

Grades  
**1-2**

YALE CHILD STUDY CENTER  
+ SCHOLASTIC COLLABORATIVE  
for Child & Family Resilience

Family Guide to  
**SOCIAL-  
EMOTIONAL  
LEARNING**  
Through  
**LITERACY**


# Dear Family,

In today's changing world, books can offer a powerful source of comfort and calm for your child. This collection has been chosen to help build your child's social-emotional learning. Reading these books will help maintain and develop literacy skills that are vital to academic success. By sharing your child's reading experience, asking questions, and engaging with the collection, you will also foster your child's social-emotional well-being.

This package contains:

1. Five books chosen to support social-emotional learning and literacy.
2. This Family Guide to help use literacy to build social-emotional wellness.
3. A Reading Journal for your child to use.

These resources can be used with any books your child reads. You can also build social-emotional learning and literacy through storytelling, writing, and playing together.

The Reading Journal activities will help your child connect the characters and situations to his or her own experiences. They will reinforce social-emotional skills while also building deeper reading comprehension. The Reading Journal also contains Mind Builder Tips  to help you nurture your child's growing brain. The Reading Log at the back of the journal will help keep track of the books your child is reading at home, along with his or her reactions. Please share the log and other insights from the journal with your child's teacher.

Most important, use these books to talk to your child. Your child may be able to express thoughts and feelings through the characters and plot of a book that might otherwise go unspoken.

We hope these books help you and your child connect, read, share, and learn together.

Read and be well!

*The Scholastic Team*

# What Is Social-Emotional Learning?

Just as you enjoy watching your child learn to read, do math, explore science, and develop other academic skills, you also notice when he or she helps a neighbor, solves a problem, or persists through a challenge. In fact, academic and social-emotional development are deeply connected. The chart below shows five social-emotional learning skills aligned to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

## Social-Emotional Learning Skills

### Understanding Myself

- ▶ Identify and discuss emotions
- ▶ Grow self-awareness and confidence

### Managing Myself

- ▶ Connect thoughts to actions
- ▶ Control impulses and manage behavior

### Respecting Others

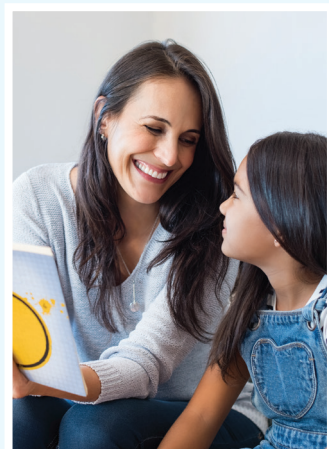
- ▶ Empathize
- ▶ Understand perspectives of people from diverse places and cultures

### Building Relationships

- ▶ Communicate and work together
- ▶ Develop and sustain healthy relationships

### Making Decisions

- ▶ Recognize conflicts
- ▶ Evaluate situations
- ▶ Find solutions



## Reading with SEL in Mind

Books hold a unique key to building empathy in a child. Through familiar thoughts and experiences, children recognize that they are not alone. Equally important, children learn to consider what different emotions others feel. Through unfamiliar experiences in a book, children's minds are open to experiences that they may not have had. Use this chart to engage your child's social-emotional growth through literacy.

### Supporting SEL Through Literacy

#### Understanding Myself

- ▶ What emotions is this character experiencing?
- ▶ Have you ever felt the same way?

#### Managing Myself

- ▶ What would you have done in this situation?
- ▶ Is this character behaving well?

#### Respecting Others

- ▶ How are you like this character? How are you different?
- ▶ How would you feel in this character's shoes?



#### Building Relationships

- ▶ How did these characters become friends?
- ▶ Does this story remind you of any of your relationships?

#### Making Decisions

- ▶ How did the character make this choice?
- ▶ Was it a good decision? What would you choose?

# Check Your Child's Social-Emotional Learning

Help understand your child's SEL better with the reflective prompts below. In addition, as your child reads the books in this collection and other books, notice the SEL literacy milestones.

| SEL Skill                     | SEL Reflective Prompt  | SEL & Literacy   |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Understanding Myself</b>   | When my child is feeling a particular emotion very strongly, I notice...     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ My child can identify and relate to a character's feelings.</li> <li>▶ My child understands a character's goals.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Managing Myself</b>        | When my child is trying to control his or her behavior, my child tends to... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ My child can understand what internal conflicts a character is facing, and recognizes problems and solutions.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Respecting Others</b>      | When my child picks up on the way someone is feeling, I notice...            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ My child understands if characters are acting with respect for others and identifies characters' motivations.</li> <li>▶ My child notices similarities and differences between a character's life and his or her own life.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Building Relationships</b> | When my child wants to make a new friend, I notice...                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ My child notices different kinds of relationships in the book and relates them to his/her own life.</li> <li>▶ My child notices the importance of good communication among the characters.</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>Making Decisions</b>       | When my child is faced with a tough choice, my child tends to...             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ My child evaluates characters' decisions, understands the reasoning behind their choices, and draws personal connections.</li> </ul>  |

# Bringing Literacy to Life with SEL

Engaging daily with your child in a variety of literacy activities can be easy and fun for the entire family. When combined with your child's books and available literacy apps, these additional home literacy activities can play a vital part in shaping your child into a lifelong learner.

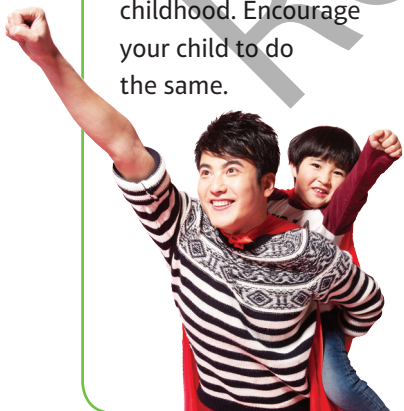
**LAUGH IT UP!** Kids love funny books, and laughing together reduces stress. Extend the humor by telling jokes, puns, and riddles, and clowning around. Jokes build humor and storytelling skills, while also boosting confidence and creativity.



**PLAYING CHARADES** is a fun way to get inside other characters and to explore storytelling. Take turns acting out scenes from a book and guessing what a character is feeling.



**SHARE YOUR OWN STORIES** when reading with your child. Look out for a part in a story that reminds you of your own childhood. Encourage your child to do the same.



**INVITE FAMILY MEMBERS** to write letters, record audio books, or share their favorite childhood books with your child. Relatives can help with literacy activities, too!



**MAKE PUPPETS** using a marker and recyclables like spoons, cardboard tubes, paper bags, old socks, etc. Let your child use them for storytelling and plays. Puppet play often allows kids to bring an issue to light from their real lives.



**NONFICTION COUNTS!** Although we think of fiction for building readers' empathy, nonfiction can help build SEL, too! Read a nonfiction book or article and look for examples of problem-solving, decision-making, and showing concern for others.

### REWARD EFFORT AS MUCH AS SUCCESS!

Recognize and applaud your child's honest efforts while reading, learning, and working on new skills. This will inspire continued attempts to try hard when facing new challenges.



### CREATE A QUIET READING SPACE

for your child. Add a few pillows, a soft rug, and blankets to curl up with. Place a small basket or shelf nearby to keep books and magazines handy. Encourage your child to use this nook for reading, and also just for a quiet space to feel calm and comfort.



## Grow With Mind Builders

Scholastic has worked with the Yale Child Study Center to develop Mind Builders.

Founded on brain research combined with an understanding of child development, the Mind Builders fall into the following categories:

- ▶ **Social Development**  
Children grow and develop in their social interactions, including working and playing with others, using effective communication, and caring for others.
- ▶ **Emotional Development**  
Children identify their own emotions and express them, and learn how to adapt to stressful situations, while showing pride and self-awareness in age-appropriate abilities.
- ▶ **Executive Function**  
Children understand and control their behavior, persist in and solve problems, and develop working memory.
- ▶ **Motivation and Creativity**  
Children foster their curiosity through asking and answering questions, making connections between situations, and using their imaginations and thinking symbolically.

### TELL AND RETELL

Have your child retell the story from a book. Then ask him or her to retell the story from another character's point of view. Try the same activity when telling stories about what happened in his or her everyday life to practice thinking from multiple perspectives.



**WRITE TOGETHER** Leave a notebook in a special spot in your home. Encourage the entire family to write something creative, inspiring, funny, or true in it every day. You can respond to your child's writing by noticing his or her social-emotional skills.



**BOOK GROUPS** offer a chance for a shared experience through literature. Kids can talk about the characters and plot, their responses, and their own lives. Help your child form a book group with friends or family, which can take place in person or virtually, as needed.



Look for Mind Builder Tips in your child's Reading Journal to help support your child's growing mind!

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