



# Choose Love For Schools™

## Implementation Best Practices

*A guide to creating a culture of caring and compassion and choosing love in the classroom and throughout the school.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Click Titles to Navigate*

<b><u>BEST PRACTICES FOR THE CLASSROOM</u></b>	<b>3</b>
The Classroom	3
The Lessons	3
Creating A Choose Love Climate	4
Suggested Practices	4
Educator Preparation and Presentation	5
Monitoring	5
Learning Opportunity	5
Reinforce and Integrate Choose Love Into Daily Classroom Routine	6
Supplemental Materials & Resources	7
The Choose Love For Schools – Educator Guide	8
<b><u>BEST PRACTICES FOR WHOLE SCHOOL</u></b>	<b>9</b>
Create a Choose Love Team of Champions	9
Monitoring Program Implementation	9
Decide Where and When Content Will Be Taught	9
Garner Support of the Staff and Parents	11
School Climate	12
Professional Development	13
Athletic Coaches and Club Organizers	13
Parent/Family Relations	14
Evaluation/Review	14
<b><u>SUSTAINING THE CHOOSE LOVE FOR SCHOOLS™ PROGRAM</u></b>	<b>16</b>
Strategies to Keep Interest	16
Leadership	16
Choose Love Ambassadors	17
Documentation	17

# BEST PRACTICES FOR THE CLASSROOM

*“You practice mindfulness, on the one hand, to be calm and peaceful. On the other hand, as you practice mindfulness and live a life of peace, you inspire hope for future peace.” Thich Nhat Hanh*

## The Classroom

We are so excited that you have decided to begin the Choose Love For Schools program. As an educator, you set the tone and create the environment of the classroom for the students. Evidence indicates that schools with committed educators, positive teacher-student relationships, and orderly, warm, caring, supportive environments are associated with greater academic success.

In addition, teaching practices that foster student autonomy, student participation, and a feeling of competence are also critical (McPartland, 1994; Walberg, 2007, 2011).

## The Lessons

Choose Love For Schools contains weekly, user friendly lessons that vary in teaching time from 10 - 30 minutes, along with supplementary resources and materials.

The program lessons should be taught in the order as written, starting with Courage, and will build upon the formula adding Gratitude, Forgiveness, ending with Compassion in Action. Each lesson is set up with Student Objectives, Educator Preparation, Discussion/Activity, and SEL Skills Taught. We also offer numerous ways to Reinforce Learning or Transfer the Learning.

In Elementary school, we recommend teaching one lesson per week, followed by daily Choose Love quotes or prompts and discussion, journaling, daily practice of the Focused Awareness exercise introduced in the lesson, additional literature (suggestions for books - and quotes - by unit are provided in the Supplemental and Additional Materials sections of the course online,) and activities or art projects (see

Google or Pinterest for some great ideas!) We are also always adding new activities online to help keep the program going all year long, and ensure that it becomes part of your classroom vernacular.

In Middle and High School we include Social Media Messages/ Social Media Shares. Supplemental materials are provided online, should a teacher decide to enhance the students skills.

Complete lesson breakdowns and additional direction and suggestions related to Diversity & Inclusion and other teaching strategies can be found in the **Choose Love For Schools™ Educator Guide**.

## Creating A Choose Love Climate

Create an environment of Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness and Compassion in Action.

- Display the Choose Love Formula in the classroom or teaching area.
- Post visuals that communicate the short and long term objectives of the Choose Love Curriculum and weekly lessons.
- Utilize Choose Love vernacular and objectives to build respectful, caring and supportive relationships with and between students, both in the class and schoolwide.
- Model the ingredients of the Choose Love Formula .
- Reflect and share how it benefits you.

## Suggested Practices

- Take the time to have students create journals. Even though they may give push-back they will find benefit in them. Give students frequent opportunities to reflect in their journals through both drawing and writing.
- Watch the Choose Love Videos for Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness, Compassion in Action, and Choosing Love to give students a greater understanding of the Formula and reinforce the themes taught.
- Incorporate mindful minutes throughout the day for yourself and students.
- Infuse the Choose Love Formula and practices into all areas of study.
- Reinforce Dan Siegel's Brain Hand Model.
- Hang posters of the brain model.

- Refer to parts of the brain when asking students about decision making, conflict resolution and behavioral consequences.
- When presenting the lessons, follow along with the mindful minutes and other mindfulness practices.
- Journal along with the students. Share your responses and experiences as well.
- Be vulnerable! It is a sign of courage.

## Educator Preparation and Presentation

- Familiarize yourself with the lesson objectives and content before presenting.
- Utilize the educator preparation section of the lesson to be prepared and comfortable with the objective and lesson topic.
- Many of the lessons include one or more supplemental videos; we encourage you to preview the video prior to showing it, as many of them are not our own content and hosted on a third party video platform therefore might have been removed without our knowledge or altered in some way without our knowledge. If you find a link is no longer working, we would appreciate your sending an email to [support@chooselovemovement.org](mailto:support@chooselovemovement.org) to let us know the grade and lesson.
- Communicate verbally and visually the weekly learning goals and objectives.
- Connect the current lessons' goals and objectives to prior lessons and units.

## Monitoring

- Check for understanding of the weekly objectives and key ingredients of the Choose Love Formula .
- Ask questions relating to the Choose Love objectives that provide opportunities for students to ask and answer questions that promote critical thinking and self reflection.
- Give students time to think and respond before speaking.
- Give students the opportunity to reflect on the learning objective in their individual journals.
- Review, reteach and reinforce the weekly lesson objectives throughout the week.

## Learning Opportunity

- Engage all students in the lesson.
- Model and guide students in the mindful minute practice.
- Give students multiple opportunities to practice skills taught.
- Have students practice/use their mindfulness skills such as brave breaths, yoga poses and other power poses to start the day, when faced with transitions or stressful situations, or when students need to calm and focus.
- Utilize morning/afternoon meeting time to reinforce the learning through simple activities, sharing, and discussion.
- Utilize small and large group share circles.
- Make meaningful connections to students' cultural background, family and community, and individual development.
- Establish a cooperative learning environment for student-to-student engagement using the Choose Love vernacular.

## Reinforce and Integrate Choose Love Into Daily Classroom Routine

Plan ahead before starting the program. See how you can tie in language arts, math, social studies, science, technology, and more. There are many ways to infuse the Choose Love Program and teachings into other subject areas, or to infuse other subject areas into the program.

For example:

- When talking about feelings you can make a math graph of how students are feeling on a particular day and then ask questions like how many classmates feel Happy? Are there more classmates feeling Happy or Sad?
- Use technology to find more quotes or books on Courage and the other traits. Or look up famous people past and present and write about how they showed courage or compassion.
- Learn a specific style of poetry like Haiku and then create Haiku poems about Gratitude, or one of the other traits.
- Write personal Compassion Stories.
- Delve deeper into the neuroscience for a science lesson.
- Take the time to practice Brave Breaths and other skills throughout the day and week. You can do Brave Breaths as a class before taking a test, for example, to

get into a relaxed state. You can do Brave Breaths after recess to calm the body down and get everyone ready to start learning again. The more these skills are practiced, the better the students will be at using them. Regularity and Consistency are Key!

- In Elementary School, utilize morning or afternoon meetings as a time to reflect on Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness, Compassion and Choosing Love. Let this be a time of expressing, sharing and reflecting. Let this be a time where you bring the class together as a caring, connected, loving community. We've included Morning Meeting Infusion Activities to help with this. These can be found in the Supplemental Materials folder. You can also use this time to do additional reflection time in the students' Choose Love Journals. They can write three things they are grateful for in their journals to start every morning off on a positive note, for example.
- Make sure to 'catch' students showing the traits. Praise, recognize or reward them when they show courage, have a grateful attitude, let go of their anger in a healthy way, or show compassion to their classmates.

## Supplemental Materials & Resources

At the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement we are here to support you in any way with the implementation of the program, updated information, supplemental materials and resources.

Be sure to review the **Supplementary Materials** menu, found in the Course Prep section of the online Syllabus for each grade level.

### Get Started

#### COURSE PREP

- ✓ Third Grade Overview
- ✓ Standards Alignment
- ✓ Educator Guide
- ✓ Essential Training
- ✓ Supplemental Materials

#### LESSONS

- ✓ Unit 1 – COURAGE
- ✓ Unit 2 – GRATITUDE
- ✓ Unit 3 – FORGIVENESS
- ✓ Unit 4 – COMPASSION IN ACTION

#### Extension Programs

- ✓ All Calm Down
- ✓ Compassionate Connection
- ✓ Grow & Guide
- ✓ Healthy Grieving
- ✓ The Tapping Solution
- ✓ Zensational Kids

This is where you will find supplementary information, visuals, printables, the pre-and post survey templates, more information about the neuroscience of Choose Love, videos, certificates of completion, and more.

Also included for elementary grade levels is a Morning Meeting Infusion section with suggestions for simple, fun ways to take 5 or 10 minutes to extend the learning from the Choose Love For Schools program, as well as mindfulness exercises and other complementary techniques for reinforcing a Choose Love environment.

Keep in mind that while Choose Love For Schools is often therapeutic, it is not intended to in any way be therapy. If at any time a student needs mental health support, remember those professionals in your school that can provide the needed attention.

Mental health is not simply the absence of mental illness but also encompasses social, emotional, and behavioral health and the ability to cope with life's challenges. Familiarize yourself with the school-based mental health professionals as well as those individuals responsible for the multitiered system of supports (MTSS).

The following professionals are specially trained in student's functioning and learning within a school system, as well as an individual's behavioral and mental health impact on academic success:

- School Counselors
- School Psychologists
- School Social-Workers
- School Nurses

## The Choose Love For Schools™ Educator Guide

For a comprehensive review of the Choose Love For Schools™ program, including a breakdown of lessons, suggestions for instruction and additional teaching strategies including trauma-sensitivity, diversity and inclusion, and more, please be sure to read the **Choose Love For Schools™ Educator Guide** that can be found in the COURSE PREP section of the online Syllabus for each grade level.



# BEST PRACTICES FOR WHOLE SCHOOL

***“The beginning is the most important part of the work.” - Plato***

Once Choose Love For Schools has been adopted by the school, it is important to develop a plan to implement the program. Quality implementation begins with supportive educators, school administration and staff members. This section lays out some of the best practices that influence the quality of implementation and sustainability.

*According to a [Stanford SCOPE study](#), social emotional learning will be most effective when practiced and implemented comprehensively and coherently across key levels of the school— climate and culture, features and structures, and formal and informal practices—as well as when its practice is supported by districts.*

## Create a Choose Love Team of Champions

A Choose Love Team of Champions is most effective if comprised of educators, administrators, mental health staff, community members, and if possible students. The responsibilities of team members would include program implementation and monitoring the progress of program implementation throughout the year.

## Monitor Program Implementation

The Choose Love Team of Champions can create mechanisms, such as monthly monitoring measures that include real-time feedback, walkthrough observations and reviews of implementation data, that can help to improve implementation if necessary, or resolve problems or obstacles that arise.

## Decide Where and When Content Will Be Taught

Where and when to teach these lessons will vary depending on the grade level and the school circumstances. Ideally classroom teachers should teach the lessons, then reinforce them throughout the week.

In situations where the classroom teacher is unable to teach the lessons, the lessons can be taught by counselors then reinforced by the teacher.

### **Elementary School**

In elementary school, educators may teach lessons during an extended morning or afternoon meeting time, or weave a lesson into a social studies lesson block. Whichever grade level is being taught, the basic best practices are the same. Teach at least one lesson per week, and reinforce that lesson throughout that week. Each grade level is broken into the four units of the Choose Love Formula : Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness, and Compassion in Action. Each unit has a set of weekly lessons. Scheduling a lesson at the beginning of a school week allows you to reinforce the concepts and skills throughout the week. The lessons are rich with content so in Elementary School it is recommended to not teach more than one new lesson per week.

Just like with other subjects, elementary students need an opportunity to practice and reflect on the skills they are learning before adding to them. Allow students time to internalize their new skills. There are 23-25 lessons for the whole program depending on grade level, so the Elementary Program will take 23-25 weeks to teach.

### **Middle School**

For Middle and High School, we recommend using an advisory or homeroom period as a consistent, available time to incorporate the program. Implementing the program during this time can help to intentionally set the Choose Love Formula as the school culture, strengthen the advisory period, and provide SEL skills development for the students.

Middle School has a slightly different format and more content than elementary. We created the Middle School Program with the idea that most schools have an advisory/homeroom period that meets daily (and is often underutilized.) There are enough lessons for every day of the week if your schedule permits, with an overarching lesson to start off the week and optional “Extension Lessons” to supplement, reinforce and extend the learning.

Of course teaching the program in its entirety is optimal, but not always feasible. We suggest you teach as many lessons as possible. At the very least, we encourage you to teach all of the primary lessons and then pepper in as many Extension Lessons as

possible. Pick the Extension Lessons that best meet the needs of your students, and those that you feel would most engage them.

## High School

The High School format is also intended to be taught as one lesson per week as quick blasts of learning. The learning can be extended to fill the class time and schedule by allowing for more discussion and written reflection. At the High School level, we expect students to take the ball and run with it in terms of lessons springing them into their own creative and thoughtful extensions and applications.

Consistency, just like with other subjects helps the students see the curriculum as an integrated part of their learning, rather than a random side offering. Educators can reinforce the lesson by reteaching a skill twice, utilizing the supplemental material, such as the videos or mindfulness activities provided on the website, or infusing the skills into the content areas such as art, world language or physical education.

## Garner Support of the Staff and Parents

The Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement recognizes that, year in and year out, schools face an influx of new initiatives and programs that educators have to incorporate into their daily teaching. This often leads to the attitude, that “this too shall pass.” In order to garner the support of staff and parents, when introducing the Choose Love For Schools to educators, time should be given for the educators to train, review, prepare and find comfortability in presenting the lessons. If the school is planning to implement the program at the beginning of the school year, introducing Choose Love For Schools before the end of the previous school year gives educators that time.

You will find helpful resources to support these efforts in the *Essential Training* section of any of our online Choose Love For Schools courses.

### Additional Suggestions:

- Have the **Choose Love Team of Champions** present the history of the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement and SEL objectives at faculty meeting or professional development training with the assistance of [this video](https://youtu.be/ygUYhl1ho8c) (https://youtu.be/ygUYhl1ho8c.)
- In some schools, that team has presented to the educators and students, held workshops for teachers and students, and then had students present the reasons why they believe in the program to their teachers at a faculty meeting.

Here is a video example of such a workshop  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVKOdXhPAw0>.)

## School Climate

When implementing Choose Love For Schools™ you are creating a culture that prioritizes the elements of a Choose Love Culture: Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness and Compassion in Action.

Getting the whole school on board may be a challenge, but students in schools that implemented social emotional learning into their day report stronger relationships with administration, educators, staff and other students. This leads to a caring and respectful environment where students and educators feel valued, supported and safe. Students who perceive a positive climate in their school demonstrate higher levels of social competence and report fewer personal problems.

Positive school climate in middle and high school is associated with academic achievement, decreased absenteeism, and lower rates of suspension. (Thapa et al., 2013)

### Suggestions for Creating a Choose Love Climate

- All participating program administrators and teachers should register for the [Choose Love CONNECT Community and Program Portal](#) for real-time program and material updates and additions, announcements, event information and to access Supplemental Resources for the Choose Love For Schools™ program. There is also a Discussion Board designed to support educators and administrators in sharing ideas and best practices from around the globe. We have also created a brief video tour of the portal to highlight additional features and resources, which you can [view here](#).
- Develop an understanding of the purpose of Choose Love For Schools™ among staff.
- Develop a shared vision of Choose Love For Schools™ for your school.
- Develop intervention strategies and mentors for educators having difficulty implementing the lessons in their advisories/classes.
- Coordinate activities with other school initiatives.
- Throughout the school year, celebrate each individual ingredient of the Choose Love Formula™. For instance, if your school is on a quarter schedule, you could

focus on Courage 1st quarter, Gratitude-2nd quarter, Forgiveness-3rd quarter, and Compassion in Action- 4th quarter.

- Start a Choose Love Student Club.
- Download or purchase posters [from the website](#) and post throughout the school.
- Download the Choose Love Action Calendars from the website (monthly calendars are added on an ongoing basis.)
- Post the Choose Love Formula in classrooms.
- Use quotes or Action Steps from the Choose Love Action Calendars for Announcements. Quote lists for each trait are available online.
- Create a Choose Love Library in the classroom and school library. There are book lists for each trait online with some wonderful books for students that reinforce the themes and lessons.
- Adopt the use of the Choose Love Formula™ vocabulary when speaking to students, colleagues and parents/guardians.
- Invite speakers to address the student body, educators and staff on the topics relating to the ingredients of the Choose Love Formula™.
- Take part in the SEL Awareness Week held in February (announcements and information will be posted online and included in the monthly newsletter.)
- Set schoolwide goals and objectives relating to the Choose Love Formula™.

## Professional Development

Professional development is a crucial step that should not be overlooked. The use of trained and experienced SEL coaches could be instituted to assist in professional development and quality implementation. The Choose Love Team of Champions can be key to providing pre-training, ongoing assistance, and keeping lines of communication open between individuals implementing the program and the Team. These are strategies that will increase the likelihood that the CLEP will be successfully implemented.

## Athletic Coaches and Club Organizers

Coaches and club organizers must also have the opportunities to become familiar with and to utilize the formula of Choose Love For Schools™ as they not only develop our students as athletes/musicians/club members but also assist our students in the development of their social emotional competence. Such activities are an extension of the classroom, and they are designed to teach our students the values and skills

they need to prepare for the future. We recommend reviewing the [Champions Choose Love course](#), now available through the Choose Love CONNECT Community and Program Portal.

## Parent/Family Relations

The Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement is built on the premise that the best practices of SEL begin with a partnership between the school and parents/families. Parents/families have many concerns, ideas and insights regarding the needs of their children socially and emotionally. The “Caregiver Connection” section that is now included with each unit of Choose Love For Schools™ offers tools and videos that will help parents/families learn the vernacular being used in the classroom and develop an understanding of the importance of SEL, which in turn will positively impact our students’ growth and development. At the onset of the Choose Love For Schools™ implementation process, the school community has the opportunity to communicate with parents on the strategies they will use to implement the program and encourage parents to work through the no cost [Choose Love For Home Program](#).

Additional suggestions for communication with parents/caregivers include:

- Send home the parent letter that is located in the Caregiver Connection tab for each unit. This lets parents know that you will be teaching Choose Love For Schools™ and gives some general information on SEL and program content. Also included in the Caregiver Connection tab are links to 2 brief instructional videos as well as discussion topics and activities that can be done at home to reinforce the lessons. These were created for parents and families and are available in the Choose Love At Home program, as well. You can include these links in your parent letter communication or distribute the videos however you wish. All materials are available in both english and spanish.
- Create a section of the Monthly School Newsletter dedicated to Choose Love For Schools™.
- Inform Parent/Families of Activities via school website/social media.
- Partner with Parent/Teacher Groups to develop discussion forums or book clubs that focus on the ingredients of The Choose Love Formula™ and other issues relating to the adolescent and social emotional competencies

## Evaluation/Review

Implementation of Choose Love For Schools™ is not an “all or nothing” experience, it exists on a continuum. This is one that constantly evolves, as it is a process that involves creating a school culture of Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness and Compassion in Action. Therefore, the program should be evaluated and reviewed regularly. Utilizing the Choose Love For Schools™ pre- and post-surveys, which can be found in the Supplemental Materials folder in the online Introduction section for each grade level, schools can access each student’s level of connection to the school community at beginning, middle and end of school year to acquire data for review. We have included a simple scoring guide that can show changes in perceptions in students.

# SUSTAINING THE CHOOSE LOVE FOR SCHOOLS™ PROGRAM

*“Everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you’re climbing it.” - Andy Rooney*

## Strategies to Keep Interest

- Review the Choose Love For Schools™ implementation, procedures and program feedback each year.
- Continue quality improvement by developing ways to continue to meet the needs of the students and educators through appropriate professional development.
- Encourage staff and administration’s registration and participation in the [Choose Love CONNECT Community and Program Portal](#) through discussion boards and other Choose Love sponsored activities (e.g. the Choose Love Book Club)
- [Invite Scarlett Lewis](#) to give a presentation to staff, the school, or the community.

## Leadership

Turnover in any school system is inevitable, therefore:

- Orient new administrators to the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement and obtain support for Choose Love For Schools™.
- Good communication between the Choose Love Team of Champions and new administrators will ensure that leadership transitions will be smoother and easier.
- Provide training, mentoring and professional development for new educators each year.
- Enlist the commitment of Choose Love Team of Champions members for the upcoming year, replace members as needed.



## Choose Love Ambassadors

Our volunteer team of Choose Love Ambassadors is growing fast and is composed of educators, parents and community members who believe in the program and have agreed to be a resource for information about the program, fundraising events, and professional development opportunities to Choose Love schools in their area while helping to grow the number of schools teaching Choose Love For Schools™. For information on Ambassadors in your area, [check our website](#).

## Documentation

Collect, analyze and utilize data to demonstrate effectiveness of Choose Love For Schools™ and improve practices relating to the implementation of the program.