

Tip Sheet: *Explicitly Teaching Social and Emotional Skills with School-Age Children*



SE Skills to Focus On

- Responsibility
- Self-awareness
- Relationships
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness

To teach Responsibility, try these activities:

- Walk through the steps of problem-solving in practice situations. “What would you do with this problem?”
- Teach students a method to use when a problem arises (e.g., stop, calm down, identify the problem, consider the alternatives, make a choice, try it out, re-evaluate).
- Model good decision making.

To teach Self-Awareness, try these activities:

- Provide age-appropriate vocabulary words. (e.g., Happy, sad, hurt, mad for young children. Elated, blue/down, rejected/disappointed, angry/irate for older children).
- Discuss age-appropriate physical and emotional cues of a certain feeling/emotion (i.e. the physical cues that help them know when they’re feeling angry, happy, sad, etc.).
- Ask questions like, “what happens when we get angry?”

To teach Relationship Skills, try these activities:

- Teach a lesson or lessons on how to resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Teach lessons on how to listen to someone else’s words.
- Use collaborative work groups to reinforce the importance of working together to solve problems and achieve goals.

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To teach Self-Management, try these activities:

- Lead discussions about positive, age-appropriate ways we can express our feelings (e.g., put our feelings into words, draw a picture or write about how we feel, create an art or media project, show our feelings through dance).
- Teach effective, age-appropriate self-management techniques (belly breathing, yoga, counting to ten, self-talk, relaxation exercise, mental rehearsal).

To teach Social Awareness, try these activities:

- Discuss the expectations and demands of different settings, e.g., how we dress and behave for school, places of worship, formal ceremonies, hanging out with friends.
- Routinely talk about how others feel in different situations.
- Build on the diversity in the classroom by having students share their different cultural perspectives on situations.

Some things to think about:

All children need support as they learn to interact with others; either in groups, or a one on one situation. Consider your role in the learning process as you help teach and model these skills.

“As you help children build their social emotional competency skills, look for ways to build into their environment some opportunities to connect, to feel important and to find ways to share and communicate with others.” – *Caring Communities for School Aged Children*; www.nmels.org

You may do this by reflecting on the following ideas:

- Building a positive relationship with the children.
- Offering choices in activities.
- Adding individualized or personal touches to the program.
- Celebrating the small achievements of each child.
- Modeling what you want to see.
- Building in opportunities to practice socializing and working together.

Ideas borrowed from CASEL: <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>; these ideas and more can also be found though our UNM ECSC Training *Caring Communities for School Aged Children*: www.nmels.org.