

Self-Awareness Activities:

Journaling: Encourage students to keep a journal to record thoughts, challenges, emotions, events, and memories. Encourage them to record one positive thing for each day.

Growth Mindset: Use positive quotes about growth mindset to get kids ready to learn for the day. Growth mindset posters can be [colored](#) and then hung around the house or classroom as reminders to persevere and not give up when things get hard.

Self-Affirmations: Spend some time choosing self-affirmations and post them throughout the house as gentle reminders. In the classroom, try having student's put these words of positive self-talk in the front of their homework folder.

"I Am" Mirror: Find a [small mirror](#) and post the saying, "I Am" at the top. Add [sticky notes](#) with positive words, such as special, kind, and hardworking, around the mirror that they can recite. In the classroom try making an "I Am" wall for the class or individual [worksheets](#) students can complete for themselves.

"I" statements: Introduce "I" statements (I feel, I think, I believe). Use them to in conversations to identify your own emotions, thoughts, and values. Discuss how this can change a conversation when we identify our perspective.

I matter: Recognize your strengths and unique characteristics. What to you add to your family? To your classroom? To your friend group? (Ex. I can make others laugh, I am caring, I am good at math)

Self Check-in: For 1 minute, check in with yourself. How am I feeling? How do I know? How does my body feel?

Ride the Wave: Recognize when you are feeling an intense emotion, go to a safe space, with a trusted adult, and allow yourself to feel the emotion. Emotions are natural and they come and go, acknowledge the feeling and let it pass. When it has passed, reflect on what led to that feeling and talk it through with a trusted adult.

Self-Management Activities:

Morning Meetings: Use this time at home or in the classroom to review the plan for the day. What goals need to be accomplished and how can we plan for success?

Be My Best Self: Have students identify ways they can be their best selves while learning at home or in school. Have students [interview](#) a family member about a time when they believe the student showed their best-self.

Self-Motivation, Perseverance, and Resilience: Have students identify ways that they have overcome challenges through persistence and hard work (learning to tie their shoes or ride a bike, passing a difficult class). Have them share their experience. What struggles did they encounter? What kept them motivated to keep trying? Were there people or strategies that helped them? How did it feel when they achieved success?

Sleep Hygiene: Talk about healthy sleep habits with students and challenge them to commit to improving their own sleep hygiene. Are you getting 9 hours of sleep at night? Do you avoid using a laptop/tablet/phone/tv while in your bed? Do you avoid screen time for at least 30 minutes before bed? Is your bedroom dark?

Nutrition: Discuss how a healthy diet can help us feel better physically and emotionally. Do your eating habits change when you are feeling stressed, upset, or overwhelmed?

Exercise: 30 minutes of heart pumping exercise can reduce negative emotions and make it easier to focus in school and at home. Try relay races with the family. Try jogging or biking around the block. Stuck inside? Try jumping jacks, sit-ups, push-ups. *Your student's Physical Education teacher is a great resource for more ideas!*

Mindfulness and Mindful Breathing: Elementary students are encouraged to try [basic breathing exercises](#). Secondary students are encouraged to try both brief breathing exercises and [longer mindful breathing exercises](#).

Tech breaks: A break from devices is good for our emotional wellbeing and our productivity. Adults and students are challenged to try a device break. Start with 1 hour free of all devices - no phone, no tablet, no tv.

Create a Safe Space: Identify or create a space for students to use when they need a moment to regulate their own feelings. Consider adding calming and comforting tools like pictures, fidgets, coloring supplies.

Social-Awareness Activities:

Use a story or video to discuss empathy: Take time to pause and discuss what empathy is and how we can show more empathy towards others. Check out books like *The Invisible Boy* by Trudy Ludwig or *Chocolate Milk, por favor* by Maria Dismondy for younger students or some of these [ideas](#) for older students.

Give Back: Help students brainstorm different ways they can give back to others. Collect donations for a cause, help a neighbor rake their leaves, recognize the helpers in your community.

Wrinkled heart: Cut out a paper heart and write on it – “Before you speak, think and be smart, it’s hard to fix a wrinkled heart.” Afterward, crumble up the heart and open it again. Discuss how you can’t remove the wrinkles just like you can’t take away those hurtful words.

Help Others: Encourage students to help someone at home or school. In a classroom make it a goal to have a set number of good deeds accomplished by the class by the end of the week. Try to fill in all of the hearts on the [kindness tree](#). Helping others, helps ourselves.

How are YOU?: Ask someone in your family how they are doing and LISTEN to their response. Let this conversation be about them completely.

Name and Motion: Students go around and introduce themselves and share an interest or skill they have. Students can use a motion or gesture associated with that action. The following students do the same for themselves and repeat all students who went before them. Students will be learning to appreciating diversity as they learn each other’s interests.

Fishbowl: Divide students in two groups, 1 group discussing, 1 group listening and set a time limit. Provide a question or topic and have the first group discuss while the listening group listens thoughtfully to the discussion. When the time is up, have the groups change roles. After have students reflect on their experience as both a “listener” and “discusser.”

Relationship Skill Activities:

Paper Hearts: Have students cut out paper hearts. Fill them with a personal message or image of thanks, kindness, or appreciation. Hang them on the windows or front door for service workers to see. Post them around the house for family members to find or have them placed in school mailboxes for cleaners, nurse, or other staff.

Phone a Friend or Family Member: Encourage students to connect with one friend or family member over the phone this week. With older students, have them consider the ways our communication is changed when we use verbal expression instead of [texting](#) or messaging. How can this help us improve our relationships, resolve, and even prevent conflicts?

Be a good friend: Have students discuss ways to be a good friend. How do you feel someone shows you they are a good friend? Sometimes we expect to get more than we are giving in our friendships. What can you do to be a better friend to one of your friends?

Practice Respectfully Disagreeing: We are going to disagree, so learning how to do so respectfully is an essential skill for students and adults. Have students discuss topics from different points of view. Encourage students to try [active](#) listening [skills](#) like eye contact, rephrasing, and asking questions. Try starting with topics like favorite pizza topping and working towards more important conversations, especially with older students.

Write a letter: Have students select someone they care about who you may not see all the time, family or friend, and write send them a letter. If they write back, keep it going!

Responsible Decision-Making Activities:

Plan a meal: Have students create a menu for a healthy meal. What ingredients do they need? Based on age, when will they need adult assistance? For older students have them consider the cost of the ingredients. Go even further and compare that to the cost of purchasing the meal from a restaurant. What are the costs vs. benefits and which way would they choose?

Accomplishment Jar: Encourage students to celebrate their growth. Decorate a jar or box and every time the student achieves a personal accomplishment, write it down on a piece of paper and put it in the jar. As the year goes on they will have visual reminders of all their growth from the year.

Circle of Control: Discuss situations that you can or cannot control. Create a poster with a circle on it. Inside the circle, draw and write things you CAN control. Outside the circle, draw and write situations that you CANNOT control. Help students to recognize other SEL skills that can help them manage or cope with these situations.

Goal Setting: Discuss SMART goals with students and have them set a personal SMART goal for the day, week, or month.

Reflect: At the end of the day reflect with a family member how the day went, did you make responsible choices? Would you change anything if you could do it again? Is there anyone you might have wronged today?

Card Sorts: Have students respond to a question by writing their response on a card or sticky note. Invite each student to come up with more than one response. Have students discuss their responses in a group and work together to group responses by theme, encouraging all students to have an equal voice and each response has equal value.