

HeartMath® Institute

expanding heart connections

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HeartMath® Institute Launches Smart Brain Wise Heart™ e-Learning Program at Boys & Girls Clubs

Boulder Creek, Calif., November 17, 2015 – Members of nine Boys & Girls Clubs across the country soon can *get in sync* and start working on their Inner Weather Reports with the HeartMath® Institute's new Smart Brain Wise Heart™ program.

Smart Brain Wise Heart for 9- to 16-year-olds, is a social and emotional e-learning program the Boys & Girls Clubs will begin offering members in 2016. The program was funded by the generous support of HeartMath supporters that understand the importance and lifelong benefits of living from the heart.

Trained instructors will help children learn to synchronize their mental, emotional and physical systems with techniques and exercises designed to help them lower stress and improve mental focus and decision-making abilities. (Participation in the program is voluntary.)

“These kinds of skills are not taught so much at home these days, and only sometimes at school,” says Smart Brain Wise Heart developer Jeff Goelitz, an education specialist and senior trainer for HeartMath Institute. “Given how fast, noisy and, at times, stressful our world has become,” Goelitz said, “these skills are increasingly essential for effectively dealing with the change, uncertainty, disappointment and complexity today’s children face.”

Goelitz said Smart Brain Wise Heart helps to “improve behavior, self-identity, relationships and even academic performance.” He said the program incorporates HeartMath’s research on how children learn, interactions between the heart and brain and ways to increase resilience and heart *coherence*. (Coherence is basically an optimal state in which all of the body’s systems function harmoniously.)

The **Smart Brain Wise Heart** program was piloted at the Boys and Girls Club in Santa Cruz, Calif., and additional locations are already signed-up for the program and will be provided at varying times next year for Boys & Girls Clubs in Phoenix, Ariz.; Bakersfield and Los Angeles, Calif.; Austin and La Masa, Texas; and a rural club in Wisconsin. The program currently is free to Boys & Girls Clubs and local chapters interested should contact HeartMath to request the program for their chapter.

“We’re very excited about sharing this program with our kids and staff,” said Dr. Wonhee Kang, DMIN, Sr. Director, Fairfax County Region Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington. “We see the **Smart Brain Wise Heart** program as an important platform for helping the kids we serve learn valuable life skills needed to succeed in today’s changing world. HeartMath has done a fantastic job developing this program and making it easy for kids to learn and develop these needed skills.”

At the heart of each Smart Brain Wise Heart lesson are simple self-regulation tools developed by HeartMath, a world leader in the physiology of emotions, stress and performance.

Program lessons and homework emphasize the importance of children getting into the habit of practicing the tools and every day. “How is the weather like your emotions?” the program guide directs leaders to ask

participants in one lesson. “Our emotions are lightning fast,” leaders will explain. “In one day, we can go from sunshine to a rainstorm, hurricane and back.”

Participants learn how to do an “Inner Weather Report” in the lesson. They identify emotions such as anger, happiness, sadness and caring and discuss how these can affect their “inner battery,” or energy levels.

Each child fills out an Inner Weather Worksheet, assessing his or her personal inner weather by identifying actual emotions he or she has felt recently. For homework, children are asked to pay attention during the coming week to the wide range of emotions they and others experience. Then in the next session, everyone will discuss the emotions they observed.

The goal of the lesson, of course, is for participants to learn how to change, or improve their inner weather by self-managing their emotions. Instructors teach them how to do this using two simple tools, Heart-Focused Breathing™ and the Quick Coherence® Technique. Children learn in what kinds of situations the tools can be used in their daily lives: for instance, when they are angry at someone or feeling sad about things that happen in life.

The Smart Brain Wise Heart program for Boys & Girls Clubs has four 45-minute lessons lead by trained instructors and six follow-up sessions. The program uses whiteboard animation, posters, interactive technology and interactive exercises. There are six follow-up sessions for discussion of personal goals and Inner Weather Reports and additional time to practice tools and use HeartMath’s emWave® technology.

All participants begin learning about the [emWave Pro](#)® in the first lesson. This computer-based software program guides users in self-regulating their emotions and building coherence. It includes games in which players work at increasing their coherence levels by maintaining smooth, or balanced heart rhythms as they play. Scientific studies show smooth heart rhythms are good indicators of higher levels of coherence – mental, emotional and physical well-being.

Everyone starts using emWave Pro in the remaining lessons and in the six follow-up sessions, which are lead by teen or adult mentors in some locations. During these sessions, personal goals and Inner Weather Reports are discussed and more time is spent practicing the tools and using the emWave Pro.

Parents or guardians are involved in the program through regular correspondence with program staff and their children’s homework assignments. Boys & Girls Club members who attend the four lessons and six follow-up sessions will receive certificates of completion at the end of the program. **For Boys and Girls Club staff that are interested in learning how to bring the program to their region, an email can be sent to: bgcinfo@heartmath.org.**

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About HeartMath® Institute

The HeartMath Institute is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit research and education organization dedicated to teaching the principles of heart-based living around the world and promoting global coherence by inspiring people to connect with the intelligence and guidance of their hearts. HMI has been conducting scientific research on the physiology of emotions and the science of the heart for more than 23 years. HMI was founded in 1991 by Doc Childre, a world leader in stress reduction and emotion-management HMI research. Through its research and education divisions, the institute has developed practical tools, educational programs and services – collectively known as the HeartMath System – for the mental, emotional and physical benefit of children through seniors without regard to their social, economic or cultural status. HMI research has been published in numerous peer-reviewed journals such as *American Journal of Cardiology*, *Stress Medicine*, *Preventive Cardiology*, *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, *Integrative Physiological and Behavioral Science* and *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*. For more information about IHM Education and Professional Development programs visit www.heartmath.org.