

SEL Educator Starter Curriculum

Eight character-centered lessons for kindergarten through grade 2



EVERYBODY BRINGS SOMETHING

A story-based, identity-affirming starting point for classroom circles, counseling groups, morning meetings, and family connection.

Created by Dr. Kareem Moncree-Moffett • RainbowSoupKids.com

Teach the skills. Protect the child.

Use these lessons as invitation, practice, and reflection - never as a test of worth or disclosure.



PROGRAM AT A GLANCE • Audience: Kindergarten-grade 2; adaptable for PreK or grade 3. • Sequence: Eight 25-minute lessons plus a culminating Rainbow Soup circle. • Settings: Whole group, small group, counseling, after-school, or family night. • Response modes: Speak, point, draw, sign, act, use AAC, partner-share, or pass.	THE RAINBOW SOUP STANCE • Strengths first: Children bring assets, cultures, stories, and ways of communicating. • Feelings are valid: Behavior can be guided without shaming the child. • Belonging is designed: Access, routines, language, and relationships shape participation. • Privacy matters: Never require personal trauma or family disclosure.
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A SIMPLE SAFE LESSON RHYTHM

S SEQUENCED Build from notice to practice to reflection.	A ACTIVE Let children rehearse, make, move, and choose.	F FOCUSED Name one skill and keep the goal visible.	E EXPLICIT Teach the language and model the behavior.
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OPENING LANGUAGE In Rainbow Soup, every voice matters, every feeling matters, every family matters, every culture matters, every story matters, and every child matters - because everybody brings something.
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FACILITATOR REMINDER Preview examples for possible triggers, use family-neutral language, honor a child's right to pass, and follow school safeguarding procedures if a child shares a safety concern.

SOURCES + USE NOTE Framework references: CASEL, What Is the CASEL Framework? https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/ Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Standards: https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Social-and-Emotional-Learning Accessed July 12, 2026. Alignment is interpretive and does not imply endorsement. This starter resource is not a diagnostic or high-stakes assessment.
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Eight ingredients. Five connected SEL competencies.

Each lesson supports practice toward the CASEL 5 and Ohio K-2 SEL standards; local educators should adapt pacing and evidence to student development.



CHARACTER	GIFT	ESSENTIAL QUESTION	CASEL 5	OHIO K-2	EVIDENCE OF LEARNING
Kareemah	Courage	What helps me be brave?	Self-awareness; self-management	A2.1a; A4.2a; B3.1a	Names a strength or brave step.
Donald	Feelings	What is my feeling telling me?	Self-awareness; self-management	A1.1a; A1.2a; B1.3a	Names a feeling and safe response.
Carlos	Cultural Pride	What is special about my family and culture?	Self-awareness; social awareness; relationship skills	A2.1a; C3.1a; D1.1a	Shares/notices a family or cultural asset.
Ryan	Confidence	What helps everyone participate?	Self-awareness; social awareness; decision-making	A4.2a; A3.2a; C3.1a	Names a support or access improvement.
Jakobi	Heritage	What stories help me know who I am?	Self-awareness; social awareness; relationship skills	A2.1a; C3.1a; D1.1a	Shares or respectfully listens to a story.
Kym	Belonging	What helps people feel safe, seen, and included?	Social awareness; relationship skills	D2.1b; A3.1a; C1.1a	Names a trusted person/place or inclusive action.
Ike	Curiosity	How can a good question help me learn?	Decision-making; self-awareness; relationship skills	E4.1a; A2.2a; D1.1a	Asks a respectful question.
Xochee	Creativity	How can I make a new idea that helps?	Decision-making; self-awareness; relationship skills	A2.2a; E1.1a; D1.1a	Generates or improves an idea.

DEVELOPMENTAL USE

Observe growth over time and in context. A child may demonstrate a skill differently across settings, languages, relationships, sensory conditions, and days. Use evidence to plan support - not to label the child.

Recommended sequence: weekly, twice monthly, or as eight daily launch lessons. Revisit the Rainbow Soup Promise before each lesson.

Kareemah brings Courage

What helps me be brave?



LEARNING TARGET • I can: I can name a strength and choose one brave next step.	SEL ALIGNMENT • CASEL: Self-awareness; self-management • Ohio K-2: A2.1a; A4.2a; B3.1a
WHY THIS MATTERS • Story lens: Kareemah reminds us that courage is not the absence of worry. Courage is trying, asking, speaking, or seeking help while honoring how we feel.	MATERIALS • Gather: Book or character image; Brave Steps cards; crayons; My Ingredient printable.

25-MINUTE LESSON FLOW

1 WELCOME + CONNECT • 3 MIN		Invite children to show a quiet brave pose. Ask: What can bravery look or sound like? Accept many answers.
2 READ + NOTICE • 5 MIN		Notice Kareemah's posture, words, and choices. Name strengths without focusing only on appearance or scars.
3 PRACTICE • 8 MIN		Teach Brave Steps: Pause - Name the feeling - Choose a safe next step - Ask for help if needed. Practice with child-sized scenarios.
4 CREATE + REFLECT • 7 MIN		Children draw or dictate one brave step they can take this week and add COURAGE to the class soup pot.
5 CLOSE • 2 MIN		Invite children to complete: Today I brought... or One thing I want to practice is... Participation may be spoken, drawn, signed, selected, or passed.
LOOK FOR • Child identifies a personal strength or a safe brave step.	FAMILY BRIDGE • At home, share a time each family member tried something hard.	ACCESS + CARE • Children may point, act, draw, dictate, or pass. Never require disclosure of a frightening experience.

Donald brings Feelings

What is my feeling telling me?



LEARNING TARGET • I can: I can name a feeling and choose a safe way to respond.	SEL ALIGNMENT • CASEL: Self-awareness; self-management • Ohio K-2: A1.1a; A1.2a; B1.3a
WHY THIS MATTERS • Story lens: Donald shows that every feeling matters, even when a behavior needs repair. Children can be accountable without being labeled as bad.	MATERIALS • Gather: Feelings Recipe printable; crayons; optional mirror.

25-MINUTE LESSON FLOW

1 WELCOME + CONNECT • 3 MIN		Make neutral, happy, worried, frustrated, and calm faces. Children may copy, point, or name the feeling.
2 READ + NOTICE • 5 MIN		Separate feeling from behavior: It is okay to feel angry. It is not okay to hurt or humiliate someone.
3 PRACTICE • 8 MIN		Use the Feelings Recipe: Notice body clues - Name the feeling - Breathe or pause - Choose words or help.
4 CREATE + REFLECT • 7 MIN		Children complete a feeling bowl with one body clue and one strategy that helps.
5 CLOSE • 2 MIN		Invite children to complete: Today I brought... or One thing I want to practice is... Participation may be spoken, drawn, signed, selected, or passed.
LOOK FOR • Child names a feeling and one safe regulation strategy.	FAMILY BRIDGE • Use a daily one-word feelings check-in at dinner or bedtime.	ACCESS + CARE • Offer visuals and sensory choices. Do not insist on eye contact or verbal answers.

Carlos brings Cultural Pride

What is special about my family and culture?



LEARNING TARGET • I can: I can share or notice a cultural or family strength with respect.	SEL ALIGNMENT • CASEL: Self-awareness; social awareness; relationship skills • Ohio K-2: A2.1a; C3.1a; D1.1a
WHY THIS MATTERS • Story lens: Carlos brings cultural pride and language as assets. Every family has traditions, words, stories, foods, music, and ways of caring that deserve respect.	MATERIALS • Gather: Paper ingredient cards; crayons; optional family photos or objects.

25-MINUTE LESSON FLOW

1 WELCOME + CONNECT • 3 MIN		Ask: What is something your family does, says, celebrates, cooks, sings, or values? Passing is always allowed.
2 READ + NOTICE • 5 MIN		Model curiosity without treating a child as spokesperson for an entire group. Pronounce names carefully and value home languages.
3 PRACTICE • 8 MIN		Partners practice: Tell me more. Thank you for sharing. That is important to your family.
4 CREATE + REFLECT • 7 MIN		Children draw one family or cultural ingredient and add it to the shared soup.
5 CLOSE • 2 MIN		Invite children to complete: Today I brought... or One thing I want to practice is... Participation may be spoken, drawn, signed, selected, or passed.
LOOK FOR • Child identifies a personal/family quality or responds respectfully to another child's share.	FAMILY BRIDGE • Teach one family word, greeting, song, or tradition to someone at home.	ACCESS + CARE • Children may describe a household routine instead of an ethnic tradition; avoid costumes and stereotypes.

Ryan brings Confidence

What helps everyone participate?



LEARNING TARGET • I can: I can name what helps me participate and respectfully ask what helps someone else.	SEL ALIGNMENT • CASEL: Self-awareness; social awareness; decision-making • Ohio K-2: A4.2a; A3.2a; C3.1a
WHY THIS MATTERS • Story lens: Ryan brings confidence. His wheelchair is part of how he moves through the world, not a problem to solve. Access helps everyone belong and contribute.	MATERIALS • Gather: Classroom access checklist; building blocks or common classroom items.

25-MINUTE LESSON FLOW

1 WELCOME + CONNECT • 3 MIN	Ask: What helps you learn, move, communicate, or join in? List tools and supports without ranking them.
2 READ + NOTICE • 5 MIN	Use respectful language: Ryan uses a wheelchair. Center his choices, friendships, humor, and competence.
3 PRACTICE • 8 MIN	Conduct a short access hunt: Can everyone reach, see, hear, understand, and join this activity? Choose one improvement.
4 CREATE + REFLECT • 7 MIN	Children redesign a play or learning space so more people can participate.
5 CLOSE • 2 MIN	Invite children to complete: Today I brought... or One thing I want to practice is... Participation may be spoken, drawn, signed, selected, or passed.
LOOK FOR • Child names a support or access improvement without pity language.	FAMILY BRIDGE • Notice one place in the community designed for access and one place that could improve.
	ACCESS + CARE • Offer multiple ways to engage: speech, movement, AAC, pointing, drawing, partner response, or quiet observation.

Jakobi brings Heritage

What stories help me know who I am?



LEARNING TARGET • I can: I can share, draw, or listen to a story that connects someone to family or community.	SEL ALIGNMENT • CASEL: Self-awareness; social awareness; relationship skills • Ohio K-2: A2.1a; C3.1a; D1.1a
WHY THIS MATTERS • Story lens: Jakobi brings heritage - the people, memories, places, traditions, and lessons that help us understand where we come from and what we carry forward.	MATERIALS • Gather: Story Keeper page; drawing tools; optional object or photo.

25-MINUTE LESSON FLOW

1 WELCOME + CONNECT • 3 MIN	Show a safe object or picture with a simple story. Explain that families remember in different ways.
2 READ + NOTICE • 5 MIN	Children without family information may choose a community, place, favorite memory, or person who teaches them.
3 PRACTICE • 8 MIN	Partners use listening stems: I heard... I noticed... Thank you for trusting me with that story.
4 CREATE + REFLECT • 7 MIN	Draw a person, place, object, saying, or tradition that belongs in your story.
5 CLOSE • 2 MIN	Invite children to complete: Today I brought... or One thing I want to practice is... Participation may be spoken, drawn, signed, selected, or passed.
LOOK FOR • Child shares or listens respectfully and identifies why a story matters.	FAMILY BRIDGE • Ask a trusted adult to tell a short story from childhood.
	ACCESS + CARE • Never require genealogy, biological-family information, or disclosure about loss, adoption, or separation.

Kym brings Belonging

What helps people feel safe, seen, and included?



LEARNING TARGET • I can: I can name one person, place, or action that helps create belonging.	SEL ALIGNMENT • CASEL: Social awareness; relationship skills • Ohio K-2: D2.1b; A3.1a; C1.1a
WHY THIS MATTERS • Story lens: Kym brings belonging. Families can look different, and children deserve care without having to explain private family experiences.	MATERIALS • Gather: Belonging Circle printable; crayons; yarn optional.

25-MINUTE LESSON FLOW

1 WELCOME + CONNECT • 3 MIN	Finish the sentence: I feel welcome when... Children may point to examples instead of sharing personally.
2 READ + NOTICE • 5 MIN	Name concrete belonging actions: invite, listen, pronounce names, make space, ask before helping, and repair harm.
3 PRACTICE • 8 MIN	Sort actions into Builds Belonging / Breaks Belonging. Practice changing one exclusionary action into an inclusive one.
4 CREATE + REFLECT • 7 MIN	Children map trusted people and places, then choose one belonging action for the class.
5 CLOSE • 2 MIN	Invite children to complete: Today I brought... or One thing I want to practice is... Participation may be spoken, drawn, signed, selected, or passed.
LOOK FOR • Child identifies a trusted adult, safe place, or inclusive action.	FAMILY BRIDGE • Choose one small way to help someone feel welcome at home or in the neighborhood.
	ACCESS + CARE • Use family-neutral language such as grown-up, caregiver, trusted adult, or family person.

Ike brings Curiosity

How can a good question help me learn?



LEARNING TARGET • I can: I can ask a respectful question and stay open to a new idea.	SEL ALIGNMENT • CASEL: Decision-making; self-awareness; relationship skills • Ohio K-2: E4.1a; A2.2a; D1.1a
WHY THIS MATTERS • Story lens: Ike brings curiosity. Wondering, noticing, and asking thoughtful questions help children learn without making another person feel examined or responsible for teaching everything.	MATERIALS • Gather: Wonder cards; mystery object; crayons.

25-MINUTE LESSON FLOW

1 WELCOME + CONNECT • 3 MIN	Reveal part of an object. Invite noticing statements before guesses: I notice... I wonder...	
2 READ + NOTICE • 5 MIN	Compare respectful curiosity with intrusive questions. Teach: Ask permission, accept no, and avoid questions about bodies or private histories.	
3 PRACTICE • 8 MIN	Turn statements into open questions: What do you like about...? How did you learn...? What could happen if...?	
4 CREATE + REFLECT • 7 MIN	Children draw one wonder and one safe way to investigate it.	
5 CLOSE • 2 MIN	Invite children to complete: Today I brought... or One thing I want to practice is... Participation may be spoken, drawn, signed, selected, or passed.	
LOOK FOR • Child asks a relevant, respectful question or identifies when to stop asking.	FAMILY BRIDGE • Take a five-minute wonder walk and collect three I wonder questions.	ACCESS + CARE • Non-speaking children can choose from question cards, use AAC, point, or draw their wonder.

Xochee brings Creativity

How can I make a new idea that helps?



LEARNING TARGET • I can: I can imagine more than one solution and work with others to improve an idea.	SEL ALIGNMENT • CASEL: Decision-making; self-awareness; relationship skills • Ohio K-2: A2.2a; E1.1a; D1.1a
WHY THIS MATTERS • Story lens: Xochee brings creativity - not just art, but flexible thinking, playful problem-solving, and making room for many kinds of ideas.	MATERIALS • Gather: Recycled materials; tape; crayons; Create-a-Kind-Solution prompt.

25-MINUTE LESSON FLOW

1 WELCOME + CONNECT • 3 MIN	Name as many safe uses as possible for a paper cup or cardboard tube. Celebrate unusual thinking.
2 READ + NOTICE • 5 MIN	Creativity is not a contest. Children can combine ideas, change direction, and contribute in different ways.
3 PRACTICE • 8 MIN	Use Imagine - Choose - Make - Test - Improve to solve a simple classroom belonging problem.
4 CREATE + REFLECT • 7 MIN	Teams build or draw a tool, sign, space, or routine that helps someone feel included.
5 CLOSE • 2 MIN	Invite children to complete: Today I brought... or One thing I want to practice is... Participation may be spoken, drawn, signed, selected, or passed.
LOOK FOR • Child generates an idea, listens to a teammate, or improves a first attempt.	FAMILY BRIDGE • Reuse a household item to solve a small problem or create something joyful.
	ACCESS + CARE • Offer prepared pieces, adapted tools, partner roles, and choices that do not depend on fine-motor skill.

CULMINATING LESSON

Make the Rainbow Soup

Children name what they bring, notice what others bring, and choose one shared action that strengthens belonging.



LEARNING TARGET	
I can name a gift I bring, recognize a gift in someone else, and help our group choose a caring action.	
1 PREPARE	Create a large paper soup pot. Prepare eight color-coded ingredient cards or blank paper pieces.
2 REMEMBER	Review the eight gifts: courage, feelings, cultural pride, confidence, heritage, belonging, curiosity, and creativity.
3 CHOOSE	Each child draws, writes, dictates, or selects an ingredient they bring today. Children may choose a character gift or another strength.
4 SHARE	Invite - never require - children to place the ingredient in the pot and say: I bring... The group responds: You belong in our soup.
5 DECIDE	Ask: What does our group need more of this week? Choose one specific action such as inviting, listening, making access, or repairing harm.
6 CLOSE	Read the Rainbow Soup Promise together. Photograph or display the finished pot only with appropriate permissions.

INFORMAL OBSERVATION - NOT A GRADE

OBSERVE	BEGINNING	WITH SUPPORT	INDEPENDENT / GENERALIZING
Names self	Observes or opts out	Chooses from examples	Names/draws a personal strength
Names feelings	Notifies body/face cues	Names with a visual or prompt	Names feeling and safe strategy
Notifies others	Attends to a peer	Identifies a peer's cue/gift	Responds with empathy or respect
Builds belonging	Participates alongside others	Uses an inclusive action with prompt	Initiates or adapts an inclusive action
Makes choices	Explores options	Chooses with adult/peer support	Explains a caring choice or improvement

SOURCES + USE NOTE
Framework references: CASEL, What Is the CASEL Framework? https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/ Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Standards: https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Social-and-Emotional-Learning Accessed July 12, 2026. Alignment is interpretive and does not imply endorsement. This starter resource is not a diagnostic or high-stakes assessment.

My Rainbow Soup Ingredient

What strength, gift, story, language, idea, or way of caring do you bring?



NAME: _____ DATE: _____

CHOOSE YOUR WAY

Draw it, write it, dictate it, collage it, or choose words from the list. Your ingredient can change from day to day.

COURAGE	FEELINGS	CULTURAL PRIDE	CONFIDENCE
HERITAGE	BELONGING	CURIOSITY	CREATIVITY

MY INGREDIENT IS...

Why it matters to me or our group:

Today I will use my ingredient by...

My Feelings Recipe

Feelings are information. What is your body, heart, and mind telling you?



NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. I NOTICE

Circle or add a feeling: happy • sad • worried • angry • excited • calm • left out • proud • other

2. MY BODY SAYS

Draw or write a clue: tight hands • fast heart • tears • smile • wiggly body • quiet voice • other

3. I NEED

Choose: space • movement • a trusted adult • water • breathing • words • comfort • a plan • other

4. MY SAFE NEXT STEP

Draw or write what you will try. If the first strategy does not help, choose another or ask for support.

ADULT LANGUAGE

I believe you. Your feeling makes sense. We will keep everyone safe. Would you like choices, help, or quiet time?

My Belonging Circle

Who and what help you feel safe, seen, supported, and included?



NAME: _____ DATE: _____

PRIVACY CHOICE

You may use names, roles, initials, symbols, or drawings. You do not have to explain private family information.

ME

Draw yourself or write your name in the center.

PEOPLE I CAN TALK TO

Trusted adults, friends, family people, helpers, or community members.

PLACES I FEEL WELCOME

Classroom, home, library, club, faith/community space, team, neighborhood, or another place.

ACTIONS THAT BUILD BELONGING

Invite • listen • pronounce names • make access • ask before helping • include • repair.

One belonging action I can take this week:

The Kind Choice Recipe

Pause, consider, choose, and repair.



NAME: _____ DATE: _____

STOP + NOTICE	What happened? What feeling or need is present? _____ _____ _____
THINK OF CHOICES	What are two or three safe things I could do? _____ _____ _____
CHECK THE IMPACT	Could this help or hurt me, another person, our group, or our space? _____ _____ _____
CHOOSE + TRY	Choose the caring, safe, workable next step. _____ _____ _____
REPAIR + LEARN	If harm happened: tell the truth, listen, make it right, and practice a better choice. _____ _____ _____

REMEMBER

A consequence should teach safety, responsibility, and repair. It should not shame a child's identity, family, disability, language, culture, or feelings.

Family letter + implementation notes

Copy, edit, and send this letter before or during the eight-lesson sequence.



Dear Families and Caregivers,

Our group is beginning Rainbow Soup Kids social-emotional learning activities. The central message is simple: every child brings something meaningful, and belonging grows when we learn to recognize and use our gifts together.

We will explore eight strengths through the Rainbow Soup Kids: courage, feelings, cultural pride, confidence, heritage, belonging, curiosity, and creativity. Children will practice naming feelings, seeking support, listening across differences, making caring choices, and contributing to a welcoming group.

These are conversation and practice activities - not therapy, diagnosis, or a test. Children may speak, draw, point, use another communication method, or pass. We will never require a child to share private family information or difficult experiences.

You can support the learning by asking: What did you bring to the Rainbow Soup today? What helped someone feel included? What feeling showed up? What caring choice could we try next?

Please share any family language, cultural practice, accessibility need, or child-specific support that would help us make these lessons respectful and useful.

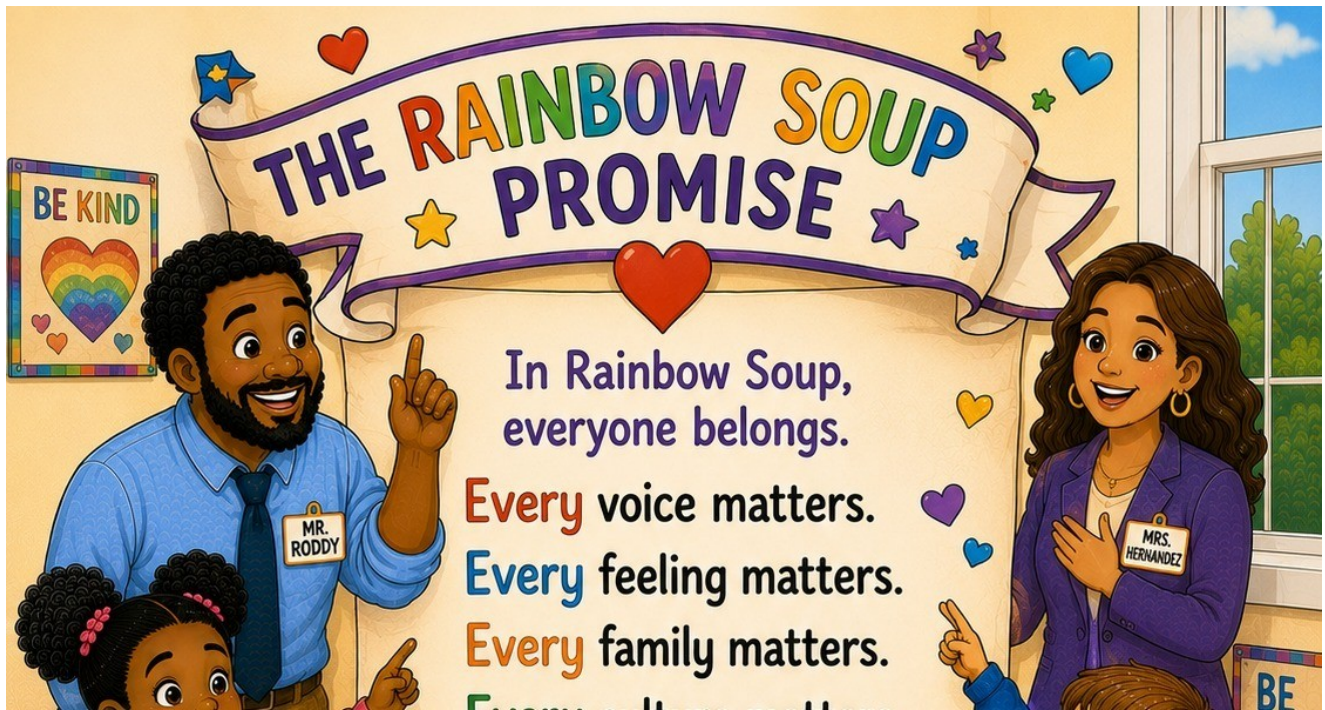
With appreciation,

SOURCES + USE NOTE

Framework references: CASEL, What Is the CASEL Framework? <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/> | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Standards: <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Social-and-Emotional-Learning> | Accessed July 12, 2026. Alignment is interpretive and does not imply endorsement. This starter resource is not a diagnostic or high-stakes assessment.

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CLOSING RESOURCE

Bring the promise into the routine

Repetition turns the promise from a poster into a shared classroom practice.



MORNING Choose one line as the day's intention.	BEFORE CONFLICT Ask which promise line can guide the next choice.
AFTER REPAIR Name the line the group is rebuilding together.	FAMILY CONNECTION Send one promise line home with a simple conversation starter.

KEEP GROWING

Future Rainbow Soup Kids downloads can extend this starter sequence with story-specific lesson plans, classroom visuals, badges, missions, and differentiated activity pages.

RainbowSoupKids.com • Everybody Brings Something.