

Techniques for Supporting Advanced Learners' Social-Emotional Needs in the Classroom





Kevin Kusy, LCPC, NCC, PEL-SC

Illinois Association for Gifted Children

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Information about Me

- Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor
 - School Counselor
 - IAGC Board Member
 - Doctoral Student in Counselor Education
 - Future Educator/Researcher
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Topics to Cover

- Overarching concern around seeking help
 - What are the current mental health issues students, gifted and non, face?
 - Identify the gap in teacher training and social/emotional support
 - Working to bridge the gap
 - Exploration of options for teachers
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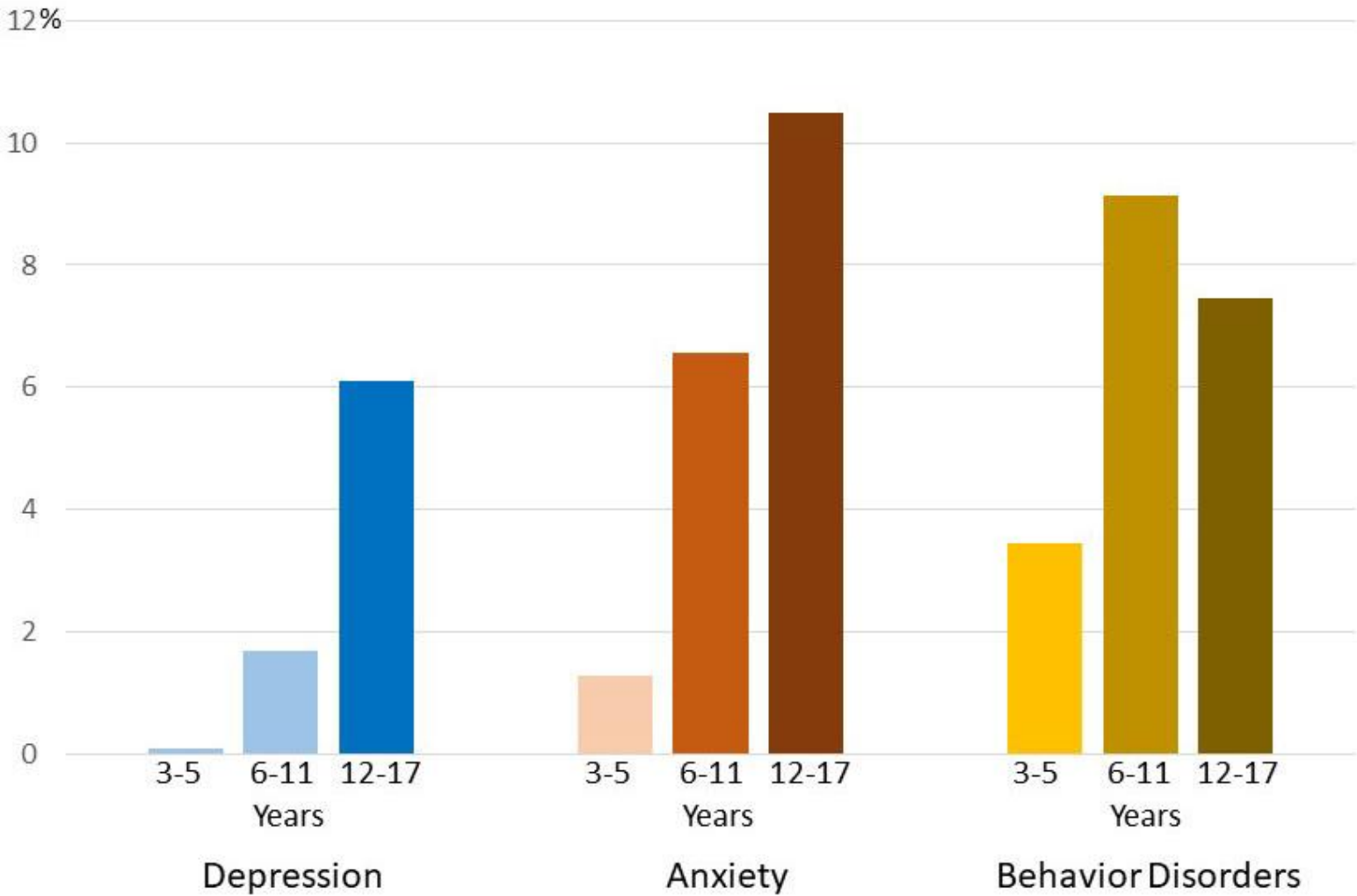
What Prevents Students from Seeking Help?

- Mental Health Stigma
 - Stigma is when someone views you in a negative way because you have a distinguishing characteristic or personal trait that's thought to be, or actually is, a disadvantage (a negative stereotype).
 - Some of the harmful effects of stigma can include:
 - Reluctance to seek help or treatment
 - Lack of understanding by family, friends, co-workers or others
 - Bullying, physical violence, or harassment
 - Health insurance that does not adequately cover mental illness treatment
 - The belief that you will never succeed at certain challenges or that you cannot improve your situation

Most Common Wellness Issues for Students




- Mood Disorders
 - Depressive Disorders
 - Bipolar or Cyclothymia
- Anxiety Disorders
 - Phobia
 - Separation Anxiety
 - Social Anxiety
- Behavioral Disorders
 - ADHD
 - Autism
 - ODD or CD

Depression, Anxiety, Behavior Disorders, by Age







Signs to Look For

- Have lost interest in things that they used to enjoy
 - Have low energy
 - Sleep too much or too little, or seem sleepy throughout the day
 - Are spending more and more time alone, and avoid social activities with friends or family
 - Fear gaining weight, or diet or exercise excessively
 - Engage in self-harm behaviors (e.g., cutting or burning their skin)
 - Smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs
 - Engage in risky or destructive behavior alone or with friends
 - Have thoughts of suicide
 - Have periods of highly elevated energy and activity, and require much less sleep than usual
 - Say that they think someone is trying to control their mind or that they hear things that other people cannot hear
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Gifted and Talented Student Mental Wellness

- G&T students are not more or less prone to mental health issues compared to their non-G&T peers
 - G&T students do not experience different social/emotional issues
 - It is common for G&T students to experience loss, anxiety, sadness, and depression at the same rate as their peers
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Gifted and Talented Student Mental Wellness

- Common G&T issues:
 - Perfectionism
 - Refusal to anything less than perfect
 - Irrational desire to achieve
 - Three types to look for
 - Academic/Test Anxiety
 - A form of a phobia
 - Positive correlation with perfectionism
 - Develops because of increased demands to achieve or potential personality traits
 - Asynchronous Development
 - Lack of emotional maturity
 - Dyssynchrony
 - Overexcitabilities







Close the Social-Emotional Gap for Teachers

1. Training and Education
 2. Evaluate personal social-emotional wellbeing
 3. Incorporate social-emotional learning
 4. Strategies that support motivation and self-directed learning
 5. Create individual support for each student
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Use the Data to Drive Decisions

- To best support students, structure classrooms around CASEL's five dimensions of SEL
 - Social awareness
 - Relationship skills
 - Responsible decision-making
 - Self-awareness
 - Self-management
 - Academic learning is only one part of a student
 - Student learning and development areas to remember:
 - Cognitive
 - Social-emotional
 - Physical
 - Ethical
 - Well-being and safety
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Develop Your Identity

- Teachers are not trained counselors
 - Use your personal skills to your advantage
 - It is ok to ask for help
 - Develop supervision and mentorship groups/relationships
 - Basic skill development can be helpful
 - Encouragement
 - Support
 - Challenging
 - Shift Perspective
 - From educator to skilled helper
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Increase Your Knowledge Base and Skillset

- Recognizing students in distress
 - What are students saying?
 - How are students acting?
 - Understand the common signs and symptoms
 - Work to develop relationships
 - Students respond to adults they trust
 - If you cannot connect, ask student if there is another adult
 - Work to realize that their challenge likely has little to do with you
 - Know when to refer
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Making the Transition

- Assess your pedagogy
 - What type of teacher do you want to be?
 - Consider a constructivist approach
 - Inquiry-based learning
 - More inclusive
 - Reflective in nature
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Model to Consider

- Counseling Curriculum for Teachers
 - Five Major Areas
 - Contemporary therapeutic systems for working with diverse student populations and their families
 - Basic counseling strategies and techniques
 - Multicultural counseling concepts, and practices
 - Philosophical, ethical, and legal issues
 - Counseling learning activities
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Build a Community in the Classroom

- From the first day:
 - How do you promote respect and communication?
 - How do you structure learning?
 - How do you take time to connect with each student?
 - How do you provide feedback when assessing?
 - Who is your support system?
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Integrate Your Daily Strategies

- Internal check prior to going into the class
 - How are you feeling, and how will that effect your students?
 - Practice and develop specific skills
 - Active listening
 - Empathetic responding
 - Boundary setting
 - Work to encourage communication
 - Check-in with students
 - Can be openly to class or privately to you
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Be Aware of Support Systems

- When students struggle, it is important to consider the best referral options
 - School Counselor, Psychologist, or Social Worker
 - Discussion with Parent or Guardian
 - Consult with department head, other teachers, principal, or mentor
 - Consider your legal and ethical issues
 - Remember mandated reporting for safety concerns
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Monitor Your Wellness

- Common concerns to observe:
 - Burnout
 - Compassion Fatigue
 - Sleeping issues
 - Appetite issues
 - Difficulty concentrating/forgetfulness
 - Signs of depression or anxiety
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Contact Me

- If you would like to email me:
 - kkusy@imsa.edu

