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8 Practical Things Families Can Do at Home to Support Social-Emotional Learning

Because teens with good SEL skills become successful adults.

 [Kimberley Moran](#) on April 7, 2020



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With kids home for the foreseeable future, social-emotional learning (SEL) may be some of the best at-home learning kids do. We know SEL skills are key to our students' success in life, but not everyone knows how to explicitly teach these skills. Here are some practical activities that support social-emotional learning at home. We invite you to share them with your students' families.

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Praise effort instead of ability.

A teen or tween who works hard and persists through a tough assignment or test deserves loving recognition—even if the grade isn't great. Try saying, "I know you worked really hard on that assignment. It wasn't easy, but you learned a lot and I'm proud of you."



Ask the right questions.

Let's show kids how to build relationships and communicate better by listening more. Try to lecture less and ask more questions. The following conversation starters may get your child talking:

- Where do you want to travel?
- What qualities do you look for in a best friend?
- What would your perfect day consist of?

Make solutions more interesting.

Teens and tweens tend to be obsessed with fairness. Try using interesting ideas to help solve unfair issues. For example, in "I Cut, You Pick," one person gets to cut the piece of cake (or pizza or other food) and the other person gets to choose which one to eat.

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Let them make more decisions.

Kids can't make wise decisions if they never have the chance to practice, and they won't learn to choose wisely if they don't experience the consequences of failing to do so. Leave lower-consequences choices in their hands. For example, should your teen take cooking or painting as their elective this year? Let them decide.

Teach problem-solving strategies.

Making responsible decisions means choosing constructive solutions in the face of a challenge. Help teens break down big problems into smaller units. What's the very first step? Show them how to take their time in solving a problem. First approaches don't always work.



Engage in more family activities.

Playing board or card games is a great way to get kids talking. If that's too much for a shy adolescent, play a video game together or simply sit and watch a movie—their pick. Inviting them to help with routine physical tasks also fosters cooperation and teamwork.

Talk about relationships.

Discuss your friendships and family relationships, including the mutual respect and understanding that protects those bonds. If that's too personal for your teen, look to other sources of content to color the conversation: binge-watch a TV series together and talk through the dynamics.

For more ideas to encourage families to support social-emotional learning at home, download our free parent guide.



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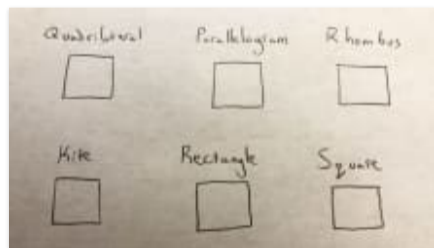


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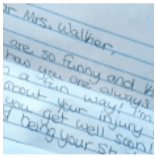
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