Social-Emotional Development and Parenting Support: Building Relationships In Order to Build Skills

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Social and emotional learning (SEL) provides the structure and process for adults and children to develop fundamental emotional and social competencies and experiences to:

- understand and manage emotions
- set and achieve positive goals
- feel and show empathy for others
- establish and maintain positive relationships
- make responsible decisions
Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Identifying emotions
- Self-perception/Identity
- Recognizing strengths
- Sense of self-confidence
- Self-efficacy

- Perspective-taking
- Empathy
- Appreciating diversity
- Respect for others

- Communication
- Social engagement
- Building relationships
- Working cooperatively
- Resolving conflicts
- Helping/Seeking help

- Impulse control
- Stress management
- Self-discipline
- Self-motivation
- Perseverance
- Goal-setting
- Organizational skills

- Identifying problems
- Analyzing situations
- Solving problems
- Evaluating
- Reflecting
- Ethical responsibility
SEL Promotes Success in School & Life

Inputs/Approaches

- SEL Skills
  - Instruction:
    - Self-awareness
    - Self-management
    - Social awareness
    - Relationship skills
    - Responsible decision-making

- Positive Learning Climate & Instructional Strategies
  - Safe, Caring
  - Well-managed
  - Engaging
  - Cooperative
  - Supportive
  - High Expectations

Short-term Outcomes

- Greater Attachment, Engagement and Commitment to School
- Less Risky Behavior, More Positive Development

Long-term Outcomes

- Greater Success in School, Work, and Life
Infants and Babies

- **By 2 months**
  - Cry to get needs met
  - Occasionally self-soothe by sucking on hands and fingers
  - Start to smile and look directly at you

- **By 4 months**
  - Cry in different ways to show hunger, pain, or being tired
  - Smile in response to caregiver’s smile
  - Play with toys by shaking them

- **By 6 months**
  - Are more aware of which people are familiar and which are strangers
  - Can respond to other people’s emotions by crying, smiling, or laughing
  - Enjoy looking at themselves in the mirror

- **By 9 months**
  - Start to show stranger anxiety
  - May cry when familiar faces aren’t around
  - Start to prefer some toys over others

- **By 12 months**
  - Play favorites with familiar people
  - Are more interactive (like handing over a toy or a book, or making a specific noise to get a caregiver’s attention)
  - Enjoy simple interactive games, like patty-cake and peekaboo
Toddlers and Preschoolers

• Ages 18 months–2 years
  • Have more temper tantrums and become more defiant as they try to communicate and be independent
  • Start simple pretend play, like imitating what adults or other kids are doing
  • Become interested in having other kids around, but are more likely to play alongside them (parallel play) than with them (cooperative play)

• Ages 3–4 years
  • Start to show and verbalize a wider range of emotion
  • Are interested in pretend play, but may confuse real and “make believe”
  • Are spontaneously kind and caring
  • Start playing with other kids and separate from caregivers more easily
  • May still have tantrums because of changes in routine or not getting what they want
• **Ages 5–6 years**
  - Enjoy playing with other kids and are more conversational and independent
  - Test boundaries but are still eager to please and help out
  - Begin to understand what it means to feel embarrassed

• **Ages 7–8 years**
  - Are more aware of others’ perceptions
  - May complain about friendships and other kids’ reactions
  - Want to behave well, but aren’t as attentive to directions
  - Try to express feelings with words, but may resort to aggression when upset

• **Ages 9–10 years**
  - Share secrets and jokes with friends
  - May start to develop own identity by withdrawing from family activities and conversations
  - Are affectionate, silly, and curious, but can also be selfish, rude, and argumentative
Middle-Schoolers and High-Schoolers

- **Ages 11–15 years**
  - Start thinking more logically
  - Are introspective and moody and need privacy
  - Value friends’ and others’ opinions more and more
  - May test out new ideas, clothing styles, and mannerisms while figuring out where/how to fit in

- **Ages 16–18 years**
  - Strive to be independent and may start emotionally distancing from caregivers
  - Start trying to discover strengths and weaknesses, at times seeming self-centered, impulsive, or moody
  - Show pride in successes
  - Spend a lot of time with friends and may be interested in dating
Attachment

**Overarching goal:** Creation of a safe environment and safe relationships that are able to support children and adolescents in meeting developmental, emotional, and relational needs.

Defined as a deep and enduring emotional bond between two people in which each seeks closeness and feels more secure when in the presence of the *attachment* figure.
Teach Kids

- Everyone has feelings
- Feelings come from somewhere
- It is not always easy to know what we feel
- There are cues that can tell us what we might be feeling
- Knowing about feelings helps us understand ourselves, the situation we are in, and whether we need to do something to manage the feeling(s)
Feelings Identification and Expression

- Teach that all feelings matter
- Children get angry, sad, frustrated, nervous, happy, or embarrassed, but they often do not have the words to talk about how they are feeling. Instead, they sometimes express these emotions with their actions, which may not always be appropriate.
feelings - emotions

shocked  |  surprised  |  confident  |  sad

in love  |  happy  |  sad  |  tired

friendly  |  bored  |  upset  |  depressed

angry  |  afraid  |  lonely  |  proud

HOW WAS YOUR DAY? feelings worksheet for kids

My name is: ___________________ Today is: ___________________

What did you do today?: ______________________________________

What was your most favorite part of today?: ____________________

What was your least favorite part of today?: ____________________

Is there anything you would change about today?: ________________

What one word describes how you feel about today? (circle one)

happy  |  sad  |  angry  |  scared  |  surprised  |  worried  |  tired  |  sick

Why do you feel that way?: ____________________________________
Impacting Energy Levels

- Up-regulation
- Physical movement
- Head, shoulders, knees, and toes
- Simon Says
- Dancing
- Down-regulation
- Breathing
- Blowing Bubbles
- Belly Breathing

- Grounding/Mindfulness
- Coloring/Mandala
- Play Dough/Clay
- Progress Muscle Relaxation
- Tense & Release
- Pressing Activities
- Stretching
- Standing or chair stretches
- Yoga Poses
Sensory and Movement

- Why kids need to move, touch, and experience to learn
- Why kids shouldn’t sit still in class
- Why young kids learn through movement
- Why so many kids can’t sit still in school today
10 simple activities to encourage physical activity in the classroom

1. Secret Password: Every day establish a secret password activity such as 5 jumping jacks, stand on one foot for 5 seconds, hop three times, etc. Then establish when the student needs to use the secret password - i.e. after a drink of water, before receiving a handout, when entering the classroom, in between subjects, etc.

2. Walking Worksheets: Tape worksheets on wall, easel and chalkboard. Students move from worksheet to worksheet and answer the different questions.

3. Opposite Hunt: Divide the class in half. Half of the class write a word on an index card. The other half writes the definition. Shuffle the cards and hand one card to each student. The students must move around the classroom and match the word with the definition. For younger students match up sight words, letters or numbers. Try math problems and solutions.

4. Pencil Jumps: For a quick movement break in between lessons have each student place a pencil on the floor. Jump over the pencil a designated number of times.

5. Race in Place: When revising material, have the students stand up and run in place by their desks. On the teacher's signal, student stops running in place, listens to question and writes down the answer on paper.

6. Daily Rule: Establish a new daily rule every day that includes physical activity, i.e. walk backwards to water fountain, tip toe to the bathroom, stretch before sitting in chair. See if you can catch the students forgetting the daily rule.

7. Shredder: Cut up worksheets in quarters. Students can help scatter the worksheets around the floor face down. On the teacher's signal, the students can crawl around the floor, find the four quarters of the worksheet, complete the worksheet and give it to the teacher.

8. Push Up Line Up: When the students line up against the wall to leave the classroom, have each student face the wall and perform 10 wall push ups. After all push ups completed the class can walk in the line.

9. Mobile Math: Divide the class in half to review math problems. The students can stand at their desks (paper and pencil on desk). Call out a math problem such as 4+5=. One half of the class jumps 4 times and the other half jumps five times. Each student writes down answer on paper. Continue with other math problems. Vary movements.

10. Q and A Stretching: Provide students with paper at desks. Students can stand or sit. Ask a question and student writes down the answer (very large) on one sheet of paper. Each student holds paper up, two heads overhead to stretch. Teacher checks answers. Multiple choice questions work best.

Looking for more motor activity ideas? Visit www.YourTherapySource.com

Sensory & Movement Activities
In the Classroom

Heavy Work Activities
- Erase or wash chalkboard
- Wash desks or tabletops
- Carry a box of books
- Push or stack chairs
- Reorganize bookshelves
- Open doors for others
- Staple paper onto bulletin board
- Sharpen pencils with manual sharpener
- Wear heavy backpack
- Move fresh air to another location
- Carry basket of items
- Make deliveries to the office
- Squeeze stress balls or fidget toys
- Get heavy paper or cardboard with scissors

Movement Activities
- Sit in a rocking chair when reading or during floor time
- Sit on an inflated air cushion placed on a chair or floor
- Hold out papers and materials for the teacher
- Push your feet into the board placed around chair legs
- Do head, neck and shoulder rolls while sitting
- Take a stretch break after sitting for a long time
- Breath deeply—in through your nose out through your mouth
7 Steps of modulations

- Be attuned: Notice the feeling (tune in to the energy)
- Keep yourself centered: Check in with yourself
- Ask yourself: Where is the child’s/group’s energy? Where does it need to go? (Up/Down)
- Reflect (simply) what you’re seeing: (i.e. “I can see you just got pretty frustrated. Let’s see if we can calm it down a bit so we can talk.”)
- Cue child/group on use of skills (breathing, sitting quietly, calming down space, stress balls, etc)
- Reinforce use of modulation skills (i.e. “I’m really proud of you for trying to calm your energy down.”)
- Invite expression/communication when child is calm
Self-regulation allows kids to manage their emotions, behavior, and body movement when faced with tough situations.
Bumble Bee Breathing

Get into a comfortable sitting position and close your eyes. Focus on listening to your breathing. Feel the air entering in through your nose, filling up your lungs and blowing out of your mouth.

Inhale slowly through your nose. Place your fingers gently on your ears to close off external sound. Breathe out through your mouth, saying “buzzzzzzzzzz” for as long as you can. Repeat. Try a different sound such as “hummmmmmm” or “ohhhhhhhh”.

Repeat the bumble bee breathing until your body is calm and relaxed.
Mindfulness

and Calming

• mind·ful·ness /ˈmīn(d)fl(ə)lnəs/
• noun: mindfulness

• 1. the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something. "their mindfulness of the wider cinematic tradition"

• 2. a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique.
For Counselors, Therapists & Coaches:
A MINDFULNESS CONVERSATION GUIDE

1. CHECKING INTO THE PRESENT MOMENT
   - What is happening right now?
   - How do you feel in this moment?
   - What thoughts are visiting you now?
   - Describe the emotions that are with you now.
   - Noticing the thoughts that are passing in your mind now, what are they saying?

2. PAYING ATTENTION, LOOKING DEEPER
   - Paying attention to your body, where is the feeling (the anger, the sadness, the worry, etc.)?
   - If the feeling or emotion was a color, what color would it be? What shape, size, smell, temperature, texture, sound would it be?
   - Noticing the thoughts in your mind right now, how do these words sound? Angry? Scared? Hesit? Afraid? Unsure?
   - Breathing in and out slowly, what do you notice now?

3. MINDFUL SELF TALK RELEASING JUDGMENT OF THE SITUATION
   - Noticing the discomfort (pain, stress, unease, sadness, fear, etc.) in your body, say to yourself: This hurts. This is pain. Ouch. This is disappointment. Hello. Fear. Hi there, worry, This is sadness.
   - With gentle kindness, try telling yourself that pain, hurt, and uncertainty do not need to be fixed. Just see. Just witnessed.
   - Breathing in, breathing out, just sit, in stillness, with the feeling.

4. PRACTICING SELF-COMPASSION
   - If the feeling could talk, what would it be telling you you need?
   - Imagine your good friend finding themselves in a similar situation. How would you care for them? How can you show yourself the same care that you would a good friend?
   - If you were talking to yourself like you would to someone you love, what would you tell yourself?

5. CLOSURE PRACTICES / PLAN
   - Suggest different mindfulness practices depending on their developmental need and comfort level.
   - For example, share the following: Breathe in for a count of two, hold the breath for a count of one, breathe out for a count of four, hold the breath for a count of one. Continue this as often as you need, paying attention, here and now, to the still place within.
   - Practice treating feelings as if they were visitors, with kindness and curiosity, and see what happens.
   - Try relating to yourself like a good friend and notice what happens.
Calming Yourself Down

1. **Stop and think.**
2. **Ask yourself: “How does my body feel?”**
3. **Try**
   - **Taking three deep breaths.**
   - **Counting backward slowly.**
   - **Thinking calming thoughts.**
   - **Talking to yourself.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items that give kids a brain break</th>
<th>Items that provide proprioceptive support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Puzzles</td>
<td>Punching bag or bop bag</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter books to read</td>
<td>Mini massager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank notebook/journal and writing utensils</td>
<td>Weighted lap cushion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coloring books</td>
<td>Hand weights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scratch art doodle pad</td>
<td>Resistance/exercise bands</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity books</td>
<td>Compression clothing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brain Quest cards</td>
<td>Heated blanket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doodle books</td>
<td>Weighted blanket</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mad Libs</td>
<td>Skipping rope</td>
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<tr>
<th>Items for auditory sensory support</th>
<th>Items to squeeze, fidget with, or keep hands busy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Noise cancelling headphones</td>
<td>LEGO kits</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP3 player with music, nature sounds, audiobooks, etc.</td>
<td>Stress balls</td>
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<td>Sound machine</td>
<td>Rubik’s Cube</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Woodenen or metal logic puzzles</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Craft kits</td>
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<td>Cat’s cradle</td>
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<tr>
<th>Items for oral motor sensory support</th>
<th>Items to visually calm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chewing gum, hard candies, or lollipops</td>
<td>Kaleidoscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snacks with a variety of textures</td>
<td>Eye mask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chew necklace</td>
<td>Look &amp; find books</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lava lamp</td>
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<tr>
<th>Items to support breathing &amp; relaxation</th>
<th>Items for olfactory sensory support</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book of yoga poses or yoga activity cards</td>
<td>Calming essential oil spray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rescue Remedy Spray</td>
<td>Scented lotion</td>
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</table>
Coping skills are what we think and what we do to help us get through difficult situations. A child will begin to learn and use different coping skills from the time they are born.

You can build on the skills they are already using, as well as assist them to learn new ones. This may include asking for help, talking with friends, problem solving and taking time out when they need a break.
Coping Skills Wheel
9 Ways to Handle Big Emotions

1. Take deep breaths
2. Do a positive activity
3. Play sports
4. Think of something funny
5. Take a quick walk
6. Practice yoga
7. Stand up and stretch
8. Listen to music
9. Take a time out
10. Slowly count to ten
11. Use positive self-talk
12. Say something kind to yourself
13. Talk to a friend
14. Talk to an adult
15. Close your eyes and relax
16. Say, “I can do this”
17. Visualize your favorite place
18. Think of something happy
19. Think of a pet you love
20. Think about someone you love
21. Get enough sleep
22. Eat a healthy snack
23. Read a good book
24. Set a goal
25. Jog in place
26. Write in a journal
27. Hum your favorite song
28. Doodle on paper
29. Color a coloring page
30. Clean something
The three main areas of executive function are:
- Working memory
- Cognitive flexibility (also called flexible thinking)
- Inhibitory control (which includes self-control)

Executive function is responsible for a number of skills, including:
- Paying attention
- Organizing, planning and prioritizing
- Starting tasks and staying focused on them to completion
- Understanding different points of view
- Regulating emotions
- Self-monitoring (keeping track of what you’re doing)
What can I do?

Problem solving wheel

- Wait and cool off.
- Walk away and let it go.
- I feel.
- Use an I message.
- Ignore it.
- Apologize.
- Talk it out.
- Go to another activity.

How Big is My Problem?

5 - Emergency
- Earthquake, tornado, security risk, fire, danger

4 - Gigantic Problem
- Harassment, fighting, someone is injured, someone is being destructive to property

3 - Big Problem
- Parent contact, minor accident, calm down needed

2 - Medium Problem
- Not feeling well, someone is bothering you, forgetting assignment, need something

1 - Little Problem
- Ranney nose, need to go to the restroom, dropping supplies on accident

0 - Glitch
- Not getting called on, someone at the door you know, not getting the supplies you want.
- When you feel yourself becoming stressed, stop and breathe. Do something for yourself to refuel your energy—walking, reading, being with your family, listening to music, cooking, or giving yourself an hour to just do nothing.

- Talk with other teachers, friends, or family members about your struggles, overwhelming feelings, or discouragement.

- Engage your learning community in exploring the stressful issue, such as a new lesson plan or an uncooperative child.

- Get more information about your problem through training, reading, or watching videos.

- Be willing to give up something if you are overwhelmed because you agreed to take on too much.

- Learn the ways you demonstrate your stress.

- If you react too quickly, make mistakes, ignore a child’s request, or become short with either children or parents, don’t be too hard on yourself.

- We are all balancing tasks, feelings, events, and demands from both home and school and so are families. Acknowledge your mistakes and make reparations.
How do we increase our ability to regulate?

(1) Validation, and depersonalization
   - Normalizing caregiver responses and depersonalizing youth behaviors / reactions

(2) Identifying difficult situations
   - Building awareness of challenging situations

(3) Self-monitoring skills
   - Increasing capacity to “tune in” to our own reactions

(4) Self-care and support
   - Building coping strategies and support systems that facilitate caregiver self-care
Normalize and Depersonalize

- Adaptive nature of behaviors
- Understanding function of child behavior
- Understanding and recognizing triggers (and differentiating this response from opposition, manipulation, etc.)
- Working models of self and other, including the parallel process
Identifying Difficult Situations

- Consider the following with all adults (primary caregivers / daycare / system):
  - How are you coping? What sustains you in (parenting, your work), and what feelings do you find harder?
  - Moments of: efficacy / positive feelings, as well as moments of feeling overwhelmed, helpless, and/or angry
  - Are there particular vulnerable areas?
    - i.e., Specific youth behaviors that are more difficult to cope with or that “push your buttons”, times of day or times of year (i.e., holidays, transition times, etc.)
  - How do you know when you are modulated versus on edge?
  - What other types of things affect your ability to stay centered (i.e., external pressures, lack of sleep, etc.)?
Build Self-Monitoring Skills

- **Body**: What cues does the body give? Notice more routine body cues, as well as warning signs for “losing control” or hitting a danger point.
- **Thoughts**: What are caregiver’s automatic thoughts in the face of difficult situations? Do they…blame themselves? Worry about their choices? Focus on what the child is *not* doing? Compare the child to other kids?
- **Emotions**: What does caregiver *feel* in the face of these thoughts? How strongly?
Each caregiver should have a “self-care” plan, including an individual “tool-box”

Pay attention to four levels of self-care / support:
- **Advance preparation**: something you do before entering the situation (i.e., mental rehearsal, relaxation strategies, seeking support);
- **“In-the-pocket” strategies**: something you do in the situation (i.e., deep breathing, muscle relaxation, self-mantra);
- **“Recovery” strategies**: something you do after the situation (i.e., reaching out, enjoyable activities, taking down time);
- **Ongoing self-care**: something you do purposefully to increase well-being and decrease stress (i.e., connecting to community resources, built-in “me” time, engaging in arousal regulating activities like yoga and sports)
Observe, validate, and put language to youth experience

- 3 key skills to teach caregivers for mirroring experience:
  - (1) Reflect
  - (2) Validate
  - (3) Normalize
Home routines

Consider targeting natural areas of challenge; i.e.:
- Mealtimes
- Transitions
- Bedtime

Use routine / structure to support key goals; i.e.,
- Family communication
- Problem-solving
- Proactive approaches to modulation
Directions For Youth & Families

- 1515 Indianola Ave Columbus, OH 43201
- 614-294-2661
- www.dfyf.org
- Clinical Counseling Programs
- Educational/Prevention Programs
- Community and school based, telehealth
- tzink@dfyf.org