Madison Public Schools Life Skills Curriculum (MJS)

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Course Overview

Description

Life skills is a year long course for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students in the special education program who need direct instruction to learn specific life skills to help them succeed to live independently and volunteer or work in the community as they become young adults. This course offers students the opportunity to learn about themselves and the people and places around their community. The students will be working to develop their social, communication, and interpersonal skills. The students will also be investigating personal health and hygiene, personal finances, managing a household, and navigating the community. Each unit provides students with opportunities to practice these skills in a safe educational environment with the assistance of an adult.

Goals

This course aims to:

- Develop skills that students will use both while they are in school, as well as in the real world.
- Develop awareness of self and others and how to maintain relationships.
- Support students in learning about personal finance, household management, and community awareness.
- Develop an awareness of future expectations to prepare them for life outside of school.

Materials

Core: AGS Life Skills by American Guidance Service Inc., Pay by Check by Janis Fisher Chan, Life Skills Practice by Ellen McPeek Glisan, PCI Education Let's Talk About Life Skills Volumes 1 & 2, Attainment's Look'n Cook by Ellen Sudol Catalano

Supplemental: YouTube, BrainPop and BrainPop Jr. videos, Newsela Articles, various other online resources and videos.

Resources

Suggested activities and resources page

Benchmark Assessments

Benchmark assessments will be given after units 2 and 4 and focus on the main ideas and anchor standards of the course. Both assessments will provide choice of how students would like to demonstrate understanding.

Modifications and Adaptations for Special Needs Learners

(Gifted and Talented Students, English Language Learners, Students with Special Needs, At-Risk Students, and Students with 504 Plans)

Scope and Sequence (Pacing Guide)

Unit Number	Topic of Study	Duration (Weeks Taught)
1	Self-Care and Personal Needs	8
2	Interpersonal Skills and Communication	8
3	Household Management	7
4	Money Management and Personal Finance	7
5	Understanding the Community	7

Unit 1 Overview

Unit Title: Self-Care and Personal Needs

Unit Summary:

This unit provides the students with the opportunity to understand the importance of mental, emotional, and physical health. This unit looks to build each student's self esteem. For the mental component, they will evaluate what they like, what they are good at, and what they may need to improve upon. This will help them to better understand themselves, realize their full potential, and cope with stress. It will also aid them to make choices that will help them to be their most productive and ask for help when they feel that they are struggling with something. For the emotional component, they look at different ways to reduce stress, such as breathing techniques and yoga to alleviate stress and calm themselves down when they are upset. For the physical component, the students will learn about keeping themselves clean and how germs are spread, as well as appropriate diet and exercise.

Suggested Pacing: 20 lessons

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- What are my interests?
- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- How do I know if I need help and how do I ask for help when I need it?
- How do I keep myself clean?
- How can I calm myself down when I get upset?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Who I am.
- Personal hygiene.
- Asking for help.
- Nutritional and physical health.
- Self calming techniques.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessments: A variety of formative assessments will be used throughout the lesson, such as think-pair-share, exit tickets, group discussions, graphic organizers, venn diagrams, and etc.

Summative Assessments: Student unit portfolio that focuses on self-esteem, hygiene, diet, and exercise.

Objectives (Students will be able to)	Key Concepts (Students will know)	Suggested Assessments	Standards (NJSLS)
Describe themselves and information about themselves, such as interests, hobbies, etc.	What they like and like to do. What interests they have. How to share information about themselves. Vocabulary: Interest, hobby	Create a poster or powerpoint presentation about themselves and present the information.	2.1.8.E.1 Analyze how personal assets, resiliency, and protective factors support healthy social and emotional health.

Define self-esteem and explain how self-esteem can related to self-awareness and self-image.	What self-esteem is. Identify personal strengths and areas of need. Understand that nobody is perfect and that it is okay. How to work on areas of need. Vocabulary: Self-esteem, self-awareness, self-image	Choose an area of need and make a plan to build up self-esteem using small achievable steps.	2.1.8.E.1 Analyze how personal assets, resiliency, and protective factors support healthy social and emotional health.
Manage personal hygiene through hand washing, following the proper steps to brushing their teeth, and following the proper steps to bathing themselves.	Understand how germs and sickness can spread. How to wash their hands. The steps to properly brushing their teeth. The steps to properly bathing themselves. Vocabulary: Germs, soap, lather, plaque, flossing, shampoo	Sorting the steps to hand washing, tooth brushing, and bathing.	2.1.8.A.4 Determine the impact of marketing techniques on the use of personal hygiene products, practices, and services. 2.1.8.C.2 Analyze local, state, national, and international public health efforts to prevent and control diseases and health conditions
Plan time during their day to exercise as well as choose exercises or activities that they can do to stay healthy.	Why exercise is important. What exercises or activities will help them to be healthy. Vocabulary: exercise	Creating an exercise or healthy activity schedule for each day of the week.	2.1.8.A.2 Compare and contrast the impact of genetics, family history, personal health practices, and environment on personal growth and development in each life stage. 2.1.8.B.2 Identify and defend healthy ways for adolescents to lose, gain, or maintain weight. 2.6.8.A.1 Summarize the short- and long-term physical, social, and emotional benefits of regular physical activity.
Distinguish between healthy and unhealthy foods after examining the food groups.	The food groups and why it is important to eat foods from the different groups. Examples of foods from the different food groups. What makes a food healthy and what makes a food unhealthy. Vocabulary: Food groups, dairy, fruits, vegetables, proteins, grains, fats, healthy, unhealthy	Creating a healthy meal plan for a day, including foods from each of the food groups. Sorting between healthy and unhealthy foods.	2.1.8.A.2 Compare and contrast the impact of genetics, family history, personal health practices, and environment on personal growth and development in each life stage. 2.1.8.B.2 Identify and defend healthy ways for adolescents to lose, gain, or maintain weight.
Demonstrate how to ask for help.	Asking for help is okay because everyone needs help sometimes. Appropriate times to ask for help. Appropriate ways to ask for help. Vocabulary: Help	Practice asking for help with teachers through the day and write about one experience when they asked for help and reflecting about what the results of the interaction were.	9.2.8.B.3 Evaluate communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can be developed through school, home, work, and extracurricular activities for use in a career.
Employ calming breathing techniques.	Various breathing techniques to help them calm down when they are stressed or upset. Vocabulary: Inhale, exhale	Practice three breathing techniques and evaluate which they liked the most and when they may need to use the technique through a self reflection sheet.	2.1.8.E.4 Compare and contrast stress management strategies that are used to address various types of stress-induced situations.

Unit 2 Overview

Unit Title: Interpersonal Skills

Unit Summary:

This unit provides the tools the students need to learn the importance of having interpersonal skills. They will learn how to appropriately interact with both their peers and adults. The lessons will focus on behaving appropriately when meeting someone for the first time, as well as greeting peers and adults. Students will learn about making friends and what makes someone a good friend. They will also learn about maintaining friendships and appropriate ways to resolve conflicts with peers.

Suggested Pacing: 20 lessons

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- How do I appropriately greet someone?
- What starts and continues a conversation?
- What does it mean to be respectful and how can I show respect to others?
- What does it mean to cooperate with others and how do I resolve disagreements and conflicts with others?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Introducing yourself and appropriately greeting others.
- Making lasting relationships.
- Demonstrating respect.
- Conflict resolution.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessments: A variety of formative assessments will be used throughout the lesson, such as think-pair-share, exit tickets, group discussions, graphic organizers, t-charts, venn diagrams, and etc.

Summative Assessments: Student unit portfolio focusing on creating and building functional and appropriate relationships in school, outside of school, and on the internet.

Alternative Assessment: Write and perform a skit demonstrating one of the following topics: friendship, respect, cooperation, conflict resolution, or appropriate internet usage.

Objectives (Students will be able to)	Key Concepts (Students will know)	Suggested Assessments	Standards (NJSLS)
Demonstrate an appropriate introduction to a peer with eye contact and a greeting.	The importance of introducing yourself. What eye contact is and that it shows that you are engaged in the interaction. Appropriate greetings for peers. Vocabulary: Greeting, eye contact	Introduce themself to another peer in the classroom using eye contact and an appropriate greeting.	2.2.8.A.1 Compare and contrast verbal and nonverbal interpersonal communication strategies in a variety of settings and cultures in different situations.

Demonstrate an appropriate introduction to an adult with eye contact, a greeting, and a handshake.	The importance of introducing yourself. What eye contact is and that it shows that you are engaged in the interaction. Appropriate greetings for adults. What a handshake is and how to do one appropriately with an adult. Vocabulary: Greeting, eye contact, handshake	Introduce themselves to an adult in the school using eye contact, an appropriate greeting, and a handshake.	2.2.8.A.1 Compare and contrast verbal and nonverbal interpersonal communication strategies in a variety of settings and cultures in different situations.
Demonstrate appropriate conversation skills through starting a conversation and asking subsequent questions to keep it going.	How to start a basic conversation. How to ask follow up questions based on information mentioned in the conversation. Vocabulary: Conversation, question	Practice starting and continue having a conversation with a peer or teachers in the classroom.	2.2.8.A.1 Compare and contrast verbal and nonverbal interpersonal communication strategies in a variety of settings and cultures in different situations. 9.2.8.B.3 Evaluate communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can be developed through school, home, work, and extracurricular activities for use in a career.
Explain what it means to be a good friend.	How to begin a friendship. What characteristics make someone a good friend. Vocabulary: Friend, respect, loyal, honest, acceptance, kind, caring	Sort through pictures and statements to decide if the situation is demonstrating the characteristics of someone being a good friend.	 2.2.8.C.1 Analyze strategies to enhance character development in individual, group, and team activities. 2.4.8.A.5 Determine when a relationship is unhealthy and explain effective strategies to end the relationship.
Explain what respect means and distinguish between respectful and disrespectful situations.	What respect is. How to show respect for self and show respect to others. Vocabulary: Respect, self-respect, disrespect	Create a comic strip showing situations where someone is showing respect for themselves and where someone is showing respect for others.	2.2.8.C.1 Analyze strategies to enhance character development in individual, group, and team activities. 2.4.8.A.5 Determine when a relationship is unhealthy and explain effective strategies to end the relationship.
Explain skills needed to communicate effectively with others in order to complete a cooperative activity.	What cooperation is. What it means to communicate. What are good communication skills. What cooperation and good communication looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Vocabulary: Cooperation, communication	Students will compare and contrast good and bad times that they worked in groups and analyse what made the experience good or bad.	2.2.8.A.1 Compare and contrast verbal and nonverbal interpersonal communication strategies in a variety of settings and cultures in different situations. 2.4.8.A.5 Determine when a relationship is unhealthy and explain effective strategies to end the relationship. 9.2.8.B.3 Evaluate communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can be developed through school, home, work, and extracurricular activities for use in a career.
Demonstrate strategies to manage or resolve conflict.	What can cause conflict. Healthy and unhealthy responses to conflict. Managing and resolving conflicts through listening. How to use an I-message. Vocabulary:	Students will use an I-message to let someone know how they feel, what the action is that is making them feel that way, and what they would like them to do instead.	2.2.8.A.1 Compare and contrast verbal and nonverbal interpersonal communication strategies in a variety of settings and cultures in different situations. 2.1.8.E.2Determine the effectiveness of existing home, school, and community efforts to address social and emotional health and prevent conflict.

	Conflict, I-message		2.2.8.A.2Demonstrate the use of refusal, negotiation, and assertiveness skills when responding to peer pressure, disagreements, or conflicts.
Distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate internet activity.	How to appropriately use social media. What cyberbullying is. How to report inappropriate internet behaviors and who to report it to. Vocabulary: Internet, social media, report	Students will create a bumper sticker with a catchy slogan about internet safety.	8.1.8.D.1 Understand and model appropriate online behaviors related to cyber safety, cyber bullying, cyber security, and cyber ethics including appropriate use of social media. 2.2.8.E.2 Compare and contrast situations that require support from trusted adults or health professionals. 8.1.8.D.5 Understand appropriate uses for social media and the negative consequences of misuse.

Unit 3 Overview

Unit Title: Household Management

Unit Summary:

This unit provides the students with the opportunity to practice skills needed to maintain a household. The students will learn about organizing and maintaining a household through practicing on their small space in their home, their bedroom. They will learn to appropriately clean their room and organize their clothes and belongings. They will also practice preparing snacks and basic meals for themselves, using appropriate techniques for food prep and kitchen safety.

Suggested Pacing: 20 lessons

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- How do I keep my belongings clean?
- How do I organize and maintain my belongings?
- How do I prepare a meal cleanly and safely?
- How do I demonstrate good manners when dining?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Maintaining a household.
- Importance of cleanliness.
- Appropriate table manners.
- Safety within the home.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessments: A variety of formative assessments will be used throughout the lesson, such as think-pair-share, exit tickets, group discussions, graphic organizers, venn diagram, and etc.

Summative Assessments: Student unit portfolio focusing on managing a household through caring for clothing, organizing and maintaining belongings, and preparing a basic meal.

Objectives (Students will be able to)	Key Concepts (Students will know)	Suggested Assessments	Standards (NJSLS)
Prepare clothing for washing and organize clothing after washing.	To look at clothing tags to see proper care of the item. How to sort laundry before washing clothes. How to fold clothes. Vocabulary: Laundry, sort, tag, fold	Students will fold ten clean articles of clothing.	CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
Organize their bedroom.	How to make a bed. Putting clean clothes away either on a hanger in a closet or folded clothes in drawers.	Students will make a bed using a fitted sheet, top sheet, comforter, and two pillow cases.	CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.

	Putting books on a bookshelf. How to use a broom and dust pan. How to dust. How to use a vacuum. How to safely use and store cleaning products.	Students will organize and hang clothing. Students will learn how to keep their area tidy and clean.	
Demonstrate appropriate table manners.	How to set the table. How to use dishes, glasses, and utensils appropriately How to use napkins appropriately.	Students will independently set a table using a knife, fork, spoon, salad plate, plate, glass, and napkins.	CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
Demonstrate food prep, kitchen safety, and cleanliness.	How to safely prepare food before cooking or assembling. How to safely use various kitchen utensils, equipment, and appliances. How to clean utensils, equipment, and appliances after use. Vocabulary: Utensil, equipment, appliance, knife, oven,	Students will complete a web-quest about food safely answering fifteen questions.	CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
Create various snacks and meals for themselves with supervision.	How to follow a recipe. How to read common abbreviation used in recipes. How to properly measure ingredients. How to prepare a snack or meal. How to store unused ingredients. Vocabulary: Ingredients, recipe	Students will complete one recipe from start to finish.	CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.

Unit 4 Overview

Unit Title: Money Management and Personal Finance

Unit Summary:

This unit provides the students with the opportunity to evaluate and determine their personal finances. They will evaluate ways that they can earn money. The lessons will focus on creating personal understanding of how money is earned, understanding the difference between a need and a want, and reasons for both spending and saving. They will learn about the advantages and disadvantages of various forms of payment, including cash, checks, debit cards, and credit cards. They will create an individualized budget based on their income.

Suggested Pacing: 25 lessons

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- In what ways can I earn money?
- How do I determine what type of payment method is right for my situation?
- What are my financial goals?
- How do I determine if something is a need or a want?
- What are the benefits of saving for the future and how do I do that?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Creating personal goals.
- Understanding the value of money.
- Researching consumer products to determine best prices.
- Importance of saving for the future.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessments: A variety of formative assessments will be used throughout the lesson, such as think-pair-share, exit tickets, group discussions, graphic organizers, venn diagrams, and etc.

Summative Assessments: Student unit portfolio that focuses on identifying and using money, using various payment methods, and budgeting.

Objectives (Students will be able to)	Key Concepts (Students will know)	Suggested Assessments	Standards (NJSLS)
Identify various ways to earn money.	What an allowance is. What chores are. How they can earn money for themselves. Jobs that they can do to earn money. How small jobs and interests that they have can lead them on a career path.	Creating an individualized plan to earn money through various methods (chores, allowance, small jobs, etc.)	9.1.8.A.2 Relate how career choices, education choices, skills, entrepreneurship, and economic conditions affect income.

Compare different payment methods and when it is appropriate to use each one.	Vocabulary: Allowance, chores, earnings, job, career, entrepreneur The values of different coins and bills. How to make change. How to create a bank account. The way to maintain a checking account and write a check. What a debit card is and how it is used. What credit is and how a credit card works. Vocabulary: penny, nickel, dime, quarter, dollar, bank account, check, checkbook, checking account, credit card, debit card	Exit tickets after reviewing the types of coins and currencies. Venn diagram comparing credit cards and debit cards.	9.1.8.B.1 Distinguish among cash, check, credit card, and debit card. 9.1.8.B.9 Determine the most appropriate use of various financial products and services (e.g., ATM, debit cards, credit cards, check books). 9.1.8.C.1 Compare and contrast credit cards and debit cards and the advantages and disadvantages of using each.
Create a budget and explain how it can help a person to achieve financial goals.	How to track and evaluate their spending habits. Evaluate their priorities. How to create a budget. Vocabulary: Spend, budget, priorities	Create a weekly budget for their spending.	9.1.8.B.7 Construct a budget to save for long-term, short-term, and charitable goals.
Explain the difference between a need and a want.	What a need is. What a want is. Assess whether an item is a need or a want. Vocabulary: Need, want	Create a T-chart between items that are needs and items that are wants.	9.1.8.A.6 Explain how income affects spending decisions. 9.1.8.E.4 Prioritize personal wants and needs when making purchases.
Explain the basic principles for saving such as reasons for saving, how much to save, and plans of action to enable saving.	Identify obstacles to saving. Determine how much they need to save for a particular. Create a plan of action to save for future needs and wants. Vocabulary: Save, spend, savings account	Research a "want" item and develop a plan on how they will save up the money to enable them to get the item.	9.1.8.D.1 Determine how saving contributes to financial well-being. 9.1.8.D.2 Differentiate among various savings tools and how to use them most effectively. 9.1.8.E.1 Explain what it means to be a responsible consumer and the factors to consider when making consumer decisions.

Unit 5 Overview

Unit Title: Understanding the Community

Unit Summary:

This unit provides the students with the opportunity to better understand their community. They will learn about the important places in their community, including the police station, the fire department, hospital, townhall, ambulance corps, post office, and the library, as well as the important people they may interact with in their community, such as police officers, firefighters, EMTs/Paramedics, doctors and nurses, mail carriers, librarians, and the mayor. The students will learn about why and how these places and people help the community. The students will also learn about other local establishments in the community and how to locate them. The students will also learn about transportation and how people get around in the community.

Suggested Pacing: 18 lessons

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- What are the roles of community helpers in the community?
- What other types of places are available in the community?
- How do people get around the community?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Who to go to for help in the community.
- What public resources are available in the community.
- Reading a map.
- Transportation in a community.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessments: A variety of formative assessments will be used throughout the lesson, such as think-pair-share, exit tickets, group discussions, graphic organizers, KWL chart, venn diagram, and etc.

Summative Assessments: Student unit portfolio focusing on identifying community helpers and their purpose, locating important places and landmarks throughout town, and understanding the various types of transportation to get around the community and beyond the community.

Alternative Assessments: Students will have the opportunity to create a Google Slides presentation about the community helper of their choice that goes into detail about the community helper's important jobs, the tools does this community helper use to do their job, where does this community helper works, the reasons why is this community helper important to the community, any special clothing does the community helper wears and any other details that they feel are interesting or important to know about their community helper.

Objectives (Students will be able to)	Key Concepts (Students will know)	Suggested Assessments	Standards (NJSLS)
Explain why rules are important and list consequences that can occur when rules aren't followed.	What rules are. Why they are important.	Play a game first where the rules are not explained, then play a game where the rules are explained. Compare how the games were played each time.	CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.

	What can happen when you choose not to follow rules. Vocabulary: Rules, consequences	Which was a better experience and explain why they feel that way?	
Identify important community helpers, identify where they work, and explain their role in the community.	The community helpers in their town. The roles or jobs of the community helpers. Vocabulary: Community, role, police officer, police station, firefighter, fire department, mail carrier, post office, librarian, library, townhall, mayor, EMT, paramedic, ambulance corps, doctor, nurse, hospital, equipment, uniform, vehicle	Students will create a community helpers journal where they illustrate how the community helper looks when they are at work and describes what their important jobs are.	9.2.8.B.3 Evaluate communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can be developed through school, home, work, and extracurricular activities for use in a career.
Find and label the locations of important community landmarks on a map.	How to read a map, including cardinal directions. How to read a key/legend on a map. Vocabulary: Map, cardinal directions, key/legend, landmark	Students will fill in a map with the locations of community landmarks on a map using the key.	CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
Create routes to different locations on a map.	How to read a scale on a map. How to use a map to navigate the community. Vocabulary: Scale, navigation	Students will use a map to create a route from their school and/or their home to different community landmarks.	CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
Discuss different types of transportation available in the community and the advantages and disadvantages of using these forms of transportation.	How to identify different types of transportation. How to safely and independently use appropriate transportation. How to use different types of transportation. Advantages and disadvantages of different forms of transportation. That distance can determine the form of transportation used. Vocabulary: Walk, bicycle, car, boat, public transportation, taxi, bus, train, ferry, plane, distance, destination	Compare and contrast two different types of transportation with the use of a Venn Diagram. Given various situations and destinations, evaluate which type of transportation is appropriate to use and explain why.	2.1.8.D.3 Analyze the causes and the consequences of noncompliance with the traffic safety system.