Connecting Parents to Student Social Emotional Learning

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Session Objectives:

- Develop an understanding of the Illinois Social Emotional Learning Standards
- Practice mindfulness and awareness when determining student SEL Skill levels
- Work with a resource to help identify student SEL skill stage
- Connect conversation to SEL Standards
- Connect literature to SEL standards
Illinois Social Emotional Learning Standards

- **Goal 1-** Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success
  - Standard 1A- Identify and manage one’s emotions and behavior
  - Standard 1B- Recognize personal qualities and external supports
  - Standard 1C- Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals

- **Goal 2-** Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
  - Standard 2A- Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others
  - Standard 2B- Recognize individual and group similarities and differences
  - Standard 2C- Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
  - Standard 2D- Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways

- **Goal 3-** Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school and community contexts
  - Standard 3A- Consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions
  - Standard 3B- Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations
  - Standard 3C- Contribute to the well-being of one’s school and community
Mindfulness is about training your attention to be able to rest in the present moment. Thoughts or worries about the past and future are observed without being focused upon or judged. In this way, you can avoid being caught up in dwelling on the past or worrying about the future and can instead can be present in the moment. The word mindfulness can be used to refer to both the state of being mindful as described above and the daily practices (e.g. meditation) that help to bring it about.

“Paying attention; On purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.” - Jon Kabat Zinn
Mindful Practitioner

LET STUDENTS KNOW YOU’RE LISTENING
“I hear your concern” / “I understand you are upset” / “Let’s talk when things are calm”

WRITE IT DOWN - as you listen to a student, take notes – let them know what you are doing and why

DRAW IT OUT – for some students a picture communicates best – use simple stick figures and talking and thinking bubbles. A thinking map might help to organize their thoughts

CHECK IT OUT - Repeat what you heard and ask if you got it right

Lower your voice volume as students raise theirs Reduce your verbal communication

Be mindful of your physical posture, the space between you and the person you’re communicating with, your orientation and your nonverbal signals.
- Create space between your ears and shoulders – check your overall body language
- Calm relaxed facial features
- Slow steady breathing
- Slow your pace
Adult strategies before, during and after a disruption-

• Know YOUR triggers.
  
  What sets you off?

• Stop and acknowledge you emotions in a situation.
  
  How are you feeling right now?

• Ask yourself what the student is really asking for.
  
  What need is this child displaying?

• Calmly and consistently respond accordingly.
  
  What is your plan?

• Reflect on what worked and what didn’t.
  
  Did my action/reaction help the student de-escalate?
What trauma looks like from the outside...

Aggression

Avoidance

Apathy
Implicit bias refers to unconscious attitudes, reactions, stereotypes, and categories that affect behavior and understanding.

Educators can hold assumptions about students’ learning behaviors and their capability for academic success which are tied to students’ identities, behavior and/or backgrounds, and these assumptions can impede student growth.
Think of a child ……that is struggling with social emotional skills……

Which Goal would they need the most support?

Goal 1- SELF
Goal 2- Others
Goal 3- Decisions

Now look at the standards under that goal.....which most reflects where the student is struggling.

Look through the stages and find which stage the student is most competent.....can do most of the items. (That will be the stage the student is currently “in”.....look to the next stage to see what you can do to assist the student to getting to the next level.)
Discuss what you found and what you can do to help the child move to the next level......
Building Relationships for Students and Teachers

Every interaction with a student is a chance to build environments where trust is the norm.

Be present when you are with students.

Make mistakes and allow students to offer corrections.
What you talk about is probably less important than the fact that you were interested enough to **ask and listen.**
Question and reflective strategies to support Social Emotional Learning Goal 1

Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.

Increasing opportunities for families to interact and communicate is beneficial to developing SEL skills. Using the question stems below can provide caregivers with topics to include. Parents should be interactive in the conversations by answering as well as asking the questions. There are NO WRONG ANSWERS to the questions below. Children’s responses may not match what you thought, but they are their perspectives and will guide more conversations.

- What makes you angry?
- What do you like most about your life?
- What do you like least about your life?
- Would you consider yourself a leader or a follower?
- Have you ever stood up for something you believed in? Describe the situation.
- What are you most proud of?
- What strengths do you bring to your family?
- What subject in school is most useful in life? Why?
- What personality trait gets you in the most trouble?
- What is something you would like to learn to do?
- Are you named after someone? Who?
- Have you ever been homeless? What made you feel better?
- Do you think people are motivated by external rewards or internal rewards or both?
- What motivates you to work in school work?
- What do you appreciate about your family? Explain.
- What do you think your friends would say that they like most about you?
- What are integrity?
- Who do you miss?
- How can parents best show their love for their children?
- Who is your favorite signer or musical group or song?
- Name one goal you have for yourself.
- What was your craziest or most embarrassing hair style you ever had?
- What is the most exciting sports event you have ever attended or watched?
- Who is the best joke teller in your family?
- Who is your favorite cartoon character? Why?
- What is the nicest thing that someone has ever done for you?
- Have you ever had a firefighter or police officer that you appreciate them?
- Other than family, who is your hero? What makes them a hero?
- What is the scariest thing that has ever happened to you?
- What do you feel are your top two talents or abilities? What are you doing to develop those?
- Who would you be if you could be someone famous? Why do you choose this person?
- Who inspires you to be a better person and how do they do it?
- How will you know when you are grown up?
- Including your parents or siblings, who are three of your most favorite relatives? Why?
- What is the most special day of the week in your home? What makes it so special?
- What kinds of things hurt your feelings? Where do you feel most frightened? Where do you feel most safe? Why?
- When is it hard for you to say "I Love You"?
- What is something you would like to accomplish and why?
- If you were being abducted what would you do and how? Demonstrate it.
- What do you worry about the most and why?
- Have you ever been in big trouble? Why? What did you learn from it?
- What is something that you do that gives you the most personal satisfaction?
- What do you do or how do you act when someone is angry or upset with you?
- What foods or smells remind you of when you were younger?
- When are you most frightened? What makes you feel better?
- What’s a good attitude? A bad attitude? Who or what determines YOUR attitude?
- How does it make you feel when someone is angry with you?
- What is your favorite movie food?
- What are some things that make you feel stressed or anxious at school, home or work?
- What is the scariest thing you have ever done?
- What kind of compliment means the most to you?
- If you could change one thing about your appearance, what would it be and why?
- What is the goofiest thing about your family? In what ways is this good or bad?
- Do you see the cup half full or half empty?
- What makes you feel most welcome when you get home?
Question and reflective strategies to support Social Emotional Learning Goal 2

Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.

What do you say or do when someone complements you?
Are you related to anyone famous? Explain.
Why do you think people do or say mean things to other people?
What form of discipline is most effective? When you are a parent, what method will you use?
What do kids know more about than adults?
Would you ever like to go to space? Why?
Are you more like your Mom or Dad?
How did your parents meet?
When do you think a woman might be elected president?
What would it be like if everyone looked alike and acted alike?
How are you different from everyone else? What does celebrate your differences mean?
Whose house is the most fun to visit? Why?
Compared to your life, how was life different for your grandparents?
Do you think it will be important to know a foreign language in the future?
What foreign language would you like to speak?
Name all of the pets you have ever had.
What is the nicest thing you have ever done for someone?
Name some holidays that your friends may celebrate that you don’t. Why is this so?
Name three qualities of a good friend. Do you have these qualities?

What would you do if someone gave you a gift that you already had?
What are some creative ways to tell each other you love them? Ways to show each other?
What is your favorite family photo?
What was your best family vacation? Who has the hardest time saying “I love you” in your family? Who has the easiest time?
Does your family have a secret code word to use for safety? How could this be beneficial?
If you had to be a member of a family you know, which family would it be and why?
If as a family, you were to do something nice for someone, what would you do and why?
When do you like being hugged? When are you embarrassed by being hugged? Why?
In what ways are you generous? Could you be more generous?
Define courage. Who is the most courageous person you know?
What is one thing about each of your family members that makes you proud?
How can you tell if someone is paying attention to you?

What is your favorite story about your parents as children?
Who is the most famous person you ever met?
Name an old friend that you would love to see and why?
What is the very first thing you recall for your childhood?
What is your favorite story about you when you were younger?
What was bedtime like when you were growing up?
Why would someone use a guide dog? When is it okay to pet a guide dog?
If you see someone in a wheelchair, is it okay to ask that person about his/her disability?
Name your ancestors. Where were they from? What would you ask them?
How would you describe each family member to someone using only words or gestures?
If everyone in your family became dogs, what kind of dogs would they be? Why?
Define respect. How do you earn respect? Who should you show respect to?
How can you tell if someone is telling the truth or lying?
If money and time were no object what would you most like to do for someone else?
What do you think schools are like in other countries?
How would you go to the bathroom or brush your teeth if you could use only one arm?
Question and reflective strategies to support Social Emotional Learning Goal 3
Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school and community context.

Many of the questions below have to do with “favorites” or ask “why” after the question. This allows children to understand the background on making decisions. We automatically decide our favorites or why we selected something, but often we don’t talk about the background things to take into consideration.

What is your favorite flavor of cake?
Is it more rewarding to give or to receive? Why?
What are the benefits of saving money?
Name a rule at home or school that you would like to change?
Is it ever okay to lie?
What is your favorite ride at an amusement park? Why?
What is your favorite thing to do in the summer? Fall? Winter? Spring?
What would you change about your school?
How old were your parents when they got their first new car? Who paid for it?
What kinds of car did your parents first drive?
How and when did your parents learn to drive?
Do you think having a lot of money is important? Why or why not?
What is your favorite childhood book? In what ways does television influence your life?
How do your mom and dad help people by the work they do?
Where would you take someone who was visiting your town?
What is your favorite dessert? Why?
Where did your parents go on their honeymoons?
What is or was your favorite stuffed animal? Why?
What is your most prized possession? Why?
Did you get an allowance as a child? If so, how much?
How are firefighters and police important to your family and community?
Where were you on 9-11 when you learned of the attack on the United States of America?
If your family spent one week a year helping others, what would you like to do?
If you family turned the TV off for a month, what would you do with your time? (No devices either.)
Name two things that you have never tried but you think would be fun? Why?
If you could be any animal. What would it be and why?
If you could have chosen your own first name, what would it be? Why?
If you could do any job in the world for one day, what would you choose and why?
If you could change one thing about your parents, what would it be and why?
What would you put inside a time capsule to be opened in 100 years?
If you won the lottery, what is the first thing you would do? Why?
What do you want to be when you grow up? Why?
What is your favorite movie of all time and why?
What is your favorite meal to eat in a restaurant?
If you were to be granted one wish, what would it be? Why?
If you named your town after your favorite food, what would it be called?
Describe the house of your dreams.
If your family only made hand made gifts for the holidays, what would you make and why?
What is your favorite household chore? What is your least favorite household chore?
How was your bedroom decorated when you were growing up? Was it clean or messy?
Name a change that was hard for you. Why was it hard? What did you learn?
Are the buildings we use accessible? Why is that so important? What does accessible mean?
What was your favorite game to play when you were a child?
If you were lost in the woods, how would you find your way out?
If your house caught on fire, how would you escape? Where would you meet outside?
What is your favorite food? Why?
What was your favorite candy when you were younger?
In 100 years, how will your house be different room by room?
What could you say to someone offering you cigarettes or drugs?
What is the most difficult thing about being a kid?
What are three most difficult things to do? Why?
What are your three least favorite things to do? Why?
What is or was your favorite toy? Why?
Coping Strategies for all ages!

Everyone needs an outlet or strategy when we become frustrated or just need a break. Here are many strategies to assist in calming down or coping with things going on around us. These are best used when someone is in a crisis mode. Allowing the person to calm and refocus is a necessary step before any conversation about the behavior choices can be productive.

Take a deep breath. Rip paper into pieces.
Do a positive activity. Play an instrument.
Play sports. Watch a good movie.
Think of something funny. Take pictures.
Take a quick walk. Garden.
Practice yoga. Write a list.
Stand up and stretch. Keep a positive attitude.
Listen to music. Blow bubbles.
Take a time out. Blow on a pinwheel.
Slowly count to ten...twenty. Write a positive note.
Use positive self-talk. Chew gum.
Say something kind to yourself. Paint your nails.
Talk to a friend. Write a story.
Talk to an adult. Read a joke book.
Close your eyes and relax. Write a poem.
Say, “I can do this”. Drink cold water.
Visualize your favorite place. Watch fish in an aquarium.
Think of something happy. Eat a healthy snack.
Think of a pet you love. Read a good book.
Think about someone you love. Set a goal.
Eat a healthy snack. Jog in place.
Read a good book. Write in a journal.
Set a goal. Write in a journal.
Jog in place. Hum your favorite song.
Classroom Calm Down Corner

Select an “out-of-the-way” area in the classroom

Furnish with soft rugs, beanbag chairs, floor cushions or large pillows.

Post visual calming strategies and emotion cards....something to help students identify “what they feel”, “why they need to calm themselves” and “how can they do that”.

Whole Child  ●  Whole School  ●  Whole Community
What items go in a Calm Down Toolkit?

- Puzzle
- Building blocks
- Drawing items – chalkboard/chalk, paper/pencils
- Mazes, Dot-to-Dots, word searches
- Calm Down Bottles
- Lava lamp
- Tissue paper to rip
- Pipe Cleaners to bend
- Play Dough
- Photo albums
- Fidget tools – Tops, spinners
- Music (with headphones)
- Stress Ball
- Pinwheel
How to have conversations about........

- Fear
- Love
- Anger
- Pain
- Being scared
- Friendship
- Bullies
- Lying
Social Emotional Book List

How Literature Supports SEL

We are storytelling and conversation creatures. Our brains are hardwired for stories and including stories can be key to building strong social emotional skills in our children.

Stories that display a character’s emotions and behaviors can be used to help our children understand their own emotions and behavior choices in a non-threatening conversation starter.

Young children can start to identify emotions and decisions they see in characters and start to connect those to themselves. As children grow the decisions and actions of more evolved characters can help them in make connections to things happening in real life.

Young children can see the modeling of social skills through the books and adult reflection on the story. Asking questions about what is happening and identifying the emotions during the reading will allow a deeper understanding about the emotions and situations.

To create an open and consistent dialog about social emotional situations adults should join in on reading and reflecting on the literature selected. Children (especially pre-teen and teen) are more relaxed and open to discuss a “character’s struggles” than their own. Adults can offer guidance, reflection and decision skills using the books as an opening.

Illinois Social Emotional Learning standards are made up of 3 goals divided into 10 standards.

Goal 1 – Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.
- Standard IIA: Identify and manage ones emotions and behavior.
- Standard IIB: Recognize personal qualities and external supports.
- Standard IIC: Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals.

Goal 2 – Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Standard II A: Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.
- Standard II B: Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.
- Standard IIC: Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.
- Standard IID: Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.

Goal 3 – Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school and community context.
- Standard III A: Consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in decision making.
- Standard III B: Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations.
- Standard III C: Contribute to the well-being of ones school and community.
Social Emotional Book List

High School

Empathy
- The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank
- A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith
- Great Expectations by Charles Dickens
- Looking for Alaska by John Green
- Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster by Jon Krakauer
- In the Time of the Butterflies by Julia Alvarez
- Luna by Julie Anne Peters
- Nectar in a Sieve by Ramala Marianiyan
- The Help by Kathryn Stockett
- The Things They Carried by Tim O’Brien

Relationship/Friendship
- Staying Fat For Sarah Byrnes by Chris Crutcher
- The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- If You Come Softly by Jacqueline Woodson
- Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
- Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli
- A Separate Peace by John Knowles
- Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
- Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom
- Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare
- Drowning Anna by Sue Mayfield

Exploring Emotions
- Face on the Milk Carton by Caroline Cooney
- Emotional Intelligence: Why It Matters More than IQ by Daniel Goleman
- The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway
- The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger
- Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close by Jonathan Safran Foer
- I Am I Blue? Coming Out From the Silence by Marion Dane Bauer
- The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde
- The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky
- The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

Resilience/Self-Esteem
- Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain by Dan Siegel
- Angela’s Ashes by Frank McCourt
- Loser by Jerry Spinelli
- The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck
- Charlie’s Story by Maurice Sendak
- The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho
- Oprah Speaks: Adolescent Girls Write About Their Search For Self by Sara Shandler
- Twelve Years a Slave by Solomon Northup
- Hoops by Walter Dean Myers
- Life of Pi by Yann Martel

Respecting Diversity
- The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan
- Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe
- To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
- Hidden Roots by Joseph Bruchac
- The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini
- A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry
- Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux by Nicholas Black Elk and John G. Neihardt
- Bless Me, Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya
- Caramelo by Sandra Cisneros
- The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd

Bullying/Conflict Resolution
- Sticks and Stones by Beth Goobie
- Some Girls Are by Courtney Summers
- Before, After, and Somebody In Between by Jeanine Garbee
- Hate List by Jennifer Brown
- Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson
- Snow Flower and the Secret Fan by Lisa See
- Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls by Rachel Simmons
- The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton
- Just Listen by Sarah Dessen
- Lord of the Flies by William Golding

Whole Child  ●  Whole School  ●  Whole Community
Technology to support Calm and Mindfulness

https://www.stopbreathethink.com/educators/

https://www.calm.com/schools

Full Premium Version FREE for educators!
Tools and Resources for
ELA
MATH
Science
Social Science
Social Emotional Learning
Technology
Fine Arts

www.ilclassroomsinaction.org