

Chapter 1 : Early Childhood Health, Mental Health & Nutrition - The Issues - BUILD Initiative

Social-emotional health is so important in child development and success in school and life but it is an attribute that does not develop successfully if we are passive about its promotion.

Many primary care physicians report that they lack the confidence to manage children identified with developmental delay 29 percent of pediatricians and 54 percent of family practitioners. Diagnosis-focused eligibility criteria ignore the research on the strong association between risk and poor child outcomes. Eligibility criteria for assessing developmental delays currently miss many children at risk for emotional problems. Trained providers are often unavailable. There are restrictions on funding services in diverse service settings, and family focused strategies are lacking. Children with greatest needs may be stigmatized. Services lack family, developmentally appropriate and culturally competent focus. Young children with multiple risk factors are more likely to fare poorly in achieving benchmarks for early school success. Behavioral problems among young children are often predictive of later conduct problems, antisocial behaviors, delinquency and serious mental health problems. Promote quality child care settings that support social-emotional development and the mental health of young children. Preschools with access to mental health consultation have lower expulsion rates. Address the lack of trained providers in health, mental health and early care and education settings. A state that required the use of a standardized developmental tool improved screening rates by over 50 percent. Communities and states that use developmentally appropriate diagnostic classification tools like the DCR provide appropriate fiscal supports for early childhood social-emotional development related interventions. Comprehensive assessments were associated with significant increases in the number of young children identified and appropriately served. Use of empirically supported interventions led to positive social, emotional and behavioral health outcomes for young children and their families. Screening for parental depression can help reduce its negative impact on young children. An effective home visiting program that embeds an evidence-based intervention for parents with depression has demonstrated improved outcomes for children and their parents. Mental health consultation is associated with significantly fewer preschool expulsions. The principles of strong effective public policies must support: Empirically supported strategies exist to address the social-emotional needs of young children. See the box on page 11 of the PDF for selected strategies from prevention to treatment. From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development. Public Health Reports Child and Youth Services Review Prevalence of Psychopathology in Preschool-age Children. Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing Economic Deprivation and Early Childhood Development. Archives of General Psychiatry Adaptation in the Context of Childhood Adversities. See Hammen in endnote Two Years in Early Care and Education: Self-Reported Depression in Nonfamilial Caregivers: Early Childhood Research Quarterly 19 2: Department of Health and Human Services. Psychiatric Services 56 8: See Burns in endnote Expulsion Rates in State Prekindergarten Systems. 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Chapter 2 : CSEFEL: Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning

Social-emotional health in young children means successfully developing the capacity to: Form secure relationships; Experience and regulate emotions; Explore and learn 1; Social-emotional health and regulation of emotions are critical building blocks for children's learning.

All aspects of child development are interconnected Figure 1. Thinking About the Whole Child: Domains of Development Figure 1. Women had generally healthy pregnancies and, similar to Shelby County mothers who recently gave birth, were mostly African-American and low-income women. In Shelby County, the CANDLE Study has collected biological, physical, and behavioral data to help us better understand these connections and their collective influence on child well-being. What is social and emotional development? Social and emotional development is complex and includes many different areas of growth. Each is described in more detail below: Children develop in all of these areas of growth from birth through four years. These milestones help us know whether children are developing "on time. Social and emotional milestones let us know if a child is gaining skills in the time frame we would expect. However, sometimes children will be a bit early or a bit late on some of these milestones. Learn More About Milestones What is temperament? Have you ever noticed how babies have personalities, even from the day they are born? Temperament is the beginning of personality. It typically refers to the way a young child acts and responds to different situations, and how he or she interacts with caregivers and strangers. Most children fall into one of three temperament categories: Slow-to-warm-up babies are more hesitant in new situations and with unfamiliar people. Difficult babies are easily agitated and very sensitive to all sights and sounds. Nationally, more than half 55 percent of infants display at least one characteristic of a difficult temperament most of the time, suggesting that many of these characteristics are common Figure 1. For instance, most infants want attention and company. However, when an infant demands attention through crying, fits, or whimpering most of the time, this may be a sign of a difficult temperament. And, together these behaviors make caring for difficult babies challenging for many parents. In fact, 22 percent of infants displayed two or more of these characteristics most of the time. What does a child who is slow-to-warm-up or difficult need? Keep the home and outside environment as predictable as possible. At the same time, gently expose the child to new experiences. Signs of Difficult Temperament: Percent of infants who display behavior most times Figure 1. Attachment is the emotional bond between a child and caregiver. First, it motivates children to stay near a caregiver, which keeps them safe. Second, it allows children to depend on their caregiver as a source of support as they explore their surroundings. Children who do this successfully have what is often called "secure attachment. Promotes a positive relationship between a child and caregiver Decreases risk for social and emotional problems later in childhood and adulthood Encourages healthy relationships outside the home e. Nationally, about two-thirds 62% 66 percent of infants and toddlers have secure attachment styles. Phase I, What is social competence? For example, babies make eye contact, imitate facial expressions, and respond to voices. As children age, they interact more with other children and adults, which helps them to learn additional social skills. Play gives children a chance to practice different social skills. As children get older, play becomes more interactive, further improving their social skills and preparing them for more active social interactions inside and outside the home. What is emotion regulation? Emotion regulation is the ability of a child to control his or her emotions and reactions to his or her environment. This does not mean that a child should be happy, brave, and calm all of the time. It is normal, for example, for babies to cry to communicate needs or for toddlers to throw temper tantrums and push boundaries. But some children have a harder time calming down. Nationally, approximately 26 percent of children 12 months of age exhibited problem behaviors related to a lack of emotion regulation. Today, Shelby County spends more time talking about child social and emotional development and its importance than in the past. But, schools, community organizations, and other local child service organizations have traditionally paid less attention to social and emotional development than cognitive outcomes and academic success. Want to know more? Read more about kindergarten readiness Why is it important to invest in social and emotional development? One theory suggests that intervening with very

young children at higher risk of social and emotional difficulties produces the largest gains in terms of skill development over time Figure 1. In essence, pay now or pay more later. Unfortunately, a number of children struggle with at least one area of social and emotional development. These children and society may benefit from investments to set them on the best path forward. But we need to know what works, for whom, and under what circumstances, as well as where and how much to invest. In the next chapters, *Off to a Good Start* explores the issue of social and emotional development in more detail and provides insights for how each of us can help. There is no "one size fits all" approach. *Off to a Good Start* offers some quick tips to support child social and emotional development, but it is important to review the evidence when selecting a more comprehensive program or policy. This book is designed to help improve understanding of the social and emotional development of children in Shelby County and help community members think about how they can make a difference. To do this, the report pulls together data from both local sources of information and national sources. A list of these resources is available in Appendix A. The use of both local and national data highlights the knowledge available in Shelby County about social and emotional development, identifies differences and similarities between our local community and the overall United States, and emphasizes areas where additional information is needed to understand the local issues. What is next in the book? Chapter Two provides a snapshot of the children living in Shelby County and their families, with attention to factors that influence social and emotional development. Chapter Three takes a closer look at factors in the home environment that could be addressed to support social and emotional development in young children. Chapter Four examines factors related to caregivers and child-care settings that could be addressed to support social and emotional development in younger children. Chapter Five summarizes the key findings from this book. This chapter also identifies action steps to promote and support healthy social and emotional development for the youngest residents of Shelby County.

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Chapter 3 : Early Childhood

Teachers can promote children's social and emotional health in many ways, for example, by organizing a material-rich environment to stimulate social interactions among children. This article focuses on two of the most important practices: building trusting relationships and conducting intentional teaching.

Published online Oct 1. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>: This article has been cited by other articles in PMC. Abstract There is accumulating scientific evidence of the potential of play and playfulness to enhance human capacity to respond to adversity and cope with the stresses of everyday life. In play we build a repertoire of adaptive, flexible responses to unexpected events, in an environment separated from the real consequences of those events. Playfulness helps us maintain social and emotional equilibrium in times of rapid change and stress. Through play, we experience flow—“A feeling of being taken to another place, out of time, where we have controlled of the world. Adaptability, control, flexibility, resilience and balance result from the experience of uncertainty, unpredictability, novelty and non-productivity. The article concludes with a preliminary discussion of the challenges and possibilities of providing for spontaneous free play indoors, in early childhood care and education programs. Early childhood development is a determinant of health [1]. There is compelling neuroscientific evidence of the significance of early experience to life-long mental, as well as physical health [2], and accumulating evidence of the adaptive value of play and playfulness in the development of social competence, emotional resilience, and flexibility in response to unpredictability and stress [3 , 4]. The child is a citizen with the right to play [5]. Profound changes in the physical and social environments of early experience in the western world are constraining opportunities for spontaneous free play in early childhood [6]. Changes in the demographics of family life are accompanied by an institutionalization of free play: There is growing concern amongst academics, professionals, policy makers and community leaders alike that the decline in free play opportunities may be a contributing factor to increasing rates of childhood obesity, and to the alarming increase in the incidence of anxiety, stress and depression in young children [8 , 9 , 10 , 11 , 12 , 13 , 14]. Neuroscientific evidence of the significance of early experience not just to individual health, but also to the long term social and economic prosperity of society as a whole [1 , 15] is driving a new public policy agenda in early childhood development. The evidence highlights the interconnectedness of physical, intellectual, social and emotional development [16], and of physical and mental health. There is powerful evidence about the impact of excessive stress and adversity in the early years on the incidence of a range of chronic diseases in adulthood [17], creating a new emphasis on the importance of social and emotional health in early childhood [2] and growing public policy interest in early intervention with children living in families coping with the stresses of poverty, violence, mental illness, and substance abuse. Early childhood is on the public policy agenda, and the environments where children spend time in their pre-school years are under intense scrutiny [18]. The focus of the public policy agenda in Canada and much of the Western world is on combatting sedentary lifestyles and childhood obesity, increasing self-regulation and impulse control, and ensuring school readiness, particularly for young children whose development may be compromised by social and environmental factors. Taking a playful approach to learning can be very effective, however it frequently takes control of the play away from the players, changing the experience for the player. Even very young children are now losing the opportunity to play for their own purposes and with this, essential opportunities to build the foundation of play, and playfulness, which determine in large part their subjective sense of well-being and belonging in childhood and may well affect their physical and mental health long into the future. The paper argues that opportunities for spontaneous free play, in particular spontaneous free play that allows young children to explore those dimensions of play which may appear to be chaotic, nonsensical and disruptive to adults, is key to their health and well-being. The barriers, challenges and possibilities of providing for these kinds of spontaneous free play opportunities in group early childhood care and education settings are explored. The body of knowledge coalescing around the value of rough and tumble play in healthy social and emotional development in early childhood provides a

focus for understanding how children play with the ongoing social and emotional self-balancing that is fundamental to successful participation in social life. The recognition of play as a distinct conceptual category and an irreducible concept in human culture rings true nearly 75 years after the publication of *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*. Huizinga emphasizes that play cannot be reduced to other terms or understood by connecting it to a functional purpose that is not play, arguing that to be understood, play must be seen as the player sees it [23] p. The defining characteristic of spontaneous free play is the control of the play by the players. This is the source of some of its unique benefits for children, and most enduring challenges for adults. Children, particularly young children, are never really in control of their everyday lives. Although play is not the only experience that affords children an opportunity to make their own decisions, in spontaneous free play controlled by the players, children can explore what it means to be in control of themselves and others, without the full responsibility of being in control. Importantly, play also offers a context where children can explore being out of control, in ways that are often unacceptable outside of the play context. For the child, play and playing is fundamentally about agency, power, and control. In play, children actively explore their own social and physical power, in relationship to the world, and to other children. As each child participates with other children in the social contexts of play, exploring and testing and making decisions at the edges of their own possibility, they come to understand what it means to be in control, and what it means to be out of control. When left to control their own play, they do explore what it means to exert their own power over others, and they do take chances and physical risks. These are essential dimensions of spontaneous free play that present critical ethical challenges for adults. It is worthy of note that the notions of participation and control are deeply embedded in the language of health promotion [24]. Active participation in community and in particular in the decisions that affect us contributes to a sense of control over the multiple factors that influence not just our physical and mental health, but also our subjective sense of well-being and belonging. Children, arguably the experts on play and playing, seem to know exactly what it is and are unconcerned with trying to call it anything else. Play has a pervasive and ubiquitous presence in human culture and across multiple animal species. We tend to associate play and playfulness with the young of a species. While the play of children, kittens, puppies, and monkeys is familiar, animal play researchers have also observed playful behavior in birds, turtles, fish and even some insects [26]. Despite its variability and remarkable social complexity in the animal world, play seems to be more clearly identifiable as a distinct behavior in animals than it does in humans. When a puppy wants to play, it assumes a characteristic pose, lowering on its front legs and wagging its tail. The invitation to play in young children is often much more ambiguous, requiring subtle interpretation of social communication, as well as a certain kind of emotional resiliency, as the following example of two boys meeting on a public playground for the first time, illustrates: Boy 1 opening the conversation and for no apparent reason: Do ya wanna play [28]? Human play is arguably more varied and complex than animal play. There are many forms of childhood play and an equally diverse array of functions of human play as are emerging in the study of animal play. It is this sheer diversity of types and functions of play that make it difficult to define. A recent observation of a group of five year old boys deeply engaged together in block play confirms that children continually slip in and out of solitary, onlooker, parallel, associative and cooperative play [31] as it suits their purposes, developing their own ideas and seeking out the possibilities and fun that results when their playfulness intersects with the play narratives and constructions of other players. Their play embraces aspects of object play, sensory-motor play, construction play, symbolic play, and games with invented rules [32]. The disruptive dimensions of play that are the subject of this paper—the rowdy, rambunctious, nonsensical, irrational, elements of rough and tumble, and order and disorder, both physical and verbal—are characteristic of spontaneous free play. These are better understood as dimensions and qualities of the spontaneous free play experience rather than forms of play, dimensions that coexist simultaneously and fluidly, forming, reforming, appearing and disappearing spontaneously, as any free play episode unfolds. While this definition of play is in many ways explanatory, it does not capture essential elements and nuances of spontaneous free play from the perspective of the player. For example, the idea that play is free of externally imposed rules suggests, quite rightly, that children are able to make their own rules in play. What it does not adequately describe or explain is the meaning of play and

playing that pushes the edges, challenging and even breaking the rules of ordinary life. The popular YouTube video [34] of a wild polar bear returning night after night to play with a husky sled dog is a stunning example of play that breaks the rules of ordinary life. Young children routinely challenge the rules in play, for example climbing up the slide rather than sliding down it is a playful approach which breaks the rules of how young children are expected to use slides in most early childhood care and education programs. The notion that children play to experience pleasure is also limited; when children play they feel powerful. Jumping from a playground platform is a total body encounter with gravity and an experience of the power of flying. He lists the following as properties of play: The improvisational nature of play is thoroughly explored by Keith Sawyer in his study of preschool pretend play [38], a quality of play may be linked to its capacity to enhance adaptability and flexibility in response to rapid change. The players do have one key purpose, and that is to keep the play going, particularly if it is accompanied by pleasurable affect and feelings of power. Keeping the play going is the source of incredible creativity and spontaneous innovation in play. We observe young children introducing surprising novelty into story lines and character roles, in order to sustain the play or include more players or combine their play narrative with another group. Spontaneous free play can only take place in an environment where spontaneity is possible. The phenomenon of group glee [39] in toddlers and preschoolers is another spontaneously disruptive and common feature of free play, one which produces a strong sense of social bonding and belonging. The shared humor of very young children is not obvious to adults and other outsiders. In an attempt to distinguish play from nonplay behaviour in animals, Burghardt [29] pp. He describes the voluntary nature of play as being intentional, which further complicates our understanding of play as purposeless. Burghardt notes that the purposelessness of play in the animal world is specific to immediate survival needs. The players may be pursuing purposes that are neither immediately obvious nor purposeful from an adult perspective. While an adult will walk efficiently, a small child walking from the house to the car will adopt a gait that includes elements of hopping, skipping, and galloping. Spontaneous free play frequently involves intentional, systematic and novel complication of behavioural patterns, building a combinatorial freedom and flexibility in the behavioural repertoire, arguably rendering both animals and humans more adaptable [40]. In spite of the complexity and diversity of play behaviour, there is general agreement by specialists in the field that play is controlled by children rather than by adults, and that it is undertaken for its own sake and not for prescribed purposes. However, the characteristics of free play—control, uncertainty, flexibility, novelty, and non-productivity—are what produce a high degree of pleasure and, simultaneously, the incentive to continue to play [41] p. They are also the qualities that lead to play that is frequently suppressed by adults because it tends to be disruptive [4] p. Interestingly, these are also the qualities of animal play that are understood to contribute to its adaptive value [42]. It is significant in their lives. The awareness that children may have purposes in their spontaneous free play that are neither readily apparent, nor important to adults, is key to understanding the potential of play to contribute to the subjective experience of well-being in childhood. A critical difference between spontaneous free play and other play based approaches lies in the participation of the adult. Children make a very clear distinction about what is and is not play based on how adults participate [43]. In spontaneous free play, the locus of control remains with the players. Adult efforts to guide and direct play—either out of necessity or in the service of a developmental or learning agenda—generally interrupt the flow of the play for the players. The idea that the benefits of play accrue most directly from play where the frame is both set and sustained by the players themselves presents significant challenges to adult sensibilities and to the expectations of early childhood educators. For children, play must be spontaneous free play in order to be experienced as play. This means it is controlled and directed by children, even when adults are playing. Other kinds of play based approaches are neither experienced as play by children, nor defined by them this way. Promoting Social and Emotional Health: Making a Case for Disruptive, Disorderly, Dizzy Play A theoretical explanation of what exactly is important about play, how its associated benefits are realized and what dimensions of play produce which benefits is almost as difficult as defining it. Recent evidence from neuroscience suggests that play may have more important social, emotional, and affective benefits in the immediate context of living than were previously understood [4] p. As Pellis et al. Nonetheless, researchers and play theorists alike maintain that

there must be some adaptive value to play, given its pervasiveness, its ubiquity and its evolutionary resilience. This section of the paper looks specifically at the potential of play to contribute to social and emotional health in early childhood, building a case for the idea that the power of play to make us resilient, flexible, and strongâ€”emotionally, socially, physically, intellectually, and perhaps spirituallyâ€”may lie in its propensity to invert and subvert the order of things. The similarities between health promotion action strategiesâ€”strengthening social relationships, personal control and participation [24] and the characteristics of spontaneous free play, support the notion that play can be understood as a contributing factor to health in its broadest sense. In a recent analysis of the decline of free play in childhood, Peter Gray reviews the evidence linking the loss of a sense of personal control and the lack of social connectedness to the increasing incidence of depression and anxiety in children and young adults [12] p.

Chapter 4 : Social Emotional | School Health

Early Childhood Emotional and Social Development: Social Connections Angela Oswalt, MSW As young children leave toddlerhood behind, they also begin to mature in their ability to interact with others socially.

It encompasses both intra- and interpersonal processes. National Scientific Council on the Developing Child , 2 Infants experience, express, and perceive emotions before they fully understand them. In learning to recognize, label, manage, and communicate their emotions and to perceive and attempt to understand the emotions of others, children build skills that connect them with family, peers, teachers, and the community. These growing capacities help young children to become competent in negotiating increasingly complex social interactions, to participate effectively in relationships and group activities, and to reap the benefits of social support crucial to healthy human development and functioning. 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 Responsive caregiving supports infants in beginning to regulate their emotions and to develop a sense of predictability, safety, and responsiveness in their social environments. In other words, high-quality relationships increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for young children Shonkoff 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. Most learning in the early years occurs in the context of emotional supports National Research Council and Institute of Medicine Together, emotion and cognition contribute to attentional processes, decision making, and learning Cacioppo and Berntson Furthermore, cognitive processes, such as decision making, are affected by emotion Barrett and others Brain structures involved in the neural circuitry of cognition influence emotion and vice versa Barrett and others Young children who exhibit healthy social, emotional, and behavioral adjustment are more likely to have good academic performance in elementary school Cohen and others ; Zero to Three 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 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 ; Raver ; Shonkoff 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 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. How teachers interact with children is at the very heart of early childhood education Kontos and Wilcox-Herzog , Infants use relationships with adults in many ways: Return to Top Interactions with Peers In early infancy children interact with each other using simple behaviors such as looking at or touching another child. Interactions with peers provide the context for social learning and problem solving, including the experience of social exchanges, cooperation, turn-taking, and the demonstration of the beginning of empathy. Social interactions

with peers also allow older infants to experiment with different roles in small groups and in different situations such as relating to familiar versus unfamiliar children. As noted, the foundations called Interactions with Adults, Relationships with Adults, Interactions with Peers, and Relationships with Peers are interrelated. Interactions are stepping-stones to relationships. Burk , writes: We, as teachers, need to facilitate the development of a psychologically safe environment that promotes positive social interaction. As children interact openly with their peers, they learn more about each other as individuals, and they begin building a history of interactions. Return to Top Relationships with Peers Infants develop close relationships with children they know over a period of time, such as other children in the family child care setting or neighborhood. Relationships with peers provide young children with the opportunity to develop strong social connections. Infants often show a preference for playing and being with friends, as compared with peers with whom they do not have a relationship. The three groups vary in the number of friendships, the stability of friendships, and the nature of interaction between friends for example, the extent to which they involve object exchange or verbal communication. Infants demonstrate this foundation in a number of ways. For example, they can respond to their names, point to their body parts when asked, or name members of their families. Through an emerging understanding of other people in their social environment, children gain an understanding of their roles within their families and communities. They also become aware of their own preferences and characteristics and those of others. Self-efficacy is related to a sense of competency, which has been identified as a basic human need Connell For example, they pat a musical toy to make sounds come out. The later ability to use words to express emotions gives young children a valuable tool in gaining the assistance or social support of others Saarni and others Tronick , described how expression of emotion is related to emotion regulation and communication between the mother and infant: Some cultural groups appear to express certain emotions more often than other cultural groups Tsai, Levenson, and McCoy In addition, cultural groups vary by which particular emotions or emotional states they value Tsai, Knutson, and Fung Positive emotions appeal to social partners and seem to enable relationships to form, while problematic management or expression of negative emotions leads to difficulty in social relationships Denham and Weissberg The use of emotion-related words appears to be associated with how likable preschoolers are considered by their peers. Children who use emotion-related words were found to be better-liked by their classmates Fabes and others Infants respond more positively to adult vocalizations that have a positive affective tone Fernald It appears likely that the experience of positive emotions is a particularly important contributor to emotional well-being and psychological health Fredrickson , ; Panksepp Return to Top Empathy During the first three years of life, children begin to develop the capacity to experience the emotional or psychological state of another person Zahn-Waxler and Radke-Yarrow The following definitions of empathy are found in the research literature: The concept of empathy reflects the social nature of emotion, as it links the feelings of two or more people Levenson and Ruef Since human life is relationship-based, one vitally important function of empathy over the life span is to strengthen social bonds Anderson and Keltner Research has shown a correlation between empathy and prosocial behavior Eisenberg In particular, prosocial behaviors, such as helping, sharing, and comforting or showing concern for others, illustrate the development of empathy Zahn-Waxler and others and how the experience of empathy is thought to be related to the development of moral behavior Eisenberg For example, those behaviors are modeled through caring interactions with others or through providing nurturance to the infant. Quann and Wien , 28 suggest that one way to support the development of empathy in young children is to create a culture of caring in the early childhood environment: The relationships among teachers, between children and teachers, and among children are fostered with warm and caring interactions. Researchers have generated various definitions of emotion regulation, and debate continues as to the most useful and appropriate way to define this concept Eisenberg and Spinrad As a construct, emotion regulation reflects the interrelationship of emotions, cognitions, and behaviors Bell and Wolfe Emotion regulation is influenced by culture and the historical era in which a person lives: Adults can provide positive role models of emotion regulation through their behavior and through the verbal and emotional support they offer children in managing their emotions. Emotion regulation skills are important in part because they play a role in how well children are liked by peers and teachers and how

socially competent they are perceived to be National Scientific Council on the Developing Child At kindergarten entry, children demonstrate broad variability in their ability to self-regulate National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 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. Social understanding is particularly important because of the social nature of humans and human life, even in early infancy Wellman and Lagattuta Return to Top References Ainsworth, M. Infant Care and the Growth of Love. Johns Hopkins University Press. American Academy of Pediatrics. Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5 Fourth edition. University of Chicago Press. Attachment Second edition , Attachment and Loss series, Vol. Foreword by Allan N. Self-Regulation in Early Childhood: California Department of Education. Return to Top Campos, J. Science and Practice, Vol. Helping Young Children Succeed: The University of Chicago Press. Early Language Milestone Scale: Emotional Development in Young Children. The Beginnings of Social Understanding. Return to Top Fabes, R. Infant, Family, and Society Fourth edition. Denver II Screening Manual. The Social World of Children: Why Are They So Important? Return to Top Kravitz, H. Caring for Infants and Toddlers in Groups:

Chapter 5 : Social & emotional health in early childhood: Building bridges between services and systems

What is early childhood social and emotional development and mental health? Early childhood social and emotional development and mental health refers to the development of social, emotional, and behavioral skills in children birth through early school.

In the toy area, Tom and Juan both reach for a small blue car. What a great way to play together! Research indicates that children who are mentally healthy tend to be happier, show greater motivation to learn, have a more positive attitude toward school, more eagerly participate in class activities, and demonstrate higher academic performance than less mentally healthy peers Hyson ; Kostelnik et al. Children who exhibit social and emotional difficulties tend to have trouble following directions and participating in learning activities. Compared with healthier peers, they may be more likely to suffer rejection by classmates, have low self-esteem, do poorly in school, and be suspended Hyson ; Kostelnik et al. This article focuses on two of the most important practices: In her work supervising student teachers, Ho the first author often sees children developing positive social and emotional health as a result of close relationships with their teachers. Do you want to hold the teddy bear? But gaining the trust of every child is not as simple as being nice and engaging. How can teachers create trusting relationships with all of the children? The preschoolers we observed used gentle hands and kind words and positively interacted with peers most of the time. Johnson displays a pleasant facial expression throughout the day. Logan uses the appropriate tone of voice at all times. His speech is at normal pitch and volume; his tone is relaxed and soft. Aragon gives appropriate touches when necessary, such as a pat on the back, a handshake, hugs, and brief tickles. Sharma often uses loving comments to show he cares: Carnes establishes and maintains close personal bonds with every child in her classroom by consistently acting in respectful and caring ways. You built a truck with dozens of Legos. It is difficult to wait! Emily is sad when her mom leaves. Carnes reads her a book in a cozy corner with soft pillows and stuffed animals. Afterward, Emily is ready to explore and play in the classroom. Judy complains that no one wants to play with her at the tactile table. Carnes sits at the table and plays with Judy until another child joins the play. Carnes keeps track to ensure that she speaks with each child regularly, which deepens their relationship and builds trust Gartrell Carnes finds time for these conversations throughout the day, especially during greeting, free play, snack, lunch, and departure time. Teachers and all caregivers play key roles in helping children develop social and emotional competence Kostelnik et al. To introduce a new social or emotional skill, Ms. Coz carefully chooses high-quality books to read aloud at circle time. When she finds a child crying because her friend hit her, Ms. Coz plans to read the book at least twice and also add it to the classroom library. During the second reading, she asks meaningful questions: Coz plans follow-up activities, such as hands-on crafts, games, and songs. These guides help her embed social and emotional development activities into daily routines, including read-alouds. For example, when Ryan and Ethan build a firehouse in the block area, Ethan grabs the fire truck from Ryan, and Ryan cries. When you took it away from him, he got upset. What could you do to make Ryan feel better? To make praise effective, teachers describe specifically what they seeâ€”without generalizing, evaluating, or making comparisons. When Emily finishes her drawing, Ms. Coz notices her picture and her smile. Coz offers detailed, positive comments immediately after desirable behavior occurs. Noticing Ethan asking Ryan politely for a policewoman figure, Ms. This research-based conclusion is evidenced in Ms. Both teachers implement several noninvasive strategiesâ€”including modelingâ€”that their center administrators created to support teachers in promoting socially and emotionally healthy behaviors. They carefully observe and record details about how children apply the target skills, and they share their observations with the children through puppet shows during circle time. Carnes often provide verbal cues to help some children participate in activities. Before playtime, for example, Ms. For example, they provide teacher-made hand puppets to guide children to use quiet voices, helping hands, and walking feet. These puppets, demonstrations, and explanations are essential for clarifying and modeling appropriate behaviorâ€”and the visual cues are essential for reminding the children to practice what they have learned. Teachers can intentionally teach and enhance these skills using evidence-based strategies to teach, model, and

reinforce positive behaviors. Trace and cut out multiple hands for each child. Place them in a pocket or baggie that is easily accessible. The hands can be placed on the wall to wrap around the room. On a regular basis, celebrate how long the helping hand chain is getting! 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. Create a special share box that is only introduced during circle time. Children can decorate the box with primary colors or with a bold pattern. To use Book Nook guides at no cost, visit <http://The Emotional Development of Young Children: Extending the Dance in Infant and Toddler Caregiving: Enhancing Attachment and Relationships>.

Chapter 6 : Social-Emotional Development Domain - Child Development (CA Dept of Education)

Social and emotional development is a child's ability to understand the feelings of others, control his or her own feelings and behaviors, get along with other children, and build relationships with adults.

Perspectives Regarding Current Knowledge Challenging behavior exhibited by young children is becoming recognized as a serious impediment to social-emotional development and a harbinger of severe maladjustment in school and adult life. Of particular concern for the field of behavioral disorders is the lack of correspondence between what is known about effective practices and what practices young children with challenging behavior typically receive. To increase the likelihood that children receive the best of evidence-based practices, the current analysis was conducted to provide a concise synthesis and summary of the principal evidence pertaining to the presence and impact, prevention, and intervention of challenging behaviors in young children. A consensus building process involving review and synthesis was used to produce brief summary statements encapsulating core conclusions from the existing evidence. This article presents these statements along with descriptions of the strength of the supporting evidence. The discussion addresses directions and priorities for practice and future research. Adding functional behavioral assessment to First Step to Success: A case study Carter, D. Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 9 4 , First Step to Success is a manualized early intervention program with documented success in reducing the problem behavior of young children. Walker and colleagues are now engaged in analyses of variables that will increase the proportion of children for whom First Step is effective. A possible enhancement to the First Step to Success protocol is the use of functional behavioral assessment and individualized, function-based behavior support. The present analysis provides a case study with one 6-year-old student who received First Step to Success. Following the coaching phase of First Step, a reversal design was employed in which function-based features of behavior support were withdrawn and then re-implemented. Analysis of problem behavior and academic engagement data suggests that incorporation of function based features enhanced the impact of First Step to Success. Implications for modifications of the First Step protocol and future research are provided. Assessment and Implementation of Positive Behavior Support in Preschools There is increasing concern over the number of young children who exhibit challenging behaviors in early childhood settings. One approach utilizes a three-tier prevention model called positive behavior support PBS. Implications for future applications of PBS to early childhood settings are discussed. Involvement of the field of early intervention in the debate between proponents of behavioral teaching strategies and professionals against it; Argument that saying "good job" manipulates children in order to maximize adult convenience. Behavior support strategies in early childhood settings: Participants included early childhood special education teachers, Title I teachers, speech and language pathologists, instructional aids and paraprofessionals, physical therapists, and school psychologists. Participants rated 24 behavioral support strategies on both their importance and their feasibility. Overall, results indicated that early childhood professionals rated the majority of the behavior support items in the mostly important range. Participants did not rate as many items as mostly feasible, and statistical analyses documented a significant difference between overall importance of the items and overall feasibility. Findings indicated that early childhood special education and Title I teachers rated the support items as more important than did paraprofessionals and instructional aids. Educational level also differentiated groups on importance ratings; professionals with either undergraduate degrees or graduate-level educational experiences rated items as more important than professionals with high school-level educations or some college. Years of teaching experience was not associated with ratings, and no teacher characteristic was associated with the feasibility of behavior supports. The implications of these findings are discussed. Positive behavior support systems: Applying key features in preschool settings The differences between positive behavior support PBS at the preschool level and at the elementary school level are discussed and a method is presented for implementing features of PBS in preschool programs. A Synthesis of Knowledge Relevant to Pathways of Service Delivery for Young Children with or at Risk of Challenging Behavior The serious consequences of challenging behaviors in young children have become an increasing concern of caregivers. Without intervention, the

presence of challenging behaviors in young children is associated with unfavorable outcomes in school and later life. This paper describes a synthesis of the existing knowledge related to the processes of identification and access to services for children with challenging behaviors and their families. A variety of data sources were examined to extract findings relevant to national initiatives. Findings are presented as a description of the existing federal programs and funding streams that provide pathways to services and associated mandates relating to cross-system convergence, along with the limited empirical data related to their implementation, utilization, and effectiveness. Service pathways for identification and referral were found to be fragmented with less than complete implementation of many mandates, largely unaccompanied by utilization and evaluation data. These gaps are described and recommendations are offered to guide research for addressing the paucity of systems information for this important group of children. Prevention and intervention for the challenging behaviors of toddlers and preschoolers An early manifestation of atypical social-emotional development is the occurrence of challenging behaviors. While some challenging behaviors dissipate during and following the early years, others persist and even escalate, marking increasingly problematic developmental trajectories, school failure, and social maladjustment. Increasing attention has begun to focus on the early identification and prevention of challenging behaviors and on strategies for resolving such behaviors at their earliest appearance. In this article, the authors discuss what is known about challenging behaviors in the repertoires of toddlers and preschoolers, and present a model of prevention and intervention.

Chapter 7 : Social and Emotional Development â€¢ ZERO TO THREE

Social networking sites like Facebook can help us reach parents with information about social-emotional development and early childhood mental health. This folder has social media content that you can post on your organization's Facebook and Twitter pages.

Chapter 8 : What is Social & Emotional Development | Child Mental Health

Understanding infant mental health is the key to preventing and treating the mental health problems of very young children and their families. It also helps guide the development of healthy social and emotional behaviors.

Chapter 9 : NCCP | Social-emotional Development in Early Childhood

*The second commentary, *Emotional Competence in Early Childhood: Construct and Measurement Considerations*, by Susanne A. Denham and Grace Z. Howarth of George Mason University, makes the case for the need to include social and emotional development when measuring overall child well-being. Focusing specifically on the subdomain of emotional.*