

Parent Fact Sheet

Social and Emotional Learning at Home

Two of the most influential aspects in any child or teens life are the school and the home. They both offer the possibility to build self awareness and to learn the skills for positive and meaningful contribution to family, friends, school, and community. Through the relatively new concept of social and emotional learning we are able to link how we feel (about ourselves, our lives, relationships, dreams, or environments), how we manage and express those feelings and how well we learn. Social and emotional learning approaches “enable individuals to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively” (CASEL, n.d.).

Model positive social and emotional behaviors to your children.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), found that 86% of students 10-17 years said that parents are the most important influences on their lives. Providing examples of self awareness and emotional control can not only aid your child in developing these types of relationships with other people, but can also enhance your daily relationship with your kids.

In your thinking about social and emotional development consider the five central competencies research identifies:

- **Self-awareness** – knowing what we are feeling in the moment, having a realistic assessment of our own abilities and a well-grounded sense of self-confidence
- **Social or other-awareness** – understanding what others are feeling, being able to take their perspective, appreciating and interacting positively with diverse groups
- **Relationship skills** – handling emotions in relationships effectively, establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation, resistance to inappropriate social pressure, negotiating solutions to conflict, and seeking help when needed.
- **Self-management** – Handling our emotions so they facilitate rather than interfere with the task at hand, being conscientious and delaying gratification to pursue goals, persevering in the face of setbacks and frustrations.
- **Decision making** – Making decisions based on accurate consideration of all relevant factors and the likely consequences of alternative courses of action, respecting others, and taking responsibility for one’s decisions (CASEL, 2003).

In your life with your children consider how you might:

- **Be aware that everyday experiences are opportunities to teach positive or negative social and emotional behaviors.** Parents can teach social and

emotional skills through a wide variety of interactions and situations. Discussions of current events, television broadcasts, websites, personal stories and the media can be the perfect chance for parents to reflect on the social images all around us. Talk with your children about the positive and negative social and emotional behaviors observed in the real world.

- **Give children the opportunities to make their own choices and follow through with their decisions.** By giving young people the chance to make decisions on their own, they learn important problem solving skills that they would have never mastered had their parents made all the decisions for them. They will also take more control in determining the course of their lives and have opportunities to learn from their mistakes.
- **Help your child to solve problems on their own by asking questions instead of giving advice.** Some examples might be: What are some of the other things you could choose to do in this situation? What might be the consequences of that choice? How might that make the other person feel?
- **Look for toys, products, and books which communicate important social and emotional competencies.** Remember, social and emotional learning can be fun and interesting too.
- **Take the time to discuss feelings with your children.** An important aspect of developing social and emotional skills in children is creating an environment that is safe and comfortable for these interactions. In talking with your child about feelings, make sure to disclose how you are feeling as a parent and as an individual through personal stories, real experiences, and informal discussions. Then, take the time to listen to your child and watch your relationship develop!

Teaching and modeling through behavior is an ideal way to develop social and emotional skills and set children and teens on the path toward self understanding, emotional management, and healthy future relationships. Enjoy the process of further developing your families social and emotional literacy.

Resources

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) www.casel.org

Emotionally Intelligent Parenting www.EQparent.com

Hawaii State Improvement Grant materials for parents www.sig.hawaii.edu/final_products

References

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