

# **Social Emotional Wellness in Middle School**

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## Social Emotional Wellness in Middle School

### Research Question

How can we at McTigue implement specific strategies and interventions to improve social-emotional wellness for our middle students?

### Background/Rationale

As a parent of a former TPS student I realized that my child did not qualify for certain mental services from contracted agencies because we had private pay insurance. As a school/district I feel that it is our responsibility to ensure that all students have access to quality mental health services and support. While conducting my research, I realized that focusing on the district as a whole was too broad of a topic so I narrowed it down to just focusing on the middle school students at my school. Since middle school can be a challenging time for many students as they navigate social relationships, academic demands, and physical changes. Providing effective emotional wellness support is crucial to helping our students navigate these challenges and thrive.

### Literature Review

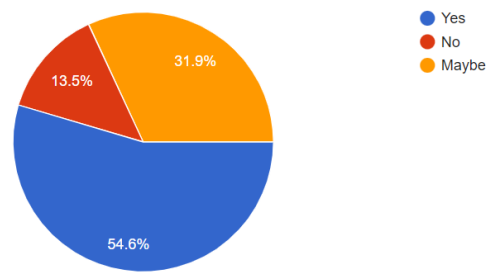
The Impact Heartfulness-based practice elective on middle school students is a meditation practice that focuses on cultivating a sense of inner peace and positivity through the heart which can be beneficial to middle school students' emotional regulation, stress level, academic performance, social emotional learning competencies and overall well being. This article gave me more motivation to develop the Wednesday Round Table at McTigue..

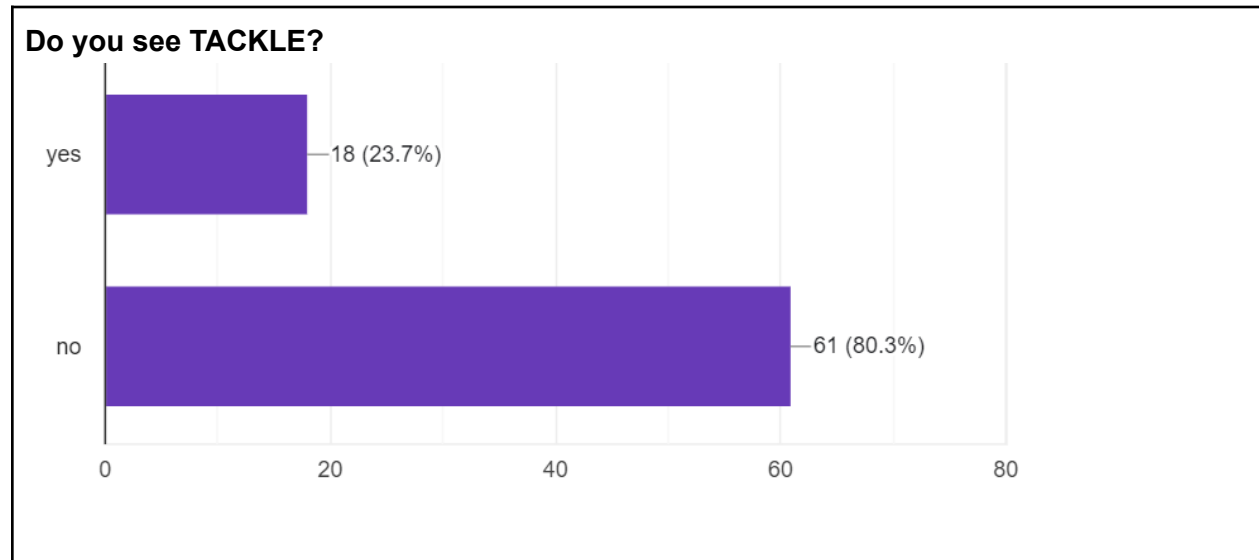
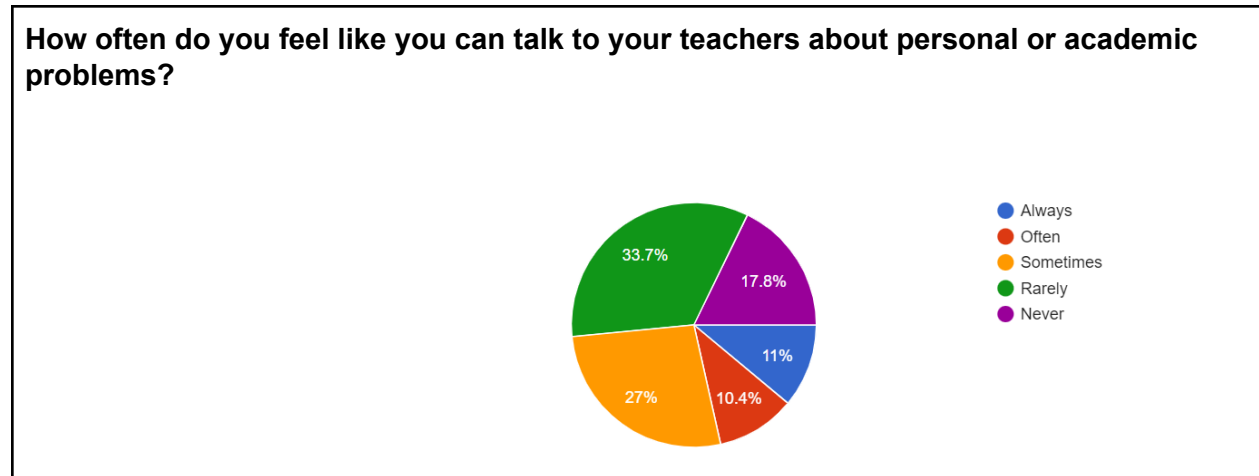
### Design/Tools/Process

The research design I used in my study was a mixed-methods design, which combined both quantitative and qualitative research methods to gain an understanding of the social wellness of middle school students. The study utilized two surveys, one surveying 6-8 graders from McTigue and Riverside Elementary, and the second surveying just 7 and 8 grades at McTigue. The surveys collected data on social wellness, and perceptions of social wellness. The results of the study can provide insights for educators, parents, and policymakers on how to promote the social wellness of middle school students.

### Data analysis

**Would you like to see more resources or programs in place to support students' mental health and safety at school?**





- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences related to mental safety at school?**
- no not besides the fact we need more people here to support a lot of the students here because almost all of us have some kind of problem
  - We should have more talks with students about their mental health
  - I think we should have a mental health group for kids that are comfortable sharing their feelings and for other kids to know they are not alone in their mental health journey.

**Implication/ Recommendations**

As middle school students continue to navigate the complexities of academic and personal growth, it is essential to prioritize their social-emotional wellness. In our middle school Cohort, we recognize the importance of providing basic social-emotional support and have implemented

some practices to promote student well-being. However, there is a need for more programs, such as small peer group sessions, to address the unique challenges faced by middle school students. To start, our school has taken the initial steps towards providing social-emotional support by incorporating mindfulness activities, counseling services, and social skills training. We believe that teaching students how to manage their emotions and develop healthy relationships is critical to their overall development. We have made it a priority to create a safe and supportive environment where students feel comfortable discussing their concerns and seeking help when needed.

While these practices have shown positive results, I recognize that there is more we can do to support our students' mental health. One program I believe would be beneficial is small peer group sessions, which I would call Wednesday Round Table. These sessions would involve a small group of students meeting regularly with a trained facilitator to discuss topics related to social-emotional wellness, such as managing stress, building self-confidence, and developing healthy relationships.

The benefits of small peer group sessions are numerous. First, they provide a safe and supportive environment for students to share their experiences and learn from one another. By creating a sense of community, these sessions can also help students feel less isolated and more connected to their peers. Additionally, peer group sessions allow for more personalized attention and tailored interventions, which can help students develop the skills they need to succeed in school and beyond.

### **Bibliography**

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