Universal Design to Promote Well-Being

Why Are We Talking About This?
Grade 6/10
- 20-43% of girls, and 18-25% of boys, reported being so sad every day for more than two weeks they stopped doing regular activities, and wished they were someone else
- 20-35% of students said they often felt lonely
- 30-60% of students said they often felt anxious
- 20-48% of students had headaches weekly
- Self confidence dropped from 40-10%
- 13-20% of students rated life satisfaction as low
- 20% of students rated their lives as having low meaning and purpose

School climate had a greater impact on life satisfaction and spiritual health than did friend and community support!

And Because...

- 47% of teachers will leave the profession before retirement age (Brackenreed, 2011)
- 40% leave in the first five years of teaching
IN LOCO PARENTIS
“Teacher actions are expected to conform to what a careful parent would do”
– Supreme Court of Canada

Social Inclusion

Social inclusion means that all students are a part of the social life of the classroom and school in their neighborhood!
**Academic Inclusion**

- **All students** are placed in their home schools, and services are delivered in the classroom/school – with the general education teacher taking primary responsibility for ALL students enrolled in the class.

- Academic inclusion means *all students are a part of the learning activities of their classroom and school – not parallel, but interactively with their peers and the general curriculum.*

---

**What Are We Talking About?**

© Dr. Jennifer Katz, 2016
What is UDL?
A lens, not a list

- Create **accessibility** for all
- "**Designed for some, of benefit to all**"
- In other words what strategies can we use in our classrooms that support students with exceptional needs, and benefit ALL learners?
- Essential Question:
  - Would all the kids benefit?

CAST’s Model

- Originators of UDL
- Three main guidelines
  - Engagement
  - Action & Expression
  - Representation

[www.cast.org](http://www.cast.org)
The Three Block model of UDL was developed in inclusive classrooms. As such it is practical and grounded in a realistic process teachers recognize as “possible” and “real.”

- A blend of CAST’s work on UDL, CASEL’s work on SEL, Indigenous ways of learning, and other evidence based practices

---

**Systems & Structures**

- Inclusive Policy – No “Except!”
- Administrators with expertise/vision
- Distributed Leadership
- Professional Development
- Staffing for collaborative practice
  - Team planning time, Scheduling in cohorts/teams
  - Resource / EA allocations to classrooms / Co-planning / teaching /assessing
- Budgeting changed from segregated practices/funding allocations
  - Assistive technology
  - Multi-leveled resources

**Instructional Practice**

- Integrated Curriculum
- Student Choice
- Flexible Groupings / Co-operative Learning
- Differentiated Instruction
- Differentiated Assessment
  - Assessment for learning / Class Profiles / Strategic Teaching
  - Technology
  - Discipline Based Inquiry
- Meta-Cognition – Assessment as learning
- Understanding by Design / Essential Understandings
- Social & Academic Inclusion of Students with Exceptionalities

**Social & Emotional Learning:**

- Respecting Diversity Program (RD)
- Developing Self-Concept
  - Awareness of and pride in strengths and challenges
  - Sense of belonging
  - Goal setting and planning
  - Leadership skills / opportunities
- Valuing Diversity
  - Awareness of the strengths and challenges of others
  - Valuing of diverse contributions to community
  - Sense of collective responsibility for well-being, achievement of all
  - Empathy, Perspective taking, Compassion
- Democratic Classroom Management
  - Collective problem solving, recognition of rights and responsibilities
  - Promotion of Independent learning, student choice & empowerment, leadership

© Dr. Jennifer Katz
There is…
NO SUCH THING AS
MENTAL ILLNESS

The brain regulates everything – so technically, everything is MH.
There is really no difference, health is health.
  A person with diabetes has an organ (the pancreas), not secreting a chemical it is supposed to (insulin)
  A person with depression has an organ (the brain), not secreting a chemical it is supposed to (Serotonin)
  Stress, nutrition, age, impact heart disease as much as anxiety or depression – nature and nurture is a false dichotomy, because our social/emotional experiences are mediated physically, and vice-versa.
Flourishing reflects positive emotional & functional states.

Languishing reflects poor emotional & functional states – but does not mean brain/mental illness.
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) COMPETENCIES

SELF-AWARENESS
The ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mindset."
- Identifying Emotions
- Accurate Self-Perception
- Recognizing Strengths
- Self-Confidence
- Self-Efficacy

SOCIAL AWARENESS
The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand and respect social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.
- Perspective-Taking
- Empathy
- Appreciating Diversity
- Respect for Others

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING
The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.
- Identifying Problems
- Analyzing Situations
- Solving Problems
- Evaluating
- Reflecting
- Ethical Responsibility

SELF-MANAGEMENT
The ability to successfully regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.
- Impulse Control
- Stress Management
- Self-Discipline
- Self-Motivation
- Goal Setting
- Organizational Skills

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS
The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.
- Communication
- Social Engagement
- Relationship Building
- Teamwork

Belonging
A sense of community, loving others, and being
Mastery
Competence in many areas cognitive, physical, social, and spiritual. Having self-control, responsibility, striving to achieve personal goals rather than superiority
Independence
Making one's own decisions and being responsible for failure or success, setting one's own goals, disciplining one's self
Generosity
Looking forward to being able to contribute to others, be able to give cherished things to others

© Dr. Jennifer Katz
In other words, we will all have times when we are flourishing, and we will all have times when we are languishing.
Cortisol is a stress hormone related to adrenaline. It activates the fight and flight mechanisms of the brain in response to danger.

- Shuts down cortex, we use our primordial/instinctual brain
- Increased use of amygdala – creates emotional memories
- Elevates heart rate
- Behaviors of a “caged animal” – avoidance, defense
- Will fight if no escape
- CANNOT be rational – cortex is not functioning

*Increased cortisol levels* mean reduced ability to pay attention, remember, and relate in pro-social ways!
Number 1 reason students cite for stress in their lives is SCHOOL!

- Lack of peer and teacher support
- Bullying
- Fear of being humiliated, ostracized
- Perception of safety – emotionally, physically, psychologically, and intellectually
33% (grade 6) to 50% (grade 10) of students reported they do not get the emotional support they need from their families.

40% of HS students feel their teachers did not care about them, though only 20% said they couldn’t get help if they needed it — instrumental support versus social/emotional support.

33-55% of students said their classmates were kind and helpful.

20-40% of students rated school climate low.

30-40% of students did not feel they belonged at school.

25-33% of students lack peer support.

20% sometimes go to school or bed hungry because of lack of food availability.

For our students at UBC

And

For the students they will teach!
Do we take kids out one to one to do programs related to anxiety, but do physical health programs in the class? *Don’t all kids at some point experience anxiety?*

Why provide programming with all the kids?

- Example: Anxiety
  - All students will experience anxiety at some points in their lives
  - Crises happen, and can’t be predicted
  - Creates a supportive community – allows friends and leaders to provide peer support

---

**What is Trauma?**

- **Stress** is considered to be the result of normal life experiences (e.g. exams, first date, fight with a friend).
- **Trauma** is the result of an acute crisis – the loss of a loved one, abuse, war, exposure to violence, etc.
What is Trauma?

- **Complex Trauma** results from repeated exposure to abuse, significant neglect and fear for safety and survival. Children who grow up in communities where food insecurity is common, where domestic violence and addictions are common are likely to experience complex trauma. The constant fear results in damage to brain development, attachment and relationship skills, and more.

- **Intergenerational trauma** can be seen on both the individual and communal levels. For example it can be evidenced when, within one family, parents or grandparents were traumatized, and each subsequent generation of that family continues to experience trauma in some form. On a communal level, intergenerational trauma can be seen when a people have been oppressed or traumatized, and thus culture, parenting, and more impact the community across generations.

Trauma Informed Schools

- **A Trauma Informed School:**
  - Realizes the prevalence of trauma in children
  - Recognizes the physiological and relational impact of trauma on students and school personnel
  - Responds by translating this knowledge into practice as part of school-wide supports
  - Reduces re-traumatization by adopting practices that promote healing and growth rather than punishment and exclusion

Crosby, 2015
From a trauma-informed perspective, children’s behavioral outbursts and/or withdrawals are not seen as conscious acts of defiance but as social-emotional responses to overwhelming stress and anxiety.

Impacts of Trauma

Consequences?

- Zero tolerance policies have proven to be ineffective in addressing children’s challenging behaviors partially because these behaviors can include internalized responses to trauma that are retriggered by punitive disciplinary confrontations.
- You can’t match the consequences these children have already faced!
What Can You Do?

- Teach TCs a framework!
- Have them create a class profile – what are the major needs for the group right now?
- Select strategies/interventions that fit that need!

Programming for Well-Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Programs/Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEL</td>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>RD Program, Mind-UP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Awareness</td>
<td>ROE, RD Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible Decision-Making</td>
<td>Class Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Management</td>
<td>ZOR, DBT, Mind-Up, DBT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship Skills</td>
<td>Co-operative Learning, ROE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle of Courage</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>TRIBES, Spirit Buddies, RD Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mastery</td>
<td>PBL, Land Based, UDL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Class Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generosity</td>
<td>Service Projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Can You Do?

- Model and share strategies – do it with your TCs, and encourage them to do it with their students!
  - Breathing Exercises
  - DBT
  - Yoga
  - Mindfulness Meditations
  - Anything you know!

DBT in the Classroom?

- Mindfulness
  - Meditation, breathing
- Distress Tolerance
  - ACCEPTS
  - SELF SOOTHE
  - IMPROVE
- Emotion Regulation
  - STORY OF THE EMOTION
  - PLEASE MASTER
- Interpersonal Effectiveness
  - DEAR MAN
  - GIVE
  - FAST
Using a count that slows our inhale, holds, and then slows the exhale counteracts the hyperventilation of stress. One of the most common techniques is that of the 4-7-8, promoted by many yoga and meditation teachers.
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a “whoosh” sound.
- Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of **four**.
- Hold your breath for a count of **seven**.
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of **eight**.
- This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.

---

**Breathing Using Imagery**

- Have students sit comfortably in a chair or on a cushion.
- Ask students to imagine a time when they were angry or anxious. Have students create an image of an animal or object inside them reflecting the feeling, for instance, a cat hissing or a black cloud.
- Instruct students to inhale, imagining something that smells or tastes good and has bright colors, and exhale imagining the animal/object and dark colors leaving the body.
Have students put one hand on their chest, and the other on their belly. Instruct them to focus on pushing the hand that is on their belly out, without moving the hand on their chest.

Belly breathing can be combined with breathing to a count.

---

To balance the body, alternate back breathing with belly breathing.

Have students put one hand on their lower back, and one hand on their belly.

When they inhale, students should try to push the hand on their back out, while keeping the hand on their belly still.
Distract with ACCEPTS

This is a skill used to distract oneself temporarily from unpleasant emotions.

- Activities - Use positive activities that you enjoy.
- Contribute - Help out others or your community.
- Comparisons - Compare yourself either to people that are less fortunate
- Emotions (other) - cause yourself to feel something different by provoking your sense of humor or happiness with corresponding activities.
- Push away - Put your situation on the back-burner for a while.
- Thoughts (other) - Force your mind to think about something else.
- Sensations (other) – Do something that has an intense feeling other than what you are feeling, like a cold shower or a spicy candy

ACCEPTS

- Create a visual script for yourself or a situation – when I am distressed I can:
  - Listen to music or ride my bike
  - Help my mom
  - Read blogs about people struggling
  - Watch a funny movie
  - Focus on a task, do a workout
  - Talk to a friend
  - Cook / eat something spicy or sour
**IMPROVE the moment**

This skill is used in moments of distress to help one relax.

- **Imagery** - Imagine relaxing scenes, things going well, or other things that please you.
- **Meaning** - Find some purpose or meaning in what you are feeling.
- **Prayer** - Either pray to whomever you worship, or, if not religious, chant a personal mantra.
- **Relaxation** - Relax your muscles, breathe deeply; use with self-soothing.
- **One thing in the moment** - Focus your entire attention on what you are doing right now. Keep yourself in the present.
- **Vacation (brief)** - Take a break from it all for a short period of time.