

## Report to PARENTS

# Building Social and Emotional Skills at Home

Educators help students learn all sorts of new things, including social and emotional skills. Social-emotional learning helps kids:

- Develop healthy identities;
- Manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals;
- Feel and show empathy for others;
- Establish and maintain supportive relationships; and
- Make responsible and caring decisions.

Here are six ways you can help your child develop social and emotional skills to bridge learning from the classroom to the home.

- 1. Encourage connection.** Over summer and during the school year, encourage your child to check in with friends and family in person, via video chat, or over text. Especially if your child tends to experience social anxiety, a little regular practice connecting with others can go a long way. After the playdate, check in with your child. These quick conversations can be a helpful learning experience for your child.
- 2. Think out loud.** When your child hears your thinking process, it helps them understand how to cope with frustration and solve problems.
- 3. Read bedtime stories.** This end-of-the-day routine is an ideal time for talking about feelings. Discuss the characters



and events in the story. Invite your child to share their thoughts and feelings by asking questions.

- 4. Work together.** Instead of asking your child to do a chore alone, do it with them. Together, you might fold laundry, set the table, rake leaves, or paint a room. Help them join in by shortening the handle of a broom to make it child-size or providing a small paintbrush or roller.
- 5. Play games.** Card and board games and outdoor games such as tag or hopscotch offer built-in opportunities for helping children learn to take turns, cooperate, handle frustration, and more. While playing games together, focus on fun instead of winning or losing.
- 6. Have fun with emojis and memes.** Get your child together with friends, including new friends who will be in class with them, to talk about how they all feel about starting the new year. Have them take turns sharing what they're looking forward to the most and what hesitations they might have.