



**DAVENPORT**  
Community Schools  
*GROWING EXCELLENCE*

# Family Learning Guide

*Social Emotional Learning for  
Ninth through Twelfth Graders*



# What is Social Emotional Learning (SEL)?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults:

- *Understand and manage emotions*
- *Set and achieve positive goals*
- *Feel and show empathy for others*
- *Establish and maintain positive relationships*
- *Make responsible decisions*

## Why do schools care about SEL?

Children's emotions and relationships affect how and what they learn, and how they use what they learn in school and at home. Emotions can allow us to have an active interest in learning. However, unmanaged stress and poor regulation of impulses interfere with attention and memory and contribute to behaviors disruptive to learning.

Learning is a social and interactive process. It takes place in collaboration with one's teachers, in the company of one's peers, and with the support of one's family. Relationships are the engine of learning.

# What are Iowa's Social Emotional Competencies?

The Iowa Department of Education has organized social emotional learning around five core competencies identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

*At the ninth through twelfth grade level, these are:*

Competencies	Learning Targets
<b>Self Awareness</b>	Identifying Emotions Accurate Self Perception Self Confidence
<b>Self Management</b>	Impulse Control Stress Management Self Discipline Self Motivation Goal Setting Organizational Skills
<b>Social Awareness</b>	Perspective Taking and Empathy Appreciating Diversity and Respect for Others Civic Engagement
<b>Relationship Skills</b>	Communication Social Engagement Relationship Building Teamwork
<b>Responsible Decision Making</b>	Identifying Problems Analyzing Solutions and Solving Problems Evaluating and Reflecting Ethical Responsibility

# Self Awareness

## What is Self Awareness?

Self Awareness is the ability accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. It is the ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism and a "growth mindset."

## What Should Ninth–Twelfth Graders be Able to Do?

### Identifying Emotions

- *Recognize emotions as personal indicators of response to situations.*
- *Analyze emotional states that contribute to or detract from the learner's ability to make decisions.*
- *Summarize how thoughts and emotions affect behavior.*

### Accurate Self Perception

- *Identify personal qualities and interests.*
- *Categorize personal skills, strengths and interests the learner wants to develop.*
- *Select priorities for personal improvement that builds on strengths.*
- *Differentiate how personal qualities influence choices and success.*

### Self Confidence

- *Express positive beliefs in one's ability to achieve and contribute.*
- *Examine conditions that influence self-efficacy.*
- *Critique their abilities that lead to high quality results and outcomes.*
- *Create strategies focusing on positive affirmations.*

## What can Families do at Home to Help Children Develop Self Awareness?

***Do check-ins with your child.*** Check in with your child several times per week to ask him/her how he/she is feeling. Consider what your child might need to do to improve their emotions, and help guide him/her toward a possible solution.

***Have open conversations about stress and its impact.*** Stress is inevitable, so learning to manage it is a necessary skill. Discuss the stress that your child is facing and provide solutions to decrease stress.

***Provide feedback about strengths and interests.*** High school is a time when adolescents figure out who they are and what they want to pursue. They may also lack the confidence to pursue their goals. Support your children and guide them toward pursuing their strengths and interests. Ask them helpful questions that will help them reflect on their own strengths.

***Encourage a growth mindset.*** Sometimes your child may feel like he/ she will never improve his/her skills. If you encourage a growth mindset, your child will learn that he/she can accomplish their goals with hard work. For example, instead of allowing your child to say, "I'm not good at algebra," teach him/her to say, "Algebra is difficult, but I will study and work hard to accomplish my goals."

***Promote self-efficacy.*** Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to perform specific tasks, like driving, public speaking, studying, etc. Self efficacy is an essential component of self-confidence. Encourage your children and help them improve on skills in which they do not feel confident.

# Self Management

## What is Self Management?

Self-management includes regulation one's emotions, stress management, self-control, self-motivation, and setting and achieving goals.

## What Should Ninth–Twelfth Graders be Able to Do?

### Impulse Control

- *Identify productive self-regulating strategies to process emotions and reframe thoughts and behaviors.*
- *Demonstrate productive self-regulation strategies to manage emotions and reframe thoughts and behaviors.*

### Stress Management

- *Identify stressors that result in physical or emotional responses.*
- *Demonstrate healthy practices that can minimize or utilize stress and promote physical and mental wellness.*
- *Communicate the need for assistance to manage stress as needed.*

### Goal Setting

- *Create, monitor, adapt, and evaluate goals to achieve success in school and life.*
- *Identify internal and external resources necessary to overcome obstacles in meeting goals.*
- *Reflect on process and outcome of goal setting.*

### Organizational Skills

- *Select the appropriate supplies and tools needed for completion of tasks and/or projects.*
- *Manage materials, space, time and responsibilities effectively.*

### Self-Discipline and Self-Motivation

- *Demonstrate the ability to stay actively engaged and persist in activities.*
- *Demonstrate the ability to delay immediate gratification.*
- *Model the ability to adapt and overcome obstacles.*
- *Demonstrate the ability to take initiative.*
- *Demonstrate the ability to work independently.*

## What can Families do at Home to Help Children Develop Self-management?

**Promote goal setting.** Setting long-term goals like attending college, going to trade school, or joining the workforce are important aspects of one's future. The earlier your children set goals for themselves, the longer they have to prepare for them. Talk to your children about some of their goals for the future, and the steps necessary to getting there.

**Discuss self-management techniques** like belly breathing, yoga positions, counting to ten, self-talk, relaxation exercises, and/or mental rehearsal. These techniques help minimize stress and promote physical and mental wellness. They are useful when your child is experiencing stress.

**Discuss how healthy decisions can reduce stress.** Stress is a normal human experience. However, there are decisions that we can make in our lives to reduce the stress that we experience. For example, if your child is feeling stressed because he/she is cramming for an exam, it would be useful to have a conversation with him/her about it. Explaining to him/her that studying in advance would decrease his/her stress levels can help him/her make a more responsible decision the next time.

**Discuss strategies for balancing time and responsibilities.** High school students tend to have a lot of responsibilities between schoolwork, extracurricular activities, and jobs. This can make it difficult for them to manage their time wisely. Encourage them to prioritize, keep a calendar, and understand when they are at their limit.

# Social Awareness

## What is Social Awareness?

Social awareness connotes perspective-taking; empathy; respecting diversity; understanding social and ethical norms of behavior; and recognizing family, school, and community.

## What Should Ninth–Twelfth Graders be Able to Do?

### Perspective–Taking and Empathy

- *Demonstrate awareness of other people's emotions, life experiences and perspectives through a cross-cultural lens.*
- *Evaluate and interpret social cues for how others feel and respond constructively.*
- *Recognize and validate the other person's feelings and perspective.*
- *Demonstrate awareness of different cultures and a respect for human dignity.*

### Appreciating Diversity and Respect for Others

- *Demonstrate an awareness of differences and respect for human dignity.*
- *Articulate contributions of various social and cultural groups.*
- *Demonstrate willingness to honor diverse points of view.*
- *Demonstrate consideration for the feelings, wishes, cultures, languages histories, rights, and traditions of others.*
- *Work effectively with those who are similar and different from oneself.*

### Civic Engagement

- *Recognize the role of volunteerism in the functioning of our society.*
- *Identify strategies to improve the community.*
- *Demonstrate advocacy skills.*
- *Model active engagement in family, school, and community projects and events.*

## What can Families do at Home to Help Children Develop Social Awareness?

**Discuss empathy.** Empathy is the ability to put ourselves in another person's shoes and view the world from their perspective. Empathy can be discussed in a variety of ways, especially in relation to current events. Ask your children about their feelings on a situation and how they would feel if they experienced it personally.

**Identify ways that your family can influence change.** Change can be done on a smaller scale, like volunteering at a food bank. It can also be done on a larger scale by influencing change in policies, agencies, and institutions that affect one's community. Both of these strategies are crucial and benefit the community. Brainstorm ways that your family can influence change and take action.

**Learn about diversity.** There are many resources available that discuss diversity. There are television shows, books, and various organizations that are committed to educating people about different cultures. Watch a show or read a book as a family, and encourage your children to learn more about it independently as well.

**Model respect for all people.** Respect can take many forms, whether it is respecting differences, honoring another person's point of view, or working effectively with people who are different from ourselves. A big part of how adolescents learn to interact with others is through their parents. Model respect in these ways, and your children will be better equipped to interact effectively with people who are both similar and different from them.

**Explore stereotyping and discrimination.** Stereotypes and discrimination lead to the mistreatment of marginalized groups. Discuss what stereotypes and discrimination are and how they impact our lives. These conversations can be difficult, but they lead to more knowledge and better treatment of people.

# Relationship Skills

## What are Relationship Skills?

Relationship skills connote building relationships with diverse individuals and groups, communicating clearly, working cooperatively, resolving conflicts, and seeking help.

## What Should Ninth–Twelfth Graders be Able to Do?

### Communication

- *Interpret, infer and use facial expressions, body language, gestures, and tone to impact interactions.*
- *Demonstrate attentive listening and responding to the needs, wants, and ideas of others.*
- *Demonstrate ability to adapt to various forms of communication in formal and informal contexts.*
- *Deliver and receive compliments, feedback, and constructive critique, responding appropriately.*
- *Demonstrate cooperative behaviors in a group.*
- *Recognize impact of a cell phone/tablet or other electronic forms on social interactions.*

### Social Engagement

- *Initiate and engage in social interactions with peers and adults.*
- *Analyze social situations and environments, including social media, and respond in ways that build/sustain healthy relationships.*
- *Recognize that the same norms and behaviors for face-to-face interactions apply to interactions through social media.*
- *Demonstrate consideration for social norms of other cultures and traditions.*

### Relationship Building

- *Demonstrate personal qualities and decisions that contribute to a healthy relationship.*
- *Identify and apply strategies for handling relationships that are not safe, healthy, or positive.*
- *Express interest and appreciation for others.*
- *Create and maintain positive and supportive relationships with adults and students of diverse backgrounds and cultures.*

### Teamwork

- *Demonstrate collaborative skills with others.*
- *Acknowledge others' diverse strengths and contributions to a group/team effort.*
- *Present multiple techniques when providing feedback to others.*

## What can families do at home to help children develop relationship skills?

**Discuss healthy relationships.** Adolescents are in several kinds of relationships, including with parents, friends, and a significant other. These relationships may look different, but they should all be healthy and safe. Discuss aspects of healthy relationships like boundaries, trust, communication, and honesty.

**Discuss social media.** Social media is a large part of many high school students' lives. It can be a fun way to communicate with friends and family, but its misuse also has many consequences for their future. Talk to your children about using social media safely. Teach them to share minimal information, use clean language, and only talk to people they personally know. They should treat social media as if they were interacting with someone face-to-face.

**Model open communication.** When communicating with your children, use the facial expressions, body language, tone, and words that you would want them to use. Share your thoughts and opinions with them in a respectful way, and encourage them to do the same.

**Encourage your child to participate in activities where cooperation is emphasized,** like sports, student government, clubs, marching band, choir, or a job. These activities not only encourage teamwork, but they also help your child form relationships with a wide variety of people.

# Responsible Decision–Making

## What is Responsible Decision–Making?

Responsible decision-making refers to considering the well-being of self and others; recognizing one's responsibility to behave ethically; basing decisions on safety, social, and ethical considerations; evaluating realistic consequences of various actions and making constructive, safe choices for self, relationships, and school.

## What Should Ninth–Twelfth Graders be Able to Do?

### Identify Problems

- *Identify a variety of problems and decisions that affect learners' lives.*
- *Define characteristics of safe and unsafe situations, including online safety.*

### Analyzing Situations and Solving Problems

- *Consider multiple perspectives and views upon identifying a problem.*
- *Generate multiple solutions for solving problems in a variety of situations.*
- *Consider the well-being of self and others when making decisions.*
- *Differentiate between situations where the learner can problem solve without assistance and situations that require assistance.*
- *Identify when peer-pressure, social, and/or cultural norms affect decision making.*

### Evaluating and Reflecting

- *Reflect on the positive and negative consequences of decisions for oneself and others.*
- *Reflect on past decisions and apply learning to new situations.*
- *Demonstrate consideration of the impact of traditions, experiences, and cultures in their decisions and outcomes.*

### Ethical Responsibility

- *Demonstrate awareness of equity, fairness and respect that positively impacts the greater good.*
- *Accept ownership for actions.*
- *Demonstrate decisions based on greater good even if not good for them individually.*

## What can Families do at Home to Help Children Develop Responsible Decision–Making?

**Give your child responsibility.** Your children will not be able to learn about responsibility if they are not allowed to put it into practice. Giving your children responsibility is an important part of maturing. Give them the freedom to do things that you are comfortable with, like getting a part-time job or joining an activity. These opportunities can help them grow and mature.

**Highlight positive SEL skills throughout the day.** When your child makes a good decision, reinforce it. For example, if your child decides not to hang out with his/her friends the night before a big test, praise him/her for it. Say things like, "I am really proud of your decision," or "I see the effort that you are putting in, and I appreciate it."

**Listen to and support your child when they are making a decision.** Decision-making can be difficult for high school students. They have to make big decisions about their future education, employment, relationships, or sports. Having a caring adult listen to them and support their choices can help decrease their stress and lead them to a responsible decision. Give them feedback and advice, but allow your children to lead the conversation and share their thoughts with you.

**Develop shared family rules and norms.** Setting clear expectations for your children will make it easier for them to make good decisions. For example, if your children know they are not allowed to hang out with friends until they finish their homework, they will be less likely to argue against that rule. Consistency is key to encouraging good decision-making. There can and should be changes to the family rules and norms, but they should be discussed and agreed upon as a group.

## Communicating with School

Your child's teacher and school counselor are great sources of information about the social emotional development of your child. Ask them how they think your child is doing with being on track with the skills discussed in this guide. Be sure to ask what they see in school, and how you can support your child's development at home.

### **Ask questions such as:**

- *How do you feel my child is doing in getting along with peers? What strengths and challenges do you see?*
- *What are your observations about my child's ability to understand and manage emotions?*
- *Tell me about how my child is doing with both following directions and solving problems effectively in the classroom.*
- *In general, how do you think my child is doing in his/her social-emotional development in terms of what you would expect from this age?*
- *Are there any specific things you would like us to work on at home to help with social emotional challenges in the classroom?*

## Concerns about Development

All children have areas of strength and areas of challenge as they grow and learn. For some children, an area of challenge is around social and emotional development.

If you are concerned about your child's development, ***talk to your child's school counselor*** about your concerns. Ask what he/she sees and if there are recommendations that may help your child. Ask your school counselor about extra groups or programs that might help your child learn these skills.

***Talk with your child's pediatrician*** or family doctor about your concerns. Sometimes children have a medical condition or developmental challenge that can interfere with their ability to be as successful as we would like.

***Ask your child's pediatrician for a referral*** to a community-based provider that specializes in helping children learn additional social and emotional skills. Community-based counselors use strategies to help children learn and practice skills that they can use to improve their social and emotional skills in everyday life.





For more information about social emotional learning, visit the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning at: <https://casel.org/>



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