Social Inclusion:

Building Connection & Belonging
in Our School Community

Program Overview

The "**Social Inclusion: Building Connection & Belonging in Our School Community**" program aims to empower both staff and students to identify and address social isolation while fostering a culture of connection and belonging. This initiative, aligned with the State of Ohio's social inclusion guidelines, provides practical tools to recognize isolation and encourages building more inclusive relationships within the school environment.
The program teaches both staff and students to recognize signs of social isolation in their peers. Through dedicated training sessions, participants will learn to observe indicators such as social withdrawal, lack of engagement in activities, and emotional detachment. By empowering both groups to identify these signs, the program ensures earlier intervention for those who may feel excluded.

Furthermore, the program highlights the importance of social inclusion by training staff and students on how to build meaningful connections and seek help when necessary. The goal is to ensure that students know when to reach out to trusted adults, such as teachers or counselors, for support. The program also equips participants with effective strategies to foster inclusive classrooms and school environments, ensuring that everyone plays an active role in creating a more connected, welcoming school community.

Student Workshop

Our student workshop is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to recognize and address social isolation while fostering a more connected and inclusive school environment. This workshop empowers students to take an active role in creating a sense of belonging, helping their peers feel valued, supported, and included.

The workshop will focus on:

- **Understanding Social Isolation:** Students will learn how to identify signs of social isolation in themselves and others, recognizing the emotional and social impact it can have on individuals and the wider school community.

- **Promoting Social Inclusion:** The importance of building connections and fostering positive relationships among peers will be emphasized. Students will explore practical ways to include others, especially those who may feel left out or disconnected.

- **Supporting Isolated Peers:** Students will gain the tools to offer empathy and support to peers who may be experiencing social isolation. They will also learn when and how to seek help from trusted adults, such as teachers or counselors, for students in need.

- **Taking Action for Inclusion:** Empowering students to take proactive steps, this section will focus on creating peer support networks, breaking down social barriers, and making everyday efforts to promote social inclusion across the school community.

Through this workshop, students will be equipped to recognize social isolation, build meaningful connections, and contribute to a school culture where everyone feels welcome and included.

Student Workshop 1:

Sit With Us: Building a Community of Belonging

Sit With Us: Building a Community of Belonging is designed to help students recognize and address social isolation in themselves and others. Social isolation occurs when someone feels left out or disconnected from their peers, and it can have a significant impact on a student's well-being. In this session, students will learn the importance of social inclusion, how to identify when someone may be feeling isolated, and ways to create a more

connected, welcoming school environment. Students will also be empowered with the tools to build their own connections, helping them take an active role in fostering inclusion and belonging. By the end of the session, students will have practical strategies to support their peers, strengthen their own social connections, and contribute to a school community where everyone belongs.

HS Standards:

- **HS 1 MEH - 1.8**
- **HS 2 MEH - 1.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, students will be able to:

- Identify the signs of social isolation in themselves and their peers, such as feelings of loneliness, exclusion, or disconnection from others.
- Understand how social isolation can impact emotional well-being, mental health, and school performance.
- Explain the importance of social inclusion and why forming connections with peers is essential for building a welcoming and supportive school community.
- Practice how to approach and support classmates who may feel socially isolated, using empathy and active listening.
- Develop practical strategies to foster social inclusion, such as organizing inclusive group activities, promoting kindness, and encouraging collaboration.
- Empower themselves to take initiative in connecting with others and creating a sense of belonging.

- Recognize when and how to seek help from trusted adults, such as teachers or counselors, for themselves or peers experiencing social isolation.
- Actively contribute to a connected, inclusive, and supportive school environment where everyone feels valued.

One-Hour Session Outline

Introduction

The session begins with an explanation of social isolation, emphasizing how it occurs when someone feels disconnected or excluded from social interactions with their peers. The discussion will highlight the importance of social inclusion and how it fosters a sense of belonging that improves emotional well-being and academic success. Students will explore the differences between social isolation and inclusion and why these distinctions are essential in school settings.

Additionally, the emotional and social impacts of feeling left out will be addressed, stressing the importance of building a supportive school community. An optional icebreaker invites students to reflect on times they felt included or excluded and share their experiences with a partner or small group to promote empathy and connection.

Understanding Social Isolation

In this section, students will learn what social isolation looks like in school life, such as being excluded from activities or sitting alone. Students will learn that isolation isn't just physical—it can also be emotional or social—and it can affect anyone, regardless of popularity.

We'll discuss how isolation can lead to feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and depression, which may result in further withdrawal, academic struggles, and

mental health issues. These effects don't just impact the individual—they can disrupt the classroom environment and weaken the sense of connection in the school community. Students will also learn to recognize signs of isolation in their peers, like avoiding group tasks or changes in mood and behavior. Key signs of isolation, such as withdrawing from social activities, avoiding group tasks, and changes in behavior, will be discussed to help students recognize when a peer may be struggling.

What is Social Inclusion?

Students will learn that social inclusion is about making sure everyone feels like they belong. This section emphasizes the importance of taking intentional actions to include others, especially those who may feel left out or marginalized. Building relationships and fostering connections among peers not only enhances emotional well-being but also contributes to success in school.

In small group activities, students will brainstorm everyday situations—such as lunch, group projects, or extracurricular activities—where they can include others who may feel isolated. Each group will share an idea, focusing on practical ways to promote inclusion in daily school life.

Breaking Down Cliques

In this section, we will discuss the social dynamics of cliques and how they can unintentionally exclude others. Students will explore how exclusive social groups form and the impact they have on those who may feel left out. We will discuss strategies for breaking down barriers between social groups and ensuring that everyone feels welcome to join in on conversations, activities, or group work.

Through a guided conversation, students will reflect on their own experiences with cliques and discuss how they can be more mindful of inclusion in their

own friend groups. The goal is to empower students to become more aware of social exclusivity and take proactive steps to build bridges between different groups at school.

Helping Isolated Peers

This section teaches students how and when to reach out to adults, such as teachers or counselors, when a peer is deeply struggling with isolation. Students will learn to recognize when a peer may need professional help due to persistent withdrawal, significant mood changes, or expressions of loneliness or distress.

Students will also receive sample language for approaching a peer who may be isolated, with an emphasis on kindness and empathy. In a role-playing exercise, they will practice reaching out to an isolated peer, taking turns playing both the supportive friend and the peer who feels isolated.

Creating Peer Support Networks

Students will learn how to form peer support networks that help maintain connections and inclusion. This could involve establishing buddy systems or student-led groups that check in on peers who may be feeling left out or struggling with social connections.

We will discuss the importance of having friends or classmates who actively look out for one another, ensuring that no one feels isolated or disconnected. These support networks can foster a stronger sense of community, where students feel empowered to help and include their peers.

Strategies for Social Inclusion in School

Students will be provided with practical strategies for fostering social inclusion in their daily routines. These may include inviting someone new to join them at lunch, partnering with classmates who often work alone, or

encouraging others to participate in after-school activities or sports. The focus is on small, everyday actions that can make a big difference in helping others feel included and valued.

Wrap-up and Q&A

The session concludes by summarizing key points on recognizing social isolation, supporting peers, and taking action to foster inclusion. The floor is then opened for questions, allowing students to reflect on how they can contribute to a more inclusive and connected school community.

School Personnel Trainings and In-services

Training in social inclusion and creating welcoming school environments will be provided for each person employed as a nurse, teacher, counselor, school psychologist, administrator, and any other personnel deemed appropriate by the school board every two years. This training focuses on fostering an environment where all students feel a sense of belonging, emphasizing strategies for recognizing and addressing social isolation, and promoting inclusivity in the school setting.

Prevention and early detection strategies for personnel will focus on identifying the signs and symptoms associated with:

- Social isolation in students
- Exclusion or marginalization of specific groups
- The emotional and social impacts of feeling disconnected
- Stress, anxiety, and overwhelm due to lack of inclusion

We are offering three professional development sessions to support teachers and staff.

Recognizing Social Isolation: Early Detection, Impact, and Intervention Strategies

Duration: 2-hours

Course Description

This workshop equips school staff with the skills to identify, understand, and address social isolation among students. Social isolation can have a profound impact on students' emotional, social, and academic development, often leading to loneliness, anxiety, and reduced classroom engagement. Through this session, participants will learn how to recognize early signs of social isolation, understand its effects on individual students and the school community, and explore practical strategies to foster inclusion and connection.

Participants will engage in real-life scenarios and role-playing activities to apply intervention strategies, ensuring they leave with actionable tools to create a more inclusive and supportive school environment. By the end of the workshop, school staff will be better prepared to intervene early, support students, and build a culture of belonging in their schools.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define social isolation and understand how it differs from physical isolation or being alone.
- Recognize the emotional, social, and academic impacts of social isolation on students.

- Identify early signs of social isolation in students, including both visible and subtle indicators.
- Understand how social isolation can affect the overall school community, creating a less connected and engaged environment.
- Apply intervention strategies to support isolated students, such as peer mentoring, creating inclusive activities, and fostering empathy.
- Collaborate with school counselors and mental health professionals when necessary to provide comprehensive support.
- Develop practical, daily actions that promote a more inclusive school culture, where every student feels connected and valued.

This workshop will give participants the tools to take proactive steps in identifying and addressing social isolation, helping to create a stronger, more supportive school environment.

Two-Hour Session Outline

Introduction and Welcome
The session begins with a welcome and an overview of the objectives, focusing on the importance of addressing social isolation in schools and its connection to student well-being and success. Participants will be invited to reflect on personal experiences of exclusion or isolation to create an open and supportive atmosphere for discussion.

Understanding Social Isolation
Participants will explore the definition of social isolation and how it differs from being physically alone. This section will explain how social isolation manifests in school settings, such as being left out of activities or feeling disconnected from peers. The focus will be on understanding how social isolation can affect any student and its broader impact on emotional, social, and academic development.

Impact of Social Isolation on Student Well-Being

This section addresses the consequences of social isolation, including its effects on emotional and social health, as well as academic performance. Participants will learn how prolonged isolation can lead to loneliness, anxiety, and depression, and how it affects students' ability to engage in the classroom and form positive peer relationships. Real-life examples will be shared to highlight the long-term impact on students and the school community.

Recognizing the Signs of Social Isolation

Participants will learn how to recognize both visible and subtle signs of social isolation in students, such as withdrawal from group activities, mood changes, or disengagement. This section will include examples and case studies to help school staff identify students who may be experiencing isolation and encourage reflection on how these signs are present in their school environments.

Break and Reflection

Participants will be encouraged to take a brief break and reflect on the content discussed so far, considering how it applies to their own experiences with students.

Strategies for Intervention and Support

In this section, participants will be introduced to practical strategies for supporting students experiencing social isolation. These strategies include peer mentoring, creating inclusive activities, and fostering a culture of empathy and social connection within the school. The importance of involving school counselors or mental health professionals when needed will also be emphasized. Participants will leave with actionable steps to build a more inclusive and welcoming environment.

Interactive Group Activity: Role-Playing Scenarios

Participants will be divided into small groups, where they will be given scenarios involving students who show signs of social isolation. Each group will collaborate to develop strategies for intervention, using the tools and ideas discussed earlier in the session. After presenting their plans to the larger group, feedback and additional insights will be provided.

Closing Remarks and Q&A

The session will conclude with a summary of the key points covered, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and addressing social isolation early. Participants will be encouraged to apply the strategies learned in their daily interactions with students and collaborate with colleagues to foster a more inclusive school environment. Time will be allocated for questions and final reflections.

Staff PD Session 2:

Cultivating a Winning Culture at School

Duration: 2-Hours

Course Description

Cultivating a Winning Culture at School is designed to help school staff understand the critical role of school culture in fostering a positive, supportive environment for both educators and students. This workshop will explore how school culture shapes day-to-day experiences, improves staff well-being, and drives student success. Participants will learn strategies for building a collaborative, inclusive culture, incorporating mindfulness to support social inclusion and foster empathy among staff and students. The session will also provide practical tools for continuous improvement and long-term cultural growth, ensuring that every member of the school community feels valued and connected.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define school culture and understand its impact on both staff and student well-being, motivation, and performance.
- Recognize how a strong, positive school culture reduces teacher burnout and fosters collaboration and inclusivity.
- Apply practical strategies to build a collaborative and inclusive school environment, ensuring all staff and students feel valued and connected.
- Understand how mindfulness practices can be integrated into the school culture to enhance social inclusion and empathy.
- Implement continuous improvement strategies, including staff surveys and feedback, to foster a culture of growth and inclusivity.
- Develop long-term plans for sustaining a winning school culture, incorporating professional development, mentorship, and community engagement.

Two-Hour Session Outline

Introduction: Understanding School Culture

The session begins by welcoming participants and providing an overview of the session's focus on cultivating a positive and thriving school culture. Participants will explore the concept of school culture, defined as the shared values, beliefs, and practices that shape the day-to-day environment of a school. The introduction highlights how school culture impacts both staff and student well-being, motivation, and success. Emphasis will be placed on how a strong, supportive culture can help staff combat burnout and improve overall school performance, while also fostering social inclusion and emotional well-being.

The Impact of School Culture on Teachers and Staff

Participants will discuss how a positive school culture enhances motivation, job satisfaction, and collaboration among teachers and staff. The session highlights the link between a strong school culture and reduced burnout, higher retention rates, and overall professional satisfaction. Staff will reflect on how their school's culture impacts their daily experience and be encouraged to think about ways to foster inclusivity and collaboration, helping to create a supportive environment where all staff feel valued and included.

Building a Collaborative and Inclusive Environment

This section explores practical strategies for building a collaborative and inclusive school environment. Participants will examine the role of leadership in setting the tone for inclusion, with actionable ideas such as cross-departmental projects, regular team meetings, and professional learning communities. The discussion will emphasize the importance of ensuring all voices are heard and valued, regardless of role or background. Participants will reflect on how inclusivity is currently practiced in their school and identify ways to make it more intentional. Mindfulness will be introduced as a tool to enhance awareness and foster empathy, helping staff to stay present and inclusive in their interactions, further supporting social inclusion.

The Role of School Culture in Student Success

Participants will explore how a positive school culture directly influences student engagement, academic achievement, and social-emotional development. The discussion will show how supportive environments foster safe spaces where students feel respected, motivated, and connected. The connection between a healthy school culture and social inclusion will be highlighted, demonstrating how mindfulness and inclusive practices can create a culture where students thrive both academically and emotionally. Staff will learn how they can contribute to this culture by modeling inclusion and creating opportunities for students to feel connected.

Strategies for Continuous Improvement and Cultural Growth

This section provides participants with tools and strategies for fostering continuous improvement in their school's culture. Staff will explore methods for assessing the school environment, including staff surveys, student feedback, and reflective practices. Emphasis will be placed on implementing positive changes gradually, improving communication, and addressing concerns. Participants will learn how small, incremental changes can lead to long-term cultural growth, benefiting both staff and students. Mindfulness practices will be incorporated as a strategy to enhance reflection and ensure ongoing inclusivity.

Creating a Culture of Long-Term Success

Participants will focus on sustaining a positive school culture over time. This section highlights the importance of consistency and intentionality in maintaining a culture that supports both staff and students. Practical strategies for embedding cultural values into everyday practices, from classroom management to staff collaboration, will be discussed. Long-term efforts, such as regular professional development, mentorship programs, and community engagement, will be explored. Participants will reflect on what long-term success looks like for their school and identify actionable steps they can take to contribute to a thriving, inclusive culture.

Closing Reflections and Q&A

The session concludes with reflections on the strategies learned throughout the workshop. Participants will be encouraged to share insights about their school's current culture and discuss next steps for cultivating a winning and inclusive culture. The session will close with an open Q&A to address any remaining questions and reinforce the importance of ongoing efforts to build a positive, supportive, and inclusive school environment.

Program Implementation Process

At Presidential Consultants, we understand that when it comes to sensitive topics like suicide prevention, violence awareness, and social inclusion, you need a partner who is not only engaging and effective but also grounded in evidence-based practices that produce measurable results. That's the foundation of our work.

Schools are required to use approved, evidence-based programs, and we're here to help meet those requirements for grades 6 through 12. Whether through annual health education or other subjects, our workshops and training sessions are designed to meet state standards while delivering real results. Our tailored approach helps teams lead, collaborate, and serve more effectively, ensuring every student and staff member feels supported, included, and heard.

With Presidential Consultants as your partner, you're choosing a trusted resource for delivering critical, evidence-based instruction that empowers students, teachers, and staff to create a safer, more connected learning environment.

How:

- **In-Person Sessions for Students:** Allows for direct engagement, deeper discussions, and emotional support in real-time. It fosters a safe space for asking sensitive questions and addressing concerns immediately.
- **In-Person and/or Virtual Sessions for Teachers and Staff:** In-person sessions are designed to foster deeper engagement and real-time interactions, creating a supportive environment where teachers and staff can connect, discuss, and address issues related to mental health and violence prevention more effectively. These sessions allow for

immediate feedback, deeper discussions, and personalized support throughout the state. Virtual options are available to ensure accessibility for all participants.

- **Micro-Learning Video Modules for Teachers and Staff:** This library of short, focused lessons provide flexible, on-demand learning opportunities that can fit into busy schedules. Learners can revisit the content anytime for reinforcement, allowing for self-paced learning.

Who:

- **Anthony President –** Founder and Chief Training Officer, Anthony President is an award-winning trainer and international speaker with over 20 years of experience in education and social work. He empowers helping professionals to navigate challenges and drive meaningful change in child welfare, education, and social services. Mr. President has transformed organizations across the U.S., making lasting impacts on children and families. He will co-facilitate various modules.

- **Dr. Kami J. Anderson –** Former education and communication scholar, Dr. Anderson will serve as the co-facilitator for various modules and, as our Director of Learning Design, will ensure that the end-to-end program meets the highest standards of excellence and relevance per State of Ohio Content Standards for secondary education and adult education & professional development.

- **Dr. Rachel Mitchum-Elahee –** licensed psychologist, certified executive coach, and self-care expert who challenges clients to choose the habits, actions, and mindset necessary for greater life satisfaction, professional productivity, and peace of mind. Dr. Elahee will facilitate the school personnel in-services on suicide prevention.

- **DJ Nicholson** - former classroom teacher, educational trainer and coach and works with professionals who support children with varying abilities. She has a life-long passion for ensuring that children with

disabilities are engaged and supported in the most inclusive environment possible. Ms. Nicholson will facilitate student-centered workshops on social inclusion.

- **Jake Ross** - licensed independent social worker in Ohio with over fifteen years of experience in the social work field. He is a highly skilled consultant and trainer known for his dedication to improving organizations and services that cater to children, adolescents, and individuals with mental health needs. Mr. Ross will facilitate student-centered workshops on suicide prevention and social inclusion.

- **Dr. Meagan Corrado** - Senior Trainer & Licensed Clinical Social Worker has over 15 years of experience specializing in trauma-informed care. Known for her creative approach, Dr. Corrado integrates narratives, art, music, poetry, and play into her training, making her programs both engaging and impactful for youth. She will support various modules for students.

- **Dr. Christine Kelly-Cross** - has spent the past three decades as a curriculum developer, trainer, and educational advocate for disadvantaged youth throughout the US. For much of her career, Dr. Cross was a Senior Training Officer for the North Central Ohio Regional Training Center at Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services.

What:

- One Curriculum Unit Lessons for Health classes in grades 6-12 (in-person), ***Sit With Us: Building a Community of Belonging***.
- Two In-service training sessions for school personnel (in-person and/or virtual) ***Recognizing Social Isolation: Early Detection, Impact, and Intervention Strategies*** and ***Cultivating a Winning Culture at School***

- Various self-paced Micro-Learning Video Modules for Teachers and Staff on various topics.

When:

- One-hour or one-class period workshops for students, each offered yearly for each incoming section of Health,
- 2-hour in-service trainings for school personnel, each offered yearly and during summer professional development days,
- 10-90 minute microlearning videos offered on-demand throughout the school year.