



# RULER for Families

Conversation Starters and  
Activities for Elementary  
School Families

Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence

## Introduction

These simple activities and conversation starters are designed to promote social and emotional skills at home. There are three types of activities: 1) TALK ABOUT IT, 2) DO IT TOGETHER, and 3) DID YOU NOTICE.



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## Grades 2-3

**TALK ABOUT IT:**  
Emotions matter! Share a time you were affected by someone else's impatience or excitement. Ask your child to share too!



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## Grades 2-3

**DID YOU NOTICE:**  
Emotions are contagious! Smile at a family member five different times today. Talk with your child about the reactions you receive.



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## Grades 2-3

**TALK ABOUT IT:**  
Strong emotions can make it hard to concentrate. Share a time you arrived to work or school upset. How did that 1st hour go?



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## Grades 2-3

**TALK ABOUT IT:**  
Describe a time that you made a big decision. What role did your emotions play? Share together.



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### Grades 2-3

**DO IT TOGETHER:**  
Our faces can show how we're feeling. Show the feelings peaceful and pleased. Can your child can guess which is which?

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### Grades 2-3

**DO IT TOGETHER:**  
Practice self-awareness with your child by asking each other how you're feeling at different points of the day!

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### Grades 2-3

**TALK ABOUT IT:**  
Sometimes we can't tell how people feel unless we ask. Discuss ways to ask someone whether they feel frustrated or disappointed.

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### Grades 2-3

**DID YOU NOTICE:**  
Our bodies give us clues about our emotions. With your child, describe what happens in your body when you're feeling nervous.

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### Grades 2-3

**DID YOU NOTICE:**  
When we're aware of how we feel, we can make better decisions. Before reacting to your child, try to identify your feelings.

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### Grades 2-3

**DID YOU NOTICE:**  
Which emotions bring up the strongest changes inside your body? When you're Ecstatic? Furious? Disgusted?

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### Grades 2-3

**TALK ABOUT IT:**  
Thinking about what causes our feelings helps us understand ourselves. Discuss a time you felt confused and why you felt that way.

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### Grades 2-3

**DO IT TOGETHER:**  
Practice understanding the causes of emotions when reading together.  
Ask: why do you think the character feels this way?

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### Grades 2-3

**TALK ABOUT IT:**  
Keep talking about emotions at home!  
Share what makes you grumpy and how it affects others. Ask your child to share too.

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### Grades 2-3

**DO IT TOGETHER:**  
Discuss what makes each of you feel cheerful. Take a selfie of you and your child making your best “cheerful” faces!

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### Grades 2-3

**TALK ABOUT IT:**  
Putting our emotions into words helps us communicate what we feel. Share about your day and name four distinct emotions you each felt.

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### Grades 2-3

**DO IT TOGETHER:**  
This week, write down all of the feeling words you encounter from books you read together. Did you learn any new words?

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### Grades 2-3

**DO IT TOGETHER:**  
There are many fun ways to build your feeling word vocabulary! Take turns acting out emotions and guessing what they are.

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### Grades 2-3

**DID YOU NOTICE:**  
The next time your child seems high energy in a pleasant way, ask what specific emotion they are feeling. You can share yours too!

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### Grades 2-3

**TALK ABOUT IT:**  
Happiness, sadness, and anger can take many forms! Talk about the different ways you have seen each other express these emotions.

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### Grades 2-3

**DID YOU NOTICE:**  
Pay attention to how family members express emotions. Compare the similarities and differences. Was anything surprising?

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### Grades 2-3

**TALK ABOUT IT:**  
Sometimes we need to change our behavior to deal with feelings. Discuss three healthy activities you can try to handle worries or stress.

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### Grades 2-3

**DO IT TOGETHER:**  
Make a list of things you can think about and things you can say or do to skillfully manage emotions! Post it!

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