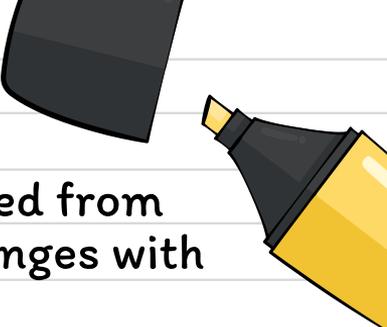


A stylized illustration of a desk with a light blue background. In the center is a white sign with a black border and rounded corners, containing the text 'Welcome to KinderCats!' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The text is separated by two horizontal lines. Surrounding the sign are various desk items: a pink pencil sharpener in the top left, a blue pen in the bottom right, a yellow notepad in the bottom left, and a white sheet of paper with horizontal lines in the top right. A blue double-headed arrow is positioned above the sign, and a green wavy line is below it. There are also some yellow scribbles on the left side.

**Welcome to  
KinderCats!**

# Reviewing 2021-2022



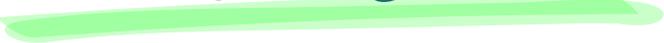
When reflecting on the 2021 - 2022 school year, it can be concluded from administrators, teachers, and staff that we all saw **significant** changes with students social-emotional well-being.

To name a few, we saw lack of ability to appropriately interact with peers, ability to peacefully problem solve, make appropriate decisions, and many more.

There are several factors that impacted students social-emotional well-being, with one stand out due to students lacking 'normal' school setting from March 2020 until just recently, to where there was limited access to social settings. Without early childhood, Pre-K, or a school setting students fell behind on developing social-emotional skills they could have developed in such environments. So as educators, it's obvious that not only are we to fill the academic gap, but the social-emotional gap as well. (*article*)

While we will strive towards helping your child build social-emotional skills, this is where we need help from you!

# Today's Agenda



## Social-Emotional Learning

Understanding the fundamentals of social-emotional skills.

## How to implement

What can be done at home to assist in developing valuable social-emotional skills.



## Proper Habits

Understand important habits to develop and continue throughout the school year.

## Conclusion

Wrapping up, preparing for an awesome school year!

## Information Coming From?

### 6 years - DCFS & Centerstone

Working with children/families with significant trauma, with a mental health diagnosis, and much more.

### 2 years - Longfellow Elementary

Being the school social worker working with students on building and expanding their social-emotional skills. I got to see **first** hand the importance of social-skills being taught and implemented at a young age.

### 4 years - Mom

Sharing personal experiences of what has helped with implementing social-emotional skills with my son. As well as, discussing the importance of communication with his teacher to build on such skills.



Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which children acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to:

- **Self-Management:** recognize and manage their emotions.
- **Social Awareness:** demonstrate caring and concern for others.
- **Relationship Skills:** build and establish positive relationships.
- **Responsible decision making:** make appropriate choices.
- **Self-Awareness:** handle challenging situations constructively and appropriately.

*(Illinois State Board of Education)*

# Self-Management: recognize and manage emotions.

## Recognize - Understanding emotions

-It is important for children to understand their feelings. Knowing that they might experience a wide range of emotions that can come and go at any time.

-To help children know the different feelings that might occur, review with them a feelings chart that includes facial expression. Discuss what each emotion is, discuss what might cause someone to feel this way (*trigger*), or better yet give an example when you or your child felt this way.

-Another example, is when a child is reading a story or watching a TV show, watch for a character to experience a strong emotion. Discuss such emotion and why the character felt that way.

		
SCARED	HAPPY	SAD
		
ANGRY	EXCITED	WORRIED
		
SURPRISED	SILLY	FRUSTRATED

# Self-Management: recognize and manage emotions.

## Managing Emotions

-Something I reiterate a lot with my students is... you cannot control the way you feel but you can control the way you **react** to your feelings. Being able to control our reactions to our feelings is hard... even as adults! So for a child, it's important to have conversations about this topic early and often.

-It is important to have such discussions with your child when they are **regulated**. Meaning, when your child is calm and able to listen, discuss what they can do when they feel frustrated, or upset that results in appropriate choices being made. Trying to have these conversation when your child is already **escalated**, meaning they are at the peak of their strong emotion, you are going to get nowhere...trust me I know!

-There are several things to discuss about how your child can come self-regulated and calm down. (*at home, school, community*)



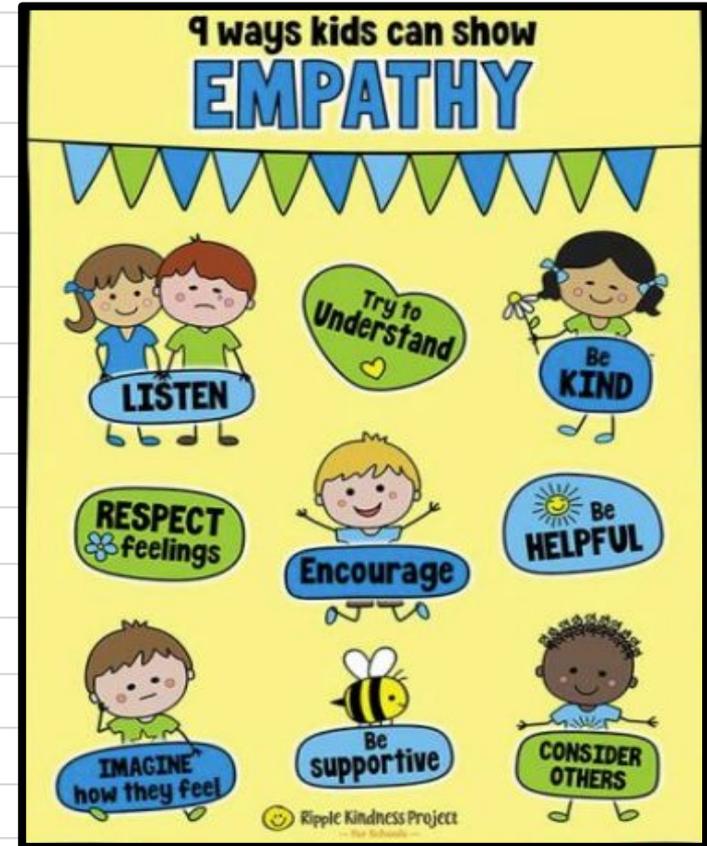
# Social Awareness: demonstrate caring and concern for others.

## Empathy

-Empathy is listening/understanding how someone else is feeling and showing compassion for them.

-Empathy can be hard for young children to conceptualize as they are still trying to learn and understand their own emotions.

-Through stories or videos, find a specific event that might make the character upset, *example falling down and scraping their knee*, discuss what your child could do to make that person feel better. Also, have your child examine how they would feel in this situation, knowing it might be different from the character.



# Relationship Skills: build and establish positive relationships.



## Interactions with peers

Building relationships can come easy for some children, but others may need a little coaching on how to be a good friend.

**-Being kind:** Kind words and actions. It is easy to find a story or video where a character is implementing this character trait, and discuss ways your child can do the same. Talk about how your child has shown kindness, and reiterate those scenarios. Giving positive praise for when kind words or actions are completed by your child.

**-Sharing:** Role-play what sharing looks like and sounds like. Meaning, giving them practice sharing their own things and giving your child examples of how to ask for something with appropriate responses.

**-Waiting their turn:** Patience is an important practice to develop as there will be a lot of waiting while at school. There are several opportunities to practice this at home and even talk about fun ways they can wait their turn. *(at home, school, community)*

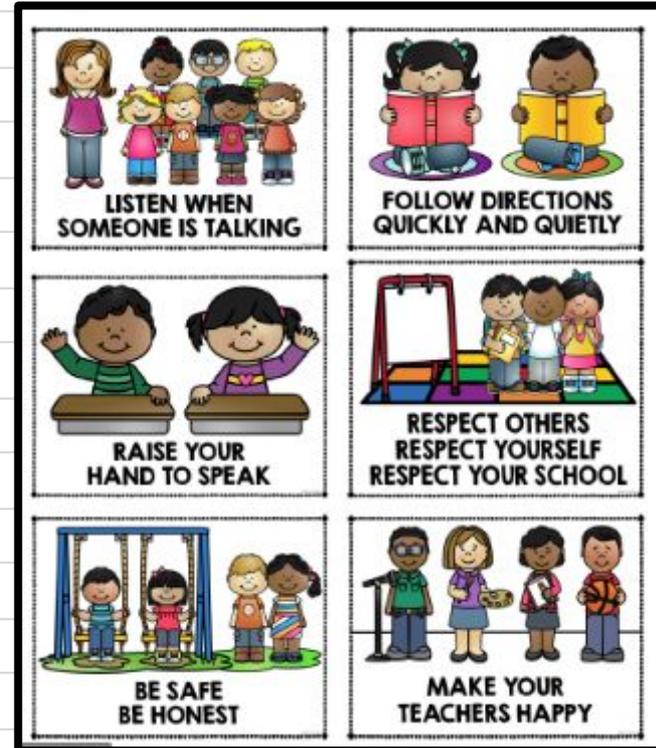
**-Gracefully losing:** Your child will participate in games where there will be a 'winner' or person who completes the activity first. It's good for your child to know they might not always win, and how it's ok to feel sad or frustrated but appropriate response to have in these situations. This scenario can be acted out at home through various activities.

# Relationship Skills: build and establish positive relationships.

## Interactions with adults

**-Respectful:** One of our three school rules for all Marion Elementary students is to 'Be respectful.' Your child can be given understanding of what this term means, how it's correlated with kindness, and by following the school/classroom rules is a sign of respect.

**-Responsible:** Another one of our school rules is 'Be Responsible.' Some students have a hard time conceptualizing 'who is in charge' of them while at school and who to follow directions from. Discussing with your child while you are not there with them, that the adult they are being supervised at that time (*principal, teacher, noon-supervisor, etc.*) is their leader and it is important to follow the school/classroom rules set and/or follow any directions given. This is being responsible.



(Longfellow Elementary Kindergarten Classroom Rules)

# Responsible Decision Making: make appropriate choices.



## Desired vs. Undesired Behaviors

**-Safe :** Our third and final school rule for all students is to 'Be Safe.' It's ideal to talk or role-play safe interactions to your child that they can have with their peers (*high fives, side hugs, etc.*). Also, even having discussion of actions that should not take place while at school (*hitting, kicking, pinching, etc.*) This is also not allowed even as a form of 'play.'

**-Managing Emotions:** Referring back to the social-emotional skill, self-management, it's important for your child to know that when they are feeling sad, angry, or worried this can cause them to not think of their choices, which could lead to undesired behaviors (*screaming, throwing a fit, hitting, etc.*). So it's important to, again, discuss in depth how your child can calm down when having a strong emotion, and letting them know it's ok for them to ask for help in this situation! (*co-regulation*)

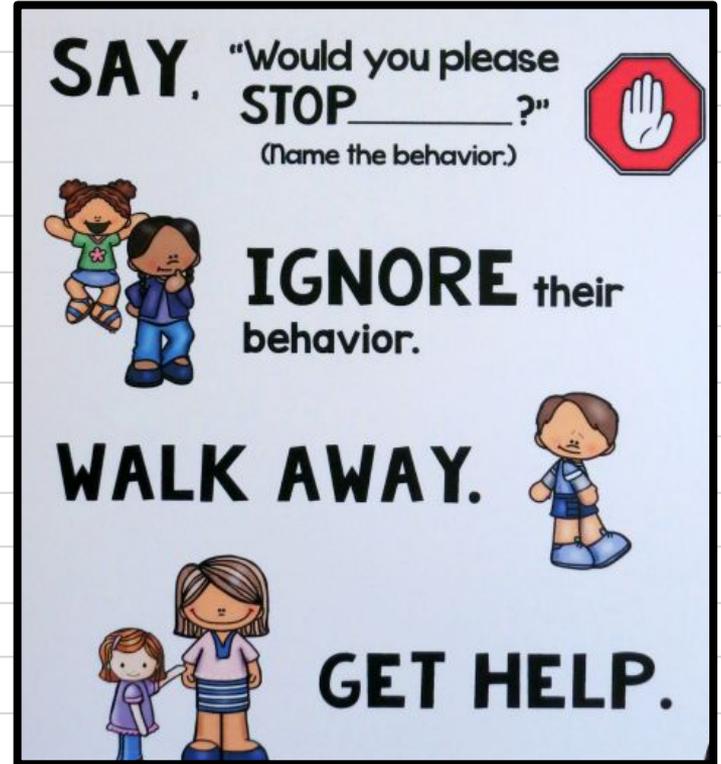
**-Reteach:** If your child shows undesired action, this is a great opportunity to reteach. For example, child throws trash in the floor, asking them to put it in the correct location. Reteaching might have to take place several more times in this scenario, but it is hope the task will be eventually be performed correctly in the future. Reteaching is the same for more extreme undesired behaviors, where maybe your child has a fit by stomping on the floor and screaming as they did not get what they wanted. Once your child is clam, refer back to this situation and discuss better outcomes they can do in the future.

**Self-Awareness:** handle challenging situations constructively and appropriately.

## Problem - Solving

-At school, your child might encounter problems with their peers. So it's important for them to learn how to solve problems in a **peaceful** way.

-With my students we discuss 'small problems vs. big problems.' Helping them understand what problems they can try to handle on their own. Then discussing what problems they might need help from an adult.



**SAY.** "Would you please **STOP** \_\_\_\_\_?"  
(Name the behavior.)



**IGNORE** their behavior.



**WALK AWAY.**



**GET HELP.**



**-Regular Hygiene:** If a child doesn't feel 'clean' based on lack of hygiene habits, this can distract them from engaging at school. It's important that if your child is in need of proper clothing, oral care supplies, or bathing supplies to notify your school social worker who can assist.

**-Eating:** It is important for your child to start the day off with a meal and a drink to help them be engaged in the classroom until lunch. If a child does not eat breakfast, it can impact their ability to participate in the classroom. Remember, all schools provide breakfast that each student is able to partake in.

**-Sleep:** Every child's sleeping needs are different. Yet, it is recommended that your child at least obtain 8 - 12 hours of sleep. Lack of sleep can negatively impact your child's performance at school.



## Communication is Key

**-Child:** It is important to not only teach and develop social-emotional skill, but continue such conversation after school has started to see what areas they are doing well in and areas they are struggling. Keep the conversation going beyond, 'how was your day going'.. 'good..'

**-Teacher:** It is important to not only discuss your child's successes and areas of growth regarding their academics but social-emotional functioning as well. As if there is any growth determined, it's important to be working together to see positive outcomes.

*Ensure all contact information is up to date throughout the whole school year phone, email, address.*

A cartoon illustration of a desk with a light blue background. In the center is a white rectangular card with rounded corners and a black border. The card has two horizontal lines above and below the text "Thank you!". The text is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Surrounding the card are various desk items: an orange pencil sharpener in the top left, a blue double-headed arrow in the top right, a white sheet of paper with horizontal lines in the top right corner, a blue pen in the bottom right, a yellow envelope in the bottom left, and a green wavy line at the bottom center.

**Thank you!**