of the lesson (1-10) and title of the lesson.

  - **Lesson-at-a-Glance**: The Lesson-at-a-Glance section provides a list of the major activities in the lesson; associated time estimates; and materials needed, including specific teacher resources and student handouts. Common lesson components include:

    - **Welcome, review, lesson overview**: The start of each lesson reminds students of key takeaways from earlier lessons and introduces the topic of the current lesson.

    - **Group agreements and key messages**: Students should be reminded of group agreements at the start of every lesson and read the key messages together.
Exit tickets: At the end of each lesson, students will receive an exit ticket. Exit tickets encourage students to reflect on the lesson through a range of short activities.

*El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* lessons are timed at 60 minutes. Schools may choose to cover each lesson in two 30-minute sessions. See “Student Handouts and Materials Package” and “Facilitator PowerPoint Slide Deck” packages for additional materials needed to implement the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum.

- Additional Information: Following the lesson title, you will find a brief lesson synopsis summarizing the lesson, the specific key messages and learning objectives for that lesson, and any DC Health Standards for grades 6-8 to which the lesson aligns.

- Procedures: The Procedures section provides step-by-step instructions on how to facilitate each of the activities in *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*’ lessons and the estimated time it will take to facilitate each activity. The Procedures section provides language that the teacher can use to describe activities, give mini-lectures, and ask discussion questions. Teachers can follow this language verbatim or put it in their own words as long as the essence of the instruction is not changed.

- Teacher’s Notes: Throughout each lesson in *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*, you will find shaded boxes titled “Teacher’s Note.” Yellow text boxes provide teachers with examples, additional language to facilitate an extended discussion, or suggested adaptations based on the grade they are teaching within the grade band. Green text boxes provide teachers with tips on how to facilitate a particular activity, background information, and/or advice on how to avoid potential pitfalls in facilitating the activity.

- Visual Resources and Handouts: Each activity includes a list of materials required, including specific teacher resources and student handouts. This content is generally incorporated into the lesson procedures for teachers to reference. The corresponding resources for each activity are also listed under the Lesson-at-a-Glance in the Lesson Overview section. See “Student Handouts and Materials Package” and “Facilitator PowerPoint Slide Deck” packages for additional materials needed to implement the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum.

Training participants are encouraged to review the appendices within the Front Matter to learn more about the curriculum and facilitation resources. Appendices include a theory of change and logic model; information on the guiding theories and research that informed the curriculum development; lesson summaries; a fidelity monitoring tool; background resources for facilitators to learn more about behavior change theory, working with LGBTQ youth, positive youth development, using a trauma-informed approach to teaching, and healthy and unhealthy relationship characteristics; and facilitation suggestions for curriculum delivery, classroom management, learning management, and behavior management.
**Fidelity to the Curriculum**

Curriculum fidelity refers to the faithfulness with which a practitioner implements a curriculum as it is written and designed. To maintain fidelity to a curriculum, a facilitator must implement it without compromising its core components, which are responsible for the program’s effectiveness. The core components of the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* curriculum include:

- The curriculum is youth driven (teachers do not tell the youth what to think, believe, or do).
- Teachers use a positive, strengths-based orientation and a focus on skills (focus on what to do, not what not to do).
- Youth identify their personal values and consider how these values influence their decisions.

Facilitators should consider these three elements to maintain fidelity to the curriculum: 1) content (what is being taught in the curriculum), 2) pedagogy (how that content is being taught), and 3) implementation (the logistics of how the curriculum is implemented, such as teacher-to-student ratio and class size). Facilitators can still maintain fidelity to a curriculum while using knowledge of their students’ strengths, needs, and cultural backgrounds to guide their approach to implementation.

**Key Competencies: Facilitator Self-Assessment (10 minutes)**

The facilitator self-assessment is included on pages 47-49 of this training manual for easy printing/prep.

High-performing facilitators of *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* should be able to demonstrate mastery of the key content and the facilitator skills (pedagogical methods) described within the facilitator self-assessment tool on page 16 of the curriculum Front Matter. In addition, they need to have a professional set of values and beliefs, and a comfort level that is consistent with implementing *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* effectively.

Take the next 10 minutes to complete the facilitator self-assessment. These responses are yours to keep. We do, however, invite you to discuss areas that you’ve learned from the self-assessment.

**Break (10 Minutes)**
Lesson 1 – Program Introduction and Values

Lesson 1 Synopsis and Mock Facilitation – Activity 1C: What are Values? (20 minutes)

- Ask participants to flip to page 1 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 1 Synopsis.

Synopsis: In Lesson 1, students will learn about the El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships program. They will be introduced to the model of life as a road and to the concept of values as something that drives us to be our best selves. They will begin to identify the values that are most important to them and consider whether their actions reflect their values. This lesson includes a small group activity and an activity that gets students to move around the room.

- Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 1C: What are Values?
- Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
- Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
- When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
- Materials needed for this activity:
  - Value and Definition cards (pages 50-54 of this training manual)
  - Values and Definitions slide (training PowerPoint slide deck)

Before the activity begins:

- Prompt for facilitator(s): Please select 1 or 2 items from your facilitator self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
- Prompt for “student”: Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 1 Debrief Discussion (15 minutes)

- What did you think went well?
- Would other instructors have done anything differently?
- How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
- Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.
Lesson 3 – Introducing STAR
Lesson 3 Synopsis and Mock Facilitation – Activity 3C: STAR Activity (20 minutes)

• Ask participants to flip to page 20 of their lesson plans and read the Lesson 3 Synopsis.

Synopsis: In Lesson 3, students will be introduced to a decision making tool: Stop. Think. Act on your values. Reflect (STAR). Students will practice considering choices and potential consequences (good and bad), potential influences on their decisions, opportunities to ask for help or advice, and how their decision could impact others. This lesson will include a small group activity and the next chapter of the novella.

• Tell participants that they will be facilitating Activity 3C: STAR Activity.
• Ask for the assigned participant or a volunteer to facilitate the activity.
• Give the facilitator about three minutes to read through and prepare for the activity.
• When the activity begins, be mindful of time. This activity is scheduled to take about 12 minutes.
• Materials needed for this activity:
  o Sticky notes, grocery bag, flip chart posters, and markers
  o STAR Activity slide (training PowerPoint slide deck)

Before the activity begins:

• Prompt for facilitator: Please select 1 or 2 items from your self-assessment on which you would like us to provide feedback.
• Prompt for “student”: Think of a student that you’ve had in the past. How would that student engage with this activity? Please channel that student as you participate in this mock session.

Lesson 3 Debrief Discussion (15 minutes)

• What did you think went well?
• Would other instructors have done anything differently?
• How would you tailor this discussion/activity to meet the needs of your students?
• Provide specific feedback based on what the facilitator identified as priority areas from their self-assessment.
Curriculum Debrief + Q&A (30 minutes)

- Thank participants for reviewing the materials and mock facilitating two activities with you.
- Ask participants if they have any questions about any of the lessons. Please refer to the curriculum and front matter for any questions related to the *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* program.
- Ask participants to take 5 minutes to reflect on the discussion questions below. Then, bring the group together to discuss their responses.

Debrief Discussion

- Do you feel comfortable with the content?
- Is there a lesson or activity that you can anticipate being challenging for students?
  - How do you think you would/could handle that?
- What are some challenges you anticipate when implementing this program?
  - What are some ways you could handle that?
Appendix: Worksheets + Handouts
**Key Teacher Competencies for *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships***

High-performing facilitators of *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* should be able to demonstrate mastery of the key content and the facilitator skills (pedagogical methods) described below. In addition, they need to have a professional set of values and beliefs, and a comfort level that is consistent with implementing *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships* effectively.

Implementing schools/organizations can use this self-assessment to find the facilitator who is the best fit to implement *El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships*.

**Content**

A high-performing *El Camino* facilitator is able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Expert</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Explain the goals of the <em>El Camino: The Road to Healthy Relationships</em> program;</td>
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<td>2. Explain and define values; help students to identify values that are important to them;</td>
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<td>3. Explain and define personal identity; help students consider how their words and actions—both in-person and online—will influence others’ perception of them;</td>
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<td>4. Explain the STAR decision making framework (<em>Stop. Think. Act on your values. Reflect.</em>);</td>
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<td>5. Explain physiological signs of stress; help students identify strategies to stop before reacting to stressful situations;</td>
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<td>6. Explain teen brain development, including why they might experience emotions more strongly, be more prone to risk-taking, and benefit from a growth mindset;</td>
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<td>7. Help students identify a range of emotions and ways to cope with those emotions;</td>
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<td>8. Explain and define empathy; help students identify and practice using listening and communication skills to support others and understand their feelings;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Beginner</td>
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<td>9. Explain and define assertive communication; help students identify techniques to communicate assertively; help students practice navigating conflict/disagreements using assertive communication;</td>
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<td>10. Explain and define boundaries; help students identify strategies to articulate and enforce their own boundaries;</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Help students identify external influences, such as peer pressure or social norms, that might influence their decision making;</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Help students practice reflecting on past decisions and planning for future decisions.</td>
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</table>

**Facilitation Skills**

A high-performing *El Camino* facilitator is able to:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Expert</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Establish and maintain a safe, respectful, and comfortable learning environment, inclusive of all youth, regardless of their race, ethnicity, immigration status, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, parenting status, ability, culture, etc.;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Enforce positive behavioral norms consistently during each session;</td>
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<td>3. Create opportunities for all youth to actively participate in each session;</td>
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<td>4. Manage classroom issues (e.g., nervous laughter/acting out, emotional reactions, disclosure of sensitive information, etc.);</td>
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<td>5. Coordinate logistics associated with the effective implementation of El Camino;</td>
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<td>6. Explain mandatory reporting laws specific to location.</td>
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</table>
**Professional Values, Beliefs, and Comfort**

A high-performing *El Camino* facilitator:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Expert</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Understands the interdependence between in-person relationships and online interactions for today’s youth;</td>
<td>○</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Is comfortable allowing students to identify the values that are important to them, regardless of the values that the facilitator or the student’s friends or family might feel are “right” or “wrong”;</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Is comfortable facilitating discussion with students to talk about what they think, believe, and experience;</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Believes that students can develop the awareness and values needed to make good decisions for themselves;</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Believes that people can resolve interpersonal conflict and demonstrate respect and empathy for others, even when they have different personal values;</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Is comfortable facilitating discussions with students related to teen social media use and its risks and benefits;</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Believes in a growth mindset and that students can succeed after failure;</td>
<td>○</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Is comfortable assisting students to practice a skill with which they may not demonstrate success in class;</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Is aware, sensitive and responsive to common cultural norms of DC youth and LGBT youth.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Activity 1C: Value and Definition Cards

Cards may be printed using pre-perforated Avery Template 5390 Name Badge Insert Refills or printed on plain paper and hand cut.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptance / Open-Mindedness</th>
<th>Authenticity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Kindness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fame</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Loyalty</td>
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<td>------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td>Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosperity / Wealth</td>
<td>Self-Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training Manual | Appendix: Worksheets + Handouts 52
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open to new experiences, ideas, and people. Non-judgmental.</th>
<th>Being true to yourself.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinking of new ways to do things. Using your imagination to create something artistic.</td>
<td>Being friendly and respectful to other people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being known or talked about by many people.</td>
<td>Caring about close relationships with your family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being fair and truthful.</td>
<td>Being funny or making people laugh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging a group to get things done together.</td>
<td>Showing support for your friends, family, and/or the things you believe are important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing to try even when something is hard.</td>
<td>Being able to influence other people or events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having money in your pocket.</td>
<td>Being able to control your impulses and behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in a higher power or inner strength.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 2H: Identity Profiles #nofilter

Use the box below to create/draw a profile of one of the following social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, or a personal blog.

Include:
- **Post a photo/video**: what does the picture or video mean to you, and why have you chosen to share it with others?
- **Link to a current event**: what is your opinion about this event, and why have you chosen to share it with others?
- **Song or poetry lyrics**: what meaning do these words have for you, and why have you chosen to share it with others?
Activity 7F: Role Play Activity Handout

**ROLE PLAY 1**

Aliyah and Hannah have been arguing with their friend Diamond for the last few days. Hannah thinks that she and Aliyah should get back at Diamond by pranking her, but Aliyah thinks it would be too mean.

What does Aliyah say to Hannah? How does Hannah respond?

**ROLE PLAY 2**

Jonah has had a crush on his friend Brianna for a long time, and he finally decides to tell her how he feels. Brianna doesn’t feel the same way, but she still wants to keep her friendship with Jonah.

What does Brianna say to Jonah? How does Jonah respond?

**ROLE PLAY 3**

Elijah is supposed to be home by 5pm for a family dinner. He has spent all afternoon playing soccer with his friends at the park. He knows he has to go home, but his friends are trying to get him to stay.

What does Elijah tell his teammates? How do they respond?

**ROLE PLAY 4**

Zion and Kennedy are friends. Kennedy accidentally shared one of Zion’s secrets online. Now there’s a rumor about Zion going around the school.

What does Zion say to Kennedy? How does Kennedy respond?
Activity 10B: Signs for Vote with Your Feet

Disagree

Agree