

Adult and System Self-Care Model (ASSM): A Pilot Research Project

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As school and district leaders return to school after the world-wide pandemic, unique challenges may surface as many adults face students for the first time. As noted by the conference theme, leaders must be prepared to lead with courage and embrace change including the needs of adults. The Adult and System Self-Care Model is critical for rural settings that often lack professional mental health resources.

The session facilitators will highlight an innovative model that provides a responsive and systemic approach to addressing the individual social-emotional well-being needs of adults in the school/district environment. This research model recognizes the need for educational leaders to respond to times of extraordinary change caused by the pandemic, including technology, instructional delivery models, interpersonal experiences (i.e., isolation, family/professional interconnectedness), and other significant/traumatic events requiring attention to and response by leaders in the organization. The model's purpose is to provide support and needed intervention, without negative stigma or adverse judgement.

This model is aligned to and offers adult application to one state's student social-emotional and character development standards. The pilot project includes the following components:

- healthy personal and social development guidelines for adults,
- a quick self/staff assessment to use in determining the stage of concern for an adult in need of support.
- a roles and responsibility chart to use when a staff member may be experiencing challenges related to personal and social well-being, and
- a visual outline of the model.

Facilitators will share definitions and guidelines for adults in personal and social development adapted from national and state standards. The definition for personal development is to develop and strengthen adult skills to better recognize, address, and regulate personal feelings, behaviors, and attitudes. The definition for social development is to establish and sustain effective communication and collegial relationships. The roles and responsibilities chart describes self, peer, and/or supervisor identification of school staff experiencing a social-emotional crisis event. The suggested guidelines are listed in a tiered level of support and will be summarized in a visual/graphic organizer. A scenario is included in the model to provide application of the outlined roles and responsibilities to a real-life situation. A resource/organization list for administrators will also be available as a part of the pilot project shared at the session. Facilitators will share the model and engage session participants in considering the model for application in unique rural/state/national/international settings.