

## DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL SOCIAL SKILLS

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### Abstract

Sporadic and inconsistent implementation remains a significant challenge for social and emotional skill interventions. Social development refers to the ability to behave in a manner that allows the individual to be accepted by both their peer and society as a whole. Emotional development encompasses the feelings that we have about ourselves and others, as well as our capabilities to function well in world from a social standpoint. The study of age related changes human behavior is referred to as developmental psychology. Social- emotional development includes the child's experience, expression and management of emotions and the ability to establish positive and rewarding relationships with others. (Cohen and others 2005) it encompasses both intra and interpersonal processes. Be a role model for forming and maintaining positive relationship with your friends. Children, Partner and Colleagues. Healthy social emotional development for infants and toddlers unfolds in an interpersonal context, namely that of positive ongoing relationships with familiar nurturing adults. Young children are particularly attuned to social and emotional stimulation. Through nurturance, adult support the infants earliest experiences of emotion regulation (Thompson and Goodwin 2005). The purpose of this paper is to correlate the relationship between three major theories of social development. In doing so, seeking to identify, describe, and actively relate each principle requires first and foremost to construct a definition of social development. "Social Development refers to how people develop social and emotional skills across the lifespan, with particular attention to childhood and adolescence. Healthy social development allows us to form positive relationships with family, friends, teachers, and other people in our lives". As we mature, we learn to better manage our own feelings, in order to respond appropriately to the feelings and needs of others. Such development begins from the day we are brought into this world to the day we seize to exist. It is in fact an active ever-changing footing that is learned through our experiences, as well as our interpretations of these experiences that help construct our own social intelligence.

**Keywords:** Social Development, Emotional Development, Skills, Children, Behaviour, Academic.

### Social-Emotional Development Domain

Social-emotional development includes the child's experience, expression, and management of emotions and the ability to establish positive and rewarding relationships with others (Cohen and others 2005). It encompasses both intra- and interpersonal processes. The core features of emotional development include the ability to identify and understand one's own feelings, to accurately read and comprehend emotional states in others, to manage strong emotions and their expression in a constructive manner, to regulate one's own behavior, to develop empathy for others, and to establish and maintain relationships. (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2004). Healthy social-emotional development for infants and toddlers unfolds in an interpersonal context, namely that of positive ongoing relationships with familiar, nurturing adults. Young children are particularly attuned to social and emotional stimulation. Even newborns appear to attend more to stimuli that resemble faces (Johnson and others 1991). They also prefer their mothers' voices to the voices of other women (DeCasper and Fifer 1980). Through nurturance, adults support the infants' earliest experiences of emotion regulation (Bronson 2000a; Thompson and Goodyn 2005). Responsive care giving supports infants in beginning to regulate their emotions and to develop a sense of predictability, safety, and responsiveness in their social environments. Early relationships are so important to developing infants that research experts have broadly concluded that, in the early years, "nurturing, stable and consistent relationships are the key to healthy growth, development and learning" (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2000, 412). In other words, high-quality relationships increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for young children (Shonkoff 2004). Experiences with family members and teachers provide an opportunity for young children to learn about social relationships and emotions through exploration and predictable interactions. Professionals working in child care settings can support the social-emotional development of infants and toddlers in various ways, including interacting directly with young children, communicating with families, arranging the physical space in the care environment, and planning and implementing curriculum. Brain research indicates that emotion and cognition are profoundly interrelated processes. Specifically, "recent cognitive neuroscience findings suggest that the neural mechanisms underlying emotion regulation may be the same as those underlying cognitive processes" (Bell and Wolfe 2004, 366). Emotion and cognition work together, jointly informing the child's impressions of situations and influencing behavior. Most learning in the early years occurs in the context of emotional supports (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2000). "The rich interpenetrations of emotions and cognitions establish the major psychic scripts for each child's life" (Panksepp 2001). Emotion and cognition work together, jointly informing the child's impressions of situations and influencing behavior. Most learning in the early years occurs in the context of emotional supports (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2000). "The rich interpenetrations of emotions and

cognitions establish the major psychic scripts for each child's life" (Panksepp 2001). Together, emotion and cognition contribute to attention processes, decision making, and learning (Cacioppo and Benson 1999). Furthermore, cognitive processes, such as decision making, are affected by emotion (Barrett and others 2007). Brain structures involved in the neural circuitry of cognition influence emotion and vice versa (Barrett and others 2007). Emotions and social behaviors affect the young child's ability to persist in goal-oriented activity, to seek help when it is needed, and to participate in and benefit from relationships. Children who exhibit healthy social, emotional, and behavioral adjustment are more likely to have good academic performance in elementary school (Cohen and others 2005; Zero to Three 2004). The sharp distinction between cognition and emotion that has historically been made may be more of an artifact of scholarship than it is representative of the way these processes occur in the brain (Barrett and others 2007). This recent research strengthens the view that early childhood programs support later positive learning outcomes in a way these processes occur in the brain (Barrett and others 2007). This recent research strengthens the view that early childhood programs support later positive learning outcomes in all domains by maintaining a focus on the promotion of healthy social emotional development (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2004; Ravel 2002; Shonkoff 2004).

### **Interactions with Adults Supporting Social and Emotional Development**

Here are some ideas to help you support your child's social and emotional development. Be a role model for forming and maintaining positive relationships – with your friends, children, partner and colleagues. Your child will learn from observing relationships where there is respect, empathy and positive ways of resolving conflict. Get to know your child's friends, and make them welcome in your home. This will help you keep in touch with your child's social relationships. It also shows that you recognize how important your child's friends are to your child's sense of self. If you're concerned about your child's choice of friends, provide gentle and consistent guidance. Listen to your child's feelings. If your child wants to talk, stop and give your child your full attention. If you're in the middle of something, make a specific time when you can listen. Respect your child's feelings and try to understand your child's perspective, even if it's not the same as yours. For example, 'It sounds like you're feeling left out because you're not going to the party on Thursday night'. Be explicit and open about your feelings. In particular, tell your child how you feel when your child behaves in different ways. For example, 'I felt really happy when you invited me to your school performance'. This helps your child learn to read and respond to emotions. It also models positive and constructive ways of relating to other people. Be a role model for positive ways of dealing with difficult emotions and moods. For example, there will be times when you're feeling cranky, tired and not like interacting with your child. Instead of giving your child the silent treatment, you could say, 'I'm tired and cross. I feel like I can't talk now without getting upset. Can we have this conversation after dinner?' Talk with your child about relationships, sex and sexuality. Look for 'teachable moments' – those everyday times when you can easily bring up these issues. This is often better than having a 'big talk'. Find out what your child already knows. Correct any misinformation and give the real facts. Use the conversation as a chance to discuss appropriate sexual behavior and values. And always let your child know you're available to talk about questions or concerns. Focus on the non-physical. Teenagers are often self-conscious and anxious about their bodies and appearance. So reinforce the positive aspects of your child's social and emotional development. For example, you could praise your child for being a good friend, or for having a wide variety of interests, or for trying hard at school and so on. It's easy to get caught up in your children's needs. There's also the day-to-day business of getting children to the sporting and social activities that are important for their development. Even with all this going on, looking after yourself and making time for the things you enjoy can keep you feeling positive about parenting your teenage child. Staying connected with your teenage child can be an important part of supporting your child's social and emotional development. You can check out our Talking to Teens interactive guide to see how different approaches to staying connected can get different results. Mental health and wellbeing research shows that teenagers are at increased risk of poor mental health, antisocial behavior and risk-taking behavior such as substance misuse. This might be because of stronger emotional responses in adolescence, changes in motivation, or difficulties balancing emotions and behavior. These activities and behavior can affect your child's health later in life and can have long-term effects. If you feel that your child's behavior is more than just 'teenage moodiness', speak to your child about your concerns. Also consider talking to a health professional. You know your child best.

### **Social Emotional Development during the Teen Years**

Adolescence is the period of developmental transition between childhood and adulthood. It involves changes in personality, as well as in physical, intellectual and social development. During this time of change, teens are faced with many issues and decisions Social and emotional development defined: Social development refers to the development of interaction between individuals and the surrounding human world, including relationships with others and also the social skills needed to fit into our culture and society. Social development can also be defined as the ability to behave in a manner that allows the individual to be accepted by both their peers and society as a whole. "Emotional development encompasses the feelings that we have about ourselves and others, as well as our capabilities to function well in the world from a social standpoint". In children, emotional development refers to the attainment of emotional capabilities and their expansion as the child grows. These capabilities enable children to have feelings about what they do and also about others. As babies

and children mature, their emotional capabilities expand, allowing them to develop a variety of skills that they will need in their adult lives. There are many different stages in the development of a child's emotions and the child learns a new type of emotion at each stage. Social emotional development is the combination of learning discretion, openness and honesty in interacting with individuals (or groups) in a way that contributes positively to members of society. The social aspect relates specifically to interactions with people, whereas the emotional aspect relates to understanding and appropriately controlling one's emotions. "A proper combination and coordination of social and emotional development is critical to leading a purposeful, fulfilling life". The current and future social functioning of a child will be largely effected by their social and emotional development, as will their educational and career accomplishments. This is due to the fact that strong social and emotional development, when encouraged and promoted at a young age, will help children settle well in school, behave suitably, and work cooperatively and independently, showing high confidence. Conversely, children whose social and emotional development is slow or stunted will sometimes exhibit difficulty in forming relationships, and are at risk of encountering academic difficulties or later developing physical or mental health problems. This is why it is so important for parents/guardians/caregivers to understand and fulfill children's emotional needs. The purpose of this paper is to correlate the relationship between three major theories of social development. In doing so, seeking to identify, describe, and actively relate each principle requires first and foremost to construct a definition of social development. "Social Development refers to how people develop social and emotional skills across the lifespan, with particular attention to childhood and adolescence. Healthy social development allows us to form positive relationships with family, friends, teachers, and other people in our lives". As we mature, we learn to better manage our own feelings, in order to respond appropriately to the feelings and needs of others. Such development begins from the day we are brought into this world to the day we seize to exist. It is in fact an active ever-changing footing that is learned through our experiences, as well as our interpretations of these experiences that help construct our own social intelligence. The three major theories discussed in this work are theory of mind, the role of perspective taking/emotional and temperament. There are various definitions of Theory of mind, in short it is the understanding of one's own and other people's minds or mental states.

### **Children's social and emotional development**

As a practitioner we have to make sure we are providing activities that involve sharing and taking turns and to be constant with the rules. We have to give the children the support and encouragement they need and the right amount of supervision while they are doing an activity. This provides opportunities to make decisions for them and get to learn the consequences of their decisions. We have to make sure we are listening to the children and what they have to say and their opinions, this will provide the children with opportunities where they can take responsibility. Birth to 1 year Babies at this age should be able to respond to adults and people around them especially to their mothers face and voice. They should be smiling and concentrating on adults face during feeding. Interactions with adults are a frequent and regular part of infants' daily lives. Infants as young as three months of age have been shown to be able to discriminate between the faces of unfamiliar adults (Barrera and Maurer 1981). The foundations that describe Interactions with Adults and Relationships with Adults are interrelated. They jointly give a picture of healthy social-emotional development that is based in a supportive social environment established by adults. Children develop the ability to both respond to adults and engage with them first through predictable interactions in close relationships with parents or other caring adults at home and outside the home. Children use and build upon the skills learned through close relationships to interact with less familiar adults in their lives. In interacting with adults, children engage in a wide variety of social exchanges such as establishing contact with a relative or engaging in storytelling with an infant care teacher. Quality in early childhood programs is, in large part, a function of the interactions that take place between the adults and children in those programs. These interactions form the basis for the relationships that are established between teachers and children in the classroom or home and are related to children's developmental status. How teachers interact with children is at the very heart of early childhood education (Cantos and Wilcox-Herzog 1997, 11). Relationships with Practitioners play a vital role in developing children's Personal, Social and Emotional development from Birth to the end of the foundation stage, it is expected that they support this area of learning by being a positive role model, promoting relationships with key adults and working effectively with parents, (Beckley, et al:2009). There are many reasons that proper emotional development is important for children and their overall development an acculturation. It is a key goal in Primary Education. For example, Erikson, in his description of various stages of emotional development, contends that each is marked with a psychosocial crisis that must be resolved before the individual can move on to the next developmental stage. This notion reveals the importance of emotional development in the gradual progression from childhood into adulthood, because without adequate evolution from one stage to the next, the child becomes emotionally stunted. This also impacts the understanding of self and the ability of the child to assimilate into normal social and cultural settings and roles. Only through proper emotional development can the child fully comprehend social norms and age-appropriate responses to certain conditions or situations in a larger cultural context to the human psyche. If the child cannot understand the relation of these roles to individual identity, the child is further unable to understand self in the context of these roles, which further diminishes the understanding of the individual child's innate self or ego. Thus, the child's emotional development has to be fostered by adults or other agencies, in order to allow for the larger understanding of the way that the child's understanding of self relates to the larger social and cultural contexts that

he or she will encounter, as true emotional development allows the child to relate to the constraints and parameters of society and their applicability to the understanding of self.

**“Socially Skilled”:** The ability to respond to social activities or environments in a manner that produces, maintains, & enhances positive interpersonal effects.

- **“Social Competence” OR “Social-Emotional Health”** One’s overall social capability... the composite or multitude of desires & abilities that result in being “socially skilled.”
- **“Social Skills Training”:**

The teaching of appropriate interaction skills.

- **Direct instruction** via planned lessons & spontaneous training in a “*teachable moment*”.
- **Indirect** via prompting, modeling, “*descriptive praise*”, & “*ripple effect*”.
- **Objective of SST:** To help students develop the ability to relate well to others who share an activity **and/or** setting.

### Social Skills Training

- **Different Realms**

1. **Survival:** Form the basic foundation for acquisition of more advanced skills & those in other realms such as:
  - a. Social interaction
  - b. Appropriate classroom behavior, work habits, & academic survival skills
2. **Interpersonal:** Enhance chances of successful social interaction with persons of all ages & relationships.
3. **Problem solving:** Thinking strategies to prevent social problems or escape social discomfort.
4. **Conflict resolution:** Dealing with highly emotional situations & resolving existing intrapersonal & interpersonal conflicts.
5. Others are often listed, like “Interpersonal perspective taking” “Feelings identification”, “Communication skills”, etc. However, we’ll address the first four.

#### 1) **Survival Skills**

- **What are the basic social skills? When in someone’s presence, ...**

- Acknowledge the other person
- Listen attentively & respond appropriately
- Conduct an accurate on-going self-evaluation of behavior
- Self reinforce for success

- **What are the basic appropriate classroom behavior, work habits, & academic survival skills? Able & willing to...**

- Comply with directions
- Maintain attention to task
- Seek assistance, attention & answers appropriately
- Accept & learn from consequences related to actions.

### Interpersonal Skills

- To enhance the chances of social success & building of friendships, one must know how to... ?
- Share
- Ask for permission
- Join an activity
- Contribute to discussions

- Answer questions
- Interrupt a busy person or conversation
- Wait for one's turn or authority figure's attention
- Begin/End a conversation
- Give/Accept compliments.

#### **Conflict resolution (intra & interpersonal)**

- Includes social skills for dealing with life's frustrations & threats. They include being able to deal with...
- Being left out
- Negative peer pressure others?
- Teasing & taunting
- Accusations
- Anger directed at you by others
- The urge or pressure to fight
- Losing
- Making mistakes (publicly & privately)
- Fear
- Anger

#### **Problem Solving & Conflict Resolution**

- When one is involved in or facing a “problematic situation”, one need to be able to...?
- Ask for help
- Apologize
- Negotiate
- Understand & consider the feelings of others
- Understand & manage one's own feelings
- Decide what to do & Make good choices
- Go with “*Plan B*”
- Respond to failure appropriately (accept it & learn from the experience)
- Accept consequences (and learn from the experience)
- Act assertively (not passive or aggressive)
- Use “I (us & we) messages”

#### **Manners & Boundaries: Civility, “Appropriate Behavior” & Re-channeling of Negative Energies**

##### **Includes:**

- Knowing oneself & one's emotions
- Sizing up a situation quickly & responding within an acceptable conversational or interactional time frame
- Proficient reading of the signals of others
  - facial expressions & body language
  - voice (volume, intonation)
  - contextual cues

- Having a practiced, easily accessed set of
  - verbal skills (vocabulary, intonation)
  - physical actions (hand extension, eye contact, smile).

## **Conclusion**

Practitioners play a vital role in developing children's Personal, Social and Emotional development from Birth to the end of the foundation stage, it is expected that they support this area of learning by being a positive role model, promoting relationships with key adults and working effectively with parents, (Beckley, et al:2009). This essay will focus on how practitioners promote positive relationships in particular, using reference from The Early Years Foundation Stage as well as other sources and also relating to personal experience. Forming positive relationships is important for children as it helps them to feel safe and secure within settings, therefore allowing them to have the confidence to explore and learn, "Warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults support children's learning more effectively than any amount of resources" (DCSF, 2007: 2.3 Positive Relationships: Supporting Learning). Babies, children and adults are all very similar in the way that they maintain successful relationships and remain emotionally fit. It should be the practitioner's priority to ensure that they understand how to meet these needs for themselves and also for all children in their care, (Beckley, et al: 2009). In order for children to develop personally, socially and emotionally they first need to have a clear understanding of themselves. This involves aspects such as self-awareness, self-worth, self-esteem and self- confidence. Children's developing capacity to control impulses helps them adapt to social situations and follow rules. As infants grow, they become increasingly able to exercise voluntary control over behavior such as waiting for needs to be met, inhibiting potentially hurtful behavior, and acting according to social expectations, including safety rules. Group care settings provide many opportunities for children to practice their impulse-control skills. Peer interactions often offer natural opportunities for young children to practice impulse control, as they make progress in learning about cooperative play and sharing. Young children's understanding or lack of understanding of requests made of them may be one factor contributing to their responses (Kaler and Kopp 1990).

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