

Social, Emotional and Ethical Learning (SEEL) - High School

Mount Madonna School's commitment to Positive Character Development is demonstrated by the number of classes and experiences dedicated in part or in full to Social, Emotional and Ethical Learning. The principles of character development permeate all the curricula at the school, including academics. In addition, the SEEL program dedicates many classes and experiences almost exclusively to character education.

Adulting 101 (Grade 12)

Students study and practice the art of being an adult! They learn and practice basic to intermediate levels of cooking and kitchen methods, create and manage a school-wide compost system, develop an educational garden center, learn how to manage their finances, and have a better understanding of student loans and investments. They'll take a deep dive into the complexities of child development and learning from birth to five years, practice basic car maintenance and problem solving, work with theater production by gaining sewing and textile construction skills, and practice basic first-aid and CPR in emergency situations.

Beginning of the Year Learning Journey (Grades 9-12)

The high school spends the first week of school on a challenging whitewater rafting and open-air camping trip. Students are challenged to face their fears and learn to rely on their community of teachers and peers for support, as they engage with the outdoor environment on and along the American River.

Catalina Environmental Leadership Program (Grade 9)

As freshman, students spend a week in the spring at the Catalina Environmental Leadership Program. Students are asked to face their fears on a high ropes course, a climbing wall, and underwater in close encounters with marine animals. Students step out of their comfort zone and develop their capacity for understanding others in leadership activities and challenging travel situations without technological devices.

Performing Arts (Grades 9-12)

Along with providing a platform for expanding skills in all aspects of musical theatre, Performing Arts at Mount Madonna presents a dynamic opportunity for students to engage in collaborative community building. Students learn not only about theatre, but also about the importance of respect, responsibility, accountability, mutual support and openness to one another. In the first quarter, after participating in song share, students engage in the audition process, including prepared dance, songs, scenes or monologues. The class provides an opportunity to discover individual strengths, talents and confidences. Even more importantly, students work together in a larger context to develop community and to foster positive qualities of teamwork, support, and respect for each other. Theatrically, this is a course less about acting, dancing and singing in isolation and more about putting truth on stage.

Yoga (Grades 9-12)

Students in Yoga class learn how to use the techniques of breathing, meditation, and Yoga postures to increase concentration and relaxation. Students learn self-control and self-awareness while developing strength and flexibility. Yoga is offered to high school students as an elective.

Values in World Thought (Grades 11 and 12)

"Values" is a capstone course that spans grades 11 and 12, and incorporates trips to Washington D.C., and South Africa or India. Students prepare for interviews with world leaders by studying their written work, and analyzing it through reflective dialogue, journaling, presentations, and essay writing. Past interviewees include Nobel Laureates F.W. de Klerk, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and the Dalai Lama. Students spend time with other schools and non-profit organizations around the world in the program. Curriculum materials include A World of Ideas: Volumes I and II by Bill Moyers. The aim of the Values in World Thought program is to develop capacities of self-awareness and to support an ongoing inquiry into the values that inform our actions and our life purpose. Students are expected to strengthen their ability to engage in positive and mutually beneficial relationships with each other and with their communities.