



## Family Activity

# Dinner Discussions

## What is Social and Emotional Learning?

Learning is not limited to science, math, reading, and writing. Social and emotional learning—which helps children understand their emotions, manage their behavior, and learn how to interact with others—is crucial too! There are five focus areas in social and emotional learning: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making, Social Awareness, and Relationship Skills. Each area focuses on skills that can help children do well in school, form healthy relationships, and develop into successful adults.

## How does this activity relate to social and emotional learning?

Children need constant opportunities to strengthen their social and emotional skills before, during, and after school. That's why this activity is specially designed to help you bring social and emotional learning into your home in a fun way that will benefit everyone who lives there! As you work together to follow the directions below, each family member will strengthen their social and emotional skills together:

- **Self-Awareness** focuses on our ability to understand our emotions and thoughts—as well as how they affect our behavior. Another way to look at Self-Awareness is: *I love and accept who I am on the inside and I know my emotions are nothing to hide.*
- **Self-Management** focuses on our ability to control our behaviors and regulate our emotions in different situations. It also focuses on our ability to set goals and work toward them. Another way to look at Self-Management is: *Life's full of surprises that make me feel different ways. If I can control myself, I'll have much better days.*
- **Responsible Decision-Making** focuses on our ability to make positive decisions and take responsibility for the outcomes of our choices. Another way to look at Responsible Decision-Making is: *I understand the choices I make should be what's best for me to do, and what happens is on me and not any of you.*
- **Social Awareness** focuses on our ability to empathize with others. Another way to look at Social Awareness is: *I understand others are unique. I want to learn more about everyone I meet. I want to step into their shoes and see what they are going through.*
- **Relationship Skills** focus on our ability to relate well to others. Another way to look at Relationship Skills is: *I am a friend. I support and trust. Working together is a must. Kind and caring I will be. I listen to you. You listen to me.*



## Family Activity Guide

Cut apart the conversation starter strips below and place them in a bag or box. At the beginning of your next family meal, have one family member select a strip and read it aloud (or have an adult read it for them). Each family member should share their thoughts, answers, or experiences. Be sure to model good listening skills!

*I love and accept who I am on the inside and know my emotions are nothing to hide.*

**Talk about something you did today to show yourself love and acceptance.**

*I love and accept who I am on the inside and know my emotions are nothing to hide.*

**Describe some ways you express yourself and show who you are on the inside.**

*I love and accept who I am on the inside and know my emotions are nothing to hide.*

**What makes you unique from other people in your family?**

*I love and accept who I am on the inside and know my emotions are nothing to hide.*

**Describe a time you struggled to be good at something and how that made you feel.**

*Life's full of surprises that make me feel different ways.  
If I can control myself, I'll have much better days.*

**What is the best surprise you've had recently?**



*Life's full of surprises that make me feel different ways.  
If I can control myself, I'll have much better days.*

**Are there times when you lose control of your emotions or behavior?  
Why do you think that happens?**

*Life's full of surprises that make me feel different ways.  
If I can control myself, I'll have much better days.*

**What rules at home or school are hard for you to follow? Why?**

*Life's full of surprises that make me feel different ways.  
If I can control myself, I'll have much better days.*

**How do you calm down when you are feeling angry, upset, or nervous?**

*I understand the choices I make should be what's best for me to do, and what happens is on me  
and not any of you.*

**What is one goal you have for yourself?**

*I understand the choices I make should be what's best for me to do, and what happens is on me  
and not any of you.*

**Have you ever broken a promise? How did it make you feel? How did it make  
the other person feel?**

*I understand the choices I make should be what's best for me to do, and what happens is on me  
and not any of you.*

**What is a choice you made this week that you are proud of?**



*I understand the choices I make should be what's best for me to do, and what happens is on me and not any of you.*

**Talk about a time you made a choice that kept you out of trouble.**

*I understand others are unique. I want to learn more about everyone I meet.  
I want to step into their shoes and see what they are going through.*

**Who is one of your favorite friends? How are you alike? How are you different?**

*I understand others are unique. I want to learn more about everyone I meet.  
I want to step into their shoes and see what they are going through.*

**What does it mean to “step into someone else’s shoes?” Can you give an example of a time when you stepped into someone else’s shoes?**

*I understand others are unique. I want to learn more about everyone I meet.  
I want to step into their shoes and see what they are going through.*

**When you meet someone new, how do you get to know them?**

*I understand others are unique. I want to learn more about everyone I meet.  
I want to step into their shoes and see what they are going through.*

**Tell something special about each person in the family.**

*I am a friend. I support and trust. Working together is a must.*

**When you are working with others do you like to be the leader of the group? Why or why not?**



*I am a friend. I support and trust. Working together is a must.*

**Name one way that you are going to be kind to someone else tomorrow (without being asked to or expecting anything in return).**

*I am a friend. I support and trust. Working together is a must.*

**Who do you trust the most? Why do you trust them?**

*I am a friend. I support and trust. Working together is a must.*

**You get invited to a party, but realize your best friend wasn't invited. What do you do?**

*Kind and caring I will be. I listen to you. You listen to me.*

**If you were a superhero, who would you help? Why?**

*Kind and caring I will be. I listen to you. You listen to me.*

**Name someone in your life who listens to you. How do you know they are a good listener?**

*Kind and caring I will be. I listen to you. You listen to me.*

**How does it make you feel when you are kind to someone else?**

*Kind and caring I will be. I listen to you. You listen to me.*

**Describe a time when you were talking to someone who had a different opinion than you. What was that like? How did you handle it?**

## Wings Words to Live By

I soar with wings.  
Let me tell you why. I learn lots of  
skills that help me reach the sky.

I love and accept who I am on the  
inside and know my emotions are  
nothing to hide.

Life's full of surprises that make  
me feel different ways.  
If I can control myself,  
I'll have much better days.

I understand the choices I make  
should be what's best for me to do,  
and what happens is on me  
and not any of you.

I understand that others are unique.  
I want to learn more about everyone  
I meet. I want to step into their shoes  
and see what they are going through.

I am a friend. I support and trust.  
Working together is a must.  
Kind and caring I will be.  
I listen to you. You listen to me.

I soar with wings.  
I just told you why.  
All of these things are why I fly high.

