



3 Constants Keep 5 Radical Minutes Simple Yet Effective

5 Radical Minutes has three constant strands, all based in solid research. The critical difference in this program over others is that we've chosen these three means of connecting students and staff and combined them into a straight-forward format.

1. **Paired Activities.** Structured, paired activities bring students together with all others in the classroom over time. As a result, *all* classmates get to know one another. Designed to foster acceptance, compassion, and kindness, paired sharing connects youth who may feel isolated or not liked with fellow students by revealing what they have in common with others.
2. **Community Circles.** Classrooms use structured circle activities to further build community. Some circles are geared for fun and laughter. Others address a range of emotions, issues, and attitudes and are designed to enhance classroom climate. (When something has gone awry between a student and others in class, Restorative Circles can be used to support the student needing to make amends.) Because most circles focus on community building, students learn how to create that “safe container” for conversations that are more difficult, and student behaviors need to be addressed.
3. **Stress Management Coping Skills.** Stress prevents students from doing their best on tests. Additionally, stress leaves students vulnerable to impulsive reactions and short-sightedness. Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) has a 40-year history of research. [Robert Sapolsky's](#) research on the debilitating effects of stress brings meaning to the relief it is for students to be mindful of the present. Students learn to break the cycle of ruminating on the past or worrying about the future. This contributes significantly to operating as a trauma-informed school.

We suggest that all adults in the building join in these 5-minute classroom activities as often as is feasible. This participation significantly increases students' trust in adults' willingness to listen, their desire to support youth, and their acceptance of and care for students.