

## Case Study

## Violence Prevention

**Organization:** **Safe of Columbia County**, Saint Helens, OR  
Domestic Violence & Sexual Violence Prevention Organization

**URL:** [www.SafeofColumbiaCounty.org](http://www.SafeofColumbiaCounty.org)

**Program Name:** Violence Prevention in Schools

**Funding:**

- Oregon Coalition against Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence
- Violence Against Women Act
- Justice Reinvestment Initiative.

**What problem is being solved?** Preventing violence by helping young people build healthy relationships with themselves, others, and their community.

**Curricula used:** [Mind Matters – Overcoming Adversity and Building Resilience](#)

**Curricula benefits:** Brings awareness of how the mind and body connect; utilizes science and research to explain reactions; makes self-regulation activities easy to teach because they are framed well; effectively introduces the concept of empathy.

It helps schools and teachers build trauma informed classrooms. Teachers learn new ways to communicate and they can use self-regulation practices with students.

**Target Audience:** Students K-12 and community partner staff  
Including:

- Students starting in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade
- Middle and high schools
- Alternative school students and those in correctional settings
- Police departments, CASA volunteers

**Audience Demographics:** Primarily rural

<p><b>Location of instruction:</b></p> <p><b>Class size:</b></p> <p><b>Length of instruction:</b></p> <p><b>Instructors:</b></p> <p><b>Program recruitment:</b></p> <p><b>Program Retention:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In elementary, middle, and high schools during reading period or health class</li> <li>• At partner organization sites</li> </ul> <p>Groups of 12 to 25 students</p> <p>Schools choose base on their greatest needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elementary and middle school students - 4 lessons Lesson 1 – Self-Regulation Lesson 2 – Emotion Lessons 3/4 – Empathy and Loving Kindness exercise</li> <li>• They do all lessons with middle, high, and alternative school students</li> </ul> <p>An instructor from SAFE conducts the sessions.</p> <p>Makes one presentation to all district superintendents and their staff in the county, then following a meeting with the principals, they conducted a needs assessment and scheduled class time for their schools. The demand for her classes continues to grow and now has expanded to community agencies.</p> <p>This program started in September 2018. SAFE is getting requests to return to schools for the next school year.</p>
<p><b>Observable outcomes:</b></p> <p><b>Unique Implementation:</b></p>	<p>Students say they act with more kindness. Students of all ages, and even the most challenged, appreciate and say that they use the self-regulation practices especially the 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and Peripheral Vision exercises. They indicate that their school communities are better because of Mind Matters.</p> <p>Teachers and counselors are very grateful for the instruction. They have asked SAFE to modify Mind Matters to meet additional classroom and student needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The facilitator has broken Mind Matters into smaller pieces to teach 3-5<sup>th</sup> graders.</li> <li>- She developed a “Calm Coach” module for 4<sup>th</sup> graders so that they can become leaders and advocates in the classroom.</li> <li>- She has modified the Code of Honor exercise to be more impromptu and to more thoroughly review the self-regulation practices.</li> <li>- Developed a closing ceremony. Students came to the front of the class and taught the class their favorite self-soothing skills and received a certificate of completion.</li> </ul>

**Challenges:**

Mapping the support map with at-risk youth opened Pandora's box. It triggered many stories of teachers, family, and other adults who were and were not trust worthy. She learned not to have the students share their stories of people who either did or did not support them.

She used the Hawaiian story of Ohana from Mind Matters about how one person can make a difference in their life. Students often only had one or two people on their support list. Some had none. Per the instructional tip in Mind Matters, she suggested that they could put their teacher or counselor on their list. They could put her, the instructor, on their list. They could put that teacher who was tough but fair on their list as their challenger. Students then realized that someone had their back.

**Tips:**

She asks elementary students to present their favorite self-regulation activity in final class. Then each student receives a certificate of completion. She also encouraged her students to teach others the skills they are learning in class.

Bring a small bell to use as a classroom management tool.

She utilizes both the ACES checklist with older students as well as the ACEs Response Check List with younger students. She makes time to discuss it. She does have students put their scores in a bag and she reports back the averages.

During the Loving Kindness exercise, she asks students to come up to the front of the class to experience leading the Loving Kindness exercise from his/her perspective as a way to build empathy.