

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**New edition of *Open Circle Curriculum* supports valuable social and emotional learning in elementary school communities**

WELLESLEY, Ma. – Open Circle, a leading provider of evidence-based curriculum and professional development for social and emotional learning in elementary schools based at the Wellesley Centers for Women-Wellesley College, has introduced a 2015 edition of the *Open Circle Curriculum* with updates across all lessons, a new unit structure, and a greater emphasis on reflection and assessment. Additional highlights include new illustrations to demonstrate social and emotional skills, greater integration of mindfulness concepts and practices, and enhanced cultural responsiveness in lessons, activities, and literature connections.

Elementary school educators face the monumental responsibility of educating children for success in school, work and life. Since 1987, Open Circle has been implemented in school communities across the U.S. to help children develop foundational social and emotional skills that research has shown are essential for success in these areas. Open Circle is currently used in over 300 schools in the U.S.

“Our 2015 curriculum will provide tools for educators to introduce mindfulness activities to their students, share more multicultural children’s literature that links to social and emotional learning, and more effectively teach problem-solving skills,” said Nancy MacKay, co-director of Open Circle.

This summer Open Circle began providing the revised 2015 edition of the *Open Circle Curriculum* to educators attending Open Circle’s year-long Core Program training, which prepares K-5 grade-level teachers to implement the *Open Circle Curriculum* in their classrooms. Previously trained staff can now purchase the 2015 curriculum on Open Circle’s website.

For the first time, key implementation materials and supplies are also available in a new curriculum kit. Open Circle-trained educators can purchase a complete kit, consisting of a set of laminated skill mini-posters, a set of 25 Open Circle calming-down and problem-solving bookmarks, a set of 96 Open Circle stickers for use on student journals or folders, a chime, a digital timer, and an Open Circle tote bag and lanyard. Some kit items are also sold separately.

In addition to the 2015 curriculum and kit, a three-hour curriculum refresher workshop provides an overview to trained teachers of the many updates in the 2015 *Open Circle Curriculum*. The workshop will introduce the revised unit structure, additional vocabulary, new mindfulness practices, expanded activities section, new reflection and assessment tools, streamlined problem-solving lessons, and other key changes to the curriculum.

Nova Biro, co-director of Open Circle, said the curriculum kit and the refresher workshop are exciting additions to the curriculum family. “We are thrilled to be offering the new materials and the refresher workshop to support educators in their work to help children develop skills for recognizing and managing emotions, empathy, positive relationships and problem solving,” she said.

Social and emotional learning is "the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions," as described by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

For more information about the benefits of social and emotional learning in school communities, the curriculum kit, or the refresher workshop, visit [open-circle.org](http://open-circle.org) or call 781.283.3277.

### **About Open Circle**

Open Circle, a program of the Wellesley Centers for Women at Wellesley College, is a leading provider of evidence-based curriculum and professional development for social and emotional learning in elementary schools for all school staff. The grade-differentiated *Open Circle Curriculum* proactively develops children's social and emotional skills, including recognizing and managing emotions, empathy, positive relationships and problem solving. Open Circle helps schools build a community where students feel safe, cared for and engaged in learning.

Since 1987, Open Circle has reached two million children and 15,000 educators. Open Circle is currently used in over 300 schools across the United States. Open Circle is a program of the Wellesley Centers for Women at Wellesley College. For more information about Open Circle and its professional development programs, visit [www.open-circle.org](http://www.open-circle.org).

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