



Principal
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Dear Families,

In an effort to support all children at Hastings each grade level will be devoting time to social/emotional learning for all students. Our goal for this allotted time is to help all students feel safe, respected, and included. Research has shown that by explicitly teaching social and emotional skills, academic growth increases by 13%(Casel, 2019). Social emotional learning can include self-awareness (naming your feelings), self-management (being in control of your feelings and body), social awareness (thinking about others), relationship skills (how to make a friend), how to speak to others), and responsible decision making (making safe choices).

In fourth and fifth grades we will cover the following topics. In addition, we have included books you may want to read with your child at home as well as some suggested activities to support our learning.

Topics/Books/Suggested Activities:

- Community Building and routines
 - Suggested Books: The Crayon Box That Talked
 - Suggested Activities: Consider having a family meeting on a weekly basis where everyone has the opportunity to check-in and connect with each other, practice problem solving and share news. Set-up a quiet homework spot and routine to get homework back to school.
- Self Regulation
 - Suggested Books: Soda Pop Head
 - Suggested Activities: Practice playing games with your child allowing them to lose so they learn how to have expected reactions when they lose or are disappointed.
- Zones of Regulation
 - Suggested Books: What Were You Thinking
 - Suggested Activities: Have a conversation of what it means to stay on topic during discussions.
- Growth Mindset
 - Suggested Books: Ish, The Most Magnificent Thing

- Suggested Activities: Praise/Effort - praise child for their effort and minimize comments on actual completed product
- Executive Functioning Strategies
 - Suggested Books: What Were You Thinking, Planning Isn't My Priority and Making Priorities Isn't in my Plans
 - Suggested Activities: Create a schedule with your child, help them learn to pack their backpacks themselves including homework, lunch etc.,
- MLK Core Values
 - Suggested Books: Let the Children March, March On
 - Suggested Activities: Discussion with children of what they understand about MLK and values he taught.
- Friendship
 - Suggested Books: Our Friendship Rules, Feathers and Fools
 - Suggested Activities: Provide your child opportunities to play with other children beyond the school day.
- Perspective Taking/Problem Solving
 - Suggested Books: It Looked Like Spilled Milk, They All Saw a Cat
 - Suggested Activities: When reading or watching tv with your child, discuss perspective taking. Characters may have a different perspective
- Celebrating Differences
 - Suggested Books: Grandfather Counts, The Name Jar, The Girl Who Thought in Pictures, Grandfather Counts, Why Am I Me?
 - Suggested Activities: Discuss celebrations and or traditions that you and your family celebrate. Encourage play dates as everyone is different and we can learn from each other.

By partnering in this work, we will share a common vocabulary with specialist teachers, assistants, recess staff, and families, so that all adults use consistent language to support the children. We are all committed to building strong and positive self-perceptions in our students, so that each person can navigate the power and social dynamics that exist across all settings and for all ages.

For more information, please visit the CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) Website (casel.org) and/or visit the Hastings Social Emotional Learning website (<https://sites.google.com/lexingtonma.org/hastingsssel/home>).

Most Sincerely,
Your Teacher

Self-awareness: Know your strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.”

Self-management: Effectively manage stress, control impulses, and motivate yourself to set and achieve goals.

Social awareness: Understand the perspectives of others and empathize with them, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Relationship skills: Communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.

Responsible decision-making: Make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety, and social norms.



Casel, 2017