

Course Name:	Overcoming Obstacles		
Credits:	1		
Prerequisites:	none		
Description:	A life skills course for middle school students.		
Academic Standards:	CASEL Domains #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24		
Units:	Unit Length:	Unit Standards:	Unit Outcomes:
Creating a Positive Environment	10, 60 min. lessons	CASEL Domains #7, 8, 12, 14, 18, 22	Work and communicate effectively as a team, while understanding their own strengths and weaknesses.
Acquiring Cores Skills	14, 60 min. lessons	CASEL Domains # 7, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24	Students will set personal goals and construct a timeline to achieve them.
Developing Related Skills	27, 60 min. lessons	CASEL Domains #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 15, 17, 18, 24	Students will create and utilize a personal organization system.

Unit Name: Creating a Positive Environment	Length: 10, 60 min. lessons
Standards: CASEL Domains #7, 8, 12, 14, 18, 22	Outcomes: Work and communicate effectively as a team, while understanding their own strengths and weaknesses.
Essential Questions: Who am I? Which traits and skills contribute to success? How can I utilize my own strengths and weaknesses to positively affect my life?	Learning Targets: Identify individual personal spaces, develop teamwork, communicate effectively, and set personal goals.
Topic 1: Getting Started	Length: 4, 60 min. lessons
Standards: 7, 8, 18	Academic Vocabulary: characteristics, personal space, traits, skills, obstacles, preferences, values
Lesson Frame: Who are You?	We will: Explore and share images and ideas that represent us. I will: participate in a game to break down personal space and develop teamwork.
Lesson Frame: What is Overcoming Obstacles?	We will: identify traits and skills that are necessary for achieving success. I will: discuss how traits and skills impact an individual's ability to successfully overcome obstacles.
Lesson Frame: Working in Teams	We will: identify benefits and challenges to working in teams. I will: negotiate and agree to a set of classroom rules/guidelines.
Lesson Frame: Setting Expectations	We will: identify and explore our dreams and goals for the future. I will: create a visual representation of my dreams for the future.
Performance Tasks: create a cereal box with themselves as hero. Make a collage to show what success means to them. Create a 'personal dream' slogan and put it on a poster.	Notes:
Topic 2: Confidence Building	Length: 6, 60 minute lessons
Standards: CASEL Domains #7, 8, 12, 14, 22	Academic Vocabulary: respect, self-respect, strengths, weaknesses, values, stereotype, perception
Lesson Frame: Giving and Earning Respect	We will: define respect, identify people we respect, and the reason we respect them. I will: evaluate my own level of self-respect.
Lesson Frame: Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses	We will: identify and discuss personal strengths and weaknesses

	I will: identify ways I can use my weaknesses to my advantage.
Lesson Frame: Staying Healthy	We will: discuss how diet, sleep, and exercise affect our health and wellbeing.
	I will: create a weekly plan for eating well, sleeping regularly, and exercising.
Lesson Frame: Clarifying Values	We will: analyze how our values influence the decisions we make.
	I will: demonstrate how my values influence my decision making.
Lesson Frame: Avoiding Stereotypes	We will: define stereotype and analyze the effects of stereotyping.
	I will: identify ways to avoid stereotyping others.
Lesson Frame: Developing Personal Power	We will: discover we have the power to affect our lives through the decisions we make.
	I will: create personal symbols that remind me of my personal power.
<p>Performance Tasks: Write a radio announcement describing a recent accomplishment Create a plan for staying healthy Select, share and discuss a video that demonstrates the impact of stereotypes</p>	Notes:

Unit Name: Acquiring Core Skills	Length: 14, 60 min. lessons
Standards: CASEL Domains # 7,10,11,12,16,17,18,20,22,23,24	Outcomes: Students will set personal goals and construct a timeline to achieve them.
Essential Questions: What are my goals and how can I achieve them?	Learning Target: Students will study nonverbal and verbal communication and its importance in achieving personal goals. Students will identify barriers that hinder goal achievement and options to combat giving up using a "stepping stone" for achievement.
Topic 1: Communication	Length: 5, 60 min. lessons
Standards: CASEL Domains #12, 16, 17, 18, 23	Academic Vocabulary: nonverbal, assertive, passive, aggressive
Lesson Frame: Understanding nonverbal messages	We will: explore and analyze nonverbal messages. I will: use nonverbal messages to communicate.
Lesson Frame: Listening	We will: recognize the importance of and identify ways of improving, listening skills. I will: practice and evaluate the effectiveness of active listening skills.
Lesson Frame: Speaking	We will: develop an understanding of the power of our words to affect other people. I will: evaluate and choose words to demonstrate the relationship between words and their consequences.
Lesson Frame: Being Assertive	We will: define and find examples of passive, aggressive, and assertive behaviors. I will: demonstrate how to use assertive behavior to communicate more effectively.
Lesson Frame: Expressing Opinions Constructively	We will: recognize that it is possible to communicate productively when disagreeing with others. I will: participate in a debate, using effective communication skills to express and listen to opinions.
Performance Tasks: Students create and present role plays that involve non-verbal cues. Create a comic of passive, aggressive, or assertive problem solving.	Notes:
Topic 2: Decision Making	Length: 5, 60 min. lessons
Standards: CaseL Domains #20, 22, 24	Academic Vocabulary: consequence, collaborate, procrastination, perseverance
Lesson Frame: Making Decisions Big and Small	We will: identify factors that influence the decisions we make. I will: use my power to make decisions even when they are hard.
Lesson Frame: Gathering Information	We will: recognize that gathering info. is an important part of decision making. I will: practice asking relevant questions and listening to answers to gather information.
Lesson Frame: Identifying Options	We will: recognize that gathering info. is an important part of decision making.

	I will: generate a list of options in response to a given stimulus.
Lesson Frame: Weighing Options and Consequences	We will: practice a method for evaluating options and consequences. I will: evaluate pros and cons in order to weigh options and consequences.
Lesson Frame: Making a Choice	We will: collaborate to make a decision about our school. I will: demonstrate the decision making process and make a personal decision
Performance Tasks: Write about a difficult decision. Make an informed decision. Make a list of options and consequences given a question.	Notes:
Topic 3: Goal Setting	Length: 4, 60 min. lessons
Standards: CASEL Domain #7, 10, 11, 24	Academic Vocabulary: procrastination, perseverance
Lesson Frame: Defining Goals (2 sessions)	We will: recognize the importance of having realistic, personal goals. I will: list goals and use specific criteria to evaluate them.
Lesson Frame: Stepping-Stone Goals	We will: identify short and medium range goals and relate them to the achievement of long-term goals. I will: set stepping-stone goals for myself.
Lesson Frame: Taking Action	We will: define 'procrastination'. I will: identify obstacles to taking action and develop a plan to act on an immediate goal.
Lesson Frame: Persevering	We will: define perseverance and identify its importance in achieving our goals. I will: revise a 'stepping-stone' goal in order to overcome an obstacle and achieve a goal.
Performance Tasks: Students will create acrostics of the word procrastination writing a strategy for avoid procrastinating for each letter of the word.	Notes:

Unit 3: Developing Related Skills	Length: 27, 60 min. lessons
Standards: CASEL Domains #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #10, #11, #15, #17, #18, #24	Outcomes: Students will create and utilize a personal organization system.
Essential Questions: How do I manage my school tasks in an efficient way?	Learning Targets: Students will identify and explore attitudes, environmental factors, stressors, and ineffective strategies that can be barriers to success. Students will recognize the value of being accountable for their own actions and they will develop and practice problem-solving, conflict resolution, organization, and study skills they can utilize to lower these barriers.
Topic 1: Managing Personal Resources	Length: 5, 60 min. lessons
Standard(s): CASEL Domains #24, #10, #11, #4	Academic Vocabulary: time management, credible, initiative, prioritize, stress, time management, excuse
Lesson Frame: Developing a Positive Attitude	We will: identify and analyze positive and negative attitudes and their consequences. I will: analyze and identify my positive and negative attitudes and the effects of positive and negative environments.
Lesson Frame: Being Accountable	We will: explore the positive consequences of being accountable for our actions. I will: define accountability and list three benefits of being accountable for my actions.
Lesson Frame: Handling Stress	We will: explore sources of stress and the behavioral and emotional signs of stress. I will: identify factors in my life that cause me to feel stress and brainstorm ways to handle stress.
Lesson Frame: Managing your Time	We will: study time management strategies and create possible to-do lists. I will: analyze a to-do list, setting priorities and scheduling time.
Lesson Frame: Taking the Initiative	We will: explore the benefits and seeking assistance from others and understand that initiative affects the ability to seek assistance and gather information. I will: listen to a guest speaker and consider how initiative makes a difference in life.

Performance Tasks: Create a system for organizing their work. Identify stressors in life and how to deal with those stressors.	Notes:
Topic 2: Studying Effectively	Length: 7, 60 min. lessons
Standards: CASEL Domains - #4, 11, 10	Academic Vocabulary: atlas, bibliography, encyclopedia, paraphrase, resource, thesaurus, visuals
Lesson Frame: Getting Organized	We will: explore ways to organize information and materials for school subjects. I will: identify the importance of planning and scheduling study time and will create a system for my work.
Lesson Frame: Following Instructions	We will: examine the importance of understanding instructions and practice active listening and reading. I will: apply active listening and reading to follow instructions and will practice clarifying written and verbal instructions.
Lesson Frame: Using Appropriate Resources	We will: learn appropriate reference material and resource including computer and internet option. I will: identify appropriate reference materials and resources in both print and internet.
Lesson Frame: Taking Notes	We will: study strategies for taking effective notes and important details. I will: identify various strategies for effective note taking and will practice note-taking skills
Lesson Frame: Writing Reports	We will: learn to focus on a topic and gather information for writing a report I will: identify ways to paraphrase and organize information in a report.
Lesson Frame: Taking Tests	We will: review organizational skills and will identify ways to study and prepare for tests. I will: identify test-taking strategies that are beneficial to me.
Lesson Frame: Learning How You Learn Best	We will: discover that we all learn different ways. I will: compare and contrast my organizational strategies to those of other students.
Performance tasks: Identify strategies for test taking	Notes:
Topic 3: Problem Solving	Length: 4, 60 min. lessons

Standards: CASEL Domain #7, #18, #17, #4	Academic Vocabulary: collaboration, skills, solution, pros, cons
Lesson Frame: Defining Problems	We will: understand the importance of defining a problem before acting on a solution. I will: define a problem and brainstorm possible solutions
Lesson Frame: Identifying options	We will: students will gather information and explore options in order to solve a problem. I will: identify options that generate possible solutions to problems.
Lesson Frame: Considering pros and cons	We will: I recall and review the problem solving process and will identify ways to evaluate the pros and cons of different options. I will: list pros and cons and weigh options in order to choose the best solutions to problems.
Lesson Frame: Finding Solutions	We will: gather information they need in order to complete a task. I will: collaborate with others and use problem solving skills in order to complete a task.
Performance Tasks: Create a plan for a community park that has allotted only a limited amount of space.	Notes:
Topic 4: Resolving Conflicts	Length: 6, 60 min. lessons
Standards: CASEL Domain #5, #6, #3, #2. #1, #15,	Academic Vocabulary: conflict, dynamics, erupt, escalate, intolerance, miscommunication, misspeak, mood
Lesson Frame: Understanding Conflicts	We will: explore positive and negative aspects of conflict and will define "conflict." I will: identify conflicts and the people involved
Lesson Frame: Identifying emotions in conflicts	We will: explore the underlying feelings and emotions that are involved in conflicts. We will: recognize the relationship between emotions and behaviors. We will: identify emotions and behaviors involved in a personal conflicts. I will: identify emotions and behaviors involved in a personal conflict.
Lesson Frame: Controlling emotions in conflicts	We will: explore the power we have to control our emotions and behaviors. I will: apply methods of controlling emotions and changing reactions to conflict situations.

Lesson Frame: Using communication skills effectively	We will: study how miscommunication can escalate a conflict and even create new conflicts.
	I will: apply assertive behavior skills to conflict situations and apply it in my own life.
Lesson Frame: Creating a Win-Win situation	We will: study the dynamics of win-lose and lose-lose situations and will recognize the benefits of win-win situations.
	I will: practice resolving conflicts.
Lesson Frame: Resolving Conflicts	We will: discuss strategies that we have learned for resolving conflicts.
	I will: analyze conflict situations and make decisions about how to resolve them.
Performance Tasks: complete a scale of emotions. Develop I messages to communicate various emotions felt during conflicts.	Notes:
Topic 5: Looking to the Future	Length: 5, 60 min. lessons
Lesson Frame: Adapting to Change	We will: study the positive and negative reactions to change.
	I will: understand that I have the power to accept and adapt to change. I will visualize potential changes in themselves and their lives.
Lesson Frame: Handling peer pressure	We will: discuss peer pressure and will define the concept of peer pressure.
	I will: create solutions to a dilemma that involves peer pressure.
Lesson Frame: Getting Along	We will: participate in an activity in which we will use a variety of skills in order to overcome obstacles and achieve goals.
	I will: identify skills they learned and used in the activity.
Lesson Frame: Playing by the Rules	We will: discuss the importance of learning rules in order to participate successfully in school and in life.
	We will: recognize that learning about and following rules are matters of personal responsibility.
	We will: conduct mock trials in order to determine responsibility and resolve conflicts.
	I will: collaborate with my peers to develop mock trials to determine responsibility and resolve conflicts.
Lesson Frame: Presenting yourself	We will: review information we have learned about ourselves.
	I will: identify categories of personal information and record current information about myself.

Performance Tasks:

Students will create posters for overcoming obstacles and achieve goals.
Students will conduct mock trials in order to determine responsibility and resolve conflicts.
Students will write letters in which they present information about themselves in order to achieve an imaginary goal.

Notes:

September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Unit 1	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 2	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 3	Unit 3	Unit 3	Unit 3
	Unit 2			Unit 3					