

Infant and Toddler Relationship-Based Care



Social-Emotional Development

is defined as “the developing capacity of the child from birth through 5 to form close and secure relationships; experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways; and explore the environment and learn—all in the context of family, community, and culture” (Yates et al., 2008, p. 2).



Relationship-based care strategies can support infant and toddler social-emotional development.

Strategies for Working with Infants and Toddlers

- Reading cues and signals
- Responding with sensitivity and support
- Supporting language development
- Giving advanced notice of changes in activities
- Offering appropriate ways to express intense feelings
- Suggesting ways to manage intense emotions
- Giving choices
- Being consistent
- Being available and observing
- Allowing children to take the lead in their learning

Planning to Implement Social-Emotional Development in Diverse Child Care Settings

- Supporting social-emotional skills requires intention.
- Caregiving routines are the primary opportunity to enhance social-emotional development.
- The physical environment, particularly in group care, plays a major role.
- Social-emotional literacy is a prerequisite for more advanced social skills and the continued maturation of emotional self-regulation.

Why Is Social-Emotional Development Important?



Healthy relationships: Early relationships are vital to brain development because they help wire the brain to trust others, love, and feel safe and secure.



Positive experiences: New brain connections are formed and modified through verbal and physical interactions.



Consistent and secure environments: The brain develops gradually in response to experiences and environments.

Learn More!

Social-Emotional Development

<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/infant-toddler-resource-guide/social-emotional-development>

Source

Yates, T., Ostrosky, M. M., Cheatham, G. A., Fetting, A., Shaffer, L., & Santos, R. M. (2008). Research synthesis on screening and assessing social-emotional competence. Child Care Bureau, Office of Head Start, The Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Learning.



CHILD CARE

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