



**Kindergarten – Second Grade Curriculum**

**2025 - 2026**



## Dear Educators,

Thank you for choosing to engage in The Rowan Center's prevention education curriculum with your students. We are honored to be able to share with you meaningful ways in which to start important discussions with the youngest members of our society. Prevention education is an ongoing conversation; we are hoping that the lesson we have provided is just the start of continued discussion of the topics covered.

The K-2 curriculum is centered around a class reading of a picture book that covers topics such as consent, boundaries, emotions, and empathy in an age-appropriate manner. We have included discussion questions to engage students directly with the material. In addition, there are activities for students to participate in that act as formative assessments to gauge their understanding, as well as ongoing ways to engage with students.

Students may ask tough questions, or even disclose their own experiences with the topics covered in the book you choose to read with your class. With that in mind, we have included a guide for responding to disclosures. Your school or district may have its own protocol – our guide is a way to supplement this and encourage healthy and safe communication.

The work you are doing with your students does not go unnoticed. Participating in this curriculum will cement you as a safe, trusted adult in the lives of countless children. Thank you.

- *The Rowan Center's Education Team*

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS

TITLE	AUTHOR	WHY?
<b><i>Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect</i></b>	<i>Jayneen Sanders</i>	Gives examples of setting and following boundaries, asks students to participate (what they would do in certain situations), includes diverse characters
<b><i>Yes! No!</i></b>	<i>Megan Madison</i>	Comprehensive information, uses correct anatomical names for body parts, includes diverse characters, discussion questions throughout, resources at the back for grown-ups
<b><i>C is for Consent</i></b>	<i>Eleanor Morrison</i>	Minimal graphics and text per page, includes multiple story-based examples of consent (grown-up encouraging, child encouraging and practicing)
<b><i>No Means No!</i></b>	<i>Jayneen Sanders</i>	Multiple examples of different situations in which children can say "no", the text "no means no" in bold letters each time it's used to repeat and ingrain in a child's mind, covers "maybe" and "I'm not sure"
<b><i>Miles is the Boss of His Body</i></b>	<i>Samantha Kurtzman-Counter</i>	Chronological story during a child's birthday of interactions between family members that make him uncomfortable, humorous in some parts
<b><i>Can I Give You a Squish?</i></b>	<i>Emily Neilson</i>	An under-the-sea story using a pufferfish puffing up after a "squish" to exemplify how it might make someone uncomfortable to hug them without consent, shows other examples of ways you can interact with others ("fin bump")

<b><i>Don't Touch My Hair!</i></b>	<i>Sharee Miller</i>	A realistic story following a character with curly hair who tries to avoid people touching her hair, sets boundaries and gives examples of people asking for consent to touch her hair
<b><i>A Hug</i></b>	<i>Nicola Manton</i>	Uses animals to illustrate the definition of hugging, gives emotions we may feel when we want a hug, when we don't want one, and alternatives to hugs, affirms you can say "yes" or "no" to hugs
<b><i>How Big Are Your Worries, Little Bear?</i></b>	<i>Jayneen Sanders</i>	Teaches about trusted adults and talking to them when you're worried or have big feelings
<b><i>Listening to My Body</i></b>	<i>Gabi Garcia</i>	Emphasis on bodily sensations and what they're telling us, validates that feelings aren't good or bad, shows examples of different situations and feelings that may arise from them
<b><i>Talking About Feelings</i></b>	<i>Jayneen Sanders</i>	Shows facial examples of different feelings, use of color and touch sensations (spiky or smooth) to have children describe their emotions, discussion questions throughout, validates that we may not know what our feelings look like or where they come from
<b><i>You, Me and Empathy</i></b>	<i>Jayneen Sanders</i>	Defines empathy, shows faces of children with different emotions, discussion questions throughout, examples of understanding empathy, including one person going through something, and responding with "I understand", and reflecting on when it had happened to you before

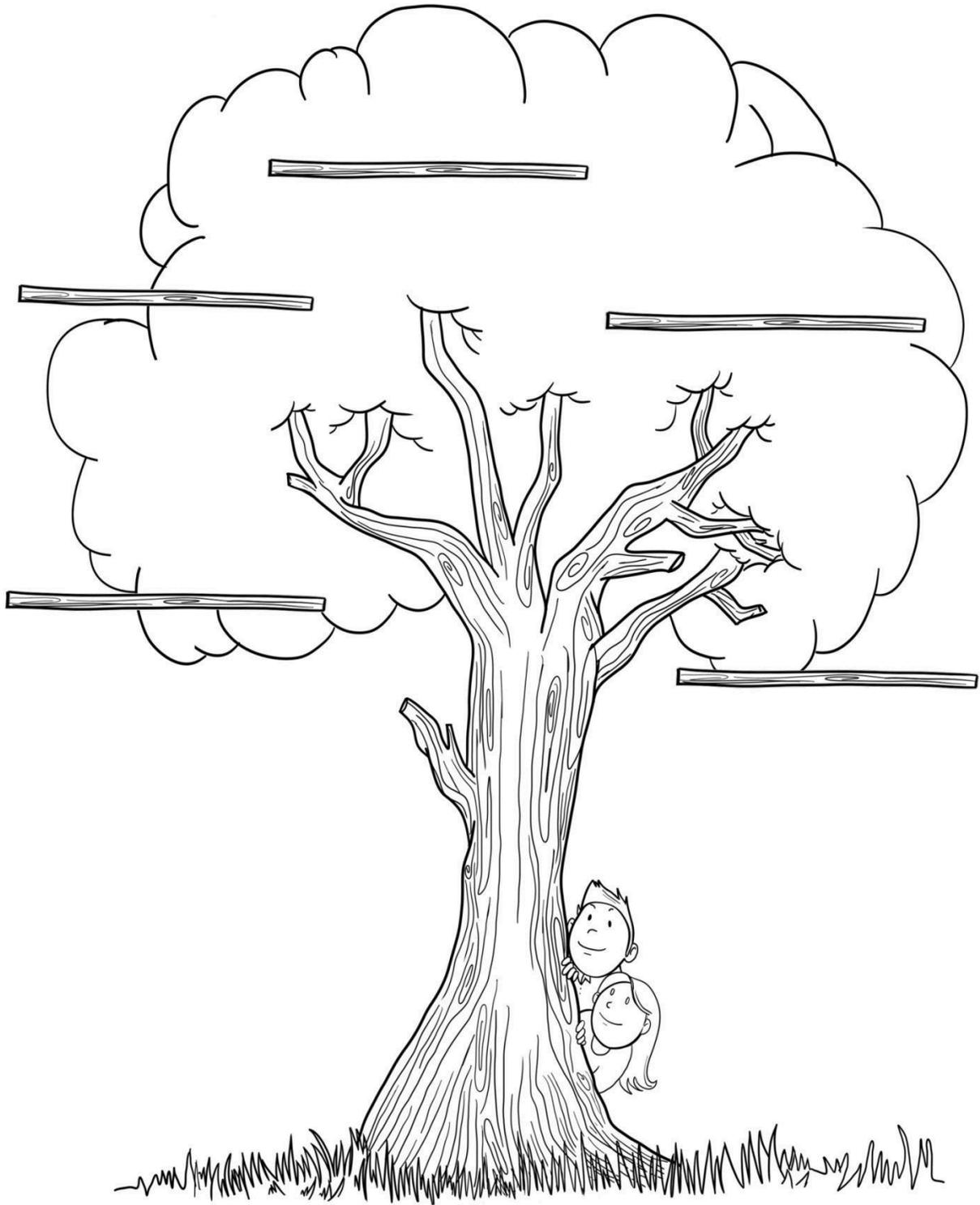
## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do you like receiving hugs? Why or why not? Do you only like receiving hugs from some people?
- Do you like giving hugs? Who do you like giving hugs to?
- What are other ways you can interact without giving hugs?
- What does “no” mean? What about “maybe”, or “I’m not sure”?
- What do we do if somebody says “no” to us?
- Who is in charge of your body?
- What is a rule you have for your body? (*You can give an example here, such as “A rule for my body is that I don’t give high fives to strangers.”*)
- What are things we can do if we feel worried?
- Who can we talk to if we feel worried?

## ACTIVITY 1: TELLING TREE

- Take a moment to review trusted adults with students.
  - Who are they?
  - When do we go to them?
  - What can we tell them?
- Brainstorm with students who may be examples of trusted adults.
  - Some students may not live with their parents, so we like to use “your grown-up” verbiage.
  - Share that trusted adults should be people who make students feel safe, comfortable, and supported.
  - Emphasize to students that it is important that they choose at least one trusted adult who doesn’t live with them (like a teacher, social worker, etc.).
- Preview the worksheet with students.
  - Share that on each line, they will write someone who is one of their trusted adults.
  - Tell students to write down as many as they can, and it’s okay if they can’t think of enough to fill in the lines.
- Pass out worksheets and coloring implements, and engage with their work.
  - Make sure not to give students specific ideas (like mom, dad, aunt, uncle, etc.).
  - Instead, encourage them to come up with these on their own so that they’re engaging in this thought process and only put down adults they truly feel comfortable with.
  - If a student is having difficulty thinking of adults, you can offer yourself as an idea.
  - You can ask students why they wrote this person down, and also affirm that students can keep their “why” private, too.
- Gather students back and reflect.
  - How do you feel after working on your telling tree?
  - How does it make you feel knowing that you have trusted adults you can talk to?
  - Remind students that, going forward, if they ever feel uncomfortable or weird or just have something to share, they can talk to the people they put on their telling tree.

\_\_\_\_\_ 's Telling Tree



## ACTIVITY 2: EMPATHY SCENARIOS

- Have students sit in a circle somewhere in the classroom.
- Take a moment to review with students what empathy means.
  - It can help to use examples (like, “my friend is sick, and I am feeling the same as them because I remember what it felt like to be sick, too”).
- Explain the activity to students. If you are able to, with another teacher or a student, model the activity using a scenario and take pauses to explain what you are doing.
  - Tell students that they will be practicing ways they can act empathetically in different situations.
  - Explain to students that they will be taking turns, and everyone will have a chance to go. Names will randomly be chosen to participate (in whichever manner you prefer). Teachers will choose one student to be the one in the situation, and the other to act with empathy in response.
  - When a situation is read to the students, the students will assume their roles and act out the situation.
  - After each situation, the teacher will ask discussion questions to the whole class to follow up.
- Go through scenarios with students. Some examples are below. After each one is acted out, discuss what happened with the students.
  - A friend finds out they’re getting a new puppy and is really excited.
  - A friend is feeling sick at school.
  - A friend is happy to celebrate their sibling’s birthday.
  - A friend is nervous that they have a test the next day.
  - A friend is thrilled that they get to go into the city.
  - A friend is upset when their grown-ups get into fights.
- Follow up with a final conversation about the activity.
  - How does it feel when someone puts themselves in our shoes?
  - How can we put ourselves into someone else’s shoes?
  - Even if we haven’t experienced something similar, how can we support our friends when they are going through something?

# ONGOING WAYS TO ENGAGE

*As teachers, it can be hard to find time to engage in full social-emotional learning lessons between academic needs. Below are some ways you can build in continuing conversations about consent, respect, and empathy in just a few minutes.*

## 1. Mood Discussions (Emotions)

- a. On the board in the morning, display emoji faces experiencing different emotions. Ask students to put a circle around the emoji they are feeling. Reflect in a morning circle.
- b. Create one-week trackers for students to draw an emoji face of their mood at the beginning of the day and at the end. Have a discussion at the end of the week about what they have noticed.

## 2. Taking Perspectives (Empathy)

- a. Engage in role-playing games with students, such as pretending to be characters from books or movies and thinking about how they might feel in certain situations.
- b. Present scenarios to students and ask them to volunteer how they would feel, think, and react in these situations. For example, "How would you feel if someone took your snack out of your cubby?"

## 3. Modeling + Reminding (Consent)

- a. Each time you engage with a student, use behavior and language that you wish for them to model. For example, "Is it okay if I write something down on your paper?"
- b. If a student doesn't ask consent to do something when engaging with peers, use reminding language to reinforce what they've learned. For example, "What should we do when we want to hug someone?". This has students recall what they have learned and use that skill.



## ACTION STEPS AFTER A DISCLOSURE

*A student has just told you they are a victim/survivor. What can you do to support this child?*

- Verbally acknowledge the student's disclosure and be a supportive presence for them.
  - "Thank you for trusting me enough to share that with me."
  - "I believe you."
  - "What can I do to support you?"
- Follow any protocols that your school or district has in place.
  - As you are a mandatory reporter, it's imperative for this disclosure to be funneled through the correct channels as soon as possible.
  - For example, reporting to administration or referring the child to guidance counseling.
- Support yourself.
  - Take a moment to breathe, recenter yourself, or do something that is calming for you.
  - Reach out to a support person in your circle, such as the school guidance counselor, social worker, or personal therapist.
  - Call The Rowan Center's helpline at (203)329-2929 for personal support, help answering any questions you may have, or information about what you can do to best support this child.