Brett Cease

**Lesson Plan (for High School in a Social Studies and Civics course):**

A significant amount of the challenges that come with working with mental illness or substance abuse issues is related to the stigma that is often attached to discussing their presence in our lives. The goal of this assignment will be to help bring information closer to students that can often feel distant or intimidating and connect MI and SA research to their immediate lives, positively impacting their future thoughts and decisions.

The beginning of the unit will cover information similar to what was in the content area for this topic.  After more underlying information on a variety of Mental Illness and Substance Abuse is presented and discussed in class, students will be provided a list of community organizations/resources that deal with MI and SA issues (chemical dependency counselors, social work groups, homeless shelters, etc.).In groups they will begin a project to research an organization of their choosing and eventually present this information as well as their own personal connection to the class.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will demonstrate understanding of the goals and purposes of mental illness and substance abuse social services that exist in our community through presenting information as a group.

Students will demonstrate the ability to work in groups and share responsibility while conducting research, interviewing professionals, and creating a class presentation.

Students will reflect on their research and articulate connections between the information discovered and how it applies and informs their own lives.

**Activity:**  After receiving the list of community organizations, students will be responsible for organizing into small groups and beginning to research an organization that they choose. Groups can research their organization through online websites, phone calls to organization personnel (with the teacher’s permission and supervision), interviewing other informed family/friends, etc.

Each group will need to answer the following questions in their presentation (which should be between 5 to 10 minutes total, involve a Web 2.0 tool (with the teachers help) and each group member must be involved in the research, in the writing, and in presenting the material):

1. What services does this organization provide? *How does it connect to MI or SA issues…*
2. What clientele does this organization serve primarily? *Reflections on why this is the case…*
3. How does this organization receive its funding? *Details of who and what are the challenges of this type of funding…*
4. Provide an example of  one personal story/testimony of someone with MI or a SA issue  this organization has helped. *Group reflections on what they learned from this in their own lives.*
5. Does this organization have a stigma in our community? *Describe why it might for some…*
6. Each group member will share one thing they discovered about SA and/or MI in our area from researching this organization.

**Assessment:**

33% Group members will be responsible for assessing each other’s involvement in the activity through a rubric provided at the beginning as a guide to help guide participation.

33% Teacher assessment of each individual’s involvement through the same rubric provided for groups member’s assessment

33% Teacher assessment of group’s presentation, based on quality of answers, depth of connections made to personal life, the level of being on-topic and engaging the audience, and the integration of the Web 2.0 technology into the presentation.

1% Wow me!

References:

University of Michigan’s Youth Depression and Suicide Prevention Program (2012).  Information retrieved online February 15, 2012 from <http://www.psych.med.umich.edu/ydspp/research.asp>.

Children’s Defense Fund (2011).  Minnesota Poverty Levels. Information retrieved online February 15, 2012 from:<http://www.childrensdefense.org/>.