



Family Guide

I Am in Control
of Myself

Dear Family,

In this theme, **I Am in Control of Myself**, children read six stories about characters who work on their self-control. Read a copy of each book with your child.

This Family Guide provides an overview of the skills covered by the books in this theme and tips for building early reading skills. It also gives a variety of tips and activities to help foster social and emotional growth in your young child.

Sincerely,

Molly Smith

Executive Editor at Newmark Learning



MySELF Series
Family Guide
For Preview Only



As you read each book with your child, build early reading skills by:

- running your finger under the words as you read them
- asking your child to name letters he or she knows, or naming a letter and having your child find it on a page
- asking your child to point to the first word and the last word on a page
- counting the words in a sentence
- asking your child to retell the story after you have read it.



"I was Super Eva and I was running,
and then I was leaping, and then I fell."
I explained.

"We want you to have lots of fun," said Miss Jan.
"But we also have rules so you will be safe."

"run," said Miss Jan.
will be safe."

Some of the social and emotional milestones covered in this theme are:

- following simple rules, routines, and directions
- handling impulses and behavior with minimal direction from adults
- resolving conflict with peers alone and/or with adult help
- using socially appropriate behavior with peers and adults, such as helping, sharing, and taking turns
- recognizing how actions affect others and accepting the consequences of one's actions.

Social and emotional intelligence allows people to work with others, learn effectively, and play important roles in their families and communities.



Following are some tips and activities to help your child develop his or her social and emotional intelligence.



Be a Role Model

Our actions as parents, caregivers, or teachers serve as a model of how to respond to difficult or irritating situations.

Maintaining composure is a powerful teaching tool, especially when we “think aloud” about our problem-solving techniques. You can say, for example: *I can't find my car keys. Instead of getting upset, I'm going to stop and think about where I last saw them. Then I'm going to calmly look for them.*

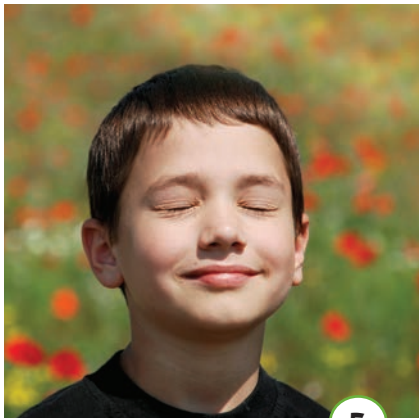
Feel Better Basket

Have a container with things children can use when they feel upset. It can include play clay and small rubber balls to squish, small stuffed animals for comfort, and a small notepad and crayons to express feelings.



Deep Breathing

One of the most effective techniques for self-calming at any age is to take several slow, deep breaths. This helps control the quick, shallow breathing we often experience when we're upset. Deep breathing also brings more oxygen to the brain. This helps us respond to the situation in a more relaxed frame of mind.





It's Up to You!

Empower children by allowing them to make choices between two or three acceptable responses. You can ask, for example:

- *Which would you like to do first: take your bath or brush your teeth?*
- *Do you want to wear your red shirt or your striped shirt today?*
- *Do you want to paint or build with blocks?*
- *Do you want me to read this longer book or these two shorter books to you before bedtime?*

Chill Out Chart

Ask your child to help you create an illustrated list or chart to hang in his or her room or on the refrigerator with ideas of things to do when upset, such as:

- Walk away.
- Count to 10.
- Take three deep breaths.
- Rest in a soft chair.
- Talk to a family member or friend.
- Read a book.
- Draw a picture.
- Write about feelings.
- Hug a teddy bear.
- Pet the dog.



Walk away.
Count to 10.
Take deep breaths.
Read.
Draw.
Pet the dog.





Game Time!

Board games designed for young children are a great way to teach taking turns, following rules, and learning how to win and lose.

Also, try some fun physical games with your child, such as freeze dance. Play some music your child likes, and have him or her dance around. Then shut off the music. Your child has to “freeze” in place until the music starts again.

