



Soar with Wings Family Activity: In Your Shoes

What is Social and Emotional Learning?

Learning is not limited to science, math, reading, and writing. Social and emotional learning—which helps children understand their emotions, manage their behavior, and learn how to interact with others—is crucial too! There are five focus areas in social and emotional learning: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making, Social Awareness, and Relationship Skills. Each area focuses on skills that can help children do well in school, form healthy relationships, and develop into successful adults.

How Does this Activity Relate to Social and Emotional Learning?

Children need constant opportunities to strengthen their social and emotional skills before, during, and after school. That's why this activity is specially designed to help you bring social and emotional learning into your home in a fun way that will benefit everyone who lives there! As you work together on the activity, each family member will strengthen these three social and emotional skills:

- **Self-Awareness** focuses on our ability to understand our emotions and thoughts, as well as how they affect our behavior. Another way to look at Self-Awareness is: *I love and accept who I am on the inside, and I know my emotions are nothing to hide.*
- **Social Awareness** focuses on our ability to empathize with others. Another way to look at Social Awareness is: *I understand others are unique. I want to learn more about everyone I meet. I want to step into their shoes and see what they are going through.*
- **Relationship Skills** focus on our ability to relate well to others. Another way to look at Relationship Skills is: *I am a friend. I support and trust. Working together is a must. Kind and caring I will be. I listen to you. You listen to me.*

Family Activity Guide

In this activity, each family member will share their thoughts and feelings about the summer and the beginning of the school year. The activity provides an opportunity for your family to reflect on the life changes you have experienced due to COVID-19 and consider how all family members have been affected in both similar and different ways.

Discussion prompts for this activity are included on the *Scenario Cards*. If there is another question or topic that you would like to discuss with your family, a blank card has also been provided.

Play & Explore

1. Gather your family and sit in a circle on the floor or together around a table. You may find that it's most convenient to complete this activity during a meal, but any time will work well!
2. Once you are all together, explain that—like this spring and summer—the 2020-2021 school year will be different than previous years. Everyone is likely to react to these changes in different ways, and this activity will help you better understand each other's feelings.



3. Place the cut-out *Scenario Cards* face down in the middle of your family.
4. Ask one person to select a card and share what it says.
5. Everyone should take a quiet moment to think about their response to the card's prompt.
6. The family member who selected the card can share their response first. Everyone else can then take turns sharing until each person has a chance to speak. Be sure every family member is able to share their response fully and without being interrupted.

If needed, try to encourage those with short responses to elaborate on their feelings. Simple prompts like "Why?" or "Can you explain a little more?" may be all that's needed!

7. Once everyone has shared their response to the card, take a moment to discuss:
 - Did we tend to feel and think similarly, differently, or a combination of the two?
 - Why may this be the case?

Your family may then decide if they'd like to select another card and repeat Steps 4–7 now **or** continue the activity with the rest of the cards over the next several days. No matter what, once most or all cards have been discussed, be sure to wrap up the activity with the *Recap and Discuss* section below.

Recap & Discuss

Once the activity is complete, discuss with your family:

- Is it okay for us all to feel and think differently, even when we are in the same situation? Why or why not?
- What can we do to help each other better understand our own thoughts and emotions?
- How can we try to better understand the feelings of our family members, and be as caring and supportive as possible?

Instructions: Before your family participates in this activity, cut out the cards below and place them face down in a pile. You may choose to fill in the last card with a discussion topic of your choice, or you may discard it.

My favorite part about summer was...

My least favorite part about summer was...

How do I feel about school starting this fall?

What excites me the most about school starting?

What makes me the most nervous and/or upset about school starting?

I am most proud of my family during this difficult time because...

Life has changed a lot in the past year. Until it returns to normal, I will really miss...

Add your own:

