

"Reading, Talking and Thinking About Mental Well-Being"

"What is Well Aware?"

Images of young girls and boys: Hi, my name is Sam. You already know me. I sit in the back of the room most of the time and if there's a window around I'm looking through it.

I'm not so good at answering your questions and sometimes I say silly things when I don't know the answer just to get everybody laughing.

I don't really like to work in groups unless I can just listen and not have to do anything. I really hate reporting in front of the class. I think the other kids think I'm stupid. Sometimes I think so myself.

The truth is most of the time you can see me in the classroom but I'm not really there. I have a lot on my mind.

I'm not very good at sports and next recess I know I'll be last picked again. It's okay though because since you talked to the class about being fair at least now they let me play. I hope they will let me play goalie but that probably won't happen.

Sometimes I find it hard to concentrate. My head keeps thinking about other things like how mom looked so sad this morning or whether dad will come home tonight.

I'm glad that I have some friends but I wish they would like me more. Sometimes I hear them laughing at what I brought to eat or making fun of me when I talk.

Sometimes I wish I could be more like them. Sometimes I just wish I wasn't me. Anyway, I am Sam and you know me.

Linda Millar, Teacher's Resource Author, Well Aware Series: Sadly, Sam and friends are in every classroom and teachers are scrambling to find ways to not only help them cope but to flourish both inside and outside the classroom.

Hi, my name is Linda Miller and as a seasoned educator with over thirty-five years of experience I know firsthand the challenges that our students face on a daily basis, whether it be bullying on the playground, test anxiety, fear of speaking in front of a group, or just feeling different than everybody else. We need to find opportunities to help them recognize their strengths, to celebrate their uniqueness, to be happy. In other words, to flourish. And that's why we have this-- we're introducing you to this unique approach to addressing positive mental health in our classrooms. These short videos will introduce you to classroom-ready resources by Pearson, entitled "Well Aware," that will show you how to use these materials to break down the stigma associated with mental health and to get students talking about mental health in the same way they talk about physical health.

Christine Bejjany, Principal, W.I. Dick Middle School: As a principal, I think it's really important that we address all of the mental health issues that are happening with our students. If we don't address those issues, then we're really in a difficult position because students are not ready to be present and engaged in their learning activities. We need to make sure that they are there and want to be there and that their major focus is on the learning not on all the other distractions that are happening in their lives. So we need to work with the community, work with the parents, work with the coaches, with the families, the students, and all the other people in their lives to help make sure that they are ready to be here and learning at school.

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