

Letter to Parents and Caregivers



Date: _____

Dear Parent or Caregiver,

Your child is beginning a program in **Social, Emotional, and Ethical (SEE) Learning**. SEE Learning is a K-12 educational program created by Emory University to enrich young people's social, emotional, and ethical development. SEE Learning adds to existing social-emotional learning (SEL) programs by including a focus on attention training, compassion and care, an awareness of broader systems, and ethical engagement.

At its core, SEE Learning is about students learning how best to take care of themselves and each other, specifically with regard to what can be termed their emotional and social health. SEE Learning is rooted in compassion: compassion for oneself (self-compassion) and compassion for others. Compassion is not taught as a dictate, however, but through the cultivation of specific skills, such as learning to regulate one's nervous system and deal with stress, learning about one's emotions and how to deal with them constructively, learning social and relationship skills, and learning to think in a broader way about the communities and societies we exist in. The aim of SEE Learning is to provide tools for students' current and future well-being.

Getting Started with Chapter 1

SEE Learning is divided into units or chapters. Chapter 1, "Creating a Compassionate Classroom," introduces the foundational concepts of kindness and compassion. "Kindness" is the term employed for younger students, whereas "compassion" is employed for older students. Compassion refers to the ability to care for oneself and others, and is taught as source of strength and empowerment, not a sign of weakness or an inability to stand up for oneself or others. A growing body of scientific research (referenced in the *SEE Learning Companion*) points to the positive health and relationship benefits that can come from cultivating compassion.

Home Practice

You are encouraged to take an active role in your child's experience of SEE Learning. The curriculum is available for you to read, as is a volume called the *SEE Learning Companion*, which includes the Overview and framework used by the program and references to the scientific research that the program is based upon.

For this first chapter, try asking over a meal or at another time, what acts of kindness each person in your household noticed and/or took part in that day. At other times, point out and recognize moments of kindness and compassion to your child when you come across them, and encourage them to do the same. This builds the skill of recognizing and valuing kindness and compassion.

Further Reading and Resources

You can access SEE Learning resources on the web at: www.compassion.emory.edu.

Also recommended is Daniel Goleman and Peter Senge's short book *The Triple Focus*, and Linda Lantieri and Daniel Goleman's book *Building Emotional Intelligence: Practices to Cultivate Inner Resilience in Children*.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

Teacher/Educator Signature

Teacher/Educator Printed Name: _____

Teacher/Educator Contact Info: _____



Center for
Contemplative Science and
Compassion-Based Ethics

EMORY UNIVERSITY