PROGRAM AGREEMENT

Adapting for Life program

Table of Contents

Program Agreement2

Housekeeping and Principles3

Teacher and Facilitator Partnership4

Protocol for Reporting Student Crisis5

Program Materials6

PROGRAM AGREEMENT

This document outlines the policies, services, and materials that Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC) will provide through its Adapting for Life program. Adapting for Life program instructs students on the importance of mental health and wellness and offers them healthier behaviors and adaptive coping strategies, so students may lead healthier lives.

The program covers a variety of topics and is structured as a four-day experience that begins with student observation and awareness and moves them towards creating a plan for tackling stress and other life challenges. Information is provided to students through different modalities such as group activities, mindfulness exercises, individual reflection, and more. We also aim to provide a holistic, integrated program by connecting parents and educators to resources on children and adolescent mental health.

To help ensure the success of this program at your school, this document includes:

* **Behavior Expectations:** Policies and expectations for appropriate behaviors throughout   
  the program visit
* **Partnership:** Teacher and facilitator partnership information
* **Student Assistance:** Adherence to school policy as it relates to a student(s) requiring assistance, one-on-one supervision, etc. in the event of health-related or other concerns
* **Program Materials:**
* List of materials provided by CCHMC for the program
* List of resources needed from the school for us to facilitate the program

We’re excited about the opportunity to partner with your school to teach students about the importance   
of mental health. If you find you have questions or concerns as you review the program agreement, please contact CCHMC Program Manager, Stacey Hoffman, at 513-802-8630.

Additional information about Adapting for Life program is located at: <https://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/service/s/surviving-teens.>

Thank you for helping lead the conversation on mental health with students and families in   
your community.

HOUSEKEEPING AND PRINCIPLES

This section reviews the policies and expectations we cover with students that we expect to be upheld throughout the duration of the program. In the event any student is unable to uphold these, we ask that the student find an alternate activity or other arrangements be made for him/her during this time.

**Housekeeping**The housekeeping items we cover with students are as follows:

* Use school/classroom policy for leaving the classroom
* If a student needs to use the restroom or see the nurse, s/he is able to do so without the facilitator’s permission. We uphold school/classroom policy and ask students to follow the policies they’ve been taught.
* Participant Guide
* As part of this program, every student will receive a participant guide, which we also call an Experience Journal. They will use this workbook to brainstorm, make notes, write down ideas, thoughts, feelings during certain points throughout the program. This book is theirs to keep   
  to jot down private thoughts, considerations, observations, making connections, etc. Students   
  can opt to not to use it, but our hope is they will engage with it, if even just a little bit, so it becomes a future tool and meaningful resource for them.
* Reach out
* The topics and discussion can get a little heavy or serious. If, at any time, a student feels or thinks s/he needs to talk with someone, we urge him/her to reach out to the teacher, facilitator, trust adult, friend, etc. The purpose is: we don’t want any student to leave the class, or leave any day, feeling like s/he wanted to talk to someone, or s/he needed help, but couldn’t reach out. We want students to understand we are here to also help them get connected to the right resources.

**Principles**These principles are the guidelines and expectations for appropriate behavior that we establish with students on Day 1 of the program:

* Give attention to others in the moment:
  + Please don’t talk when others are talking.
  + Don’t laugh at, mock, or put others down.
* Make eye contact.
  + Looking someone in the eye is an important way that we, as humans, connect with one another.
  + Sometimes, it can be difficult, but it is something that brings people together and helps us see and be seen.
* Listen to what others are saying.
  + If you don’t understand or feel differently, try to engage others with questions to better understand, rather than be aggressive or judgmental.
* Ask questions.
* If you have questions, don’t understand something, or need more clarification, please ask.

TEACHER AND FACILITATOR PARTNERSHIP

The school environment serves as an important and primary setting for students and you play an important role—a trusted adult. The facilitators from the Adapting for Life program recognize and commend you for all the good work you do as an integral part of your students’ lives. School is more than what happens in the classroom, it’s all the communities inside and beyond the classroom that create the culture of the school.

Adapting for Life facilitators want to partner with you as we encourage students to try the new experiences our program offers. As part of their daily lives, you have an exclusive relationship with each student and our facilitators are hoping you can support us in building connections with your students.

**We ask that you be a part of the Adapting for Life experience**. It is our hope that teachers will “tune in” to the stories told, surveys taken, and tools that are being taught. This engagement will provide a model for students, and support them in using newly gained skills in your classroom on an ongoing basis.

It goes without saying that each of the students will have a unique experience with the program as it can bring up difficult, sometimes painful, subject matter. While some students may engage readily, it can be expected that it may be more difficult for others. Meaningful participation will differ with each student as some may ask questions or share feelings/experience. Others may simply sit quietly and listen. The facilitators are most happy to talk with you and/or students about how we can provide the best support for each student.

We are aware that the environment of the classroom can have a significant effect on students’ ability and/or willingness to meaningfully participate. Students will be most likely to absorb information in a setting that is encouraging and feels safe. This means that it is critical that students feel safe in being vulnerable, trying things for the first time, and sharing thoughts and feelings. The facilitators hope you will assist us in providing a classroom setting that is conducive to those things. Please support our team by setting limits on inappropriate behavior such as talking when others are talking, laughing at or putting down peers, or otherwise being disruptive. The facilitators need to focus on program delivery and support which contradict the role of disciplinarian. These classroom behaviors can also reduce other students’ willingness to engage in the program, diminishing the experience for all of the class.

We are thrilled to partner with you as we work to address the concept of mental health with your students. It is our hope that together, we can educate students to help them better understand their current internal and external environments and to prepare for life stressors to come.

Thank you very much for having us!

Protocol for Student Reporting Crisis

*Adapting for Life* program

*Adapting for Life* (Program) is a suicide prevention program offered by Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC) within a school setting. The host school will identify which classes and students will participate in the program. The CCHMC facilitators will then support each group of students through the five-day workshop and will respond to group questions or concerns which may arise during program administration.

In the event an individual student approaches the CCHMC facilitator with a concern or a need for mental health support, the facilitator will offer support to the student by assisting her/him in connecting with appropriate school staff, but managing individual concerns of students will remain the responsibility of the school. It is CCHMC’s expectation that the school will follow its own protocol for addressing the mental health needs of their students. The program will not circumvent the school’s plan for supporting its students. CCHMC facilitators are not expected nor authorized to supervise/provide safety for individual students, offer psychiatric assessments, or to make recommendations regarding appropriate level of care of mental health treatment.

**Specifically, if a student approaches an *Adapting for Life* CCHMC facilitator with a concern or need for mental health support, CCHMC facilitators will adhere to the following protocol:**

1. Actively listen to the student, offer empathetic responses, and ask questions as needed to gather more information.
2. If the CCHMC facilitator has serious concerns regarding a student’s well-being, he/she will make the school aware by notifying the host/classroom teacher.
3. CCHMC facilitators will document all situations involving a report to the school and notify their CCHMC manager.

PROGRAM MATERIALS

This section lists all the materials required and to be provided by CCHMC as well as those materials   
to be provided by the school to facilitate the program.

**Materials for students to be provided by CCHMC:**

* Experience Journals (printed) for all students
* Communications for parents, guardians, and families pre- and post-program visit

**Materials to be provided by the school:**

* Classroom or quiet space that helps foster student learning
* Desks or tables and chairs, enough for all students
* Written copy of protocol for managing student mental health concerns
* Permission for students to use smart phones or computers/tablets with internet/WiFi access
* Send Pre-Program Visit emails to parents/guardians on or before Day 1
* Send Post-Program Visit emails to parents/guardians on Day 4