

Building a Kinder, Healthier Future

Students and schools benefit from new service-learning program — health. moves. minds.™

By Larissa Kulczycky

Across the country — at all grade levels — schools are seeing growing numbers of students with anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges. It's getting harder and harder for young people to cope with societal pressures, bullying and other sources of stress.

These alarming trends spurred the development of health. moves. minds. — the new educational service-learning program from SHAPE America and its national partner, Gopher.

The health. moves. minds. program teaches young people how to take care of their mind and body while developing important character traits such as kindness and empathy. It includes skills-based

and standards-based classroom and event resources for teachers as well as a fundraising component. After being piloted this spring by 21 schools, the program will kick off nationally in fall 2019.

Physical education teacher Kyle Salvo is coordinating the pilot program at Twin Chimneys Elementary School in O'Fallon, MO. "Students are

under so much more stress now than they were 10, 15, 20 years ago," says Salvo. "The health. moves. minds. lessons are geared to help students learn to cope with stress so they can regulate it before it becomes too much for them to handle."

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The supplied lessons, which align directly to both SHAPE America's National Standards for K-12 Physical Education and the National Health Education Standards, have a strong physical activity component and can be incorporated into each participating school's health or physical education program.

There are three grade bands addressed: K-2 and 3-5 at the elementary level and 6-8 at the secondary level. Each grade band has four full standards-based lessons, which are easy to incorporate into teachers' existing curriculum, making the program easy to implement.

Teachers can easily modify each lesson to meet their students' specific needs — or use the lesson in its entirety. Each level also has a corresponding mental wellness component, either kindness, mindfulness or empowerment.

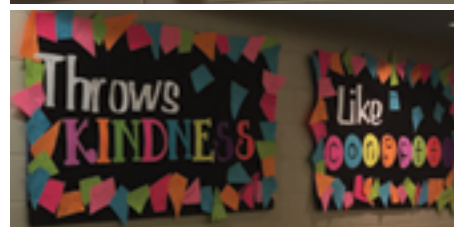
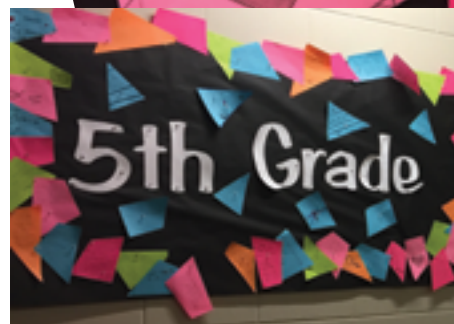
"What I love about the lessons is the mindfulness part," says Annette Ice, a National Board Certified Teacher at Overland Elementary School in Rock Springs, WY, another pilot school.

"The more I teach, the more I realize that students come to me without coping skills. Even something as simple as not getting to play the game they wanted sends some students into an emotional spiral that takes several minutes to recover from. Telling students to calm down sounds like the best answer,

“My students' success is the most important thing, and with this new program the sky is the limit!”



Students take part in a "mindful minute" activity at Sibley East Elementary School in Gaylord, MN.



The 5th grade kindness wall at Odessa Upper Elementary School in Odessa, MO.

except these students have no idea *how* to calm down, or how to prevent it from happening again."

"This program gives me the tools to teach students these skills — how to be mindful of how they are feeling and how to take steps to right their ship," she continues. "What an incredible gift to give a student!"

CARING COMMUNITIES

In addition to integrating lessons into their health and physical education program, teachers can engage other classroom teachers, the whole school, and the community at large — through school assemblies, parent engagement activities, and other community events, as desired. And, schools get to decide how they create and hold these events.

Many of the pilot schools planned physical activity events, including a family fun run, school-wide field day, glow-in-the-dark fun run, family bike ride, family health night with obstacle course, “run for joy,” and more.

Several schools also incorporated activities and events relating to emotional health, such as creating a “kindness wall” and holding a “serenity week” with a different theme for each day, such as kindness, mindfulness, empowerment, advocacy, and gratitude.

FUNDRAISING RESOURCES

All participating schools have access to a free, easy-to-use online platform that streamlines fundraising logistics and increases donations through social sharing. Students, teachers, staff, families, and community members can all raise money for their school team.

Up to 50% of funds raised by schools will benefit the school directly, providing essential funds for the equipment and resources that improve students’ physical and mental health. An equitable percentage of funds raised will go back to SHAPE America and participating state affiliates.

“health. moves. minds. is a game changer,” says Briana Fuller, physical education and health teacher at Harrison Elementary School in Green River, WY. “My students’ success is the most important thing, and with this new program the sky is the limit! With this fundraiser we will be able to make big dreams a reality!”



A student at Bell Creek Intermediate School in Bellbrook, OH, completes the obstacle course as part of the health. moves. minds. kickoff event.



Students at Sibley East Elementary School in Gaylord, MN.

Many thanks to our pilot schools and coordinators!

- Archbishop Bergan Catholic School** — Fremont, NE (Wyatt Morse)
- Bell Creek Intermediate School** — Bellbrook, OH (Sasha Taylor)
- Coolidge Elementary School** — Oklahoma City, OK (Katie Barton)
- El Dorado Elementary School** — San Antonio, TX (Brandon Turner & Danielle Norman)
- Hamilton Elementary School** — Port Angeles, WA (Krista Winn)
- Harrison Elementary School** — Green River, WY (Briana Fuller)
- Jessup Elementary School** — Cheyenne, WY (Randy Siltzer)
- Lafayette Elementary School** — Washington, DC (Marjorie McClure)
- Loma Vista Middle School** — Riverside, CA (Patti Suppe)
- Lords Park Elementary School** — Elgin, IL (Scott Park)
- Macdonough Elementary School** — Middletown, CT (Amanda Amtmanis)
- Neuqua Valley High School** — Naperville, IL (Bill Casey)
- Odessa Upper Elementary School** — Odessa, MO (Kristi Bieri)
- Overland Elementary School** — Rock Springs, WY (Annette Ice)
- Sherman Middle School** — Madison, WI (Niki Richter)
- Sibley East Elementary School** — Gaylord, MN (Kirsten Guentzel)
- Spencer Elementary School** — Middletown, CT (Amanda Amtmanis)
- Thorson Elementary School** — Cedarburg, WI (Patty Kestell)
- Twin Chimneys Elementary School** — O’Fallon, MO (Kyle Salvo)
- Westside Elementary School** — Reedsburg, WI (Brenda Erdman)
- Wherry Elementary School** — Albuquerque, NM (Ann Paulls-Neal)

health. moves. minds.™

Inspire healthy habits, fuel active minds, and teach kids to thrive physically and emotionally.

Learn more by signing up at healthmovesminds.org.