



Issue 33

Dr. Maile Monk: Introducing BrainWise Throughout a School District

The faculty and students of Hudson Elementary School, located in Colorado's Weld County Re3J School District, started the year in a beautiful new building. The large, modern school reflects the rapid growth happening in a community near metropolitan Denver that is still dotted with once prevailing farms and ranches. The school's mission is "Creating opportunities for student success through a safe learning environment, rigorous instruction, diverse activities, and an engaged community."



**Maile Monk PhD District
Mental Health Specialist**

Maile Monk, Ph.D., the district's Mental Health Specialist, believes BrainWise can help them achieve this goal. In collaboration with the Weld 3J administration, principal, and faculty, she ordered curricula and scheduled a professional development day for training for the school's entire staff. The school year started with everyone informed of the 10 Wise Ways and where they could get support.

Dr. Monk learned about BrainWise when she was a graduate student and observed a teacher asking students to identify wizard brain and lizard brain behaviors. "It caught my attention because it made so much sense!" She had an opportunity to teach the program when she was at another school where

BrainWise was being introduced for the first time. She said that she was "impressed by how teachers taught the program with fidelity and integrated the concepts into their everyday lessons."

That said, she plans to do more to help all faculty and staff recognize opportunities to reinforce BrainWise. "Teachers need help to infuse the Wise Ways into everything - some don't see its extensive applications." Already taught in many of the district's elementary schools, her goal is to integrate BrainWise into all schools, including middle and high school. "BrainWise provides a foundation that enhances all SEL, PBIS, and PYD programs. Its common language underlies its universal application as an intervention program. I tell teachers that the 10 Wise Ways provide them with a foundation of social and emotional skills to refer back to throughout the school year. They help students apply the thinking skills not only to their problems, but to the problems of others, helping them move to the next level."



Dr. Monk Presenting BrainWise Activity With Other Trainers

She eases the fear some teachers have of adding more work by telling them that "BrainWise is a framework for everything. It is a way to make learning more effective and efficient." She tells them "they can pick it up and use it! Using the brain as a teaching tool is so natural, and its explanations are easy to understand and apply."

As a certified BrainWise trainer, Dr. Monk will be training teachers and staff throughout the district. She sees the program as a universal intervention. Parent involvement is paramount, and future plans include using middle and high school students as BrainWise mentors for younger students.

I am delighted to note that BrainWise research team member, Marilyn Welsh, PhD, served on Maile's doctoral committee years ago. Dr. Monk says that her school district is using the CASEL approved Panorama SEL measurements to assess student outcomes. Our research team will be exploring this as an instrument other BrainWise sites can administer, helping us collect outcome data that meets the rigorous CASEL standards.



Dr. Pat and Dr. Monk (aka "Dr. Smilely")

A heartfelt thank you to the exceptional individuals who champion BrainWise!



Dr. Pat

On a lighter note . . .

Keep Your Hands to Yourself

The following video addresses an issue that some children have a hard time understanding - keeping your hands to yourself. It is a good opportunity to have younger students talk about the Consequences Affecting Others of their actions, and relating impulsive actions to the Wise Ways they identify in the animation.

(Emotions Elevators, recognizing Red flag warnings, Ask Questions, Set Goals and Communicate Effectively...and others!)



Keep Your Hands to Yourself



The BrainWise Program

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