



Blueprints Model Programs FACT SHEET

FS-BPM10

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Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies

The PATHS (Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies) Curriculum is a comprehensive program for promoting emotional and social competencies and reducing aggression and behavior problems in elementary school-aged children while simultaneously enhancing the educational process in the classroom. This innovative curriculum is designed to be used by educators and counselors in a multi-year, universal prevention model. Although primarily focused on the school and classroom settings, information and activities are also included for use with parents.

Program Targets:

The PATHS Curriculum was developed for use in the classroom setting with all elementary school aged-children. PATHS has been field-tested and researched with children in regular education classroom settings, as well as with a variety of special needs students (deaf, hearing-impaired, learning disabled, emotionally disturbed, mildly mentally delayed, and gifted). Ideally it should be initiated at the entrance to schooling and continue through Grade 5.

Program Content:

The PATHS Curriculum, taught three times per week for a minimum of 20-30 minutes per day, provides teachers with systematic, developmentally-based lessons, materials, and instructions for teaching their students emotional literacy, self-control, social competence, positive peer relations, and interpersonal problem-solving skills. A key objective of promoting these developmental skills is to prevent or reduce behavioral and emotional problems. PATHS lessons include instruction in identifying and labeling feelings, expressing feelings, assessing the intensity of feelings, managing feelings, understanding the difference between feelings and behaviors, delaying gratification, controlling impulses, reducing stress, self-talk, reading and interpreting social cues, understanding the perspectives of others, using steps for problem-solving and decision-making, having a positive attitude toward life, self-awareness, nonverbal communication skills, and verbal communication skills. Teachers receive training in a two- to three-day workshop and in bi-weekly meetings with the curriculum consultant.

Program Outcomes:

The PATHS Curriculum has been shown to improve protective factors and reduce behavioral risk factors. Evaluations have demonstrated significant improvements for program youth (regular education, special needs, and deaf) compared to control youth in the following areas:

- Improved self-control,
- Improved understanding and recognition of emotions,
- Increased ability to tolerate frustration,
- Use of more effective conflict-resolution strategies,

- ∞ Improved thinking and planning skills,
- ∞ Decreased anxiety/depressive symptoms (teacher report of special needs students),
- ∞ Decreased conduct problems (teacher report of special needs students),
- ∞ Decreased symptoms of sadness and depression (child report – special needs), and
- ∞ Decreased report of conduct problems, including aggression (child report).

Program Costs:

Program costs over a three-year period would range from \$15/student/year to \$45/student/year. The higher cost would include hiring an on-site coordinator, the lower cost would include redeploying current staff.

The information for this fact sheet was excerpted from:

Greenberg, M.T., Kusché, C. & Mihalic, S.F. (1998). *Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS): Blueprints for Violence Prevention, Book Ten*. Blueprints for Violence Prevention Series (D.S. Elliott, Series Editor). Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado.

PATHS

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