

RESEARCH SUPPORTING BECOMING A TOP 20 SCHOOL

Somerset Middle School: The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System monitors six types of risk behaviors that contribute to unhealthy outcomes for youth. YRBSS was administered to students at Somerset Middle School in March 2016. 76.5% of 6th grade students stated they felt like they belonged at school. In October 2016, these same students, now in 7th grade, were introduced to Top 20 concepts during weekly advisory time called Top 20 Circle Time. When administered the YRBSS the following spring, 92.1% of students felt they belonged at school.

Lake Middle School 6th Grade: In the 2019-2020 school year, Dr. Melissa Sollom, Psychology Professor for MNSCU, conducted a study with 6th graders at Lake Middle School in Woodbury. Half of the students (experimental group) were taught Top 20 lessons each week during the first semester. The other half of the students (control group) received no Top 20 lessons. Pre-tests and post-tests on eight social-emotional competencies were administered to each group. The mean scores for each category improved by the following amounts:

	Experimental	Control
Personal Responsibility	6.5	4.0
Optimistic Thinking	8.1	6.1
Goal Directed Behavior	7.0	4.0
Social Awareness	7.7	4.6
Decision Making	7.5	4.7
Relationship Skills	7.5	6.2
Self-Awareness	9.2	6.1
Self-Management	7.3	5.0

An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was performed to compare the mean score of the control group to the mean score of the experimental group. The ANCOVA reported a statistical finding of .007 and an effect size of 20%. Since the results are <.05, this is a statistically significant finding. This means that the Top 20 program did significantly increase social emotional learning. Dr. Sollom's conclusion is that the Top 20 program is an effective program for teaching social emotional learning.

