

Social Emotional Development

When playing with children, ask yourself:
“Does this activity engage a child’s social emotional development?”



Milestones for Social Emotional Development

12-15 month old babies

- Love hugs and cuddles
- Begin to show empathy-might look sad or get upset if she sees someone crying
- Separation anxiety starts

15-18 month old babies

- Wants to explore but needs the security of knowing you are nearby-will look back to check you are there and may be upset if he can't see you
- Does not share - they think they are the center of the world and everything belongs to them
- Hugs and kisses you

2 year old

- Imitates behavior of others, especially adults and older children
- Increasingly enthusiastic about company of other children
- Demonstrates increasing independence
- Begins to show defiant behavior
- Increasing episodes of separation anxiety toward midyear, then they fade

3 year old

- Follows simple directions; enjoys helping with household tasks
- Begins to recognize own limits - asks for help
- Likes to play alone, but near other children
- Does not cooperate or share well
- Begins to notice other people's moods and feelings
- Transitions are difficult at this age. Provide warnings of changes so your child has time to shift gears
- Rituals are important. Household routines and schedules give the 3-year-old a sense of security

4 year old

- Takes turns, shares and cooperates
- Expresses anger verbally rather than physically
- Can feel jealousy
- May sometimes lie to protect herself, but understands the concept of lying
- Enjoys pretending and has a vivid imagination
- Craves adult approval-provide lots of positive encouragement
- Needs lots of play space and opportunity to play with other kids

5 year old

- Distinguishes right from wrong, honest from dishonest, but does not recognize intent
- Plays make-believe and dress up
- Mimics adults and seeks praise
- Seeks to play rather than be alone; friends are important
- Plays with boys and girls but prefers the same sex
- Wants to conform; may criticize those who do not

Educational activities that develop social emotional development

Transitions (drop-off/pick-up, play time to meal time) and routines

Socializing with peers (playing beside a child develops into playing with a child)

Helping with chores, cleaning up after self

Positive reinforcement for pro-social behaviour (i.e. patience, sharing, understanding), developing independence, and conflict resolution

Help with recognition of feelings and how to acknowledge them (i.e. frustration, happiness)

Various centres for pretend play (i.e. house centre, water and sand tables, dress-up clothing)

Games with rules, turn-taking

Help with development of social mores and laws (i.e. right versus wrong)

Great variety of toys, games, and centres for individual and group choices



Correlation

Our program helps children learn how to become pro-social community members.