



**STAFF**

**Self-Assessment**

# Our Mission

*Starr Commonwealth leads with courage to create positive experiences so that all children, families, and communities flourish.*

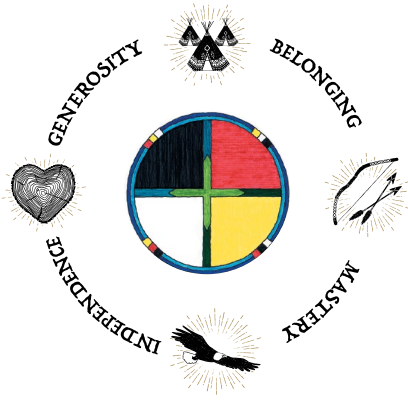
# Our Vision

*Universal Hope,  
Boundless Love, and  
Limitless Success for all  
children.*



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Starr Commonwealth is a nonprofit organization serving children and families regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, or sexuality. Starr Commonwealth is accredited by the Council on Accreditation. Founded in 1913, Starr Commonwealth is licensed by the state of Michigan. Starr Commonwealth's Albion campus is a Michigan Historic Site. Starr Commonwealth receives funds from social agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.



## The Circle of Courage® Model

Starr's strength-based, resilience-focused approach is rooted in the universal principle that, to be emotionally healthy, all youth need a sense of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. This unique model of positive youth development, known as the Circle of Courage®, was developed by Starr's 2nd President, Dr. Larry K. Brendtro (PhD) and his colleagues, and integrates the cultural wisdom of tribal peoples, the practical wisdom of professional pioneers with troubled youth, and the findings of modern youth development research.

The Circle of Courage® model addresses the needs and growth opportunities of all people, and fosters healing and growth through interventions held in an atmosphere of respect and growth. Each intervention is trauma-informed and resilience-focused, and designed to encourage individuals and youth to feel safe and comfortable in an environment of understanding and acceptance. Every broken circle can be repaired, and with every repair comes a greater sense of resilience, strength, and belief in one's greatness.



**The Lakota word for child – WAKAN – means “sacred being.”  
As you reflect on the four universal needs and your journey  
towards becoming a trauma-informed, resilience-focused  
professional, consider how adults and members of society  
view and interact with children.**

**Then, ask yourself,**

**“How might we interact with children differently  
if they were all viewed as sacred beings?”**

# Circle of Courage®

## Staff Self-Assessment Overview

A trauma-informed and resilient-focused space means setting up environments for the success of all children. We consider these approaches to be Tier 1 supports. For a more detailed overview about how to create a trauma-informed, resilience-focused classroom and school, please refer to our foundational [10 Steps to Create a Trauma-Informed Resilient School](#). Both, in tandem with Resetting for Resilience and this resource, will help set you (and therefore your students) up for success.

As a summary, relationships, connection, and creating a sense of belonging are key to helping **ALL** children flourish. Another important facet is creating a physical and emotionally safe environment, which absolutely means establishing equitable classrooms and teaching and practicing emotional awareness and regulation. The last, extremely important factor may surprise you: it's **YOU**.

A trauma-informed and resilience-focused approach to a student who is “off-task” should involve an educator asking themselves four key questions before approaching the student to help.

1. *Am I currently able to regulate my own emotions and behavior?*
2. *Which one or more of this student's universal needs is lacking right now?*
3. *How can I help this student regulate their emotions and/or behavior in this moment?*
4. *How can I make this a learning opportunity for this student?*

Our Circle of Courage®–Tier 1 Staff Self-Assessment will help you check in with your ability to create an environment that fosters the four Universal Needs of:

- Belonging
- Independence
- Mastery
- Generosity

On the pages that follow, a self-assessment has been provided for each Universal Need noted above. Included on each are four date markers to give you the opportunity to continue to reassess yourself throughout the school year – or as often as you would like. The greater your awareness of the fidelity with which you are implementing each strategy, the stronger your Tier 1 supports will be and the longer they will be held in place.

We hope you find this overall assessment to be a valuable tool in measuring your growth and development over time, and in supporting the great work you are doing every day to create safe environments for all of our students to thrive.

For more information about this assessment or additional Starr coaching or consulting services, please contact us at [info@starr.org](mailto:info@starr.org).



“Students who are loved at home, come to school to learn,  
and students who aren’t, come to school to be loved.”

—*Nicholas A. Ferroni*



## Circle of Courage® Staff Self-Assessment



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Please rate your implementation of the following four universal need interventions; Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity based upon the following scale: 0 - Not yet implemented, 1 - Rarely implemented, 2 - Sometimes, 3 - Almost always, 4 - Always. After you rate the interventions, take a look at the numbers you selected for each intervention. Focus on one to two interventions from each universal need category where you rated yourself with a 0, 1, or 2 for the next several weeks. Feel proud of the interventions you are consistently implementing almost always and/or all of the time. Well done! Periodically, come back to this assessment to compare how you are doing with your implementation.

<b>Rate your implementation of the following interventions to support BELONGING:</b>	<b>0</b> Not Yet Implemented	<b>1</b> Rarely Implemented	<b>2</b> Sometimes	<b>3</b> Almost Always	<b>4</b> Always
1. I greet each student by name every day and when they return from recess/lunch and specials.					
2. I have asked each student what they want to be called, if they have a nickname and how to pronounce it.					
3. I strive to establish a positive relationship with every student (trust, connection, and understanding) and assume each student is doing their best. Example: You look tired today – is that why you haven’t started your work? and, Do you need a drink of water, a few minutes, some time to help you get started? (Give time to let them respond).					
4. I have daily classroom meetings.					
5. I have created norms for classroom meetings collectively with my students.					
6. I practice pro-social behaviors during classroom meetings with my students (i.e. compliments, gratitude, and “get to know you” prompts).					
7. I implement the 5:1 positive/negative interactions rule. (I always look for the good in every situation. I notice what is going right. Have at least 5 positive interactions for every 1 negative interaction.)					
8. I offer specific verbal affirmation for students who are making another student(s) feel a sense of belonging.					
9. When a difficult behavior arises, I do my best to look beyond the behavior to determine if the behavior is a bid for connection.					
10. I respond to student’s bids for connection within boundaries.					
11. I restore relationships after negative interactions between myself and a student and/or between students. (Mediation session with teacher and student and/or peer to peer—may need to wait until all parties are calm.)					
12. I use time-in strategies.					
13. If a student has to leave the classroom to regain regulation, I wholeheartedly welcome them back.					
14. I notice strengths in every student.					
15. I provide opportunities for students to work together in structured and unstructured groups each day.					
16. I role model valuing diversity and acceptance and infuse this into curriculum (i.e. through “read alouds”, science, history, math role models, etc.).					
17. I identify students’ interests and hobbies and find something you have in common with every student.					
18. I help students see what they have in common with each other.					

<b>Rate your implementation of the following interventions to support BELONGING continued:</b>	<b>0</b> Not Yet Implemented	<b>1</b> Rarely Implemented	<b>2</b> Sometimes	<b>3</b> Almost Always	<b>4</b> Always
19. I teach and role play social skills and problem solving (SEL curriculum, classroom meetings, integrate into subject areas: act out characters, perform skits and plays, job skills/math, role models in history, etc.).					
20. When a student is struggling to connect, I use the 2:10 strategy – 2 minute conversation for 10 days consecutively about something not academically related to build relationship.					
21. I check in with students frequently, giving feedback every hour.					
22. I laugh and play with students every day.					
23. I celebrate reaching goals collectively.					
24. I speak regularly about what belonging means to my and the students in my classroom.					
25. I display anchor charts in my classroom that promote belonging.					
26. I promote positive speech about students and their families with colleagues.					
27. I use gender neutral pronouns – (i.e. they, them, everyone).					
<b>Self-Reflection:</b>					
Date #1:					
Date #2:					
Date #3:					
Date #4:					

<b>Rate your implementation of the following interventions to support MASTERY:</b>	<b>0</b> Not Yet Implemented	<b>1</b> Rarely Implemented	<b>2</b> Sometimes	<b>3</b> Almost Always	<b>4</b> Always
1. I post and review classroom rules regularly.					
2. I self-reflect and ask myself, "What am I teaching and reinforcing?"					
3. I self-reflect and ask myself, "How am I treating my students, peers and parents – am I modeling the behavior I want to see in my students?" (Perseverance, calm, patience, generosity, empathy)					
4. I ask myself, "Do all students understand the rules and have the capability/social skills to carry them out?"					
5. When giving instructions I provide clearly stated and specifically identified expectations.					
6. I repeat expectations frequently.					
7. I consistently offer students opportunities for process based praise.					
8. I consistently offer students opportunities for peer-to-peer feedback.					
9. I use flexible student groupings to teach and reteach as needed.					
10. I use students as resources.					
11. I celebrate accomplishments and goals collectively.					
12. I get to know all of my students' strengths and interests.					
13. I make sure everyone knows each other's strengths and expertise.					
14. I check in with all students frequently and offer individualized and specific feedback for each child.					
15. I promote a growth mindset by focusing on how much students have learned and remind them of the power of the word, "yet" (i.e. maybe you aren't there yet, but you are making such great progress).					
16. As an educator, I am always in the process of learning.					
17. I provide myself with opportunities for self-care on a daily basis.					
<b>Self-Reflection:</b>					
Date #1:					
Date #2:					
Date #3:					
Date #4:					



<b>Rate your implementation of the following interventions to support INDEPENDENCE:</b>	<b>0</b> Not Yet Implemented	<b>1</b> Rarely Implemented	<b>2</b> Sometimes	<b>3</b> Almost Always	<b>4</b> Always
1. I frequently pause and check in with my own level of emotional regulation.					
2. I teach and practice mind body skills for emotional awareness and regulation every day to promote relaxation and access to coping skills. Skills such as: breathing and movement exercises, body scans, guided imagery, and mindfulness.					
3. During classroom meetings I practice noticing and naming feelings with my students.					
4. I provide students access to sensory tools such as fidgets, weighted lap pads, exercise balls.					
5. I provide students with an opportunity to lead one another in emotional awareness and regulation practices.					
6. I give students choices of how to cope when they are having a hard day.					
7. I offer frequent opportunities for movement throughout each day.					
8. I seek out additional proactive breaks for students who have more sensory needs.					
9. I attune myself to a student's body language in order to get a sense of where they are in terms of emotional regulation.					
10. I use affective statements and questions.					
11. I post and review classroom expectations daily.					
12. I provide students with a daily planner or goal sheet.					
13. I provide a written class agenda on the board daily.					
14. I give choices whenever possible.					
15. I include students in on decision making.					
16. I include students in on problem solving.					
17. I encourage students to take appropriate challenges.					
18. I ensure students you are there to help and support them.					
19. I teach students about the impact of stress and trauma on the brain (i.e. use the meerkat, tiger, and owl example).					
20. I implement movement in the classroom every day.					
21. I provide alternate seating.					
22. I provide an open option for a "calm down" spot or corner in my classroom.					
<b>Self-Reflection:</b>					
Date #1:					
Date #2:					
Date #3:					
Date #4:					

<b>Rate your implementation of the following interventions to support GENEROSITY:</b>	<b>0</b> Not Yet Implemented	<b>1</b> Rarely Implemented	<b>2</b> Sometimes	<b>3</b> Almost Always	<b>4</b> Always
1. I speak regularly with my class about what generosity means to all of us.					
2. I display anchor charts in my classroom that support generosity.					
3. I offer specific verbal affirmation when other students are showing generosity towards another student.					
4. I offer classroom jobs to all students.					
5. I practice solving problems during classroom meetings.					
6. I practice giving compliments during classroom meetings.					
7. I create opportunities for students to help each other and showcase their strengths.					
8. I have students write notes or make cards to show appreciation to their families, school, and greater community.					
9. I promote service learning projects. Let students' passions be the driver (e.g. love of animals – bottle drive and donate proceeds to animal shelter).					
10. I teach and practice empathy exercises for self and others.					
11. I model kindness and generosity.					
12. When a student is struggling with a behavior, I offer them a suggestion to redirect their energy in a helpful way. For example, a student is struggling to stay in their seat, invite them to carry library books down to the library.					
<b>Self-Reflection:</b>					
Date #1:					
Date #2:					
Date #3:					
Date #4:					



## TRAINING & COACHING



## ONLINE COURSES



## CERTIFICATION



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