

SUPPORTING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AT HOME

A guide for parents and families

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WHAT IS SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The development of social and emotional skills to support students in building empathy for others, an understanding of their own emotions, and ability to appropriately express their emotions.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has become a key component in education across the U.S. While development of social-emotional skills is important in the classroom, learning about relationships, empathy, and feelings doesn't stop there. Parents can support their children in building social-emotional skills through encouraging thinking about other's feelings, modeling positive relationship behaviors, and encouraging appropriate expression of feelings.

Through this guide, parents and children can engage in activities to learn more and practice building relationship skills, social awareness, self-management and awareness, and responsible decision making.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Social emotional learning is not just for children! Everyone can benefit from strengthening self-awareness, self-control, and social skills like communication and empathy.



Respect



Empathy



Self-Awareness



Goal-setting



Social skills



Problem-Solving

Why is something like "self-awareness" important?
It can enhance your understanding of your strengths and challenges and support the development of self-confidence. As you identify growth areas, you can increase your skills through practice.



Building social emotional learning skillsets include things like:

- Setting and achieving your goals
- Recognizing how you are feeling
- Building understanding and empathy for others
- Making healthy choices
- Developing positive relationships
- Using listening and problem-solving skills to manage conflicts

APOLOGIES & ACCOUNTABILITY



WHY ARE APOLOGIES IMPORTANT?

Apologies are an important part of building healthy relationships that are built on trust and respect. Being able to apologize shows those that we care about that we take **accountability** for our actions, and that we want to commit to changing hurtful behaviors, even if they were unintentional. Being able to apologize and take accountability comes from a place of building empathy and care for those around you- two very important factors in a healthy relationship!

WHAT IS ACCOUNTABILITY?

Accountability is taking responsibility for your words and actions, and the impact they have on others.

OUR FAMILY'S APOLOGY GUIDELINES

Something that all families can benefit from is having a reminder about the importance of taking accountability for one's actions/words. This empowers your family to build strong and trusting relationships. Here is a quick guide that you can keep in your home to remind each other that mistakes happen and apologies are important!

Stop and think about what you want to say. Practice before you share.

Open your heart! Show empathy and care for the person you are apologizing to.

Responsibility goes a long way. Take responsibility for your actions.

Resolve together. Talk about how you can do better next time and listen to suggestions from others.

You're not alone! We all make mistakes and apologizing is a good start to making our family stronger.

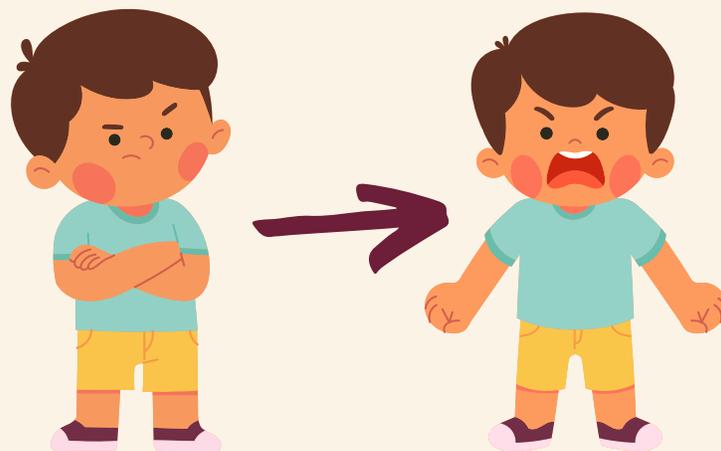
NAMING AND MANAGING BIG FEELINGS

Name Emotions & Know the Signs

Teaching your child about each emotion and what it looks like for them can help them recognize and learn to communicate about intense feelings. When your child is in a good mood, ask them to talk through their “phases” of each emotion. For example, how did they show they were frustrated before they had a temper tantrum?

What did their body feel like as they became more frustrated?

You can even ask them to draw their experience or practice using their words- "I feel ___ when ___"



Offer Help & Listen

Knowing the earlier warning signs of intense feelings means you can offer help sooner. Offering help at the earlier stages can diffuse the intensity. It also helps to talk about what support looks like for your child for each emotion. When people have intense feelings, they can feel like they aren't being heard. Listening to children express their emotions can make them feel validated and supported. You can offer love and empathy by affirming to your child that you love them and understand that they are struggling with something. This helps you to reinforce that you are here to listen when they are calm and ready to talk.

While you listen, use reflective statements like “I heard you say you feel ___ because _____. I'd like to help you work through that. I want you to know I love you and I am here when you are ready.”

NAMING AND MANAGING BIG FEELINGS ACTIVITY

Use this activity page to discuss feelings by practicing naming them and connecting bodily reactions to the emotions experienced.

When I am...

Sad	Confused
Angry	Lonely
Frustrated	Bored
Hurt	Annoyed
Happy	Tired
Nervous	Excited

(Add your own)

My body...

Feels hot	Gets chills
Has a fast heartbeat	Cries
Smiles	Laughs
Shakes	Stomps
Feels tingly or electric	Yells
Has a warm face	Gets quiet
(Add your own)	Has many thoughts

After identifying how certain emotions make your body feel, discuss which responses from others allow you to be most supported when you have these emotions!

When I am...

Sad	Confused
Angry	Lonely
Frustrated	Bored
Hurt	Annoyed
Happy	Tired
Nervous	Excited

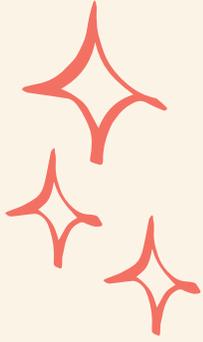
(Add your own)

I Need...

Space from others	Deep breaths
Food/drink	Exercise
A hug	To draw or write
To talk it out	To take a shower/bath
To rest or sleep	To hit a pillow
To listen to music	To shake out my body/dance

(Add your own)

Self-Talk & Why it matters



Self-talk are the unspoken thoughts that run through our heads. These thoughts can be healthy or unhealthy.



When we experience uncomfortable or strong emotions, our self-talk can sometimes become harmful. *"How could I be so dumb? What is wrong with me?"*

Instead of letting negative thoughts run unchecked, we can take control of our inner conversation by looking critically at what we are saying to ourselves. Just like there are things we say or think to ourselves about a situation that can make us feel worse, there are things we can say or think that can help us calm down.

We call these things healthy self-talk.

Healthy Self Talk sounds like:



I will learn from this.



Next time, I will make sure to ask for help when I need it.



I can't control bad things from happening, but I can control how I take care of myself.



I am growing at my own pace.

Unhealthy Self Talk sounds like:



I'm a failure.



Things will never get better for me.



Bad things are always happening to me. I must be a bad person.

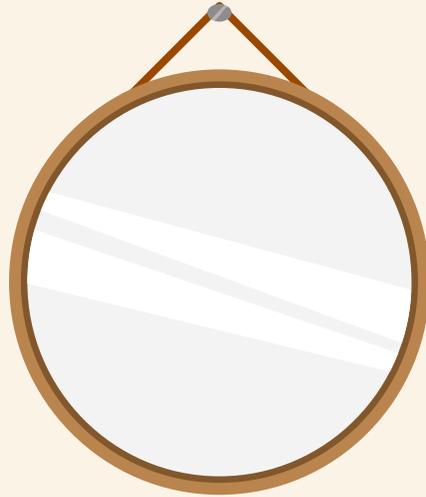


I am so behind everyone else.

✨ Mirror Work ✨

The primary purpose of mirror work is to develop self-love, self-care, and a more meaningful relationship with others.

Talking positively to yourself can be uplifting and self-empowering.



The main benefit of talking to yourself positively is that it can help reduce stress.

✨ How to do Mirror Work ✨



How to have an honest conversation *in 7 Steps*



1 Ask for a time to talk when you're both available. Ideally within a week or two so it doesn't build up.

2 Think about how you feel, your thoughts, and opinions before you start the conversation. If you need to write your thoughts down or ask someone what they think first then take that time as well.



3 Try to put yourself in their shoes. Ask questions if something doesn't make sense, and try to repeat back in your own words what you understand. Pay attention to their expressions, word choices, or tone of voice, as well to body language/non-verbal cues like crossing arms/legs, posture, eye direction or hand movements.

4 When it is your turn to speak, express yourself! Ask for what you need or want. If your opinions or thoughts are taken in ways you did not intend, be curious around the impact and explore whether there's something you can phrase differently.



5 Discuss next steps together. Reflect on where you agree and where you agree to disagree. If a compromise cannot be reached that's ok! The goal is hearing each other out so that you can reach closure.



6 Honor the agreement or compromise faithfully. It's important because this shows you listened and that you care about other person's feelings.

7 As needed, recheck-in. Reflect on the improvements or progress made between you both and ask if there's anything that could be modified to better address each person's concerns.



Notes:

- Your time is valuable! Healthy relationship characteristics include when someone values and respects you as well as your time. This includes listening, and making good faith efforts towards mutual resolutions.
- Use active listening skills. Be as fully attentive as possible and avoid doing other things that may take your focus off the conversation. If you feel like you're not being listened to and have to repeat yourself too much then ask to speak another time when the other person might be able to be more present.
- It can be challenging for everyone to express themselves if there are strong reactions while one person is speaking. Work together to determine the best way for everyone to be heard.
- Remember you're both human, it's ok to make mistakes because it's how we learn. No one is perfect.
- Remember to thank each other! It takes bravery to reflect on needs and speak honestly to advocate for yourself. Encourage each other to share in the future as well.

WHAT'S BEST FOR ME?

There are many factors that can affect the decisions you make every day, such as: how you're feeling, possible outcomes, parents, friends, school, laws, or television and more.

Everyone makes many decisions every day, some decisions are easy and some more difficult.

Quick Tips!

- When making decisions, remember to think about your goals, values, strengths, skills, likes, and dislikes.
- Take the time to get the information you need.
- Try and think of as many options as possible.
- If you need more information or help, ask someone you trust!
- It is important to think through and weigh options and consequences before making decisions.

In the story below, Chris tries to decide what's best for her at her new job. Here are some questions to help you reflect.

- Who made a decision in this story?
- What did Chris consider when making a decision?
- What were the decisions?
- What was the result of the decision?
- What were the other options?
- What are the emotions behind each decision?



WHAT'S BEST FOR ME?



Think about what is happening your life. Think about your relationships with friends, what might happen in the future, or anything else that you need to make a decision about. Or choose from the following scenarios:

Now it's your turn! This activity will guide you through the process for making a decision and how to check in with yourself, which can make tough decisions easier.

- You have a crush on your best friend's boyfriend/girlfriend.
- The grades that you have earned in science are low, but you really want to be a doctor.
- You want to join the soccer team, but none of your friends are on the team .

What is the decision that has to be made?
What could be the cause?

What are possible options?

What can be the result?
List as many as you can!

How does this option make you feel?

Blank space for writing possible options.

Blank space for listing results.

Blank space for describing feelings.

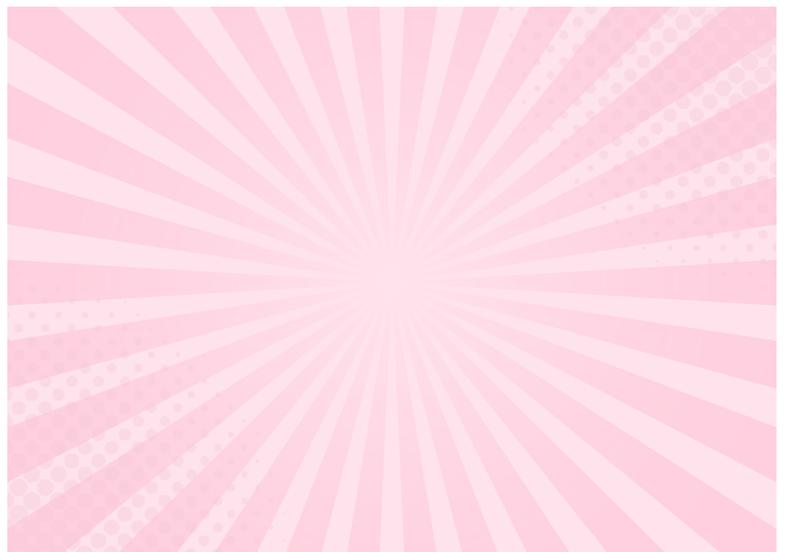
Blank space for writing possible options.

Blank space for listing results.

Blank space for describing feelings.

Do you need to ask for help or more information? Who will you ask?

How did it feel to decide? Draw a picture or write about it!



What happened after you made the decision?



JOE TORRE

**SAFE AT
HOME.**

Thank You!

Thank you for your continued support of Safe At Home's mission to end the cycle of violence!
For more information about supporting healthy relationships, building empathy and social skills, and many more topics and activities, please visit joetorre.org/resources

