

SEARCH

14 Summer Activities To Continue Teaching Social Emotional Learning

14 SUMMER ACTIVITIES TO CONTINUE TEACHING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

📅 August 2, 2019

Family & Community Engagement

With school out for summer vacation, students have hours of free time on their hands everyday – and some parents may be wondering how to fill it. This is their time to have fun and unwind, but that doesn't mean social emotional learning has to stop. As social and emotional beings, every child, adolescent and adult can continuously choose to flex these important muscles. Avoid the dreaded "I'm bored" comments by trying out some of these fun activities and tasks that promote social emotional development.

1. **Read.** Create a cozy nook complete with pillows and read some new books with your child. Choose books that focus in on aspects of social emotional learning and discuss the issues after. Check out [our list of picture books \(/family-community-engagement/2019-6-26-7-picture-books-to-teach-social-emotional-learning-this-summer/\)](#) for some great options.
2. **Go on a mindful walk.** Ask your child to take account of what they sense as you walk around your town. Taking the time to determine what you see, smell, feel and hear will help ground you in the moment. Have students focus on using one of their senses at a time in order to help them narrow their focus.
3. **Garden.** Plant some flowers, vegetables, fruit or herbs and have them take ownership for taking care of it. Teach them to care for the plant and let them take the reigns. This will help them build a sense of motivation and confidence a [🔗 Help](#) solve the problems that may come along with gardening.

4. **Visit museums.** Many museums offer free or discounted pricing, so take advantage of this to promote social emotional learning. You and your child can discover the differences between people and culture in order to build empathy by visiting a history museum or contemplate what emotions are being conjured in an art gallery.
5. **Write a creative story.** Allow your child to express themselves through words by giving them prompts and having them write a short response. Write about a favorite memory or make up a story about an epic adventure with friends.
6. **Practice yoga.** Incorporate a few minutes of yoga into your morning routine to prepare for the day, or at night to help relax. Let your child choose the poses as they get more accustomed to the flow. These videos can get you and your child started with yoga. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X655B4lSakg> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X655B4lSakg>)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMMRbi0LtGM> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMMRbi0LtGM>)
7. **Watch movies.** Some days you'll just want to relax and watch a movie – and that's okay. Use this as an opportunity to discuss the social emotional aspects of whatever you watch and ask how the characters felt or how they dealt with challenges.
8. **Make a scrapbook.** Putting together a scrapbook is a great way for children to reflect on their favorite memories. Have them piece together images and pictures that represent the moments they are most proud of and add a caption or drawing that expresses how they felt.
9. **Create a chore chart.** The summer days can be hectic, so have your child create a chore chart for themselves to add some structure. They can observe the household and choose what they will be responsible for, allowing them to take ownership of their impact in their family community.
10. **Cook or bake.** Children love eating all sorts of things, so why not get them involved in making them. Practice teamwork and listening skills as you work together to prepare a delicious meal or dessert.
11. **Volunteer.** Get your child involved in the community at an early age by participating in a park clean up or visiting a nursing home. Starting civic engagement early will help them further develop empathy which will stay with them as they get older.
12. **Paint and draw.** No matter the medium, creating art is a great way to get in touch with emotions. Ask your child to draw what they are feeling or head outside to draw in nature.
13. **Plan park playdates.** Getting a group of children of the same age together to just play and spend time together is a simple but effective way to continue to develop social skills. Children will cultivate strong relationship skills as they listen, communicate and resolve conflicts with one another.
14. **Make a vision board.** Together, you and your child can determine what you want out of the coming school year. Maybe your child wants to meet new people or solidify their math skills. No matter the goal, visualize it and hang your board up so that you can refer back to it and discuss the progress at time goes on.

Summer Reading List

For the summer break, the *Second Step* team curated these titles from *Second Step Suite* book lists, spanning a wide range of needs. The list has something for everyone, whether it's families reading together about life issues, students reading for education and empowerment, teachers reinforcing and informing their role, or parents looking for support in their roles as caregivers and mentors.

FICTION RESOURCES

Early Learning

Cook, Julia. *My Mouth Is a Volcano*. Told from a child's perspective, this entertaining book helps children understand the importance of respecting others by listening and waiting for their turn to speak.

Crary, Elizabeth. *I Want to Play*. Danny wants to join the other kids in their play. In this interactive story, the reader helps Danny decide what to do.

Llewellyn, Claire. *Watch Out! Around Town*. Part of the Watch Out! series, this book offers kids advice about staying in their parents' sight and avoiding getting lost when in large, busy places like stores and theaters. Kids are also instructed to observe safety rules in playgrounds, and to take extra care when they encounter adults they do not know.

Meiners, Cheri J. *Be Careful and Stay Safe*. This book uses bright illustrations of familiar scenes and easily understood narration to reinforce many common safety rules and reminds children that adults are there to keep them safe.

Schenk de Regniers, *Beatrice*. *May I Bring a Friend?* A young boy receives an invitation each week from the King and Queen to join them for tea. He is so happy to be invited that he wants to share his happiness with others and always asks if he can bring a friend. The King and Queen always say yes, providing an excellent example of how to be inclusive.

Kindergarten–Grade 5

Becker, Shelly. *Mine! Mine! Mine!* Claire and Gail play together but Gail doesn't want to share! Claire is not having fun, and neither is Gail. Gail's mother then models how sharing and kindness is more fun than getting your own way.

Boelts, Maribeth. *Those Shoes*. Jeremy really wants expensive shoes that all the kids are wearing, however his family can't afford them. Jeremy will do almost anything to own a pair—including squeeze into a pair on sale that are a size too small. Soon Jeremy discovers the “uncomfortable” consequences of this solution, and begins to appreciate what he already has.

Dowell, Frances O'Roark. *The Secret Language of Girls*. Eleven-year-old Kate's friend Marilyn starts treating her like an enemy, and Kate doesn't understand why.

Lowery, Linda. *Laurie Tells*. In this beautifully illustrated book, Laurie tries to talk to her mom about being sexually abused, but her mom doesn't believe her. Children follow Laurie as she decides who else she can tell.

Oram, Hiawyn. *Angry Arthur*. When his mother won't let him stay up, Arthur becomes so angry that he creates a thunderstorm, hurricane, and universe quake, which begin to quiet down as Arthur's temper does.

Middle School

Adoff, Jaime. *Names Will Never Hurt Me*. This novel takes you inside the minds of four teenagers one year after a shooting at their high school. These students are all different, but none is without the problems teenagers face, including rejection, labeling, bullying, violence, and trying to belong.

Choyce, Lesley. *The End of the World as We Know It*. Carson hates the world and everything in it, including himself. While attending a private school for kids who have flunked out everywhere else, Carson meets Christine, a teenage girl living in a trailer by herself, struggling to get by. As Carson starts to care for Christine, he starts to feel optimism begin to creep into his life.

Gephart, Donna. *Lily and Dunkin*. Lily was assigned male at birth, but she's a girl—and it's hard being a girl in the eighth grade when you look like a boy. Dunkin is a new student who has just moved to the area and is dealing with bipolar disorder. When Dunkin and Lily meet, they find their struggles connect them.

Howe, James. *Misfits*. Bobby Goodspeed and his “gang” of middle school “misfits” provide an insightful look into the way preteens stereotype each other and call each other names.

Koss, Amy Goldman. *The Girls*. Through the eyes of six middle school girls, readers learn about the realities of cliques, social status, and peer pressure that middle school girls experience.

Sachar, Louis. *Holes*. After being unjustly convicted of a crime, Stanley Yelnats is sent to a boys' detention center where wayward boys are taught to build character by digging holes all day. Stanley suspects the warden is looking for something and resolves to uncover the truth. As this humorous mystery unfolds, it also explores issues of racism, bullying, and friendship.

(Nonfiction) Yousafzai, Malala. *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*. In her memoir, Malala Yousafzai shares her remarkable story and inspires others to be the voice of change. When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, they restricted the education of girls, but Malala fought for her right to learn. When Malala was just 15 years old, members of the Taliban shot her. Miraculously, she survived, and she continues to advocate for the rights of all girls to receive an education.

NONFICTION RESOURCES

Teachers

Brock, Annie. *The Growth Mindset Coach: A Teacher's Month-by-Month Handbook for Empowering Students to Achieve*. Created specifically for educators, this handbook includes lessons and research-based activities for helping students understand that their intelligence is not fixed, but can grow.

Cozolino, Louis. *The Social Neuroscience of Education: Optimizing Attachment and Learning in the Classroom*. This book explains the science behind the importance of social connection in education. It also provides practical tips for maximizing learning in the classroom and stimulating brain development.

Rechtschaffen, Daniel. *The Way of Mindful Education: Cultivating Well-Being in Teachers and Students*. Complete with lesson plans, exercises, and science-based explanations of mindfulness practices, this book helps cultivate attention and well-being in both students and teachers.

Tough, Paul. *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*. Through the use of real-life stories from researchers and educators, Paul Tough explores how character skills, like perseverance and self-control, help children succeed.

Parents/Families

Berger, Jonah. *Invisible Influence: The Hidden Forces That Shape Behavior*. This book explores how other people's actions and behaviors affect our behavior. Understanding this social influence can help us make good decisions and have more control over our own behavior.

Goodbody, Slim. *Slim Goodbody's Good Health Guides: Avoiding Injuries*. Falls, burns, and playing sports are some of the most common sources of injury among older elementary-age children. In *Avoiding Injuries*, Slim Goodbody combines entertaining descriptions with photos and illustrations to explain why injuries happen, how to avoid injuries, and what children can do to help heal from them. This book offers practical information that will help children keep themselves safe in a fun, engaging way.

Greenland, S.K. *The Mindful Child: How to Help Your Kid Manage Stress and Become Happier, Kinder, and More Compassionate*. Using age-appropriate techniques for mindful awareness, parents can teach children learn to manage their stress with these well-established methods.

Sobel, Jeffrey. *Everybody Wins: 393 Non-Competitive Games for Young Children*. This book offers parents a large selection of indoor and outdoor non-competitive children's games that focus on cooperation, enjoyment, and creativity.

RESPECT BOOKS

A Chair For My Mother	Vera B. Williams
All Are Welcome Here	Alexandra Penfold
Be Bigger	Colleen Doyle Bryant
Berenstain Bears Show Some Respect	Jan Berenstain & Mike Berenstain
The Bicycle Man	Allen Say
Do Unto Otters	Laurie Keller
Great Joy (Holiday)	Kate DiCamillo
How Full Is Your Bucket? For Kids	Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer
I Can't Believe You Said That!	Julia Cook
I Just Don't Like The Sound Of No!	Julia Cook
Interrupting Chicken	David Ezra Stein
Kindness Starts With You - At School	Jacquelyn Stagg
Matilda	Roald Dahl
The Recess Queen	Alexi O'Neill
Rulers of the Playground	Joseph Kuefler
That Rule Doesn't Apply to Me	Julia Cook
The Way I Act	Steve Metzger

RESPONSIBILITY BOOKS

Alexander Who Used to Be Rich Last Saturday	Judith Viorst
Arthur's Pet Business	Marc Brown
Berenstain Bears and the Messy Room	Stan and Jan Berenstain
Berenstain Bears: Blame Game	Stan and Jan Berenstain
But It's Not My Fault	Julia Cook
Emperor's Egg, The: Read and Wonder	Martin Jenkins
How Do Dinosaurs Clean Their Rooms?	Jane Yolen
I Just Forgot	Mercer Mayer
I Just Want To Do It My Way	Julia Cook
It's Not my Fault	Nancy Carlson
Miss Nelson Is Missing!	Harry Allard
The Paperboy	Dav Pilkey
The Pigeon Wants a Puppy	Mo Willems
The Pigsty	Mark Teague
Responsibility	Cynthia Roberts
Saving Shadow	Sandres Dokas and Dara Lynn
Stanley and the Class Pet	Barney Saltzberg
Strega Nona	Tomie dePaola
What Should Danny Do?	Ganit and Adir Levy
William and the Guinea Pig: A Book About Responsibility	Gill Rose

HONESTY BOOKS

A Bike Like Sergio's	Maribeth Boelts
The Berenstain Bears and the Truth	Stan and Jan Berenstain
The Big Fat Enormous Lie	Marjorie Weinman Sharmat and David McPhail
The Boy Who Cried Bigfoot	Scott Magoon
Victory Vault	Jake Maddox
Doug-Dennis and the Flyaway Fib	Darren Farrell
Edwurd Fudwupper Fibbed Big	Berkeley Breathed
Eli's Lie-O-Meter: A Story about Telling the Truth	Sandra Levins
The Empty Pot	Demi
The Honest-to-Goodness Truth	Patricia McKissack
Howard Wigglebottom and the Monkey on His Back	Howard Binkow
I Want My Hat Back	Jon Klassen
Jackalope	Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel
Let's Be Honest	P.K. Hallinan
Liar, Liar	Gary Paulsen
Lying Up a Storm	Julia Cook
Molly the Great Tell the Truth	Shelley Marshall and Ben Mahan
Pinky Promise: A Book About Telling the Truth	Vanita Braver
Ruthie and the Not So Teeny Tiny Lie	Laura Rankin
Sam Tells Stories	Thierry Robberecht

KINDNESS BOOKS

A Sick Day for Amos McGee	Philip C. Stead
Be Kind	Pat Zeitlow Miller
Because Amelia Smiled	David Ezra Stein
The Bicycle Man	Allen Say
Grumpy Bird	Jeremy Tankard
How Do Dinosaurs Play With Their Friends?	Jane Yolen
How Full Is Your Bucket? For Kids	Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer
How Kind!	Mary Murphy
I Walk Vanessa	Kerascoet
If You Plant a Seed	Kadir Nelson
The Invisible String	Patrice Karst
The Jelly Donut Difference	Maria Dismondy
Mine!	Shutta Crum
Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed	Emily Pearson
Pass It On	Sophy Henn
Stick and Stone	Beth Ferry
Superheroes Club	Madeleine Sherak
We're All Wonders	R. J. Palacio
Superbuns	Diane Kredensor

SELF-CONTROL BOOKS

Clark the Shark	Bruce Hale
Click, Clack, Quack to School!	Doreen Cronin
David Gets In Trouble	David Shannon
I Can Handle It	Laurie Wright
It's Hard to Be a Verb!	Julia Cook
Katie loves the kittens	John Himmelman
Lacey Walker, Nonstop Talker	Christianne C. Jones
Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse	Kevin Henkes
My Mouth is a Volcano	Julia Cook
No, David	David Shannon
Of Course, It's a Big Deal	Bryan Smith
Oh No, George!	Chris Haughton
Percy Gets Upset	Stuart J. Murphy
Sometimes I'm Bombaloo	Rachel Vail
The Bad Seed	Jory John
Throwing tantrums	Joy Wilt Berry
Tyrannosaurus Wrecks!	Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen
We Don't Eat Our Classmates	Ryan T. Higgins
YOU WILL BE MY FRIEND!	Peter Brown

PERSEVERANCE BOOKS

After I Fall	Dan Santat
Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day	Judith Viorst
Argyle Fox	Marie Letourneau
The Book of Mistakes	Corinna Luyken
Dog Breath	Dav Pilkey
Emmanuel's Dream	Laurie Ann Thompson
Giraffes Can't Dance	Giles Andreae
I Am So Brave	Steven Krensky
I Will Be Okay (Mindful Mantras)	Ms Laurie N Wright
Jabari Jumps	Gaia Cornwall
Jonathan James and the What if Monster	Michelle Nelson-Schmidt
Let's Go For a Drive	Mo Willems
Life	Cynthia Rylant
The Most Magnificent Thing	Ashley Spires
Nadia: The Girl Who Couldn't Sit Still	Karlin Gray
Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes	Eric Litwin
Salt in His Shoes	Deloris Jordan
Sunday Chutney	Aaron Blabey
The Dot	Peter H. Reynolds
There Might Be Lobsters	Carolyn Crimi
The Thing That Lou Couldn't Do	Ashley Spires
Too Shy for Show-and-Tell	Beth Bracken
When Charlie McButton Lost Power	Suzanne Collins
Wilma Jean the Worry Machine	Julia Cook

EMPATHY BOOKS

All Are Welcome	Alexandra Penfold & Suzanne Kaufman
Amazing Grace	Mary Hoffman
Chocolate Milk, Por Favor!	Maria Dismondy
Chrysanthemum	Kevin Henkes
Hey Little Ant	Phillip and Hannah Hoose
The Hundred Dresses	Eleanor Estes
I am Human-A Book of Empathy	Susan Verde
The Invisible Boy	Trudy Ludwig and Patrice Barton
Last Stop on Market Street	Matt De La Pena
Madeline Finn and the Library Dog	Lisa Papp
The Monster Who Lost His Mean	Tiffany Strelitz Haber
My Many Colored Days	Dr. Seuss
Stick and Stone	Beth Ferry
Those Shoes	Maribeth Boelts
Through Grandpa's Eyes	Patricia MacLachlan
The Wall	Eve Bunting
What's Wrong with Timmy?	Maria Shriver

COOPERATION BOOKS

A House in the Woods	Inga Moore
Bat's Big Game	Margaret Read MacDonald
The Brownstone	Paula Scher
Colors versus Shapes	Mike Boldt
Duck and Goose	Tad Hills
Duck in the Truck	Jez Alborough
Frankie	Mary Sullivan
Franklin Plays the Game	Paulette Bourgeois
The Little Red Fort	Brenda Maier
The Little Red Hen	Lucinda McQueen
Mine	Jeff Mack
No, David	David Shannon
Officer Buckle and Gloria	Peggy Rathman
Please Please the Bees	Gerald Kelley
Prince and Pirate	Charlotte Gunnufson
Red & Yellow's Noisy Night	Josh Selig
Rulers of the Playground	Joseph Kuefler
Stone Soup	Jon J. Muth
Swimmy	Leo Lionni
The Tallest Tree House	Elly MacKay
Teamwork Isn't My Thing and I Don't Like to Share	Julia Cook
That Fruit Is Mine!	Anuska Allepuz
What if Everybody Did That?	Ellen Javernick
When Pigs Fly	James Burke

SELF-CONFIDENCE BOOKS

A Bad case of Stripes	David Shannon
The Book of Mistakes	Corinna Luyken
Calvin Can't Fly: The Story of a Bookworm Birdie	Jennifer Berne
The Dot	Peter H. Reynolds
Giraffes Can't Dance	Giles Andreae
The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes	Mark Pett
I Am Enough	Grace Byers
I Am So Brave	Steven Krensky
I Can Handle It (Mindful Mantras)	Ms Laurie Wright and Ms Ana Santos
I Like Myself	Karen Beaumont
Jonathan James and the What if Monster	Michelle Nelson-Schmidt
The Kissing Hand	Audrey Penn
Not Quite Narwhal	Jessie Sima
Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes	Eric Litwin
The Shiny Bee Who Felt Out of Place	Natalie Meraki
Stand Tall Molly Lou Melon	Patty Lovell
Tacky the Penguin	Helen Lester
Today I Feel Silly, And Other Moods That Make My Day	Jamie Lee Curtis
Wemberly Worried	Kevin Henkes
When You are Brave	Pat Zietlow Miller
Wilma Jean the Worry Machine	Julia Cook

COMPASSION BOOKS

A Sick Day For Amos McGee	Philip C. Stead
Arnie and the New Kid	Nancy Carlson
Be Kind	Pat Zietlow Miller
Come With Me	Holly M. McGhee
Each Kindness	Jacqueline Woodson
Emma and the Whale	Julie Case
Firenze's Light	Jessica Collaço and Angela Li
The Friendship Puzzle	Julie L. Coe
Hooway for Wodney Wat	Helen Lester
Horace and Morris but Mostly Dolores	James Howe
The Invisible Boy	Trudy Ludwig
Little Blue Truck	Alice Schetyle
Lost and Found Cat	Doug Kuntz and Amy Shrodes
My Brother Charlie	Holly Robinson Peete and Ryan Elizabeth Peete
My Many Colored Days	Dr. Seuss
Otis and the Scarecrow	Laren Long
The Rabbit Listened	Cori Doerrfeld
Save Me a Seat	Sarah Weeks
Sumi's First Day of School Ever	Soyung Pak
Under the Lemon Moon	Edith Hope Fine
We're All Wonders	R.J. Palacio
Wonder	R. J. Palacio
Yoko	Rosemary Wells

MANNERS BOOKS

Achoo!	Mij Kelly
Clifford's manners	Norman Bridwell
Do Unto Otters	Laurie Keller
Dude, That's Rude!	Pamela Espeland
May I please have a cookie?	Jennifer Morris
The Monsters' Monster	Patrick McDonnell
Penguin says please	Michael Dahl
Rude Cakes	Rowboat Watkins
Rules of the Wild	Bridget Levin
Time to Say Please	Mo Willems

FRIENDSHIP BOOKS

A Sick Day for Amos McGee	Philip C. Stead
Grumpy Bird	Jeremy Tankard
How Do Dinosaurs Play With Their Friends?	Jane Yolen
How to Lose All Your Friends	Nancy Carlson
The Invisible Boy	Trudy Ludwig
Llama Llama Time to Share	Anna Dewdney
The Monster at Recess	Shira Potter
The Rainbow Fish	Marcus Pfister
Rulers of the Playground	Joseph Kuefler
Stick and Stone	Beth Ferry



GRATITUDE BOOKS

All the World	Liz Garton Scanlon
An Awesome Book of Thanks	Dan Clayton
Bear Says Thanks	Karma Wilson
Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You are?	Dr. Suess
The Giving Tree	Shel Silverstein
Grateful: A Song of Giving Thanks	John Buccino
Gratitude Soup	Olivia Rosewood
I'm Thankful	Terri-Sue Hill
I'm Thankful Each Day!	P. K. Hallinan
It Could Always Be Worse	Margot Zemach
Just So Thankful	Mercer Mayer
Last Stop on Market Street	Matt De La Pena
Let's Be Thankful	Gladys Barbieri
Secret of Saying Thanks	Douglas Wood
Should I Share My Ice Cream?	Mo Willems
Splat Says Thank You!	Rob Scotton
Sylvester and the Magic Pebble	William Steig
The Thank you Book	Mo Willems
Thankful	Eileen Spinelli
The Thankful Book	Todd Parr
The Berenstain Bears Count Their Blessings	Stan Berenstain
Those Shoes	Maribel Boelts

