

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

SOCIAL SKILLS ACTIVITY LIST

SOCIAL SKILL: HAVING EMPATHY

CASEL COMPETENCY: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Grade Levels	Prep Time	Activity Time	Materials	Activity Description
3-6	10-15 min	<30 min	Nerf basketball, something to use as a hoop or goal, index cards with happy faces and happy questions on the reverse side (same with sad faces and sad questions)	<p>Basketball Empathy Explain that you are going to be playing a special type of basketball. When a student makes a basket they choose an index card with a happy face and answer the question. If a student misses they choose an index card with a sad face and answer the question. Encourage the students to be respectful and encourage discussion about how we all feel happy and sad. Sample questions: What was the happiest time in your life? What is a happy memory you had when you were little? What has someone done for you that made you happy? What is a sad moment from your life? What is your biggest worry? Have you ever had a bad dream?</p> <p>Discuss how it is important to listen to our friends even when they are telling us sad or upsetting things. Discuss how it is important to support each other and listen. Discuss good skills for showing empathy and how those skills can help us be better friends.</p>
K-6	0-5 min	<30 min	A ball or pillow to pass around, paper, writing supplies	<p>Pass The Ball Around Students practice giving compliments to each other. Each student gets a turn to share a compliment with another student. Form a circle and pass a ball around. The student who has the ball shares a compliment about one student and then passes the ball on to someone else. Make sure every student gets a turn being complimented and giving a compliment. Students then discuss and lists different ways they can show kindness in different environments.</p>
3-6	0-5 min	<15 min	None	<p>Being a Better Friend Ask the class to discuss what they would do if they wanted to be friends with someone. ex. Starting a conversation, talking about shared interests, playing games together. Call on volunteers to share their friendships – old or new – and how they developed. Ask them to discuss what helped that relationship form and what has made it stronger over time. Have the students pair up with another student they do not know very well and have them talk about what they may or may not have in common. After the students have talked for a few minutes, bring the class back to a group and ask them to discuss the things they learned about each other. Ask them to discuss why making new friends takes time and why it is important to be patient with each other.</p>

K-6	0-5 min	<15 min	Paper, markers, pencils, crayons, envelopes	<p>Serve The Community</p> <p>Talk about different people who serve the community. Write thank you notes to men and women who serve the community. Discuss the importance of appreciating those who serve the community because it couldn't work as a whole if no one was willing to contribute selfless service.</p>
K-6	0-5 min	<30 min	None	<p>Understanding Each Other</p> <p>Ask the students to think of a time when they didn't understand why a person acted the way they did. Ask the children to discuss it and why it was frustrating or confusing. Explain the concept of empathy: discuss how no two people are alike, everyone does things differently and has different points of views, and that having empathy means we try to understand what other people are feeling. Have children pair up and one student will describe something he or she did recently, what he or she had for lunch, what he or she is wearing, or anything about his or her individual behavior. Have the other student talk about why he or she thinks the first student behaved in the way he or she did. Discuss how having empathy can take practice, but that it is important for forming better friendships. Ask the students to think of examples of when they tried to show empathy. Encourage the students to pay better attention to each other and what other people are feeling.</p>
K-6	0-5 min	<15 min	Paper, writing supplies	<p>Random Acts of Kindness</p> <p>Brainstorm ideas for different random acts of kindness. Have students make lists and encourage them to follow through on as many acts of kindness as they can.</p>
K-6	0-5 min	<30 min	Whiteboard markers, 3 strips of paper for each student, art supplies	<p>What Makes A Good Friend?</p> <p>Ask the students to silently think of qualities of a good friend, such as what they do or say. Ask the students to share examples. Write those examples on the board. Hand out strips of paper to the students and have them write down something that a good friend does or says. Ask the students to color and decorate their paper strips. Have each student share one of their examples, then begin stapling the paper strips into a chain, continue until all the students' paper strips are part of the chain. Begin discussing the activity with questions like, "How many of you can think of someone who is a good friend," "Does that good friend do the things we named," "When have you done or said the things that are part of our friendship chain," "What happens when you do or say those things." Hang the friendship chain in the classroom and remind the students that they are each a part of the friendship chain.</p>
K-6	0-5 min	<30 min	Paper, pencil, crayons, markers	<p>Writing Nice Notes</p> <p>Brainstorm ideas for opportunities to write nice notes. Have children write a nice note fulfilling one of the ideas they brainstormed.</p>

K-6	0-5 min	<15 min	Mirror (optional)	<p>What Are You Feeling? Name today's sharers (up to three for four). Before the activity, teach children to mirror each other's feelings by making comments appropriate to their situation. Check in with sharers about their topic. The first sharer tells about something she is happy or excited about. When she finishes sharing, she holds up the mirror and says, "Mirror my feeling." Then she calls on a student, who offers one empathic comment. The sharer acknowledges the comment simply (with a nod, for example). Repeat this step. Later, let sharers take more comments as time allows. Continue with the other sharers. As time allows after sharing, ask a reflective question and reinforce speaking and listening skills. Discuss why it is important to listen respectfully to our friends and to show empathy for what our friends are feeling.</p>
K-6	0-5 min	<15 min	None	<p>No Smiling! Model speaking without smiling or showing teeth, having fun without going overboard, and helping a classmate who finds this greeting embarrassing by giving them encouragement.</p> <p>Choose a student to be first greeter. Without smiling or showing teeth, she says a friendly "Good morning, [classmate's name]; I'm glad to see you" to her neighbor. Her classmate greets her back in the same way. Continue around the circle. Discuss how using friendly greetings can be helpful when we are trying to make friends, but that playing funny games like this can also help us grow closer. Brainstorm ways to be friendly without smiling. Allow time for the laughter that naturally occurs when students do something this silly.</p>
K-6	0-5 min	<15 min	None	<p>We All Make Mistakes Choose a student to be first greeter. The first greeter faces the student on her right. Both students take a small step to their left so that their right shoulders line up. Both students put up their right hands and begin giving each other a high five, but they miss and extend their hands over the other person's right shoulder (this is the "mistake"). Both students gently pat each other on the back and exchange greetings: "Good morning, Ruby." "Good morning, Lee-Ann." Continue around the circle until everyone has been greeted. Tips for success: Model safely missing a high five and giving a pat on the back. Talk a little about mistakes and how making them can be hard, but that they offer opportunities to learn how to do something better. Reinforce positive behaviors. For example: "I saw a lot of friendly cooperation as you tried to figure out how to pat each other's backs at the same time."</p>

3-6	0-5 min	<15 min	None	<p>We Show Empathy Name today's sharers (up to three or four). Check in with them about their topic. Invite a sharer to go first. After a child shares, he says, "I'm ready for comments." The sharer calls on a student, who makes one caring, respectful comment. The sharer responds in a respectful way to show that he heard the comment. Repeat this step so four or five students can give comments. Continue with the other sharers. Tips for success: In advance teach children how to give empathic comments. As a class, brainstorm examples of empathic comments. To give students practice, share something positive in your life. Show feelings, smile, and use positive language. Then, have students partner chat about what they notice (your words, facial expression, and body language). Next, go around the circle and ask each pair to make one or two empathic comments. Model how to respond respectfully and simply to comments.</p>
K-2	0-5 min	<15 min	Paper, pencil, paint, bowls	<p>Friendship Tree Prepare a drawing of a tree with extending branches but no leaves. Set out small bowls of different colors of paint. Have the students dip their thumb in a bowl of paint, making sure that each color gets used. After they dip their thumbs, have them press it against the picture of the tree to look like leaves on the tree. Have everyone clean their hands, then discuss how the friendship tree took contribution from everyone in order to make a whole tree. Discuss how the classroom works in the same way, because we need each other to make the classroom run smoothly as a whole.</p>
K-2	10-15 min	<30 min	Cutouts of different body parts (arms, legs, head, feet, hands) for the whole class, pencils, glue, paper	<p>Friends One Day At A Time Have children take cutouts of each body part to make a person. Then have them write one thing on each body part that they can do to be a better friend. Have them discuss as a class what ideas they have of how to be a better friend. Then have them glue the pieces into the shape of a body on a piece of paper. Discuss how like building the body on the piece of paper, making friends happens a little bit at a time. Discuss how we have to do little things every day to make friends.</p>
K-2	0-5 min	<15 min	Paper, markers, picture of a Rainbow Fish, <i>Rainbow Fish</i> book	<p>Rainbow Fish Story Use <i>Rainbow Fish</i> book for activity. Create a picture of rainbow fish, write a friendship strategy on each scale of the fish, and discuss these strategies as a class.</p>
K-6	0-5 min	<15 min	Colored paper, scissors	<p>Cut Out Heart Cut out a heart, then cut the heart into pieces. Discuss how being mean to others can break their hearts like the cut out. As a class discuss ways that a friend could help their friend's heart heal. For every idea the class comes up with, put one piece back together.</p>
K-6	5-10 min	<30 min	Paper, scissors, markers, crayons, pencils	<p>We Are Kinder When We Work Together Use a paper cut out of a person in the different body parts. Have each student write something they could use that body part to help others. Color the pieces and glue them together. Talk about how together we can be stronger if we all share our kindness with each other.</p>

K-6	0-5 min	<30 min	Mirror, paper, pattern for paper figure, art supplies	<p>I Am Kind To Me</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: Display the essential question "What is something that I do well?" Select a student to read the question aloud. Remind students to think of the answer to this question as the lesson proceeds. 2. Introduce the lesson by gazing into a "magic" mirror and say, "Mirror, mirror on the wall... show me how I am the best of all." The mirror acts as a helping tool for the teacher to recognize his or her special strengths. Relate personal strengths to the class. 3. Ask for volunteers to look into the magic mirror and repeat the rhyme. Each participant will name his or her own special strengths. 4. Work with the students to compile a list of common strengths by brainstorming with the class. 5. The magic mirror is passed around the classroom, so that each student has the opportunity to view him or herself in this way. 6. The teacher defines what "visible" and "invisible" strengths are and gives the class several examples. Each idea on the list is then labeled as either visible (V) or invisible (I). 7. Students are given paper figures to trace and decorate to look like themselves, reflecting on what they learned when looking in the mirror. Then, ask the students to write their visible strengths around the edges of their paper figures and their invisible strengths toward the center of their figures.
K-6	0-5 min	<15 min	Paper, art supplies	<p>What Makes A Good Friend Good?</p> <p>Children discuss what qualities a good friend has. Have them draw a picture of them doing something fun with a friend.</p>
K-6	5-10 min	<15 min	Cutout gingerbread man, whiteboard, markers	<p>Gingerbread Friends</p> <p>Place a cutout of a gingerbread man on the board. Have the children brainstorm ideas of what makes a good friend "recipe" for the gingerbread man. Encourage students to think of visible and invisible traits. Teacher writes visible and invisible traits on board</p>
K-6	0-5 min	<15 min	Paper, writing supplies, markers, crayons	<p>The Power of Kindness</p> <p>Students draw, share, or write: 1) a kindness they have received, 2) how it felt to receive the kindness. Then 3) a kind act they've done for someone, 4) what the reaction was and 5) how it felt to perform an act of kindness.</p>

K-6	5-10 min	<30 min	Role play scenario cards, abc's problem solving (included)	<p>How Am I A Good Friend?</p> <p>Share a personal story about how a friend hurt your feelings. Explain to the class: "Today we will be doing (or watching) several role play situations. We will explore examples of how friends can hurt each other. We will then brainstorm ways to change this hurtful behavior into something more positive."</p> <p><i>Note: This activity may be difficult for children who are shy or have never done role playing before. One way to address this would be to ask older students to come to the class to act out a scenario, or to spend some additional class time practicing role playing before using it in this lesson.</i></p> <p>Explain that most conflicts require some kinds of problem solving skills in order to resolve them. Display the ABC's of Problem Solving chart:</p> <p>Ask, "What is the problem?"</p> <p>Brainstorm some solutions</p> <p>Choose the best one</p> <p>Do it</p> <p>Evaluate the solution</p> <p>Break the class up into groups of three or four and assign students various scenarios to act out. Distribute story cards (one scenario per group) and allow approximately ten minutes for the groups to review and practice the role play. The story cards are suggestions.</p> <p>Scenarios that occur within the specific school community should be used. The teacher should make sure that none of the names of the students in the class or grade level are used. Ask the first group to perform its scenario for the class. Explain that the students are an audience and are watching this all happen as a third party. They are bystanders or kids in the middle. Encourage them to think about how it makes them feel to watch these situations happen to some of their classmates.</p> <p>Process the role plays by asking students to describe what happened. Ask them what they learned and how they think it will help them in the future.</p>
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