Kognito

Workshop Companion Slides

Emotional & Mental Wellness: Elementary and Middle School

Insert your name and contact information.

Workshop Overview

- Welcome!

- Simulation background

- Take simulation

- 15-minute break

- Group discussion: identifying, approaching, referring students

- 10-minute break

- Role plays

- Our school's referral process

- Takeaways

Group Norms

- Actively participate.

- Be respectful.

- When sharing stories, do NOT share names or other identifying information of students or staff.

- Seek help if you would like to discuss personal mental-health.

- If you find any material triggering, take a break and rejoin later. Reach out to let me know.

- Talk to me after the workshop if you are concerned about a student and have questions.

WRITE AN "AEIOU" DESCRIPTION.

A = Adjective - What word describes this image?

E = Emotion - How do you feel about the image?

I = Interesting - What is interesting to you about the image?

O = OMG - What surprised you about the image?

U = Um? - What question do you have about the image?

What is Kognito?

Kognito is a **health simulation company** that comprises learning experts, designers, technologists and implementation professionals.

Our evidence-based simulations build a variety of competencies and shape attitudes through **role-play conversations with virtual people**.
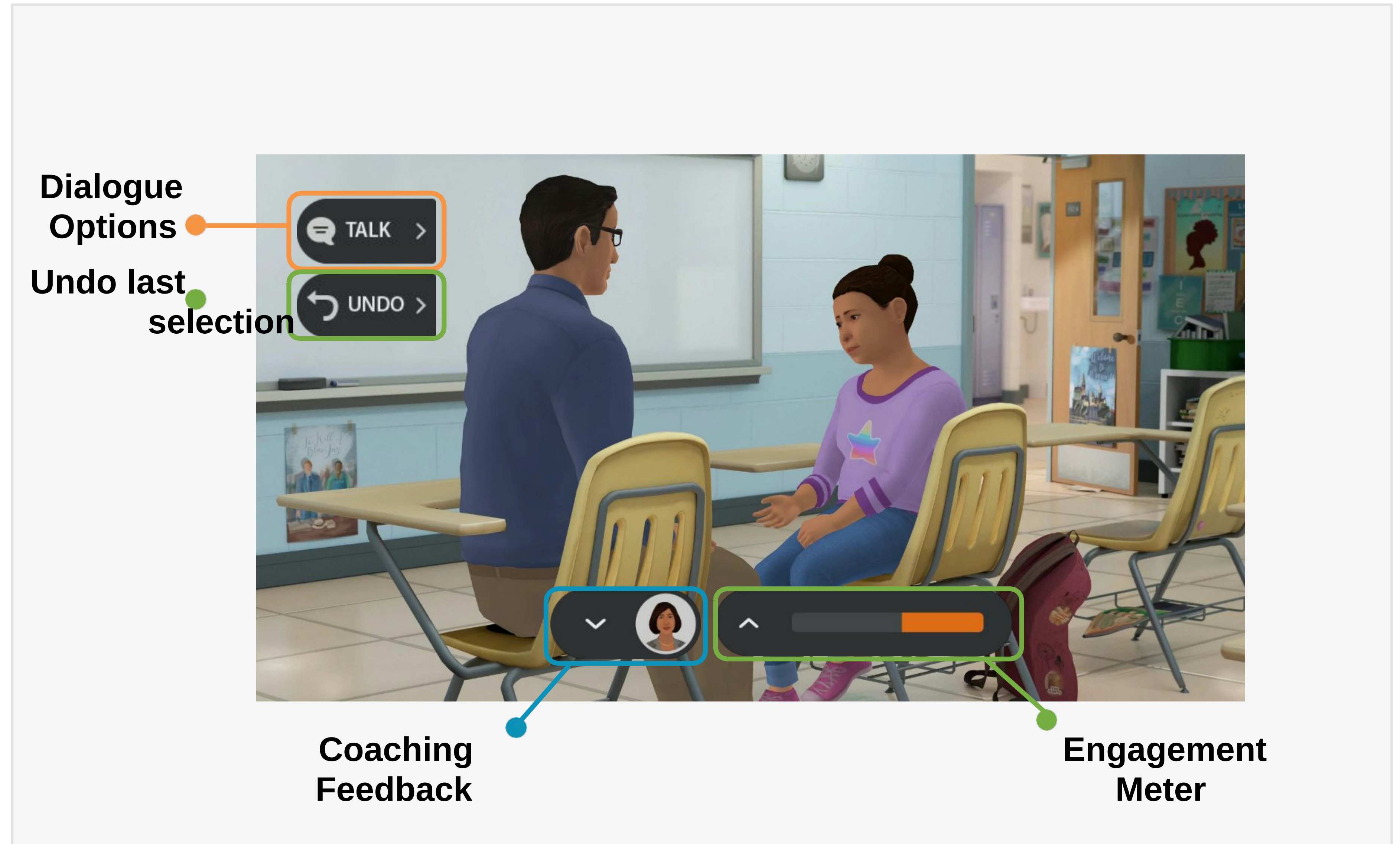
Over 1+ million educators, students, and health care professionals have used Kognito simulations to change lives, including **over 500,000 K-12 educators.**
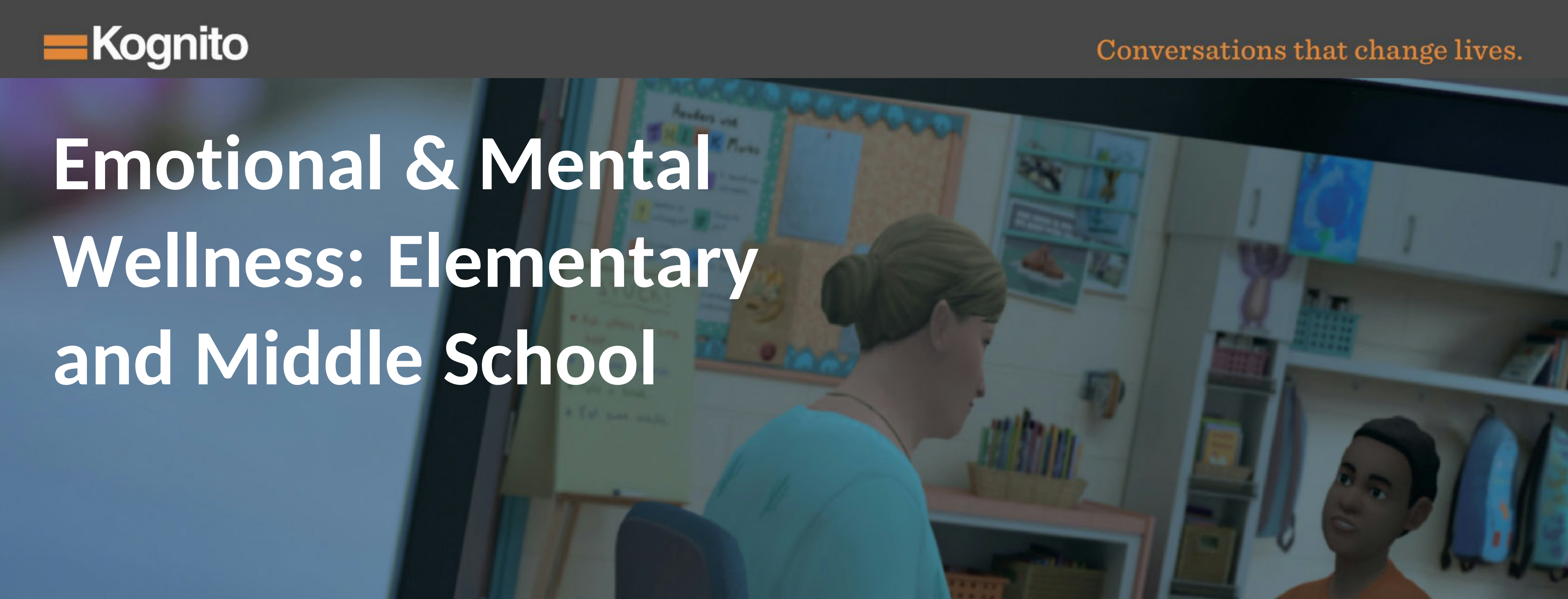
Our **innovative approach** has resulted in partnerships with government agencies and NGOs.

American Academy of Pediatrics — DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

NYC Department of Education

unicef USA — children first.

CDC

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

NORC at the UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO

FAIRFAX · FALLS CHURCH Community Services Board

How Does a Kognito Simulation Work?

- **User interacts** with a fully animated at-risk virtual student
- **Navigate** through the scenarios by selecting what to say to the virtual student

- **Receive instant feedback** from the virtual coach and engagement meter
- **Can undo decisions** and explore different conversation approaches

- **Receive personalized performance** summary upon completion

Dialogue Options

Undo last selection

Coaching Feedback

Engagement Meter

Emotional & Mental Wellness: Elementary and Middle School

Kognito

Conversations that change lives.

TOPICS

Mental health, suicide prevention, resilience

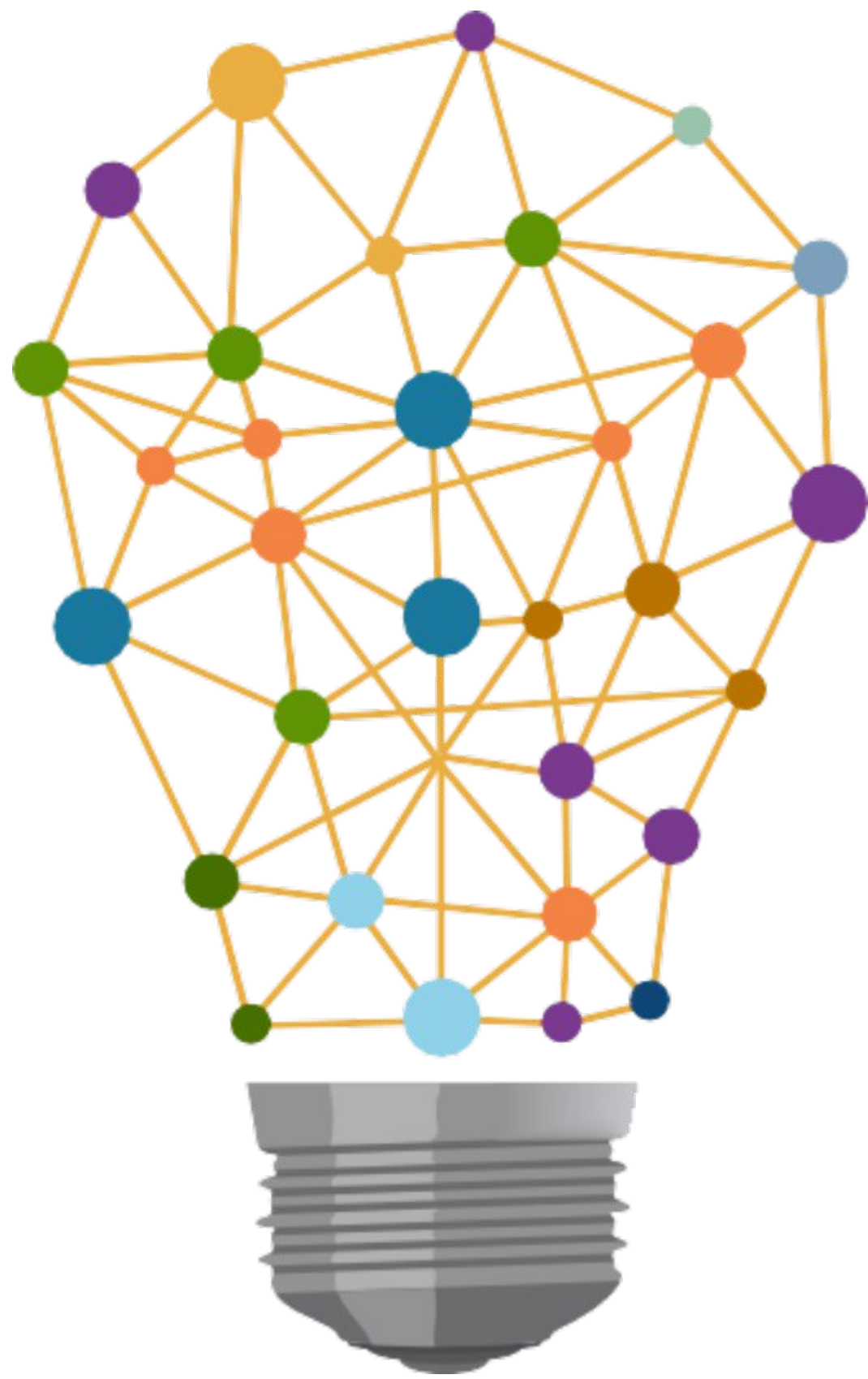**USERS**

Educators, teachers, and staff

SETTINGS

Elementary and Middle schools, youth programs, foster care, juvenile justice

DURATION

30 minutes

Learning Objectives

1) **Know how to regularly check in** with students and build resilience.

2) **Recognize warning signs and risk factors** that a student may be in distress and need support.

3) **Have a supportive conversation** with a student who may be distressed.

4) **Connect the student** to appropriate support services.

5) **Handle difficult situations** where the student may be a threat to themselves or others.

Take the Simulation

_____

_____

For technical support or any questions about your simulation, please contact Kognito at support@kognito.com or 646-923-8632.
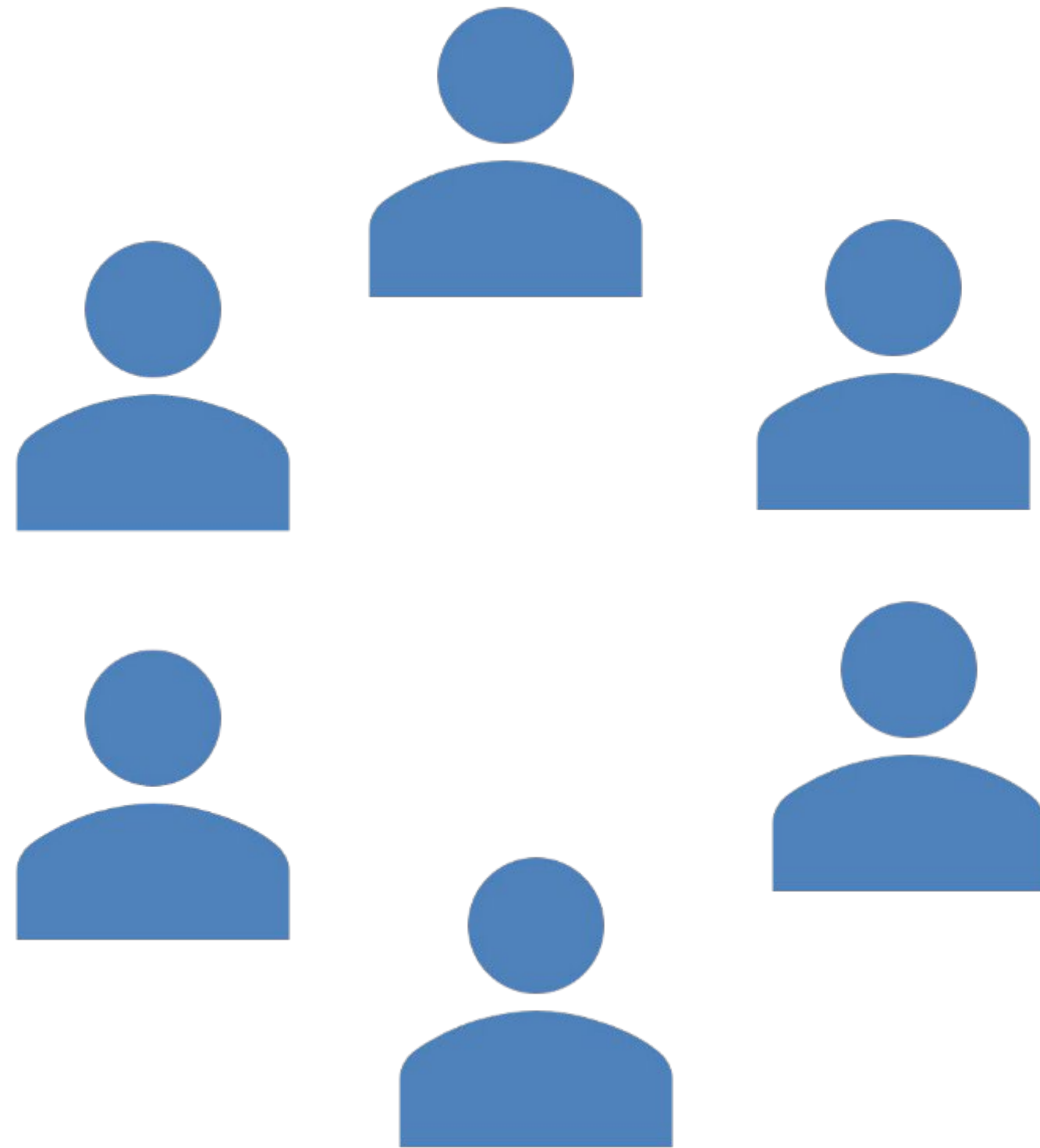
Emotional & Mental Wellness: Elementary and Middle School

A positive classroom environment promotes **connectedness** and **resilience**, creating a **pathway to discuss concerns**.

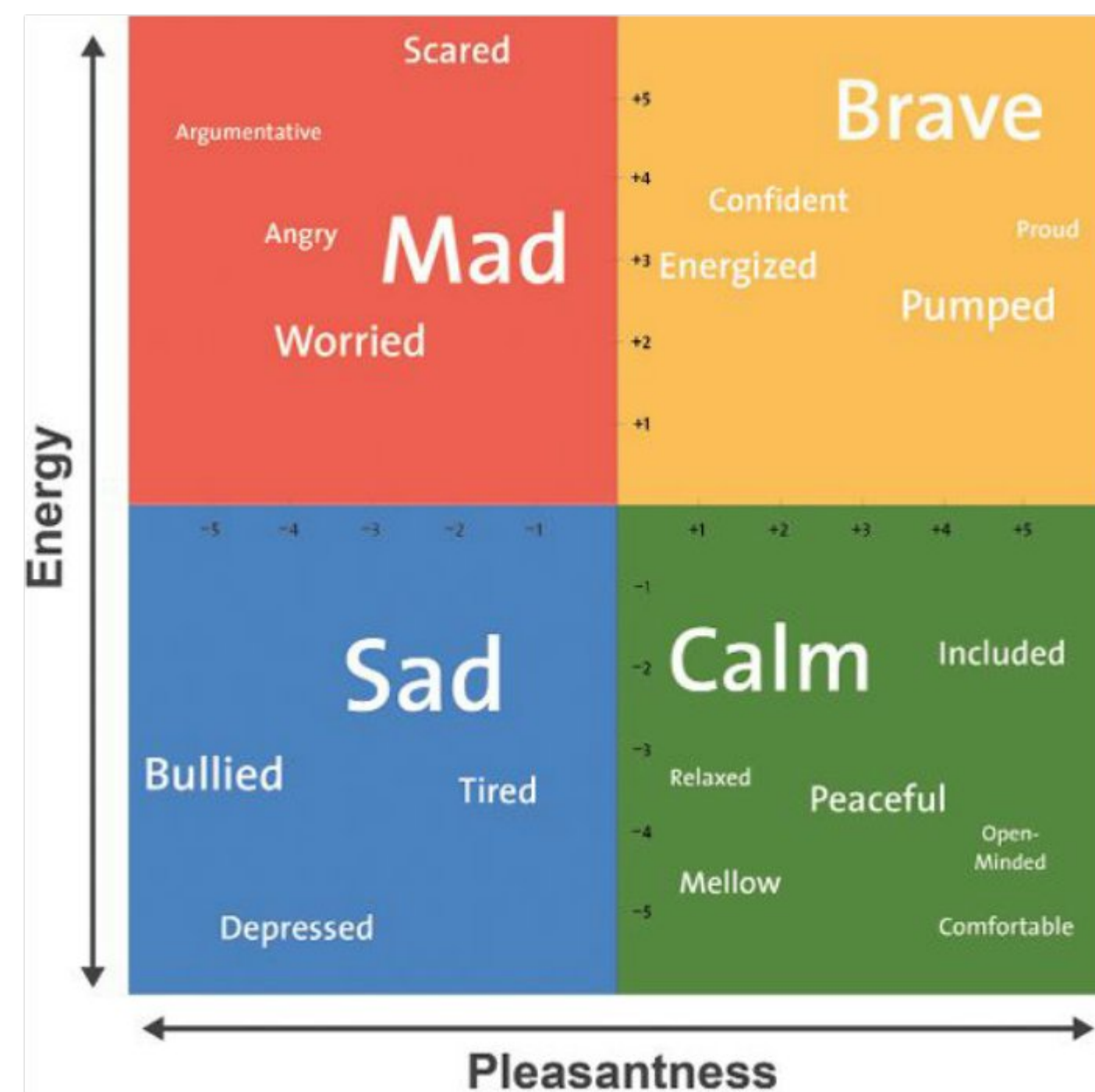# How can I check-in with my students?

Ask them to **share feelings** with a partner, in a small group, or in a check-in circle.

Sample instructions:

- "...compliment someone else."
- "...tell us about your weekend."
- "...explain how you're feeling today and why."

How can I check-in with my students?

Mood meters help students identify how they feel in the moment.

- We have emotions all the time, whether or not we take time to notice them.
- They affect the ways we work and interact with others.
- Recognizing our emotions is the first step to regulating them.

How can I check-in with my students?

Journaling and/or **drawing** is a great way for students to express feelings.

Sample prompts: "Write or draw about…"

- "...how you feel today."
- "...what you did over the holidays."
- "...someone you love."

Play music or a video at the beginning of class. Ask students to journal their feelings about it.

De-escalating distressed students

- **Mindfulness**: Students sit quietly, eyes closed, while the teacher leads them in a breathing and focus exercise until they are calm and in control again.

- **Deep Breathing**: Students close their eyes and count slowly to 10, taking deep breaths.

- **Journaling/Drawing**: Give students a quiet place to draw, color, or journal what they feel before they return to learning.

- **Movement**: Provide space where students can safely move their body, such as walking, doing arm circles, or even jumping.

Warning Signs

- Quieter during class
- Not participating in activities
- Inability to emotionally regulate
- Irritability
- Not completing assignments
- Getting sick more often

- Skipping class
- Being absent
- Running away
- Frequent use of substances
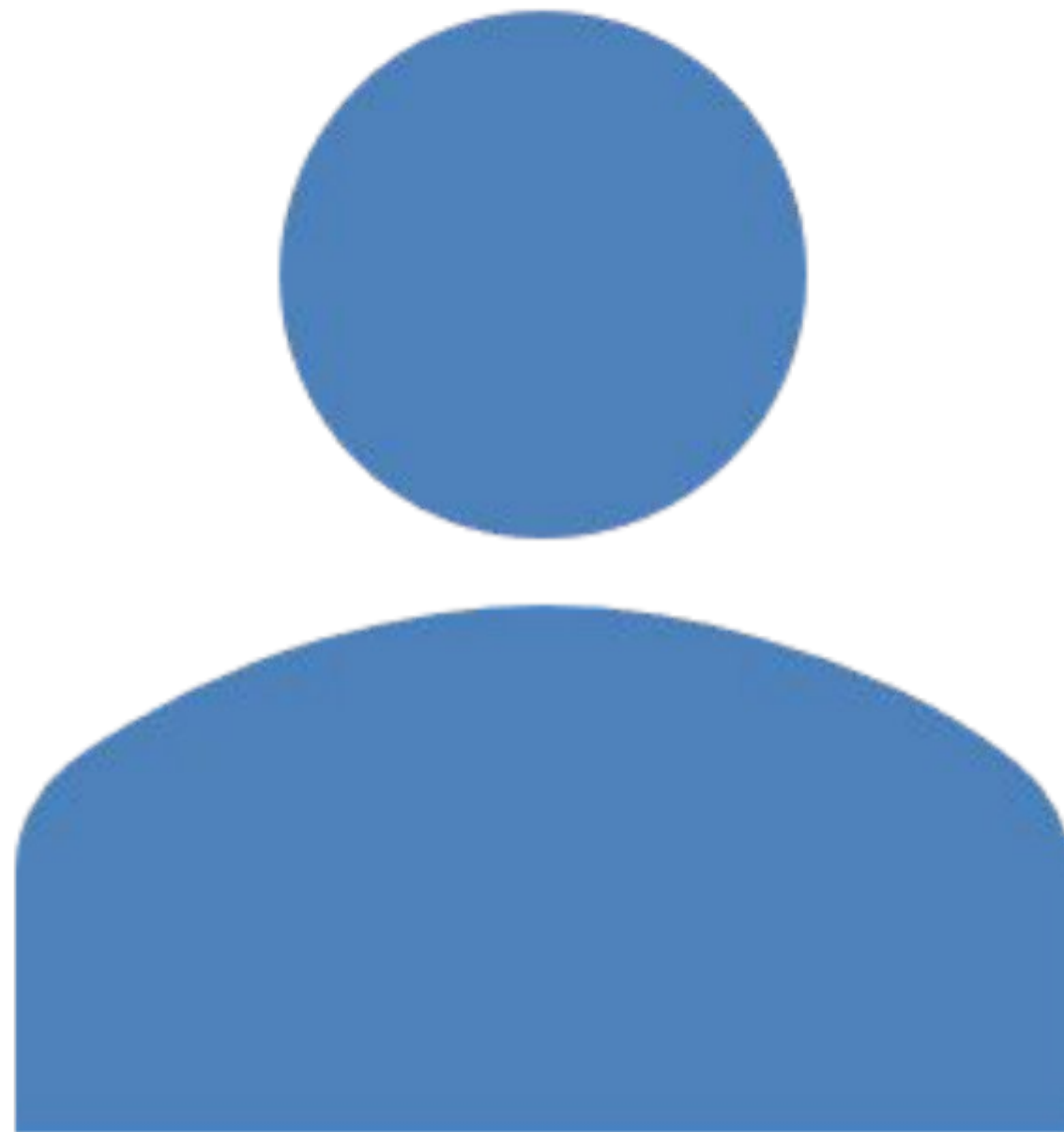- Increased use of riskier drugs
- Gambling

Risk Factors

- Intense feelings
- Feelings of hopelessness, failure, or rejection
- Relationship struggles
- Family conflicts
- Questions around sexual orientation and/or gender identity

- Death of a friend or family member
- Transitioning homes
- Having a caregiver incarcerated
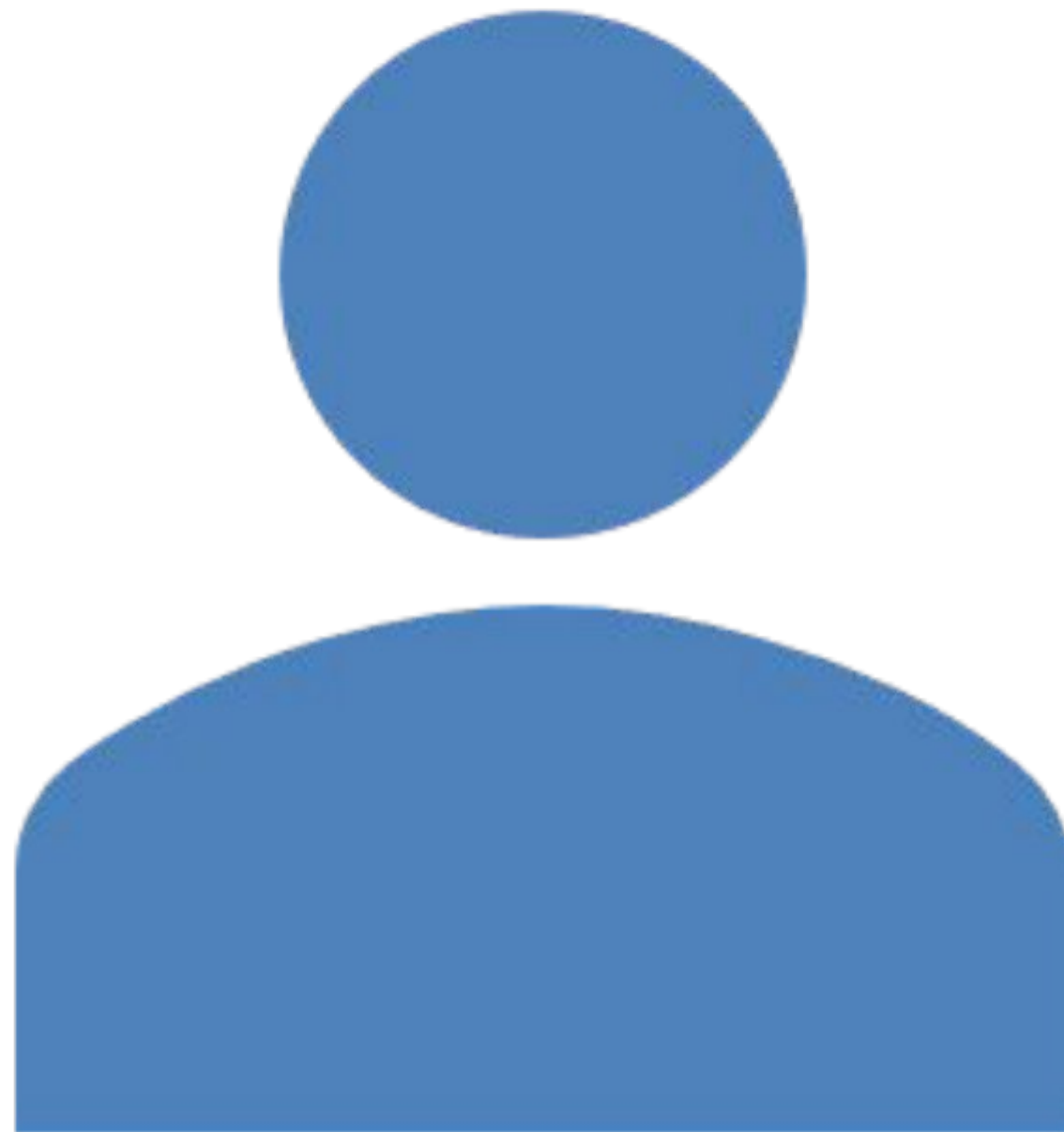- Letting go of future plans

Conversation Techniques

1. **Observable behaviors**

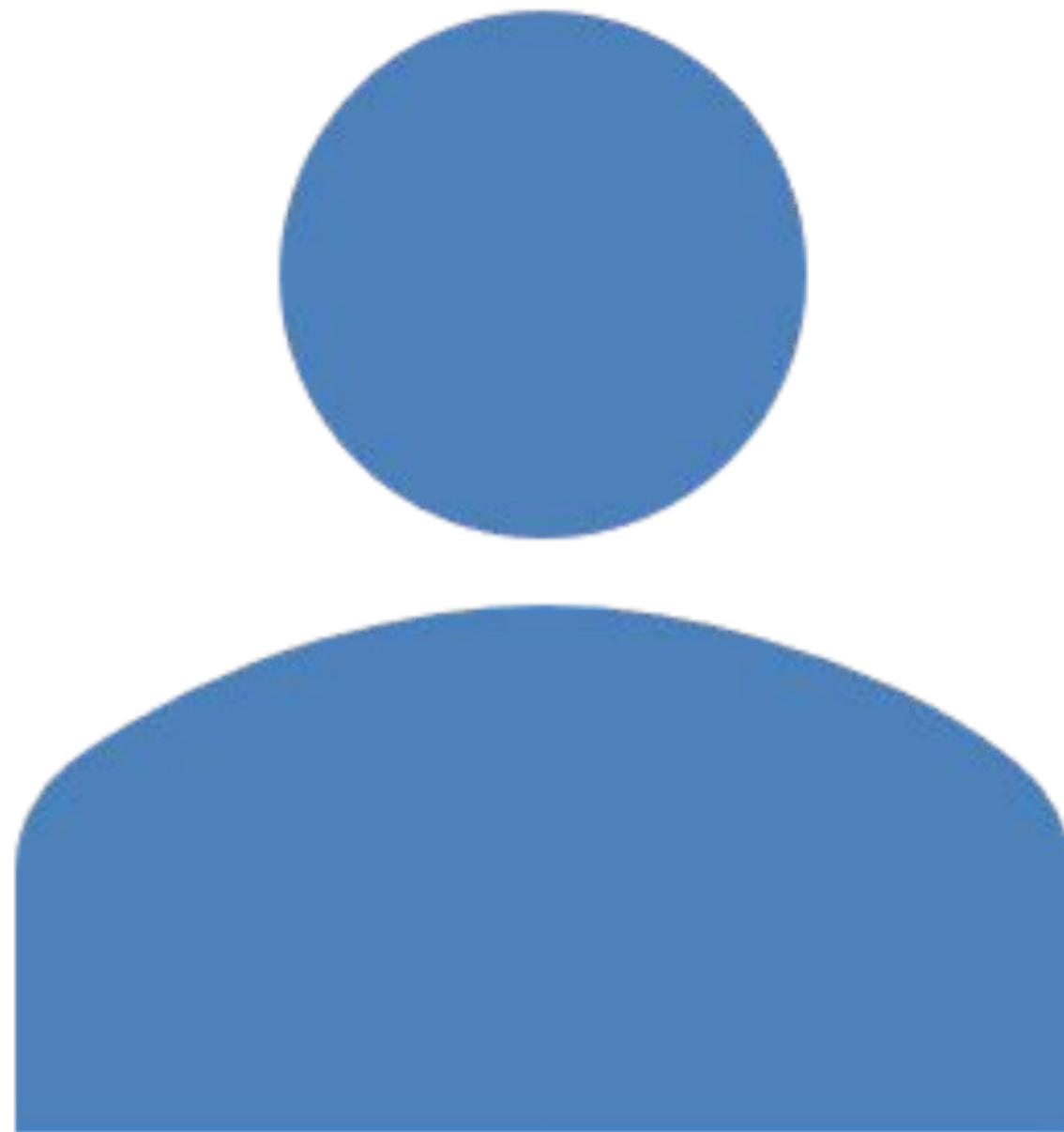2. **Open-ended questions**

3. **Reflections**

Observable Behaviors

- Reduce defensiveness by only mentioning what you observed ("just the facts")

- No judgment or exaggeration

- Don't try to interpret the student's intentions or reasons for the behavior.

- Neutral tone of voice; neutral words

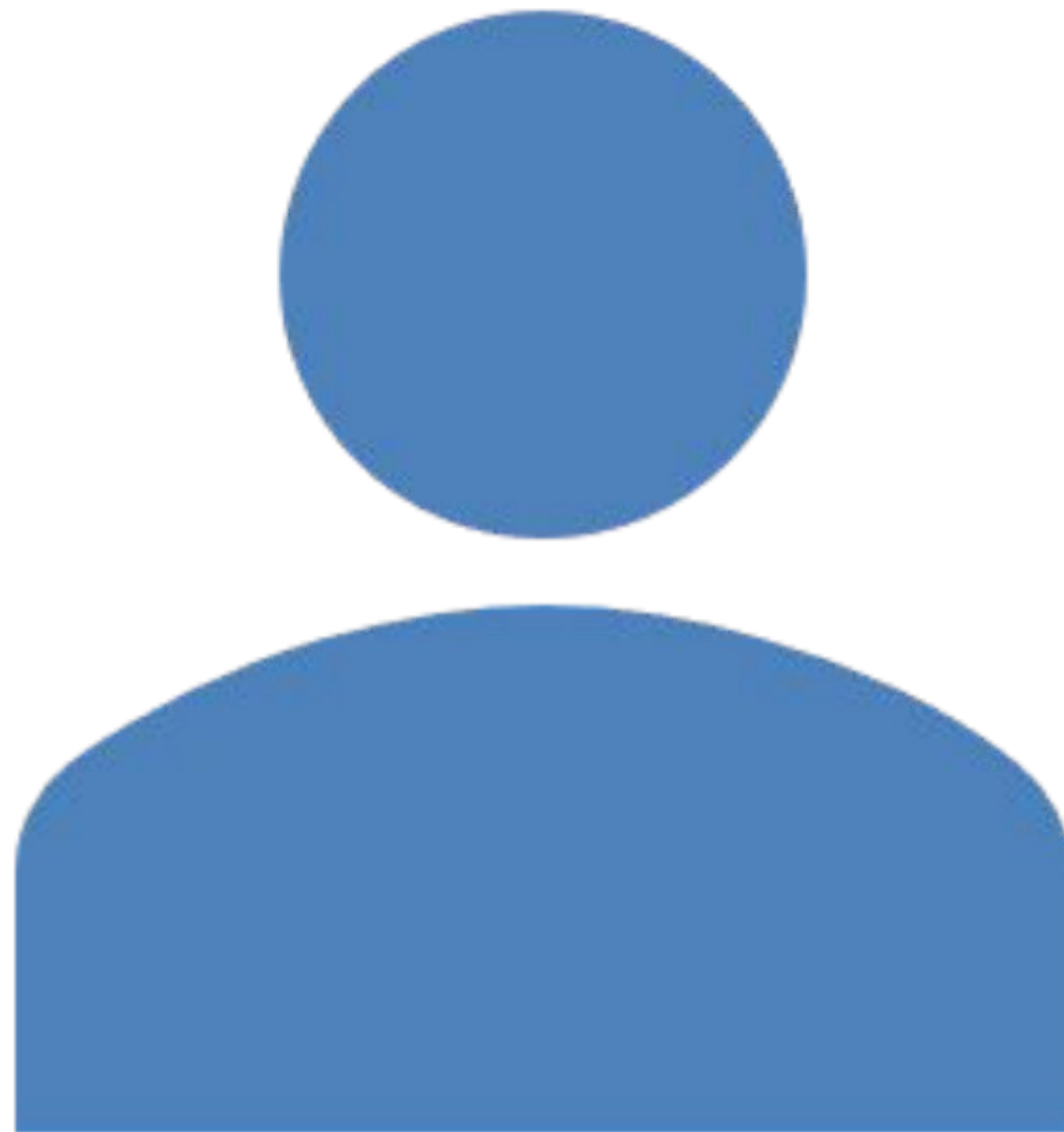- "I" statements: "I think…" "I noticed…" "I saw…"

Open-Ended Questions

- Can't be answered in one word

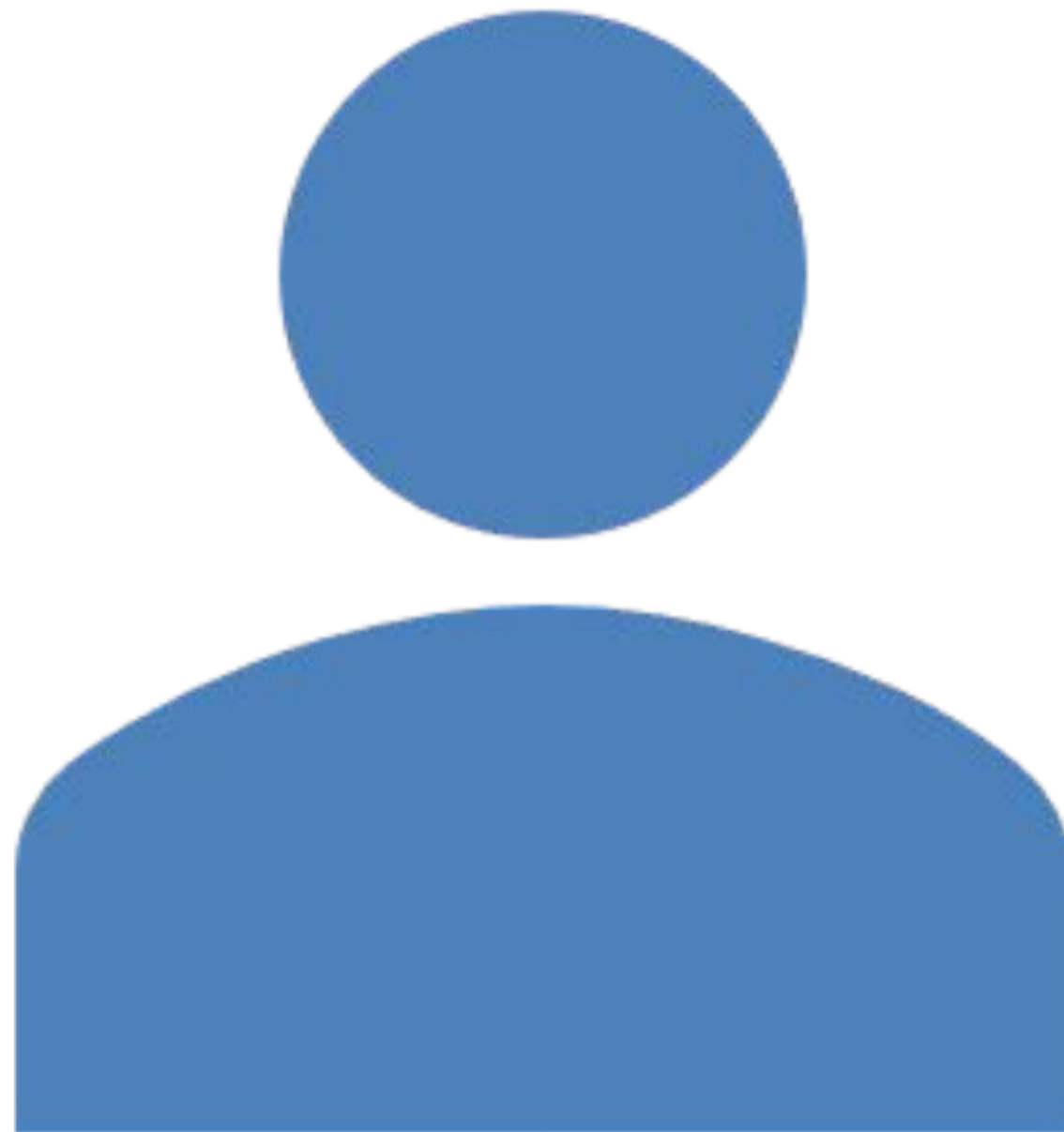- Help students open up about what they're feeling, thinking, and experiencing

Reflections

- Paraphrase what the student is saying, thinking, or feeling

- Reflections help ensure you understand and show you are listening.

- They encourage the student to keep talking.

- "What I'm hearing is…" or "It sounds like…"
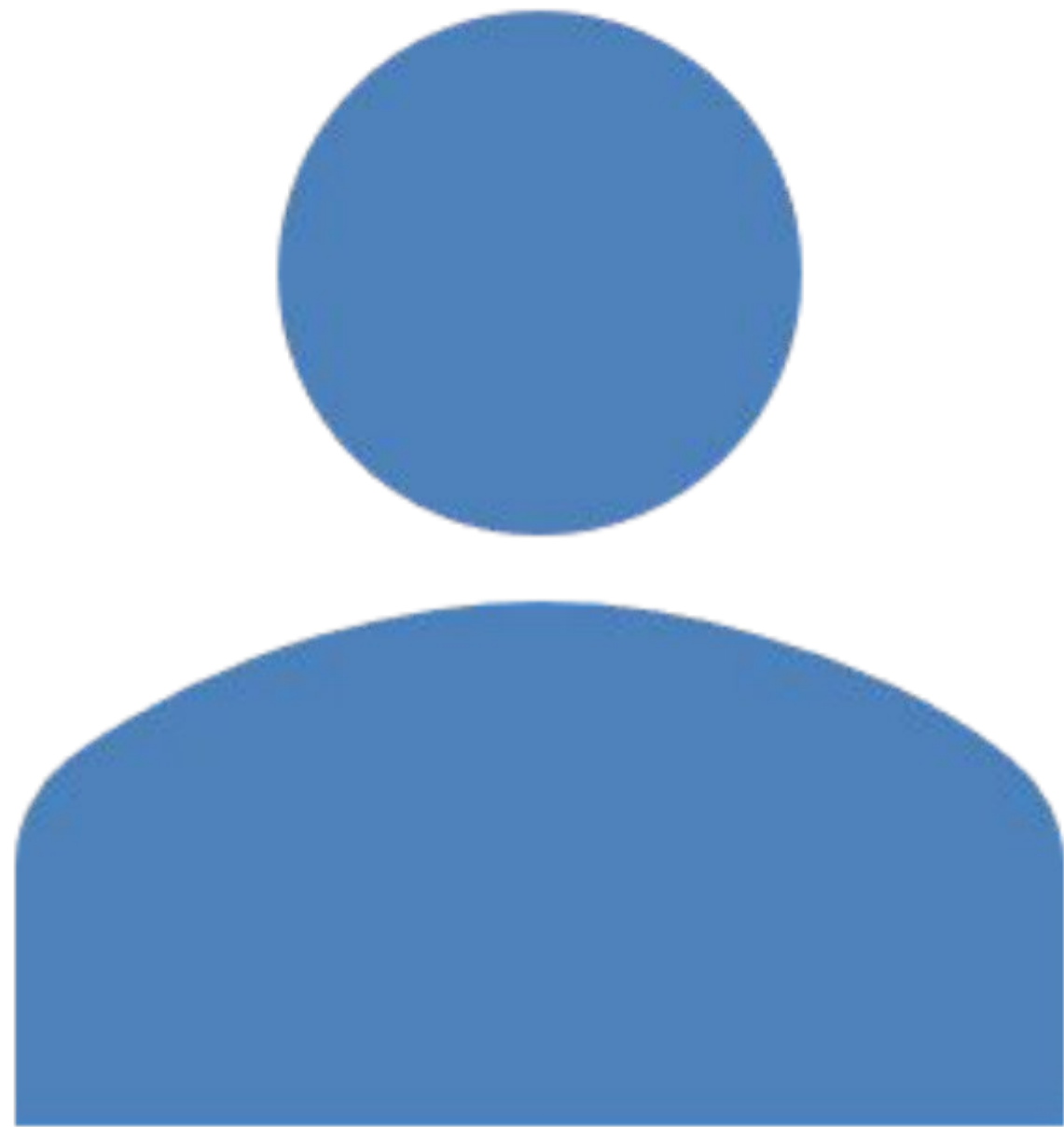
When should I refer?

If worried, err on the side of referral.

- Does the student feel helpless or alone?
- Do they feel like a burden on others?
- Are they seeking revenge?
- Are they experiencing anxiety or pain?
- Do they feel like there's no reason to live?

How do I suggest counseling?

- **Normalize it.** -- "The counselor has helped students with similar issues…" (don't name names!)

- **Discuss advantages.** -- "It can feel good to talk about your feelings." "The counselor can help you meet your goals."

- **Make the introduction.** -- "I can introduce you."

How do I ask about suicide?

✘ You're not thinking about suicide, are you?

✘ You wouldn't kill yourself. I know you're smarter than that.

✔ Are you considering suicide?

What if a student might be suicidal?

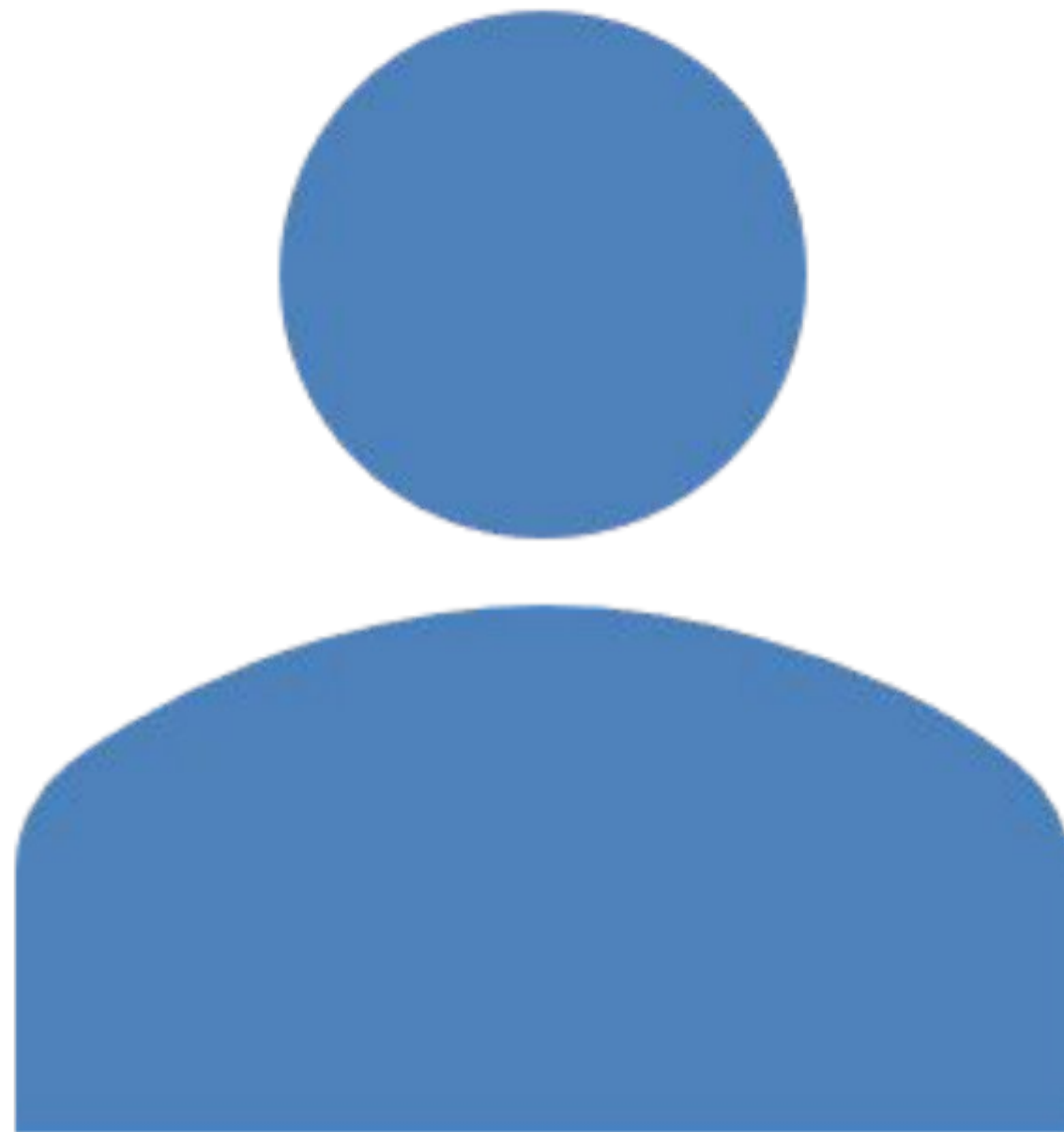1) Gather as much information as the student is willing to share:

- Are they thinking about suicide?
- Do they have a plan?
- Do they intend to act on the plan?
- Do they have the means to act on the plan?

1) Connect the student *immediately and in person* to a supportive counselor, staff member, local service provider, or crisis center.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8522)
24 hours a day, seven days a week

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Role-Play Techniques

1. **Observable behaviors**

2. **Open-ended questions**

3. **Reflections**

Referral Policy

- What is the referral policy in our school? To whom do you make a referral if you are worried about a student in psychological distress that is not deemed an imminent threat to a student's life?

- Is that the school psychologist, counselor, social worker, or nurse?

Insert Local Resources

3, 2, 1 Activity

Q. What are 3 things you learned?

Q. What are 2 questions you have?

Q. What is 1 way you're going to change your practice?

Bridging the Gap

Q. Where You Are: List some of your observations.

Q. Where You'd Like To Be: List some of the qualities of your ideal school.

Q. What It Takes: List some ideas that might bridge the gap between where you are and where you'd like to be. What could happen to bring your school one step closer to your ideal?

Thank you!

The conversations you have
with students can open the door
to them getting the help they need.

If you do this for just *one* student,
you will have made a *difference*.