Promoting Social and Emotional Competence in Young Children

Wisconsin Pyramid Model

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Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

Developing capacity of the child to:
- form close and secure adult and peer 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.

Pyramid Model for Social Emotional Competence in Young Children

Let's talk about responsive relationships...

Know your hot buttons ... see the iceberg

Grounding....teaming....nurturing adults

Wow. I’m playing a negative script.
Can you help me think about this?
Will you watch me and give me your thoughts?
How is this working for the child?
How is this working for you?
What should I try next?
Do you have what you need?
You seem stuck. Can I help?

“Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren’t always comfortable, but they are never weakness.”
- Brene Brown
Children's Social Skills Impact Success in Adulthood

For every 1-point decrease in kindergarten social competence:
- 67% higher chance of having been arrested by early adulthood
- 52% higher rate of recent binge drinking and 82% higher chance of being in or on a waiting list for public housing

For every 1-point increase in kindergarten social competence:
- Twice as likely to attain a college degree in early adulthood
- 54% more likely to earn a high school diploma and 46% more likely to have a full-time job at the age of 25

High Quality Environments

Predictable schedules and routines

Clearly communicated expectations

Consistent positive descriptive feedback

Opportunities to practice social and emotional skills

Predictable schedule and routine

Be safe 1. Use walking feet. 2. Use gentle touches.
Be a friend 1. Listen and talk. 2. Give ideas and get ideas.
Be respectful 1. Help other people. 2. Solve problems together.

Strategy: Teach children to meet expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom</th>
<th>Toilet</th>
<th>Playground</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be safe</td>
<td>1. Wash my hands. 2. Step up and down.</td>
<td>1. Slide on bottom and feet first. 2. Keep gravel on the ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be a friend</td>
<td>1. Use the doors. 2. Wait my turn.</td>
<td>1. Take turns 2. Listen to your friends.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategy: Positive Descriptive Feedback

Immediate
Frequent
Enthusiastic
Eye level
Descriptive
Opportunity to practice- Play is the Way

Intentional teaching of targeted skills

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Learning a challenging new skill

Think about the last time you tried to learn something that was challenging for you.

What was your instructor doing?

How hard were you working?

What was your performance like?

What did you appreciate about your instructor?

What did you not appreciate?

Strategy: Talking about feelings

What do you notice?

What is it called?

What can you do?

So I'm going to……

- tell a friend
- ask you to……
- take some deep breaths
- sit quietly
- etc.

Strategy: :Validating Emotions “I hear you”

Instead of “You’re OK”, consider:

Encouraging children to express their feelings is key to fostering emotional health.

No matter how “unreasonable” the reaction seems, the child needs the emotion to be accepted.

No one (not even adults) can control the emotions they feel…but we do learn to control our responses.

Resources for emotional literacy
Recognize that you feel angry.

Go into shell.
Take 3 deep breaths.
And think calm, coping thoughts.

“Think” Step.

Come out of shell when calm and think of a solution.

Strategy: Teach the Turtle Technique

Step 1
Step 2
Step 3
Step 4

Practice, practice, practice

I thought like a turtle today!

I remembered to:
1. Recognize I had a strong feeling
2. Take 3 deep breaths
3. Take 3 deep breaths
4. Try a solution when calm

Resources for self-regulation

What is the problem?

Step 1

Think, think, think of some solutions.

Step 2

What would happen?

Step 3

Give it a try!

Step 4

Strategy: Intentionally teaching problem solving

Practice, practice, practice

This looks like a problem…this is a chance to grow our brains!”

[Pawline & Stanford, 2011]
Resources for problem solving

Teaming to plan individualized intervention

1. Detect the behavior equation
2. Determine the function of behavior
3. Develop prevention strategies
4. Decide on replacement skills
5. Commit to new responses

Adults coaching support to use these skills

These strategies work for children

Questions?