Dear Families,

This year, we are focusing on building empathy and connections with our students. To do that we are engaging with the Only7Seconds Connection Curriculum. Only7Seconds is on a mission to end loneliness and we have partnered with them to help our students feel stronger connections and increase their willingness to reach out in relationships.

Each lesson has a video that we watch together and discuss. The purpose of watching a video together and discussing it in small groups is to build empathy. Students are then asked to check in with themselves; this builds a foundation of resilience for all students. Then as a group, we engage with a Connection Challenge. The challenges are designed for students to connect with people in their circles of influence. We let the students choose the audience for the challenge. You can watch the videos and engage in your own connections through the Only7Seconds website.

We hope that each month, students will report that they completed the challenge and have become more engaged in the relationships in their life. Each month, we will be repeating the same cycle, so students are building a strong toolkit for their lives.

This first month, we are focused on Kea’s story. In listening to her story, students reflect on how they connect with themselves to regroup, recharge, and reset. We ask students to write a letter to themselves that they will review at the end of the curriculum.

As we continue this journey, we will continue to share with you the stories and challenges so you can engage with your student about the content.

Because you matter, Dear Families,

We are beginning lesson two of the Connection Curriculum from Only7Seconds and this lesson is all about building relationships. As I have shared before, the lessons are all built around ending loneliness. We start with reflecting on how students did with completing last month’s challenge—writing a letter to their future self and sharing about that with someone in their Connection Circles. Students do these check-ins with their Connection Team, which helps them to be more accountable. Then we have time for the students to watch a video. This month’s storyteller is Mario Gonzalez. Remember, you can learn more about him and his story by visiting Only7Seconds.com. The point of the video and discussion is to build empathy.

The background research this month is about the CASEL standards. Those standards are a way that we foster knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes across five important areas of development. The focus at CASEL is on Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making. You can learn more by going to their website.

The discussion this lesson is around how to build relationships that ensure you are getting what you need from the people in your life. We practice by thinking about what is important to students and identifying who they get that from in their current circles. We then ask them to share this information with the people in their lives and grow their skills in building strong and healthy relationships. The rich balance between small groups and large, personal reflection and discussion ensures that every student is included in the conversation.

You can find out more about Only7Seconds at their website including other ways that we can fight loneliness in our communities including programs like SHARE Day, Ambassadors and even the ability to learn more about the storyteller through the I Know Lonely program.

As we continue this journey, we will continue to share with you the stories and challenges so you can engage with your student about the content.

Because you matter,

Dear Families,

We are beginning lesson three of the Connection Curriculum from Only7Seconds and this lesson is the core of how Only7Seconds has built their programs—the introduction of the Hope Notes! As I have shared before, the lessons are all built around ending loneliness. We start with reflecting on how students did with completing last month’s challenge—reaching out to someone in their circles and thinking about what they need to build strong and healthy relationships. Students do these check-ins with their Connection Team, which helps them to be more accountable.

Then we have time for the students to watch a video. This month’s storyteller is Vik Chopra. Remember, you can learn more about him and his story by visiting Only7Seconds.com. The point of the video and discussion is to build empathy.

The background research this month was around the importance of novelty and routine in teaching and having this curriculum follow the predictable nature—Check In from last month to build accountability, Video with empathy lesson, Check in with yourself, Check in with your circle and the Connection Challenge—ensure a nice balance between routine and novelty.

The discussion this lesson is around how to encourage others in your community that you may not have a direct connection with and how that can make an impact. The rich balance between small groups and large, personal reflection and discussion ensures that every student is included in the conversation.

You can find out more about Only7Seconds at their website including other ways that we can fight loneliness in our communities including programs like SHARE Day, Ambassadors and even the ability to learn more about the storyteller through the I Know Lonely program.

As we continue this journey, we will continue to share with you the stories and challenges so you can engage with your student about the content.

Because you matter,

Dear Families,

We are beginning lesson four of the Connection Curriculum and this month students reflect on who they are through an art experience. We build knowledge around how knowing yourself allows you to be more resilient and determine who you want to be in the future.

Then we have time for the students to watch a video. This month’s storytellers are Mac & Hailey Potts. Remember, you can learn more about them and their story by visiting Only7Seconds.com. The point of the video and discussion is to build empathy.

We hope this month’s lesson helps students to remember that they have people in their lives that they may not still be close with to help them see that relationships ebb and flow and when they feel lonely to know that it is only temporary.

You can find out more about Only7Seconds at their website including other ways that we can fight loneliness in our communities including programs like SHARE Day, Ambassadors and even the ability to learn more about the storyteller through the I Know Lonely program.

As we continue this journey, we will continue to share with you the stories and challenges so you can engage with your student about the content.

Because you matter,

Dear Families,

We are beginning lesson five of the Connection Curriculum and this month students share about their personal interests and connect with students who have similar interests or even with interests they want to know more about!

Then we have time for the students to watch a video. This month’s storyteller is Danny Rigsby. Remember, you can learn more about him and his story by visiting Only7Seconds.com. The point of the video and discussion is to build empathy. We hope this month’s lesson helps students to see places in their lives where they can expand their circles and build new friendships.

You can find out more about Only7Seconds at their website including other ways that we can fight loneliness in our communities including programs like SHARE Day, Ambassadors and even the ability to learn more about the storyteller through the I Know Lonely program.

As we continue this journey, we will continue to share with you the stories and challenges so you can engage with your student about the content.

Because you matter,

Dear Families,

We are beginning lesson six of the Connection Curriculum and this month students dig into who they respect, their role models and think of ways to build out their connection circles by including those people.

Then we have time for the students to watch a video. This month’s storyteller is Mariah Paz. Remember, you can learn more about her and her story by visiting Only7Seconds.com. The point of the video and discussion is to build empathy.

We hope this month’s lesson helps students to see places in their lives where they can connect with people they respect while building their connections.

You can find out more about Only7Seconds at their website including other ways that we can fight loneliness in our communities including programs like SHARE Day, Ambassadors and even the ability to learn more about the storyteller through the I Know Lonely program.

As we continue this journey, we will continue to share with you the stories and challenges so you can engage with your student about the content.

Because you matter,

Dear Families,

We are beginning lesson seven of the Connection Curriculum and this month students connect with the people in their closest circles and offer appreciation for what they bring to their lives.

Then we have time for the students to watch a video. This month’s storyteller is Ethan Wall. Remember, you can learn more about him and his story by visiting Only7Seconds.com. The point of the video and discussion is to build empathy. We hope this month’s lesson helps students to recognize and appreciate the people in their lives that are the closest to them.

You can find out more about Only7Seconds at their website including other ways that we can fight loneliness in our communities including programs like SHARE Day, Ambassadors and even the ability to learn more about the storyteller through the I Know Lonely program.

As we continue this journey, we will continue to share with you the stories and challenges so you can engage with your student about the content.

Because you matter,

Dear Families,

We are beginning lesson eight of the Connection Curriculum and this month students complete a kindness challenge to specifically focus on building connection with people in their lives.

Then we have time for the students to watch a video. This month’s storyteller is Izzy Boring. Remember, you can learn more about her and her story by visiting Only7Seconds.com. The point of the video and discussion is to build empathy.

We hope this month’s lesson helps students to see places in their lives where they have strong connections and where they can expand their circles and build new friendships by showing kindness in the world around them.

You can find out more about Only7Seconds at their website including other ways that we can fight loneliness in our communities including programs like SHARE Day, Ambassadors and even the ability to learn more about the storyteller through the I Know Lonely program.

As we continue this journey, we will continue to share with you the stories and challenges so you can engage with your student about the content.

Because you matter,

Dear Families,

We are coming to the end of the Connection Curriculum with this ninth lesson. This month students think about how they have grown their circles of connection over time and how the people in those circles can help them when they face adversity. We finish with a connection challenge to expand their circles and reflect on the thoughts they had when we started this program.

Then we have time for the students to watch a video. This month’s storyteller is Lyndsey Cox. Remember, you can learn more about her and her story by visiting Only7Seconds.com. The point of the video and discussion is to build empathy.

We hope this month’s lesson helps students to see the people around them as possible connections and have tools to connect.

You can find out more about Only7Seconds at their website including other ways that we can fight loneliness in our communities including programs like SHARE Day, Ambassadors and even the ability to learn more about the storyteller through the I Know Lonely program.

Finally, students take an assessment that allows to them to consider where they are regarding loneliness and empathy. We will use this anonymous data to continue to grow and refine our offerings. We are always interested in feedback, so please reach out and consider sharing how the program impacted your student this year.

Because you matter,