

## Module 2: Self-Management

TRAILS Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We are so grateful for your continued interest and investment in your student's social and emotional learning (SEL). Your student has been working hard developing skills related to identifying strong thoughts and feelings. They will build upon this while starting to learn **self-management skills** in the coming **2 months**. Self-management skills are strategies to help us manage our strong feelings in order to make behavior choices that are positive, healthy, and appropriate.

The following topics will be covered:

1. **Acting opposite:** Each emotion we have serves a purpose and is accompanied by an initial impulse to act. For example, when we feel fearful, we have the urge to hide or avoid; when we feel angry, we have the impulse to attack. At this age, students are often dealing with very strong emotions and find it somewhat difficult to control their initial reactions. Choosing behavior that is opposite of our initial impulse can prevent situations from getting worse and regulate the strong emotions we're experiencing. Your student will learn about [Acting Opposite](#) to help them understand that they have options for how to act when they have strong emotions.

***Try this activity with your student at home!***

Create challenges in your home to do the opposite of what you want to do if it's excessive or unhealthy. For example, if your student has been on the couch all weekend, encourage them to get active. Is your student afraid of reaching out to a new classmate? Challenge them to face their fears! See how your student's feelings (and your feelings!) change following doing the opposite!

2. **Getting active:** Increasing physical activity has been shown to improve mood and motivation and is another form of acting opposite. When we're feeling down and low, our urge is to lay around and isolate; instead, we can get active. Students will be able to discuss, brainstorm, and practice physical activities. Getting active is a simple strategy that students can turn to at home, school, or across any other setting when they notice they're feeling low, lethargic, and sedentary in order to improve their mood. Feel free to start with some of the videos below for inspiration on fun ways to get active.

***Try one of these activities with your student at home!***

- [GoNoodle - Go Bananas](#) (2:06)
- [GoNoodle - Shake it Off](#) (1:18)

3. **Relaxation:** Emotions, like anxiety and anger, can feel physically uncomfortable – jaw clenches, muscles tighten, and body temperature rises. Students will learn skills, called relaxation strategies, to calm the uncomfortable physical feelings and accompanying strong emotions. As students learn to reduce the intensity of these uncomfortable feelings, they gain more control over not only their emotions, but their subsequent behaviors.

***Try one of these activities with your student at home!***

- [Progressive Muscle Relaxation](#)
- [4-7-8 Breathing Exercise](#) (3:40)
- [Cloud Relaxation Script](#)

3. **Self-Care:** Learning how caring and not caring for ourselves mentally and physically can impact our ability to manage emotions, learn, and relate to others. Students will examine their different types of needs: physical, emotional, and self-fulfillment. They will discuss specific strategies for taking care of themselves using this [handout](#). Bringing awareness to students' current healthy and unhealthy habits can help motivate them to engage in healthy activities to care for themselves, manage their mood, and perform their best.

***Try this activity with your student at home!***

Post in your home or reference [Taking Care of Myself](#). Set a goal with your student to do at least one activity each day to take care of yourself at each level and have your student share with you (and you share with them!) what they did to take care of themselves. Be sure to say out loud, if possible, when you are engaging in self-care to model for your student (e.g., "I'm drinking water to take care of my body!")

**We encourage you to discuss and practice these skills at home to help your student continue to expand and strengthen their "toolbox" of social and emotional skills!**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,  
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