

# SEL Theme 3: Social Awareness

## The 5 Competencies of Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

This blog series will look at each of the 5 core competencies of Social Emotional Learning as outlined on the CASEL model below and explore ideas on how to promote and teach these skills at home.



## **What is Social Awareness?**

Social Awareness is the ability to take the perspective of and empathise with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behaviour, and to recognise family, school, and community resources and supports.

- Perspective-taking
- Empathy
- Appreciating diversity
- Respect for others

This article has been developed to support schools in their implementation of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) through the use of *The PATHS® Programme for Schools (UK Version)*; and to extend SEL beyond the classroom - reaching out to their whole school, homes and community. In this article we want to explore how you could celebrate social awareness through cross curricular activities using SEL.

## The importance of teaching Social Awareness

During this challenging time adults and children alike are experiencing new and difficult stress factors. This makes it particularly important to practice empathy for each other by reflecting not only on how we feel but how our friends and family and others may feel. A key skill we can develop at this time is for children to put themselves in other people's position, think of ways they can help, and understand how their actions can impact others.

## Saying Thank You

Learning to say thank you and appreciating others is an important part of social awareness especially during these challenging times. Encourage your child to show their appreciation for someone or a group of people who show their care and support. (Check out our Thank You colouring page for some help!)



# Thinking of Others & Empathy Activities

## Importance of practicing empathy

Practicing empathy is key for children to develop and maintain meaningful relationships. We can do this by teaching them to understand other people's feelings and how they may differ from our own, practicing giving compliments, and carry out caring acts for others.

### **ACTIVITY IDEA: Empathy Egg Box**

*Suitable for 4-7 year olds with adult supervision*

#### What you will need:

A pair of scissors, An empty egg carton, Counters or circles cut out of cardboard  
Glue, Paper, Felt tip

**Step 1: Write** the name of a 6 family members, friends or teachers on a piece of paper.

**Step 2: Stick** the names on each of the 6 compartments of the egg carton.

**Step 3: Draw** different feelings faces on the counters (e.g happy, sad, angry, surprised).

**Step 4: Take turns** to throw the counters into the egg carton and see whose compartment they land in (e.g a sad face in the compartment labelled "Mum").

**Step 5: Think** of a time that Mum felt sad and try to think of what could have made her feel that way. Think of what you could do to cheer her up next time she is sad.



*Note: You can also use flower pots or anything with various compartments instead of an egg box.*

### **ACTIVITY IDEA: Complimenting Others Jar**

*Suitable for all age groups*

#### You will need:

An empty jar, Paper, Felt tips or colouring pencils, a pair of scissors



**Step 1:** Have your child write down the names of their family members and friends.

**Step 2:** Cut the names out into strips of paper.

**Step 3:** Fold the paper and place in the jar.

**Step 4:** Every day, pick a name from the jar and compliment that person. (Use our template to think about the 4 types of compliment!)

# Perspective Taking Activities

## Understanding Different Perspectives

It can be very hard for children to see someone else's perspective especially if they are feeling upset or angry. When we can however see things from another's viewpoint, this can help us make better choices with our behavior and think about the consequences of our actions. Perspective taking is a skill that needs to be exercised like a muscle to become instinctive.

### **ACTIVITY IDEA: Interview a friend or family member**

*Suitable for all age groups*

**Step 1: Choose a friend** or family member you would like to interview.

**Step 2:** Either **using your own questions** or the template activity sheet, write down some facts about yourself such as your favourite colour, favourite food, favourite place, etc.

**Step 3:** **Ask** your friend/family member you have chosen the same questions and see how their answers are similar or different from yours. What did you have in common? What did you differ on?



## **ACTIVITY IDEA: Different Perspectives**

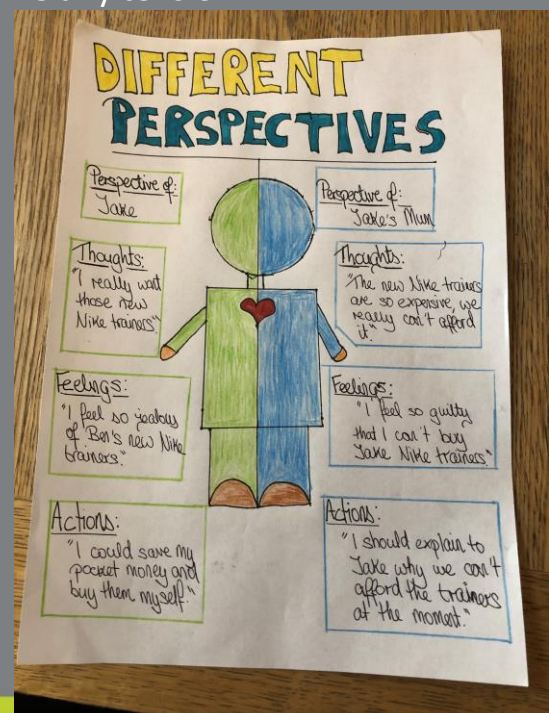
*Suitable for 8-11 years*

**Step 1: Think** of a time you felt comfortable (eg. Happy) and a friend or a family member felt uncomfortable (eg. Sad or angry).

**Step 2: Draw** the outline of a person and draw a line halfway down (or use our template). One side of the page represents your opinion and the other side represents the other person.

**Step 3: On your side of the page,** write down what your thoughts and feelings were at that time and write down the thoughts and feelings of the other person on the other side.

**Step 4: Write** an action for yourself and the other person, which would help both of you understand each other better and resolve any tension



# Diversity and Respect Activities

## Understanding our similarities and differences

It is important to remember though we can share similarities, we are also all unique. Our differences come in many forms such as the colour of our skin, where we come from, our gender, age and our preferences. Appreciating other people's differences enriches our life experiences and broadens our horizons.

Remind your child that it is important to remember that we can all experience the same emotions but this may be expressed differently or at different times.



*Different on the outside, same on the inside*

**ACTIVITY IDEA: Listen to music from different countries and dance along!**

*Suitable for all ages*

**ACTIVITY IDEA: Recipes from around the world**

*Suitable for all ages with adult supervision*

Together with your child, try a recipe from a different country to appreciate the cuisine of a different country.



**ACTIVITY IDEA: Write a fact sheet about a country of your choice**

*Suitable for 8 -11 year olds*

Have a look at our template for researching the country you live in and another country from around the world. Use the internet or atlases to find out key facts about a new countries location, population, languages, clothing, food and music. How do they differ from your country? Share your findings with friends and family!

*We certainly hope that these ideas will be both inspiring and helpful in exploring **the theme of Social Awareness***

*Please do get in touch with us via our Social Media if you have used any of these and remember to follow us on our Facebook and Twitter accounts for many more ideas from participating schools.*



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