

## KEY SEL SKILLS: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

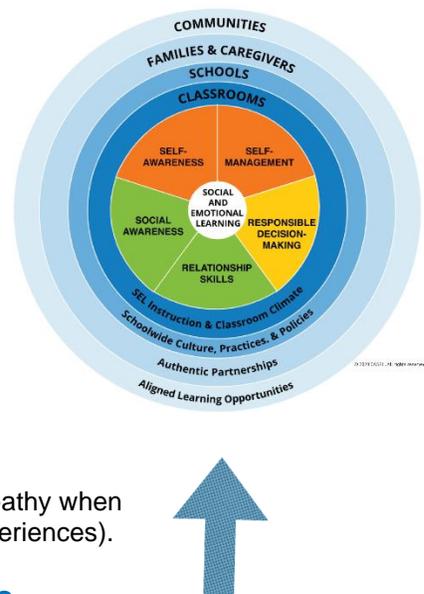
### WHAT ARE RELATIONSHIP SKILLS?

**Relationship skills** refer to our ability to create and sustain healthy relationships with others by communicating effectively (verbally, in writing and nonverbally), listening, demonstrating cultural competence, collaborating and resolving conflicts constructively.

### WHAT DO RELATIONSHIP SKILLS LOOK LIKE?

Children and teens grow their relationship skills differently at each age and stage. Children with strong relationship skills may:

- Develop and sustain healthy relationships with others.
- Use clear written, spoken, and non-verbal language to express thoughts and feelings.
- Persuade others in effective, respectful ways.
- Collaborate with others and exercise teamwork to complete a common goal.
- Demonstrate cultural awareness and competence (e.g. befriending people from diverse cultural backgrounds, embracing differences, and engaging in shared cultural learning and experiences with one another through language, food, customs, acting with empathy when engaging with those who share different backgrounds and experiences).



### HOW CAN PARENTS FOSTER RELATIONSHIP SKILLS?

Parents can...

- Model respectful relationships with others withholding judgement and treating others with kindness.
- Coach your child through friendship challenges by asking open-ended questions instead of solving the problem for them (see resource below).
- Take the time necessary to work through conflict in your household. Accept and validate feelings and make sure you agree to ways to argue fairly. Teach siblings a problem-solving process to use with one another (see resources below).
- Work collaboratively as a family and with friends, schoolmates and neighbors through volunteering or participating in community events.
- Create playdate opportunities allowing your child practice with peers in cultivating friendships.
- Look for opportunities to connect with individuals, groups and events involving differing races, cultures and lifestyles with open minds and hearts in your family.
- Read aloud to children and discuss the qualities of being a good friend and point to characters' feelings, ways to communicate and how problems are solved.
- Narrate your day with your child, while engaging in conversational turn-taking using open-ended questions.



## RESOURCES:

[Coaching Strategies to Use with Children](#)

[Family Fighting Fairly Pledge](#)

[Peace Rose: A Problem-solving Tool for Siblings](#)

**Conversational Turn Taking** Parent: “We have so much to do today! I need to go to the grocery store, pick up the dry cleaning, take you to dance practice, and make dinner! What do you think we should do first?” Child: “I don’t know... maybe we should do the dry cleaning first.” Parent: “Ok, sounds good. Why do you think we should do dry cleaning first as opposed to grocery shopping?” Child: “Well, I was just thinking that the groceries may get hot in the car if we do the grocery shopping first.” Parent: “Ahhh, I see! Good thinking!”.

