

# SEL Theme 4: Relationship Skills

## The 5 Competencies of Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

This blog series will look at each of the 5 core competencies of Social Emotional Learning as outlined on the CASEL model below and explore ideas on how to promote and teach these skills at home.

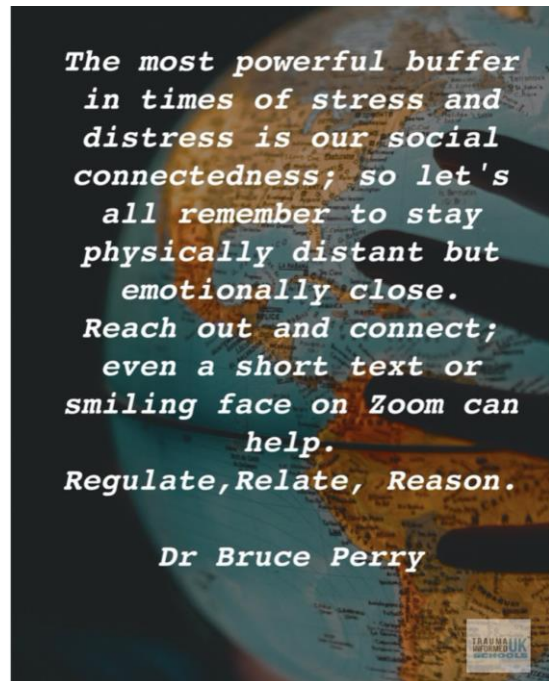


### What are Relationship skills?

**Relationship skills:** The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

Communication  
Social engagement  
Relationship-building  
Teamwork

This article has been developed to support schools in their implementation of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) through the use of *The PATHS® Programme for Schools (UK Version)*; and to extend SEL beyond the classroom - reaching out to their whole school, homes and community. In this article we want to explore how you could celebrate Relationship Skills through cross curricular activities using SEL.



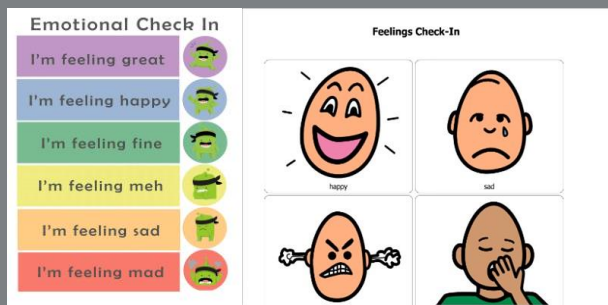
**Relationships – How can we sustain and maintain these in the coming months? Currently the way in which we help children to build relationships with a wide range of people has changed immeasurably. The chance for play with friends, parties or team sports has been postponed and communicating in school is temporarily stalled. We want to explore how you can continue to develop your child/children's SEL skills at home. Every parent/carer can help children by modelling the skills of relationship building effectively.**

# Calm Down & Think It Over

## Emotional Understanding (Feelings)

*One way to help children with conversations is to ensure they learn how to understand what emotion they or someone else is feeling. As adults we know this will always impact the mood of a conversation.*

*If your child is aged between 4-7 spend time talking about feelings. Point out things about how people look which tells us how they feel.*



*Play a game with your child/children, act out different emotions so they can grow their vocabulary and understanding. Draw/paint pictures, cut out faces from magazines and label emotions people show, are all excellent tasks to build emotional understanding. You may wish to try some of the suggestions below:*

- *Create your Daily Feelings Check In at home*
- *Staring competition*
- *Funny Faces*
- *Act It Out (a feeling)*
- *Story Time*
- *Mirrors*
- *Matching (feelings bingo)*

Older children may wish to talk about their feelings. In this way they can gain support. Seeking and finding help when we need it is an important life skill.



School days have structure, but learning at home doesn't need to have this. Be guided by your child/children and structure only what you need to for your family.



Starting with breakfast, deciding what we want and often negotiating to get it, involves communication. Seeking or offering help are important skills. Simple tasks like preparing meals with your child/children can have added value. You might even wish to follow a recipe together or if you have more than one child, let them work together with your guidance to prepare something for everyone in the family to eat. There will be no better prize than growing the skill of cooperation for your child/children.



# Regulation & Managing Conflict

## Regulation (managing emotions)

Children may struggle with this new reality. Adults may also find they have uncomfortable feelings to deal with and it can help, if as a family there are some strategies which everyone can use. This will be key to sustaining and nurturing relationships:

- Turtle Technique
- Breathing (deep breaths)
- Counting to 10
- Grounding – using senses
- Traffic Lights
- Going for a walk outside (keep a safe distance)
- Meditation

Many children will worry about friendships. Not being with friends can bring about a lot of anxiety but there is much our children can do to keep and develop their friendships:

- Letter writing (email if the postal services are halted)
- Face Time / Phone Calls
- Design a poster for your window and include a message to a friend
- Activities like 'What makes a good friend?' (this will help our children consider what matters and to value it in the future)



*Key skills for children to develop which will be important for the future include; sharing, seeking help, resisting pressure and working as a team. For this there is no more powerful tool than play.*

*Below are some ideas for simple games which can be adapted to suit your home and family:*

- *Matching (find someone who has the same eye colour, hair colour, etc. change to both have for a pair)*
- *Take turns with a ball, blocks, toy*
- *Building using blocks - maybe try the 30 day Lego challenge which appears online*
- *Feelings Throw In – Toss a ball or beanie saying I feel (insert emotion) when....*
- *SEL Brain Breaks shared via social channels on Wednesday mornings*
- *Look out for our Blog on Board Games too!*

## Managing Conflict

*Inevitably children will disagree, with parents/carers or with each other. This is normal but could become a problem if there are no rules or strategies in place for dealing with it.*

*Our tendency to blame others when we get upset means that our children may be accusing and hostile at times. Encourage the use of 'I Statements' which will take the heat out of arguments and allow each person to have a voice by expressing their feelings and the impact of behaviours on them.*

*"I feel sad when ...." "I felt hurt when ...."*

# Loving Ourselves and Others

In school children aged 4-7 will be learning that 'Friends Play, Help & Share'. Older children aged 8-12 will be using 'Fair Play Rules' to guide them. A good way to manage a lot of situations is to use 'The Golden Rule' – Treat Others How You Want to Be Treated'

- Look out for our Golden Rule colouring page (we'll share on social channels!)
- Make up your own Fair Play Rules for your home – we'd love to see them!
- Find ways to play, help and share at home



Friends Play, Help and Share!

Take Turns, Follow the Rules & Don't Tease or Boast

## Self-Esteem

Lastly, a skill which will enhance the relationships of your children is that which builds their self-esteem. Giving compliments has such a profound impact on children. From the very simple for very young children, such as things they have or how they look each morning to more complex statements about talent and personality from older children.

The hardest part may well be giving a compliment to themselves but here is where parents/carers can successfully model the process. If you can try to do this daily so everyone gets to experience and share the love. We'll share videos of complimenting on social media!



*We certainly hope that these ideas will be both inspiring and helpful in exploring **Relationship Skills at home.***

*Please do get in touch with us via our Social Media if you have used any of these and remember to follow us on our Facebook and Twitter accounts for many more ideas from participating schools.*



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