



SEL Activities by Grade Level

Social-emotional learning can be taught using several different approaches. You can provide individual lessons to teach students core social emotional skills, with lessons that vary in frequency and last different amounts of time. You may also promote SEL through embedding social-emotional competencies throughout academic instruction. Listed below are several ideas for activities that can be integrated into elementary and secondary classrooms.

ELEMENTARY

High Five to Friendship – This activity can help students learn how to be a better friend. First, brainstorm as a class to identify characteristics of a good friend. Then have students trace their right and left hands onto two pieces of paper. On one hand, have them write the characteristics that make them a good friend. On the other hand, have them write areas where they can improve to become a better friend. Ask the students to choose one area to practice that week.

Snowstorm in a Bag – This activity can encourage students to practice deep breathing with a fun technique. First, explain the concept of deep breathing and its purpose. Choose a container (e.g., bottle, baggie) that can have a straw inserted and add small pieces of paper into the container. Ask students to breathe deeply and exhale into the straw to create a “snowstorm”. Encourage students to reflect on how they feel during and after the activity.

SECONDARY

Gratitude Journal – This activity can help students intentionally recognize the positive. At the end of the day or class period, ask students to take a moment and write down or draw two things they are grateful for. Allow the opportunity for students who want to share to describe to the class one thing they are grateful for.

Self-Advocacy Cards – This activity can help students grow aware of their own needs and learn to self-advocate. Ask students to reflect on questions such as:

- What are things that I do or how do I feel when things are not going well for me?
- How would someone else be able to tell things are not going well for me?
- What can I do to help myself when I am struggling in school?
- What is my next step if these coping strategies are not working?

Everyday Mental Health Classroom Resource. (2021). *View and filter all practices*. <https://smho-smso.ca/emhc/filter/>

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