



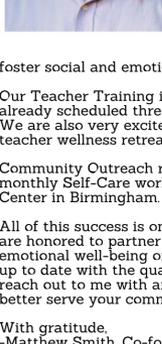
# ACE

Social and Emotional Learning

## NEWSLETTER

Winter, 2017

### Welcome to the first Issue of 2017!



Things are off to a great start as we begin our second year increasing access to Social and Emotional Learning!

In January, we scaled up our in-school Life Skills Education program to a whole school model. We are currently delivering the program to over 840 students at McAdory Middle School and we are slated to deliver whole school programs for both Hudson K-8 in Birmingham, and the DAY Program of Shelby County later this year. We have committed to using the whole school model exclusively as we move forward with in-class programming because research shows that whole school programs are the most effective way to...

foster social and emotional learning. Our Teacher Training initiative continues to grow and we have already scheduled three on-site trainings for the first half of 2017. We are also very excited to be offering the first ever Soul Purpose teacher wellness retreat coming this spring.

Community Outreach remains steady as we continue to provide monthly Self-Care workshops at the Magic City Acceptance Center in Birmingham.

All of this success is only possible because of your support. We are honored to partner with you in investing in the social and emotional well-being of our communities and excited to keep you up to date with the quarterly newsletter. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any thoughts you have on how ACE can better serve your community.

With gratitude,  
-Matthew Smith, Co-founder & Executive Director

#### In This Issue:

**Life Skills Education at McAdory Middle School**  
Learn how ACE is bringing Social and Emotional Learning to over 840 students at McAdory Middle School.

**Meet Brittany Chavarria-Mumpower**  
Learn about the Program Specialist Internship and get to know our newest addition to the ACE team.

**Soul Purpose Educator Retreat**  
A retreat centered on teacher wellness coming this Spring.

**Ways to support**  
New and easy ways to support Social and Emotional Learning.

**Life-Skills Library**  
Sharpen your Life-Skills with this Social & Emotional Learning tidbit.

### LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION AT MCADORY MIDDLE SCHOOL



2017 is off to an incredible start at ACE with the launch of our Life Skills Education program in full-force at McAdory Middle School.

On January 14th we held our first volunteer training which was a huge success. The day consisted of an interactive overview of the Overcoming Obstacles curriculum, a training on effective facilitation, a cultural sensitivity exercise, and a portion on nonviolent crisis intervention and prevention. We had ten of our Life Skills Instructors attend the training. It was a fantastic day spent getting to know one another and learning together.



The following week we hit the ground running, sending our volunteers into the school where they are now collectively leading thirty hours of Life Skills Education per week, reaching over 840 students. The program is being received unanimously, with teachers, students, administrators, and volunteers all providing positive feedback and praise week after week. It is hard to believe we are almost half way through our nine weeks at McAdory. Time is flying and we are having a blast. Stay tuned for more updates about the Life Skills Education Program!

### MEET BRITTANY CHAVARRIA-MUMPOWER



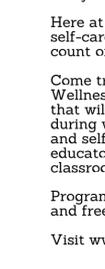
We are happy to welcome Brittany Chavarria-Mumpower to the ACE team as a Program Specialist Intern!

Brittany is serving full-time in a critical role as Program Specialist for the Life Skills Education program at McAdory Middle School. Her responsibilities include volunteer development, curriculum facilitation, and day to day co-management of the in-school program.

Brittany is a college student at the University of Montevallo and is currently working to finish her degree in Human Development and Family Studies.

She hopes to be accepted to the UM Counseling Program in the coming fall. While at Montevallo, brittany has held various positions in both special interests and service learning organizations including Amnesty International and Falcon Scholars in Action as well as being an active member of College Night as a member of the Purple Victory Orchestra. Brittany is expecting to graduate in May later this year.

### SOUL PURPOSE EDUCATOR RETREAT



## SOUL PURPOSE

A weekend of nourishment for Alabama teachers

May 20-21, 2017

[soulpurposealabama.org](http://soulpurposealabama.org)

Most passionate educators agree that while their work is fulfilling and rewarding, it can also be challenging, and the demands of students, parents, and administrators, as well as one's own family, can be overwhelming at times. Teachers tend to give so much of their time, energy, and spirit both in and out of the classroom that they often neglect to care for themselves. Does that sound like you?

Here at ACE we believe spending time rejuvenating yourself is essential. To us, self-care isn't selfish, it's ethical. After all, how can you give your students, who count on you, your best when you're not at your best?

Come treat yourself with a coveted spot at ACE's Soul Purpose Teacher Wellness Retreat. During this retreat you will develop useful self-care techniques that will sustain you throughout the school year. Among the topics covered during workshops will be mindfulness, stress reduction, nonviolent redirection, and self-healing practices. You'll also make meaningful connections with other educators from around the state and learn how to incorporate self-care into your classroom.

Program Costs \$140 per participant; includes meals, programming and materials, and free outdoor camping. Some scholarships are available.

Visit [www.soulpurposealabama.org](http://www.soulpurposealabama.org) to learn more and to apply.

[APPLY TO ATTEND](#)

[SPONSOR AN EDUCATOR](#)

### WAYS TO SUPPORT ACE



#### Support While You Shop

Buy products from many of your favorite stores right on the ACE website! Participating stores include Amazon, AutoZone, FedEx, Target, American Eagle, and many more!

[CHECK IT OUT](#)

#### Planet Fundraiser

Planet Fundraiser is a Birmingham based app that allows you to support ACE through everyday purchases at local stores you already love. All you have to do is download the app and take a picture of the receipt after you make a purchase!

[CHECK IT OUT](#)



#### Become a Monthly Donor

As a Monthly Donor, you provide ongoing support to our team with a regular monthly gift.

It's simple. Each month your contribution is transferred from your credit card or bank account to ACE. You can increase, decrease, or suspend your gift amount at any time using your personal donation management link.

[BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR](#)



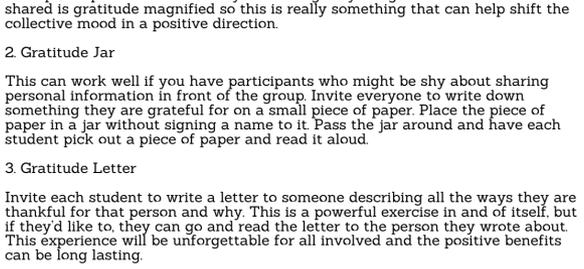
#### Participate in the Book Drive

We are partnering with USBORNE Books and More to build a library of Social and Emotional Learning books for ACE! Visit the facebook event or the website of our consultant, Kelly Thurber, and order books for yourself, for friends, or for us. For every book sold, ACE receives 50% of the sale price to go toward free books for the organization. The facebook event technically ended on Feb 14th but don't worry you can still order books! Check it out!

[WEBSITE](#)

[FACEBOOK EVENT](#)

### LIFE SKILLS LIBRARY



#### Gratitude

There are many known benefits of gratitude. It makes us feel happier and content. It makes us more likable and it improves our health. Studies show that grateful people are generally healthier than ungrateful people. They have less physical pain, they have fewer physical symptoms, and they have better sleep quality.

#### Five ideas for sharing gratitude in the classroom

1. Gratitude Circle

Each participant is invited to say something they are grateful for. Gratitude shared is gratitude magnified so this is really something that can help shift the collective mood in a positive direction.

2. Gratitude Jar

This can work well if you have participants who might be shy about sharing personal information in front of the group. Invite everyone to write down something they are grateful for on a small piece of paper. Place the piece of paper in a jar without signing a name to it. Pass the jar around and have each student pick out a piece of paper and read it aloud.

3. Gratitude Letter

Invite each student to write a letter to someone describing all the ways they are thankful for that person and why. This is a powerful exercise in and of itself, but if they'd like to, they can go and read the letter to the person they wrote about. This experience will be unforgettable for all involved and the positive benefits can be long lasting.

4. Gratitude Journal

Each student can have his/her own small book or pieces of paper or it can even be done electronically, invite them to write down 3-5 new things each day that they're thankful for. To make the exercise more potent, students can write down why they're grateful for each thing. Keep it up for at least 2 weeks.

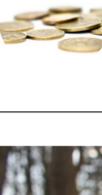
5. Gratitude Group

This can be done in different ways:

In a circle, each person can be invited to say something they're grateful for about the person to their right. Or you can put each person's name into the gratitude jar, pass it around and invite each person to pick a name and say something they're thankful for about that person.

[Click for Full Lesson](#)

This Life Skills Library lesson comes from educator, Catharine Hannay. You can find her website at <http://www.mindfulteachers.org>



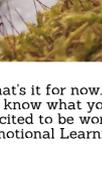
#### Join as a Volunteer

Volunteers are essential for the work we do at ACE. We have a wide range of service opportunities including office administrative tasks, event planning and support, committee service, in-class program facilitation, and more. Join today to stay up to date on how you can make a difference!



#### Sign Up as an Educator

Empowering local educators to incorporate SEL in the classroom is a pivotal step in ensuring the social and emotional well-being of our communities. Sign up as an educator to receive info on upcoming workshops and events. We are here for YOU!



#### Contribute

Your contributions make ACE possible. Social and Emotional Learning has proven to make a positive difference in communities all over the world and now is the time to bring those positive outcomes home. Join us by donating now. No amount is too big or too small.

### HAPPY WINTER WISHES! :-)

That's it for now. Feel free to leave comments on our Facebook and Twitter, let us know what you think and what you'd like to see from ACE! We are so excited to be working with you to ensure a brighter future through Social and Emotional Learning!

VISIT [WWW.ACEALABAMA.ORG](http://WWW.ACEALABAMA.ORG)



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

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