SEL Circle Year at a Glance

Middle School (Grades 6–8) • September 30 – April 28

Teacher quick-reference guide.

Unit 1: Foundation, Trust & Circle Norms

Week / Date	Topic & Theme	Circle Prompt	Slide Deck Link
Week 1: Sep 30	**Welcome to the Circle** Setting Agreements, Safety, and the Power of the Circle	*"What is one thing you need from this group to feel safe sharing your thoughts?"*	Lesson 1
Week 2: Oct 7	**Identity & Belonging** Who Am I in This Space? (Exploring Unique Assets & Identity)	*"What is a strength, passion, or background trait that makes you uniquely you?"*	Lesson 2
Week 3: Oct 14	**Emotional Literacy & Naming Feelings** Expanding Your Emotional Vocabulary Beyond 'Good,' 'Bad,' or 'Fine'	*"If your mood today were a type of weather, what would it be and why?"*	Lesson 3
Week 4: Oct 21	**Active & Mindful Listening** Listening to Understand, Not Just to Respond	*"How can you tell when someone is truly listening to you? How does it make you feel?"*	Lesson 4
Week 5: Oct 28	**Empathy & Perspective-Taking** Walking in Someone Else's Shoes	*"Share a time when learning someone's backstory changed how you viewed them."*	Lesson 5

Unit 2: Peer Dynamics, Conflict & Digital Life

Week / Date	Topic & Theme	Circle Prompt	Slide Deck Link
Week 6: Nov 4	**Belonging vs. Fitting In & Peer Pressure** Staying True to Yourself When Others Push You	*"What makes it hard to say 'no' to friends, and what helps you stand your ground?"*	Lesson 6
Week 7: Nov 11	**Healthy Boundaries in Friendships** Navigating Friendships in School and Online	*"What is one boundary or quality that is essential for a healthy friendship?"*	Lesson 7
Week 8: Nov 18	**Gratitude & Shared Appreciation** The Science of Gratitude and Building Positive Mindsets	*"Who in this school or circle is someone you appreciate, and why?"*	Lesson 8
	— Thanksgiving Break / Fall Recess —		

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Week 9: Dec 2	**Gossip, Rumors & Digital Citizenship** Cyberbullying, Group Chats, and Social Media Footprints	*"How do online comments or group chats affect real-life friendships in our school?"*	Lesson 9
Week 10: Dec 9	**Conflict Resolution 101** Resolving Differences with 'I-Statements' and Restorative Repair	*"When you get upset with a friend, what is your typical reaction (withdraw, explode, talk it out)?"*	Lesson 10
Week 11: Dec 16	**Managing Holiday Stress & Self-Care** Unwinding, Recognizing Overwhelm, and Holiday Realities	*"What is one self-care habit or activity you will use during the break to recharge?"*	Lesson 11
	— Winter Break / New Year Recess —		

Unit 3: Mid-Year Mindset, Regulation & Inclusivity

Week / Date	Topic & Theme	Circle Prompt	Slide Deck Link
Week 12: Jan 6	**The Mid-Year Reset & Intentions** Re-centering Values, Fresh Starts, and Goal Alignment	*"What is one habit or attitude you want to leave behind in the first half of the year?"*	[Add Link]
Week 13: Jan 13	**The Adolescent Brain & Emotional Triggers** Amygdala Hijacks, the Prefrontal Cortex, and Your Brain Under Stress	*"What is a common trigger that makes your brain flip its lid, and how can you tell?"*	[Add Link]
Week 14: Jan 20	**Coping Mechanisms & Regulation Strategies** Building Your Personal Calm-Down Toolkit	*"Which grounding technique (box breathing, 5-4-3-2-1, movement) works best for you?"*	[Add Link]
Week 15: Jan 27	**Growth Mindset & Embracing Failure** Reframing Mistakes as Fuel for Growth	*"Share a mistake or failure that ended up teaching you something valuable."*	[Add Link]
Week 16: Feb 3	**Kindness, Inclusion & Anti-Bullying** Being an Upstander, Not a Bystander (Kindness Month)	*"What does it look like to stand up for someone without putting yourself in danger?"*	[Add Link]
Week 17: Feb 10	**Self-Compassion & Positive Self-Talk** Silencing the Inner Critic	*"If you spoke to your best friend the way you speak to yourself in your head, would they still be your friend?"*	[Add Link]
Week 18: Feb 17	**Communication Styles** Passive, Aggressive, and Assertive Communication	*"In what situation do you find it hardest to communicate assertively?"*	[Add Link]

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Week 19: Feb 24	**Emotional First Aid & Asking for Help** Destigmatizing Mental Health and Finding Trusted Adults	*"Who is one trusted adult inside or outside of school you can reach out to when things get tough?"*	[Add Link]

Unit 4: Stress Management, Resilience & Looking Forward

Week / Date	Topic & Theme	Circle Prompt	Slide Deck Link
Week 20: Mar 3	**Academic Pressure & Time Management** Managing School Workload, Procrastination, and Priorities	*"What is your biggest obstacle when trying to complete work or study?"*	[Add Link]
Week 21: Mar 10	**Test Anxiety & Performance Mindfulness** Navigating Standardized Testing & High-Stakes Evaluation	*"What physical signs tell you that stress is building up before a test or presentation?"*	[Add Link]
Week 22: Mar 17	**Resilience & Bouncing Back** Developing Grit, Adaptability, and Recovery	*"What is a difficulty you faced this school year that made you stronger or wiser?"*	[Add Link]
	— Spring Break / March Recess —		
Week 23: Mar 31	**Body Image, Media & Self-Esteem** Unfiltering Reality: Social Media, Filters, and Physical Self-Acceptance	*"What is one message from social media/media about beauty or success that we should challenge?"*	[Add Link]
Week 24: Apr 7	**Navigating Change & Transitions** Preparing for Next Grade Levels, High School, or Moving On	*"What are you most excited about and most nervous about for next school year?"*	[Add Link]
Week 25: Apr 14	**Personal Accountability & Ownership** Owning Your Choices, Impacts, and Growth	*"What is an area in your life where taking 100% responsibility would make things better?"*	[Add Link]
Week 26: Apr 21	**Community Connection & Stewardship** Environmental Responsibility and Earth Day Connections	*"What is one small action our school community can take to make our environment better?"*	[Add Link]
Week 27: Apr 28	**Celebration, Legacy & Closing the Circle** Honoring Our Journey, Expressing Gratitude, and Looking Ahead	*"How have you grown as a person since our very first Circle in September?"*	[Add Link]