

# WHAT HELPS US CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

One way that we can move upstream in the field of prevention is by growing in the skills that help when we go through the natural ups and downs of life. The What Helps Us campaign focuses on emotional regulation and what strengths help us to cope or manage our emotions in times of stress or difficulty. No one gets through life without regularly experiencing at least one Big Emotion, such as anger, anxiety, or feeling down, sad, or depressed. The What Helps Us campaign helps students and staff identify which Big Emotions they wrestle with the most, which strengths function as positive and healthy coping strategies for them, and how we can grow and expand our healthy coping strategies, both as individuals and as a community.

While we are reimagining a new normal during the COVID pandemic, we know that Big Emotions may be more present for everyone. This campaign normalizes having conversations about our emotional wellbeing, and it also highlights the true norm that students and communities are already using some incredibly healthy coping skills when Big Emotions arise. We want to lift up those voices and celebrate the ways we are growing in our physical, relational, and emotional wellness as a community.

## Goals:

- Increase participants' social-emotional awareness of how they react to stress, difficulty, or challenges
- Identify ways to manage difficult emotions in healthy ways
- Learn and share ideas that could help others with emotional regulation and resilience
- Normalize healthy coping strategies and change the narratives on how we respond to hard times

## Campaign Structure:

After your training, it's time to launch your first campaign. Use this document to guide your planning. Use this to brainstorm, prioritize, and calendarize your campaign activities. Feel free to adapt these documents to fit your school and community.

**Training Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

When was your Adult Advisor training?

When was your Peer Leader training?

**First Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

When was your first Peer Leader meeting?

When will your recurring meetings be?

**Campaign Launch Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

When will you begin to roll out your What Helps Us Campaign?

## Campaign Cycle:

Each campaign cycle involves planning, a launch, campaign activities, and then celebration and evaluation. A campaign can roll out over 6-8 weeks. We recommend meeting with your Peer Leader team every other week for about an hour. We developed four Peer Leader Meeting agendas to support a What Helps Us Campaign. By the end of the campaign cycle, let's work toward giving every student in your school and community an opportunity to interact with the campaign, and apply the strengths to their own lives. A What Helps Us campaign cycle can look like this:

## Pre-Campaign: Launching a What Helps Us Campaign

**Launch Date:** Announce on Various Platforms (social media, classrooms, announcements, word of mouth, etc.)

**Week One-Two:** Define and Identify the Big Emotions

**Week Three-Four:** Reflect and Share What Helps Us

**Week Five-Six:** Explore and Expand What Helps Us

**Post-Campaign:** Evaluate and Celebrate our What Helps Us campaign



## CAMPAIGN PLANNING: PRACTICING A COMMUNITY OF STRENGTH

Our Sources of Strength teams will design creative opportunities to identify their own Big Emotions, identify what healthy coping strategies help them, and then authentically invite their friends to do the same.

Here are some suggestions for running a What Helps Us campaign, organized by modality. View this as a general resource that you can continue to return to for ideas. The bolded examples are included in the Peer Leader Meeting Agendas, but feel free to make each of these ideas your own. The real power of these campaigns happens when they are shared throughout your school and community.



### ART

- **Action “Steps!”** Write chalk messages in public spaces highlighting simple activities that can provide strength.
- **Create a collage of items that help.**
- **Create a special way to acknowledge someone who gives you strength.** Practice generosity by dropping it off at their door!
- **Create a “What Helps Us” mural or tessellation** on a wall where folks can pose.
- **Award individuals** whom others have seen using What Helps with a flamingo (garden gnome, misc. lawn art, etc.).
- **Design and deliver an award:** “I have been recognized as a Source of Strength this week at {Your School Name}.”
- **Download and print the Tangled Ball of Emotions.** Color in the emotions you have been feeling recently, and share this resource with family and friends.



### CLASS AND CLUB PRESENTATIONS

- **Host a classroom discussion** where Peer Leaders attend classes and meetings to talk about Big Emotions and then ask to hear about different strategies that help. Consider gathering answers and sharing a list of emotions and strategies with your school or organization.
- **Attend an organization’s meeting and ask:** What is an example from a movie, TV show, or book where you saw someone struggling with a Big Emotion, and what helped them through it?
- **At the end of a class or meeting, invite students to write down three things** that have brought them joy, peace, or comfort.



### CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

#### English/Language Arts:

- **Lead a discussion** based around a story involving how a character made it through a challenging situation, such as *The Hate You Give*, *The Outsiders*, *Lord of the Flies*, or *Catcher in the Rye*. If the character triumphed through this challenge, describe what they did and

where it might fit on the Wheel. If they did not succeed in working through their challenges, Imagine they came to you for advice - what would you suggest they do to help them through it.

#### Math:

- **Survey friends, families, and community members** about what activities help them and graph their responses into a bar graph, pie chart, or plot diagram. Analyze your results and share them with your classmates.?

#### Film/Theater:

- **Host a monthly movie or documentary viewing** and discussion of films such as Inside Out. Discuss the way the characters navigate challenges and What Helps.

#### Physical Education:

- **Host a “Chill Class”** where students can mentally take a break by practicing yoga and listening to relaxing music. Utilize YouTube to have a “guest teacher” and share your screen to have students follow along to yoga instruction.

#### Communication, Leadership, or Family and Consumer Sciences:

- **Have students create step-by-step Wellness Plans** to think through action steps they can complete throughout a day in order to thrive. Use these Wellness Plans for daily check-ins, emotional regulation tools, and as a helpful tool to turn to when we are feeling stuck.



### **ALL SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

- **Complete Wellness Plans as a classroom assignment.** Use our templated Wellness Plans, or have your team create these helpful tools for when we are feeling down or stuck to strengthen your physical, relational, and emotional wellness.
- **Design or write a how-to guide or step-by-step recipe** explaining What Helps when Big Emotions arise.
- **Host a school-wide appreciation week** where students can gift someone with a digital recognition highlighting their helpfulness or strength.
- **Develop a storytelling series, TED Talks, slam poetry night, or an open mic session** focused on What Helps.
- **Create a Strengths Scavenger Hunt** around town where Peer Leaders use ribbons associated with colors on the Wheel, and tie them to what gives them strength and challenge others to find/name them.
- **Challenge teams to create games that highlight Whats Helps** or share out the Sources of Strength Board Game or QUINGO (Quarantine Bingo).
- **Create a questionnaire to learn more about What Helps** and use the answers to develop your own games:
  - What Helps Us Mad Libs
  - What Helps Us Bingo/QUINGO
  - What Helps Us Game Show
  - What Helps Us Scavenger Hunt
  - What Helps Us Guess Who?



### **VIDEO AND PHOTOGRAPHY**

- **Interview Trusted Adults and Mentors** about What Helps them in times of stress or difficulty.
- **Collect What Helps Us story submissions** in the form of essays, videos, or audio recordings to compile into a podcast, movie, or slideshow.
- **Design a “What Helps Us” frame or social media filter** for students to capture video or images of What Helps.
- **“Who Could That Be?” Photo Contest:** As a classroom, club, or small group activity, have students submit photos of several things they rely on to help them through tough times and then design an

activity to match the students with their strength.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

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- Create one minute **What Helps Us** videos.
- **Compile a montage of student highlights** from the Sixty Second Story Challenges, and share out on your social media platform or school website!
- **Use hashtags** like #WhatHelpsUs or make it your own, like #WhatHelpsEagles or #WhatHelpsGiveGreeleyWings to get What Helps Us trending at your school.
- **Allow students to send in nominations** to your school's Sources of Strength social media platform(s) of people, places, practices that help them each day. Highlight, tag, and re-share the nominees.
- **Create a Feelings Wheel Challenge** on social media.



## AUDIO AND MUSIC

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- Begin featuring "Wheel Wednesday" announcements or newsletter stories.
- Collect song submissions from students about What Helps to feature during meetings, digital announcements, or newsletters.
- Find the Sources of Strength page on Spotify and download the #WhatHelpsUs playlist. If you don't have Spotify, you can download it for free on your desktop or mobile device.
- **Mixtape Monday!**
- Write a song or create a tune that matches with an emotion you're currently feeling. Make the hook and chorus