

A stylized, colorful illustration of a landscape. The foreground features rolling green hills in various shades of green, with a brown path winding through them. On the left, there is a green tree with rounded foliage, a purple flower, and an orange flower. A small red bird is flying in the sky above the tree. The background consists of light blue and white wavy bands representing the sky.

# Little People Big Feelings: Positively Promoting Social-Emotional Development in Young Children

*20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
ADHD and Related Concerns  
November 11, 2023  
Dr. Susan Clark  
The University of Southern Mississippi*



*How Do You Feel Today?*

# How Do You Feel Today?



tired



silly

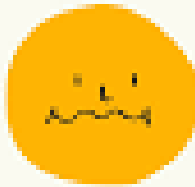
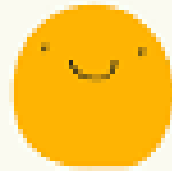
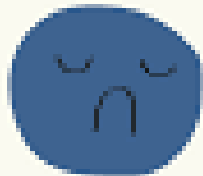
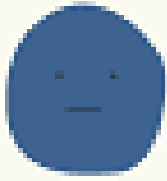
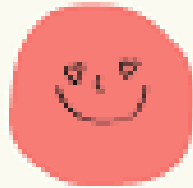
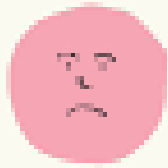
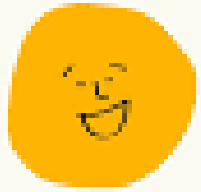


shy

What Are Your Initial Thoughts on This Topic?







# Let's Check Ourselves First!

Do you or have you ever...

- Had an adult tantrum?
- Reacted to stress/stressful situation without considering the consequences?
- Had a hard time articulating how you feel?
- Had more than one feeling at one time?
- Been unable to shake a feeling of being hurt or upset even though the moment may have passed or the situation was resolved?



If We Do It, Why  
Are We  
Upset/Surprised  
When Little  
People Do It?

# Importance of Social-Emotional Development

- *Impacts Overall development & learning*  
(Hyson 2004; Kostelnik et al. 2015)
- *Greater Motivation to Learn*
- *More Positive Attitude Toward School*
- *Higher Academic Performance*



# What Are Your Social-Emotional Goals For Your Little People?





# Emotional Intelligence

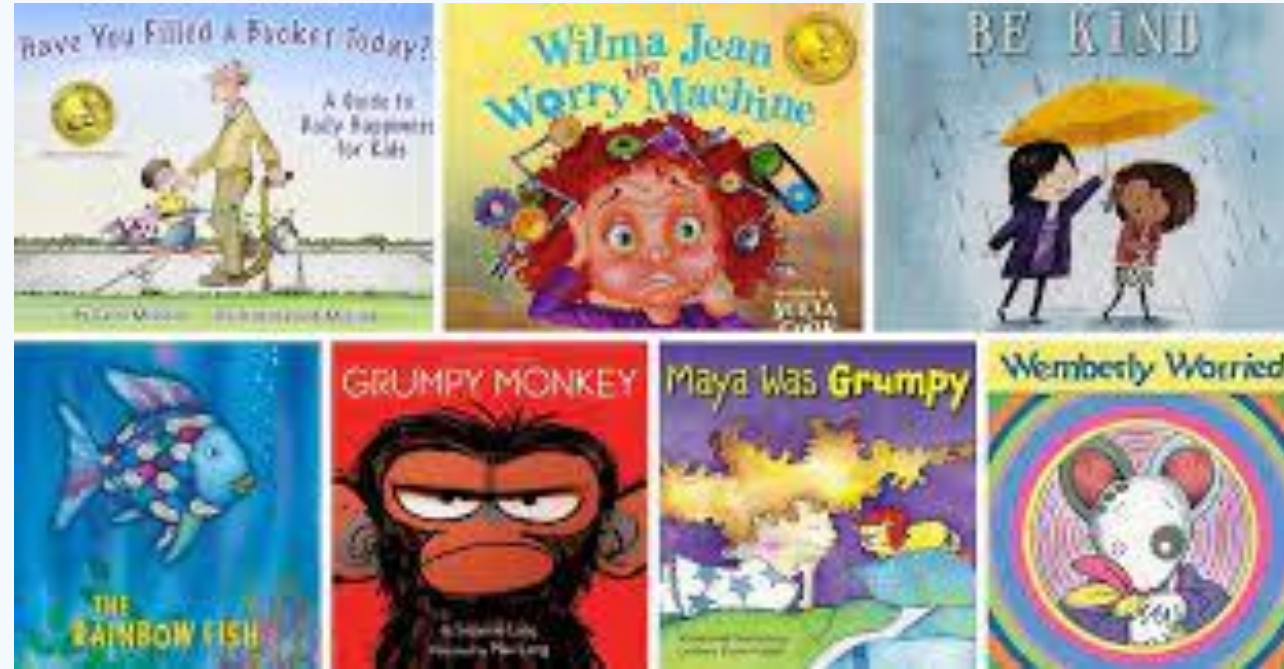
- The ability to understand emotions and develop skills and know-how to navigate feelings in a way that is healthy & secure
  - Self-Awareness
  - Self-Regulation
  - Empathy
  - Motivation
  - Social Skills



# Promoting Social-Emotional Development in Young Children

Parents & Caregivers: What's My Role?

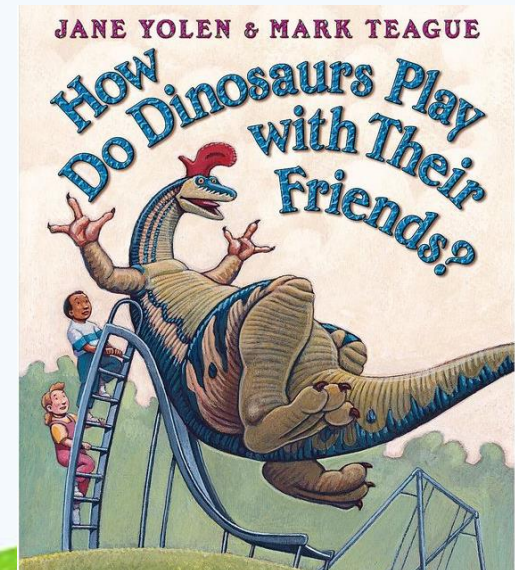
1. **Teach Social & Emotional Skills Intentionally**
2. Provide Intentional Modeling
3. Give Active Encouragement/Effective Praise
4. Break Down Tasks to Clarify Steps
5. Establishing Trusting Relationships



# Promoting Social-Emotional Development in Young Children

## Parents & Caregivers: How Do I Teach Social & Emotional Skills Intentionally? Books

- *Can You Be a Friend?*, by Nita Everly
- *Fox Makes Friends*, by Adam Relf
- *How Do Dinosaurs Play with Their Friends?*, by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague
- *How I Feel Frustrated*, by Marcia Leonard
- *I Can Do It Myself* (a Sesame Street Series), by Emily Perl Kingsley, illus. by Richard Brown
- *I'm in Charge of Me!*, by David Parker, illus. by Sylvia Walker
- *Mouse Was Mad*, by Linda Urban, illus. by Henry Cole
- *My Many Colored Days*, by Dr. Seuss, illus. by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher
- *Sharing: How Kindness Grows*, by Fran Shaw, illus. by Miki Sakamoto
- *When I'm Feeling Sad*, by Trace Moroney
- *When Sophie Gets Angry—Really, Really Angry*, by Molly Bang





# Promoting Social-Emotional Development in Young Children

## Parents & Caregivers: How Do I Teach Social & Emotional Skills Intentionally? Activities

- **Hand puppets:** Create character puppets by having children color or paint the pictures, cut them out, and glue them to craft sticks. Once dry, children can bring their puppets to circle time and act out the story while you read the story aloud. Later, they can take the puppets to the story area or puppet center.
- **Moving to music:** Choose songs with lyrics that encourage movement. Before you start, remind the children that they need to listen closely to the words so they know what actions to take. Classic songs like “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes” work well. Many children’s CDs have great songs that involve following directions (try “My Ups and Downs,” and “Hands Are for Clapping,” by Jim Gill). Do the motions with the children as you listen to the songs. After listening to each song several times, children will build confidence and know which motions to do on their own. Point out to the children that they know what to do because they are being such good listeners.
- **Pass the feeling bag:** Place an assortment of scenario picture cards in a bag. As music plays, the children pass the bag. When the music stops, one child picks out a card and identifies it. Have the child talk about how each scenario or item makes him feel and why. Allow children to take turns pulling out picture cards.
- **Feeling faces collage:** Have children cut out different feeling faces from magazines. Mix nontoxic glue and water together in a small bowl. The children put the pictures on top of a piece of paper, take a paintbrush and dip it in glue solution, and paint over their pictures. They can hang their feeling faces collages on the wall.
- **Singing:** After a story about sharing with friends, sing “Share, share, share your toys; share them with a friend. Share, share, share your toys, let’s all play pretend,” to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” After a story about feelings, sing “If You’re Happy and You Know It” with a variety of emotions and body gestures.



# Can You Think of Other Activities that Promote Social-Emotional Development in Little People?



The graphic is set against a purple background with faint icons of a lightbulb, a paper airplane, stars, and a leaf. It consists of three numbered panels, each showing a child from behind holding a green circular mirror.

- 1** Child asks: "How am I feeling today?"
- 2** Child then matches their emotions to the emotions on the mirror.
- 3** Child can repeat activity with different emotions!

# Promoting Social-Emotional Development in Young Children

Parents & Caregivers: How Do I Teach Social & Emotional Skills Intentionally?

## Coaching On the Spot

### Do

- Help children realize what they are doing
- Help children understand their actions affect others
- Help children choose positive alternatives (Riley et al. 2008)

### Don't

- Yell at Children for Responses
- Shame Children or Others for their Feelings
- Embarrass children for What they Are Experiencing

# Promoting Social-Emotional Development in Young Children

What Does It Look & Sound Like?

1. Name It to Tame It
2. Correct Yourself / Apologize & Fix It
3. Emotional Regulation Strategies
4. What Would You Do If....or If Feel you Are \_\_\_\_\_ Then You should \_\_\_\_\_
5. Check-Ins



# Promoting Social-Emotional Development in Young Children

What Does It Look & Sound Like?



1. It's okay to be upset. You are allowed to feel that way. I'm here let's try to talk about it.
2. I hear, I'm here for you-I'll stay with you. It's okay to feel\_\_\_\_\_
3. It's okay to feel how you feel, It's not Okay to\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Let's take a breath, take a break, sit down, and pause for a minute...
5. I see you are upset, I'll be over here when you need me.



# Promoting Social-Emotional Development in Young Children

## What Does It Look & Sound Like?

6. I see that you decided to \_\_\_\_\_, Let's talk about it and try a do-over!
7. Your words help me understand you better, this way I can help you!
8. What color are you right now?
9. I can help you, but I don't live in your body. Can you tell me what it feels like? What is your brain feeling?
10. I'm going to go fishing...tell me if I caught anything? ( Guessing the feeling)



*What & Why Might There Be Some Challenges/Resistance to Some of the Strategies Shared?*



# Conclusion

- *A Range of Emotions Can Be Healthy*
- *We Have to Check Self First*
- *Positive Social Emotional Development Has Positive Long-Term Impacts*
- *End Goal- Emotional Intelligence*
- *Parents & Caregivers role includes:*
  - *Intentionally Teach Social-Emotional Skills*
  - *Model*
  - *Encourage/Praise*
  - *Establish Trusting Relationships*



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