



EMPATHY CIRCLES

EMPATHY IS AT THE HEART OF TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

Science confirms, our brains are shaped by our relationships. Repeated experiences of being calmed and cared for through secure relationships are what build the brain structures and skills needed to reduce stress, promote well-being, and advance social-emotional learning and growth. That's what Empathy Circles provide.

Empathy Circles are an extension program that is offered to our partners who have already implemented other FuelEd programs. They provide districts and schools with a means of giving their educators ongoing experiential learning opportunities focused on empathic communication.

To change, grow, and heal, it is essential that educators have access to confidential, safe spaces where they feel a sense of belonging, bring their "whole" selves, and receive empathy and acceptance. In Empathy Circles, educators benefit from a continued experience and practice of the healing power of empathy.

In FuelEd Empathy Circles, educators



**Experience a
Safe Space**



**Practice
Vulnerability**



**Co-regulate in
Community**



**Grow &
Self-Reflect**

By fostering a climate of collective care that goes over and above an emphasis on teacher self-care, Empathy Circles provide districts with a means to demonstrate supportive leadership in support of system-wide teacher renewal and retention.

We recommend four, 60-minute virtual circles, hosted over the course of a year.



FuelEd

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Scientific research attests to empathy's healing powers. In order to offer empathy to others, it is essential that we experience it first.

SCIENCE & SKILLS

In FuelEd Empathy Circles, teachers and leaders:

- Practice self-empathy and develop their perspective-taking skills by sharing their problems, feelings, thoughts, needs, and values
- Experience empathy through mirroring and engage in empathic listening, a critical tool for trauma-informed practice
- Improve their ability to self-regulate from states of stress to calm through co-regulation
- Increase their capacity to offer empathy and care to others

In Empathy Circles, FuelEd expert facilitators guide small groups of educators and leaders through an intimate and experiential practice. Educators share their current challenges and stories and are met with empathic responses from their peers. They reflect, develop self-awareness, and build relationships.

**It was a great experience!
I felt supported, heard,
and safe. I grew closer to
my teammates.**

Empathy Circles develop the capacity of educators to take empathy forward into their classrooms, school communities and trauma-informed teaching practices.