

# Social Emotional Learning – Mastering Your Emotions



Understanding and nurturing social-emotional development in young children is crucial for their overall well-being and future success. As a social-emotional expert, here are some valuable insights and tools for early childhood educators and parents to foster positive social-emotional learning experiences in young children.

1. Learning basics: functional communication is the basis of all learning, both behavioral and academic. When social-emotional learning and functional communication are learned well from birth to five you will not have behavioral or academic problems. When one or both are deficient there will be issues with behavior and/or academic learning.
2. Self-regulation levels predict school success better than cognitive skills and family background. Self-control is our super-power!
3. Areas of Social – Emotional Learning:
  - a. Developing a positive self-identity
  - b. Building a sense of competence in their thinking and actions
  - c. Understanding their emotions – being able to recognize, label, and regulate their emotions
  - d. Learning empathy of others (understanding their emotions)
  - e. Understanding they are part of the classroom community
  - f. Helping them to build relationships with peers and adults
  - g. Engaging in cooperative play with peers
  - h. Developing an internal sense of right and wrong (morals)
4. Social-emotional skills learning should be creatively added to all your daily activities.
  - a. Emotional skills include: being gentle, loving, polite, kind, and friendly.
  - b. Social skills include: being helpful, sharing, caring, forgiving, and self-control.
5. Conflict resolution should be role played in circle time activities and taught during the teachable moment.
  - a. Approach calmly, stopping any behavior that might harm someone. Children should feel safe and secure in moments of conflict. When you remain calm it helps children do the same. Kneel between the children at their level. Hold the object neutrally for the children.

- b. Acknowledge the feelings of both of the children. Help them to express their feelings, without casting judgement. This enables them to let go of their feelings.
  - c. Let all children involved express their perspective about what happened or is going on, one at a time.
  - d. Restate the problem without taking sides or providing a solution, and using positive language, then ask them if you stated it right. This reinforces their understanding that you are listening to each of them without taking sides.
  - e. Ask the children for ideas for solutions and work with them to choose one together.
  - f. Encourage them to provide solutions, giving them plenty of time to respond, accepting all the ideas they provide. If they do not have any ideas you then can provide one or two, but only to get them started.
  - g. Help children think through the consequences of implementing their ideas. Have them pick one they feel handles the situation properly, then reinforce that they have solved the problem.
  - h. It is very important to remember that we are teaching them to solve their own issues, as these skills are necessary for them to be successful in school and life.
6. Only positive reinforcement can facilitate behavioral change. Overcoming chronic misbehavior takes love, patience and time. If you think they cannot behave then it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Social and emotional skills are learned from birth to five, so do not give up and get all the support you need to facilitate the change.
7. We have a nationwide problem in the development of caring, sharing, attachment, love, and empathy in boys. These are relational skills necessary throughout our lives.
8. Social-emotional patterns include:
  - a. Speaker
  - b. Helper
  - c. Time-keeper
  - d. Gifter
  - e. Hugger
  - f. Encourager

We all are multi-faceted in what skills we have a natural inclination towards. We also see the world through our own personal lens. Be mindful we should never try to change who a child is deep down, rather we should find positive ways to reinforce their natural gifts.