

**Social Emotional Learning (SEL) activities help instill qualities in our children that they need throughout life. Below are some of the skills that can be improved with a conscious emphasis on SEL:**

- Impulse control skills.
- Better cooperation with peers and authorities.
- Better openness and communication skills.
- Easier empathy processing and the ability to empathize with people they don't know.
- Better self-esteem and a better self-worth.
- The ability to feel and show gratitude without embarrassment.

**Even though schools have added SEL to the curriculum, as a parent/guardian, you can play an important role in teaching these skills as well. Please see below for SEL activities that you can do at home to support your child's Social and Emotional Learning.**

### **Charades**

Charades is a great way for children to learn how to relate to others using nonverbal cues. This will not only help them develop a better understanding of body language, but it will also allow them to read the moods of the people around them. Create a variety of categories- be sure to include playful categories such as movies, sports, songs, etc., as well as SEL related categories such as non-verbal facial expressions, reactions to scenarios, etc.

### **Meditation**

If your child is old enough to sit up, they can begin learning to meditate. Of course, your child may not take it seriously at first, but over time, they will learn to use this time to focus their mind. This will help them become more aware of the people around them and their surroundings. There are plenty of free meditation sessions for both kids and adults on Youtube. See below for a few available sessions. Remember, mediation does not always mean a deep concentration session. Meditation can be fun, using visualization to imagine happy places, dream cars, future homes, career, etc.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64QzBuhsyuk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWOHcGF1Tmc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBnPlqQFPKs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtYIOiXyrsE>

## Gratitude Activities

### SIMPLE GRATITUDE EVERY DAY

Model practicing gratitude. Emotions are contagious. Express thanks to your families, friends, neighbors, and strangers, and ensure that your children see you behaving gratefully.

Encourage “gratitude” thinking. For example, if your child wins the spelling bee, help her identify all those who helped along the way. Suggest she say “thank you” in person or by writing a note to someone who made a particular difference.

Share gratitude daily. Make time in the morning or at dinner for the family to share at least one thing for which each person is grateful. This can be balanced with one thing that was difficult that day but starting with gratefulness reinforces positive connections and resources.

Reinforce grateful behavior. Watch for grateful behavior or language in your child. Identify it when it happens and reinforce him for it. For example: “That was thoughtful of you to thank your friend for helping you with homework. Good for you. I'm sure it made him feel good and made your friendship stronger.”

### FUN AND EASY ACTIVITIES

**Make a Grateful Sayings Poster.** Get a piece of poster board and write "For This I Am Grateful" in big letters across the top. Ask everyone in your family to write or draw something on the poster for which he is grateful. It can be something big (like getting an A on a test or winning the soccer championship) or something small (like getting to stay up an extra 15 minutes or taking a fun walk with Dad). Ask each person to put his name or initials under what he writes or draws. Keep the poster up all month so that everybody can continue to add to it. By making this a month-long activity, you are showing your family that gratitude is something we experience every day, if we make the time to notice it! At the end of the month, bring the poster to the dinner table and take turns reading aloud what was written.

**Keep a Good Stuff Journal.** Most people spend far more time thinking about how they can correct something that has gone wrong, worrying about something that is about to go wrong, or simply replaying a failure or setback, than they do basking in what has gone right and being grateful for their everyday blessings. You can help your child notice what goes well in her life and build gratitude by keeping a Good Stuff Journal. Analyzing why events go well, what the positive events mean to us, and how we can create circumstances that enable more good things to occur, encourages a consciousness of blessings and gratitude and promotes optimism.

**Every night, set aside a few minutes with your child and write down three positive events from the day.** These things can be relatively small in importance (“My mom made my favorite dessert tonight”) or relatively large in importance (“My leg has finally healed and my cast got taken off”). The positive events can be things that your child brought on (“I got an A on the test”) or that she witnessed in others (“My sister helped my brother with his homework because mom was busy”). The positive events can also be things noticed in nature (“A cool looking bird was sitting outside my window”).

Next to each positive event that your child lists, write a reflection (at least one sentence) on any of the topics below:

- Why this good thing happened
- What this good thing means to you
- What you can do tomorrow to enable more of this good thing
- What you learned from taking the time to name this good thing
- What ways you or others contribute to this good thing

## Self-esteem Worksheet

**List the three characteristics of each:**

**Positive Self-esteem**

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**Negative self-esteem**

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**Finish the following sentences:**

**I am** \_\_\_\_\_

**I am good at** \_\_\_\_\_

**I like learning about** \_\_\_\_\_

**My favorite thing about myself is** \_\_\_\_\_

**When I look in the mirror, I think** \_\_\_\_\_

**I feel positive about** \_\_\_\_\_

**I am not** \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to try** \_\_\_\_\_

**I am someone who** \_\_\_\_\_

**The best thing about me is** \_\_\_\_\_

**I care about** \_\_\_\_\_

## Self-Esteem Wall

The self-esteem wall is a great way boost your child's self-esteem. Have your child post at least one post-it note on the wall each day. More if they would like. Have them write something they accomplished on each sticky note.

The key to this game is that for every note they write for themselves, **they must also write something positive about someone else in the house.** This teaches them to take pride in their own actions, but also take notice of what others do as well.

You can also use a piece of paper (use template below) or poster board and have children simply write (instead of using sticky notes). Parents/Guardians can also get in on the fun!

