Second Step: Skills for Social & Academic Success

Second Step is a classroom-based social-skills program for children in grades preK-5 created by the Committee for Children that teaches socio-emotional skills aimed at reducing impulsive and aggressive behavior while increasing social competence. The program builds on cognitive behavioral intervention models integrated with social learning theory, empathy research, and social information-processing theories. The program consists of in-school curricula, parent training, and skill development. Second Step teaches children to identify and understand their own and others' emotions, reduce impulsiveness and choose positive goals, and manage their emotional reactions and decision-making process when emotionally aroused. Each curriculum contains five teaching kits that build sequentially and cover empathy, impulse control, and anger management in developmentally and age-appropriate ways. Group decision-making, modeling, coaching, and practice are demonstrated in the Second Step lessons using interpersonal situations presented in photos or video format. [http://www.cfchildren.org/second-step.aspx](http://www.cfchildren.org/second-step.aspx)

Classroom Habitudes: Teaching Habits and Attitudes for 21st Century Learning

To meet the complexities of today’s world, our students need more than skills — they need Habitudes! Successful students, workers, and citizens have identifiable habits and behaviors, which allow them to manage emotions, communicate effectively, and sustain themselves as independent and successful lifelong learners. This session explores intentional lessons and conversations that nurture and develop these habits and attitudes, the Habitudes that ensure our students’ success far beyond our classrooms.

Imagination:
The ability to create new images out of thoughts, memories, and sensory information, and from those images to mold ideals, role models, heroes, loves, concepts, perceptions, and ideas on how to thrive and survive.
A cardboard box; a basket of unfolded laundry; an individual blade of grass. To a child, these everyday, unnoticed items become a fort; clothing for a king and queen; a harmonica that plays symphonic music. Imagination is not just for kids. Discovery, innovation, creativity, and learning all begin with imagination. Everyone says imagination is important, but it’s something we take away by forcing students to memorize and repeat rather than think and envision.

Curiosity:
A mindset and willingness to explore the internal and external worlds by asking questions, seeking answers, and engaging in a wide range of personal and interpersonal activities.
Champion learners are curious about everything. They ask questions and get themselves involved in all stages of learning, without worrying about the answer, but relishing in the process. They have learned that by posing questions, they can generate interest and aliveness in the most exciting or mundane situation. This inquisitive attitude fuels their unrelenting quest for continuous learning.

Self-awareness:
The ability to use a system of checks and balances to understand ourselves and to make conscious choices and deliberate decisions about the direction and quality of our lives.
We all have strengths and weaknesses in regard to our learning performance and capabilities. Knowing yourself, knowing your strength, preferences, and areas of need is a critical characteristic of a successful learner. Yet, self-awareness in more than just recognition of what you can or cannot be, do, have. This innate ability to stay in tune serves multiple purposes. They can foresee problems and use their strengths to overcome difficulties encountered.

Perseverance:
The ability to sustain interest, effort, and commitment in any circumstance that life presents.
I think of times in my life that it took more than “I think I can” to get me to my goal. Most recently, I completed running in my first half marathon. Without resolve, determination, firmness, and endurance, I know I could not and would not have physically or mentally gone the distance.

Courage:
The ability to enter the unknown by confronting challenges, taking risks, and overcoming fears.
Courageous learners understand that safe is risky. Success is the byproduct of taking risks, closing our eyes, saying I will not let fear hold me back, and taking the plunge. I want them to understand that it takes courage to address the voices in your head that echo doubts, questions, or other paralyzing thoughts.

Passion:
The ability to intentionally pursue actions that are personally and socially meaningful.
Passionate learners find out what it means to care deeply about something, to have something in their lives that really matters to them. It is making a meaningful contribution to society and exercising our creative powers by means of sharing our individual uniqueness and brilliance with the world.

Adaptability:
The ability to cope with change, to recognize its positive and negative aspects, and to manage one’s actions to address the nature and scope of change.
Adaptability is more than just serving change; it is using change as a growth opportunity. In fact, with anticipation of change, you can control change. This kind of development requires robust adaptability. The world opens up for adaptable learners, as they approach each task, each challenge willing to be a beginner. They approach their learning and life with a beginner’s mindset. These learners embrace challenge with openness, flexibility. Those who don’t embrace change with adaptability usually get blind-sided by it.