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Better emotional social times: An intervention based approach to improving children's social-emotional well-being

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In this interactive paper (poster) presentation, I will illustrate the Better Emotional Social Times (B.E.S.T.) program—an intervention based approach, which supports and educates children who struggle with learning disabilities who also demonstrate underlying emotional instability. In addition to illustrating the program, the poster will also present research data collected from the program over the past 3 years illustrating the efficacy of the program. B.E.S.T. is an approach that is designed to teach and

improve children's overall emotional and psychological well-being through active engagement of self-awareness, self-advocacy, self-knowledge, and coping strategies. The research team developing B.E.S.T. has partnered with the Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region (LDANR) to offer the program in local communities to children with learning disabilities who struggle with self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. At the beginning of each program season, children are administered a pre-assessment by the group facilitator to observe their self-awareness, self-advocacy, and coping skills. The assessment is comprised of knowledgeable strength-based questions, such as appropriate goal setting, self-advocacy level, understanding of assistance, and level of emotional regulation. This detailed assessment

notifies the facilitator the areas the child is lacking in and then can begin implementing useful strategies. Each week the program introduces a new theme through interactive games, role-play, and small-group direct instructions. The various themes are mindfulness, healthy expression of anger, emotional management, gratitude, and coping strategies. The implications of this program have to lead to better academic success, improvement in self-esteem, and emotional regulation. This interactive poster will present the B.E.S.T. program as well as the research around the program's efficacy. The poster is designed for educators, clinician's, researchers, and stakeholders concerned with supporting children who struggle with social and emotional regulation.

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