

Social Emotional Development

As young children develop they learn to understand themselves, their feelings and how to interact with other people in their environment. As a parent, you can encourage your child to be caring and affectionate. You can create a sense of safety and security, and you can model how relationships among people work.

Here are some other activities you can do at home to help your child develop socially and emotionally:

- Support your child's growing need for independence by creating an environment where your child can do some things on his/her own (reaching materials, getting a cup of water, putting on and zipping a jacket). When young children learn to do things independently, they feel more in control and they develop confidence in their abilities and self-esteem.
- Involve your child in real work around the house. Young children are motivated and feel proud to do purposeful tasks.
- Help to create predictable routines. Lives can get hectic and unpredictable, but establishing even a small routine can be very helpful. For example, reading a book at bedtime creates a sense of a predictable routine.
- Talk to your child about feelings and that all feelings are Ok to have. Discuss the feelings of characters in the books you read together.
- Help your child find constructive ways to express anger. "It is okay to be angry, but it is never okay to hit other people". Encourage your child to identify feelings behind actions. "You grabbed the toy from your sister. Were you angry with your sister because she took your toy? What could you have done instead?" "Could you tell her that you are very upset instead and ask for the toy back?"