

KEY SEL SKILLS: SOCIAL AWARENESS

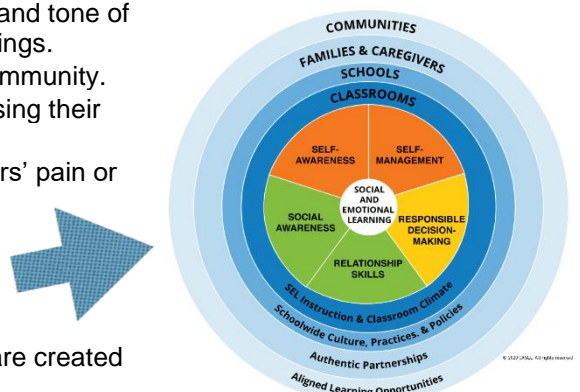
WHAT DOES SOCIAL AWARENESS MEAN?

Social Awareness refers to the degree to which we are able to empathize with the thoughts and feelings of others, particularly those who are from different races, cultures, backgrounds, and contexts as well as our ability to take social cues to inform our communication and choices.

WHAT DOES SOCIAL AWARENESS LOOK LIKE?

Children and teens grow their social awareness differently at each age and stage. Children with a sense of social awareness may:

- Be able to name and understand the thoughts and feelings of others.
- Focus on others' communication including body language and tone of voice to make meaning of their intent, motivations and feelings.
- Feel an authentic connection to and membership with a community.
- Take multiple perspectives into account without compromising their own values or beliefs.
- From empathy, find the compassion to act to alleviate others' pain or suffering.
- Understand the interconnectedness of individuals, communities, organizations, and systems (e.g., with adult support, children can think through the various ways in which littering impacts humans, other animals, and the environment, while also considering the jobs that are created by the need to clean up litter and waste in the community).



HOW CAN PARENTS FOSTER SOCIAL AWARENESS?

Parents can...

- Model empathy by taking your child's perspective and helping them name their emotions. (e.g., You might say, "I see your forehead wrinkle. Are you worried?")
- Practice empathy by discussing each other's feelings in your family regularly, noticing pain or suffering when you see it in your community, and pointing out characters' feelings when reading together.
- Practice using the language of acceptance and inclusion when discussing family, friends, neighbors or even bigger world news judging choices but never people.
- Create opportunities for children to have exposure to differing viewpoints and express those differences through a reflective lens (e.g., sharing news articles about the same topic from sources with differing viewpoints, and discussing the differences in each viewpoint in relation to what the child believes.)
- Create opportunities for your children to be involved in your communities through service and by attending community-wide events.

PTA HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

RESOURCES:

- [Differences Do Matter; Why Talking About Them Helps Us Raise Compassionate Kids](#)
- [Resources for Learning about Racial and Social Justice At Home](#)
- [Open-hearted Dialogue; Tackling Difficult Topics while Making Meaning Together](#)
- [How Do We Cultivate Compassion In Our Kids?](#)
- Want to learn more about the skill of self-management? Check out the [CASEL 5 Social and Emotional Skills](#).

EXTEND THE LEARNING

Create opportunities for children to experience the realities of others and the interconnectedness of individuals, communities, and systems by picking a social issue (i.e., hunger, homelessness, climate change, etc.) and driving to different neighborhoods, attending community events outside your own or contributing to a service project to experience the issue firsthand. Be sure and reflect afterward, by asking...

1. How do you think this issue affects the people you encountered? How do they feel? How does seeing their circumstances make you feel?
2. What do you think is contributing to the problem in the community?
3. What steps could you or your family take to help the people involved who are struggling with the issue?