Connecting Research to Practice

Strategies for Social and Emotional Development and Learning

Ages 3-5
Developing a Caring Community
We don’t necessarily control what we feel
But, we can control what we do!

"I like it best when you’re happy at me."
Help children identify their own thoughts and feelings
Talk to Children About Their Emotions

- Observe children carefully
- Be sensitive to wide range of emotions children express
- Name emotions
- Acknowledge without evaluating

Happy
Disappointed
Proud
Frustrated
Worried
Excited
Contented
Furious
Scared
Help Children Recognize Other People’s Emotions

- Describe
- Draw children’s attention to emotions
Feeling Wheels & Feeling Dice
If you are happy and you know it 
add new verses to teach feelings 

- If you’re **sad** and you know it, cry a tear..”boo hoo” 
- If you’re **mad** and you know it, use your words “I’m mad” 
- If you’re **scared** and you know it ask for help, “help me” 
- If you’re **happy** and you know it, hug a friend 
- If you’re **tired** and you know it, give a yawn.
Checking In

How do you feel today?
Use of Children’s Literature
Puppets and Role Play
Encourage children to think about others’ intentions
Help Children Develop Perspective
Taking

Hey, look! A duck!

That’s not a duck. That’s a rabbit!
Help Children Express Emotions to Others

– Set an example
– Acknowledge strong feelings - forbid hurtful behaviors
– Help children put feelings into words
  - Offer scripts
Help children develop a tool kit of Emotional Strategies

– Teach children self-talk
– Teach children how to relax
– Teach children how to ease frustration
– Teach children to develop emotional plans
Teach Skills Children Need

• **Introduce the skill**
  – Show the skill and talk about it
  – Use a variety of methods (books, puppets, pictures)

• **Practice the skill to build fluency**
  – Planned activities
  – Teachable moments

• **Maintain the skill**
  – Recognize when the skill is used without being prompted
Structure the environment to promote success

– Provide cues in the environment
– Let children maintain control when possible
– Provide areas for comfort & relaxation
Help children develop self-regulation
Encourage children to pretend and make up pretend stories
Play games that require children to pay attention.
Play games to promote inhibitory self control.
Help children think about thinking
Assist Children in Developing Friendship Skills
Teach problem solving skills

• Describe the problem
• Brainstorm solutions
• Evaluate each suggested solution
• Choose a solution to try
• Start again if first solution doesn’t work
Provide skills for entering play
Relax
Turn Competitive Games into Cooperative Ones
Kindness Monitor
Consider the child’s experience before you respond
Think Simple First

- Over hungry?
- Over tired?
- Over stimulated?
- Doesn’t understand?
Never assume children understand what you are talking about or how to do something.
Including Children’s families in the Environment
Start-Stop-Continue

• Identify 1 thing you will **stop** – it’s not working

• Identify 1 thing you will **start** – something new you want to try

• Identify 1 thing you will **continue** – it’s already working for you