



Supporting Social Emotional Learning at Home

Families have an important role in supporting [Social Emotional Learning](#) (SEL). Children are constantly learning from those around them, and parents and caregivers are in a natural role of teaching their children through daily interactions and routines. By maintaining open communication and using [SEL concepts and skills](#), parents can promote these important life skills and help their child grow social emotional skills at home. The information below shares ideas for families to use to promote social emotional well-being. Many families already practice a number of these concepts. Examples are trips to the grocery store, meeting new people, helping a family member or neighbor, or playing board games. Strengthening your child's current SEL skills at any age, as well as growing new skills, can promote positive outcomes for adulthood.

1. Take Care of yourself.

Show (or model) what you want your children to do as they are watching and learning from you. *Examples:* You make eating healthy and getting enough sleep a priority for feeling better and say "I can think so much clearer when I get a good night's sleep."

2. Make acts of service and kindness a family activity.

This means treating others with respect and kindness both in and out of the home. It might be a planned or unplanned activity to go out of your way and be thoughtful toward others. *Examples:* Donate toys no longer used to a charity, compliment someone at a store, or help another family member with homework or a project.

3. Create routines and expectations.

Routines provide safety and security for children. Communicating expectations allow them to understand rules in the home. Children will test routines and rules, but consistency will help them understand consequences and parents can provide positive feedback for adhering to routines and expectations. *Examples:* Make a chart or list of expectations for family members and talk about it. Create a visual schedule of steps in the order needed to get ready for school in the morning.

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4. Talk about how you are feeling and how you are managing the feelings.

Use strength-based and specific words to say what you are feeling and how you are managing the feeling to help children sense and label their own feelings. This is needed to develop stronger self-regulation skills. *Examples:* “I’m frustrated I forgot milk at the store, I need a minute,” not “I am so stupid, I forgot the milk.”

5. Communicate the power of “YET.”

This is the way we think, or a mindset, about things we want to do or accomplish, and implies we have the ability to improve and reach our goals. “Yet” also replaces the word “can’t” in a more positive and strength-based way. *Examples:* “I haven’t learned to drive yet,” versus “I can’t drive.” “I haven’t graduated yet,” versus “I can’t graduate.” “I haven’t learned my spelling words yet,” versus “I can’t learn these spelling words.” “I can’t be first in line for lunch today (yet) but next week is my turn.”

6. Promote regulating emotions.

This means knowing how to cope and calm ourselves down if we are upset or becoming upset. Talk about what you do, and have your child think about some of the things they can do when they are upset (such as go for walk, color, get a drink of water, listen to music, take a few deep breaths). Using a Zone of Regulation chart for your family at home which includes feelings emojis, child faces posters, or rating scales can be helpful. This will depend on the age and ability of your child. *Examples and free downloads:* [Visuals for emotions](#), [Zones of Regulation-Emotions Visuals/Handouts across ages \(free downloads\)](#); see the Resources section for more.

Resources



- [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#)
- [Michigan Department of Education, Social Emotional Learning](#)

Resources for promoting SEL:

- [A Heart for All Students: Zones of Regulation Review & Emotional Regulation Free Printables](#)
- [All Calendars: Action for Happiness](#)
- [Centervention: 95 Supplemental Social Emotional Learning Activities](#)
- [Joe Torre Foundation-Safe At Home. Supporting SEL at Home](#)
- [Nationwide Children’s: Using Social Emotional Language: How to Talk to Your Kids about Feelings](#)
- [Ohio State University, Family Engagement Center, Encouraging Positive Behaviors at Home-A Chart for Families](#)
- [PBS, Social-Emotional Learning, SEL @ Home](#)
- [Social Thinking: Free Strategies, Zones, Tools, Visuals, Charts, Handouts](#)
- [University of California-Berkeley, Greater Good Science Center Happiness Calendar](#)
- [University of California-Irvine \(UCI\), Children’s Hospital of Orange County \(CHOC\) Mindful Breathing: Five Finger Breathing \(video\)](#)