A MINDPEACE RESOURCE

Mitigating Loneliness at School

Building connection so every student feels seen

For administrators, teachers & staff



Students can feel lonely even in a full classroom, and youth report more loneliness than in past years. **School connectedness**, students' belief that adults and peers at school care about them, protects against substance use, violence and suicide and supports learning.

Six classroom and school strategies

1 Make caring visible

Greet students by name and check in on how they're doing, not just on their work.

2 Build peer connection on purpose

Use structured partners and small groups so no student has to find a group alone.

3 Teach "alone" vs. "lonely"

Build connection into health and SEL lessons, and normalize loneliness as a signal.

4 Practice curiosity

Coach students to ask how a classmate reached their view before debating it.

5 Help students go deeper

Use easy-to-deeper question prompts in advisory or morning meetings.

6 Create more ways to belong

Offer lunch with a teacher, mentoring, clubs and service-learning projects.

For administrators: school-wide moves

Invest in staff: Train all staff to meet students' social and emotional needs. Contact your MindPeace consultant for support.

Listen to students: Ask about belonging in climate surveys and student voice groups.

Plan the in-between times: Lunch, recess and transitions are when students most often end up alone.

Partner with families: Share the companion family tip sheet so home and school use the same language.

Watch for signs and loop in support

- Often sits, works or eats alone
- New or lasting irritability, withdrawal or avoiding school
- Says things like "nobody likes me"
- Connect with your counselor or mental health team, and share what you notice with families.

In a crisis

Worried about a student's safety? Follow your school's protocol. Students and families can call or text **988** (24/7). In an emergency, call **911**.

Sources

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