

Pyramid Model Practices in Part C

Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Toddlers
Responsive Caregiving and the Dyadic Relationship

National Center for
 Long Term Disability
 Information Systems
 www.ncltdisability.org
 ChallengingBehavior.org

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Learning Objectives: Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Toddlers

- Define social emotional development for infants and toddlers and why it's important.
- Understand the connection between social emotional development and healthy brain development.
- Identify why children communicate and how they communicate (the form) and how this impacts behavior.
- Identify strategies that support healthy social emotional development in infants and toddlers.

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Learning Objectives: Responsive Caregiving and the Dyadic Relationship

- Understand how relationships and the environment impact infants' and toddlers' social emotional development.
- Identify the characteristics of responsive relationships.
- Identify effective strategies to support positive dyadic interactions.

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What do we mean by social-emotional development?

Developing the capacity to:

- form close and secure adult and peer relationships... **TRUST**
 - experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways... **SELF-AWARENESS**
 - explore the environment and learn... **AUTONOMY**
- ...all in the context of family, community, and culture.



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Why Focus on Social Emotional Development in Early Intervention?

- **All** infants are born with the ability to:
 - Interact with caregivers and their environment
 - Communicate their emotions and needs



Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, Georgetown University

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Definition of Attachment

- Attachment is a pattern of interaction that develops over time as the infant or toddler and caregiver engage.



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Group Activity: The First Relationship

<https://youtu.be/7Pcr1Rmr1rM>

- What does this experiment tell us?
- What if the child is non-responsive?
- How does this effect the responsiveness of the caregiver?

Project ABC at The Children's Institute Inc., of Los Angeles

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Research



Links exist between earliest emotional development and later social behavior (Cicchetti& Cohen, 1995a, 1995b; Reynolds et al., 2001; Halle et al., 2012)



Links exist between early risk factors, poor outcomes, juvenile delinquency and violence (Conroy & Brown, 2004; Brauner & Stephens, 2006)



Secure attachment has been found to be related to enhanced cognitive, social, and emotional development throughout childhood and early adolescence (Bukaliko & Daehler, 2001)



Caregiver interactional behavior that included some aspect of explicit contingent responsiveness was the best predictor of secure infant attachment (Dunst & Kassow 2008)

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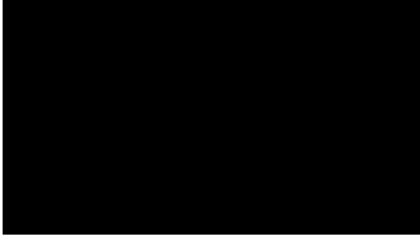
Social Emotional Outcomes

- Infants and toddlers who develop strong and positive relationships with adults are better able to:
 - Develop a sense of trust and safety
 - Engage in exploration of their environment
 - Learn self-regulation (manage their feelings, thoughts, and actions)
 - Develop independence and self-confidence
 - Learn what it means to be social and are less likely to engage in persistent challenging behaviors

Adapted from Circle Time Magazine, 2019

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The Developing Brain and Social-Emotional Development



AlbertaFamilyWellness.org

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Four Concepts of Brain Development



1. **Brain architecture** is established early in life and supports lifelong learning, behavior, and health.
2. **Toxic stress** in the early years of life can derail healthy development.
3. Stable, caring relationships and “**serve and return**” interaction shape brain architecture.
4. **Resilience** can be built through “serve and return” relationships, improving self-regulation and executive function.

Building Strong Brains: Tennessee’s ACEs Initiative, “Facilitator’s Guide” Tennessee Department of Children’s Services.

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Behavior Has Meaning

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Why are Children Communicating?

- Attention
- Requesting
- Protesting
- Commenting/Joint Attention
- Providing Information
- Seeking Information
- Social Routine (e.g. hi/bye; please/thank you)
- Emotion (e.g. humor, teasing, exclamation, warning, alarm)



Adapted from Vanderbilt TRIAD

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Ways Children Communicate



- Non-Verbal**
- Tantrums
 - Eye Gaze
 - Gestures/Signs
 - Manipulation person/object
 - Biting
 - Pictures

- Verbal**
- Words/phrases
 - Writing



Adapted from Vanderbilt TRIAD

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Early Interventionists Can Help Build the "Bridge" to the Attachment Relationship

- Support caregivers' competence in addressing their child's social and emotional development.
- Share social and emotional information and strategies to identify child's strengths and support their development.



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Strategies for Teaching Social Emotional Skills to Infants

- Use responsive interactions to get to know your baby's likes/dislikes and build trust in the relationship
- Follow the baby's lead in exploring their environment
 - Notice what they notice
 - Use positive affect to reinforce new discoveries
- Be affectionate, nurturing in response to baby's emotional status
- Respond to baby's communicative intentions
- Establish consistent and predictable routines



ZERO TO THREE Parenting Resources, 2018

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Strategies for Teaching Social Emotional Skills to Toddlers



- **Emotions**
 - read books about emotions
 - make faces in the mirror together
 - label emotions throughout the day
- **Turn-taking**
 - play catch
 - trade toys during play
- **Waiting**
 - play hide and seek
 - provide alternate choices of things to do while waiting

ZERO TO THREE Parenting Resources, 2018

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5 Steps For Brain-Building Serve and Return

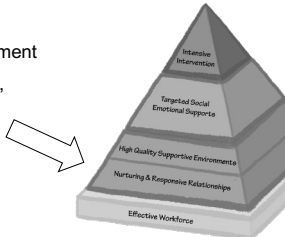
<https://youtu.be/KNmZag17Ek>

Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2019

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Nurturing and Responsive Relationships in Early Intervention

- Base of the Pyramid
- Essential to healthy social development
- Includes relationships with children, families, and team members
- Focus on supporting dyadic interactions between caregivers and children



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High Quality Supportive Environments

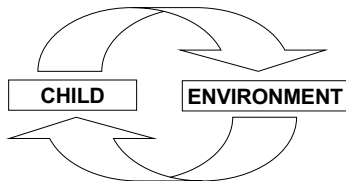
- Responsive to the priorities, beliefs, and needs of all families
- Family and culturally sustaining and affirming
- Understanding reciprocal impact between child, caregiver and environment



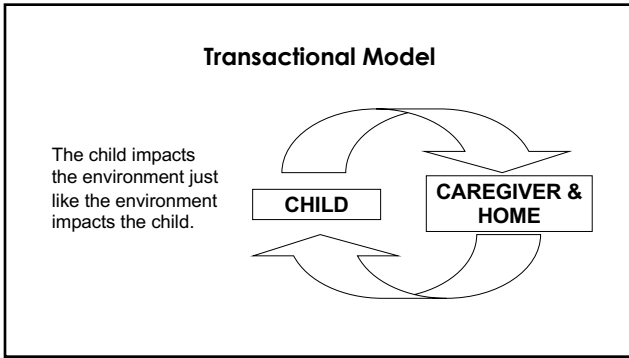
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Transactional Model

The child impacts the environment just like the environment impacts the child.



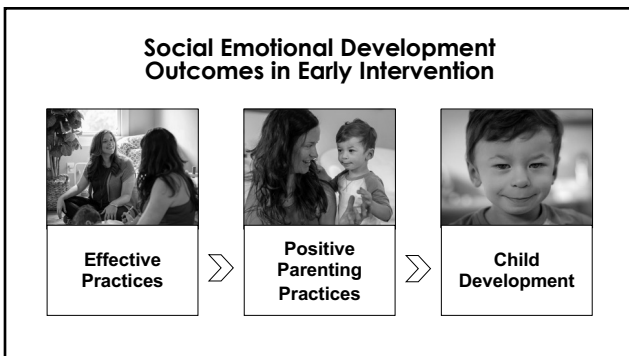
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Temperament Types
Flexible, Fearful, and Feisty

 Flexible regular rhythms, positive mood, adaptability, low intensity, low sensitivity	 Fearful adapts slowly, quiet, shy, withdraws	 Feisty active, intense, distractible, sensitive
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(Chess & Thomas, 1996; Chess & Thomas, 1999; Thomas, Chess, & Birch, 1968)


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Responsive Caregiving Characteristics

Response Quality Ability to respond promptly and appropriately	Synchrony Reciprocal and rewarding	Mutuality Joint attention
Positive Attitudes Positive affect toward child	Stimulation Play and encouragement	Support Availability

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Responsive Caregiving: Mealtime Transition



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Video Reflection

Watch the video and discuss the following:

1. What effective responsive caregiving strategies do you notice the caregivers implementing?
2. How does the child respond to the caregivers' use of these strategies?
3. In what ways do these strategies support the caregivers' competence and confidence in responding to their child's cues?
4. What coaching strategies might you use to support these caregivers?

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Dyadic Interactions *What Adults Do...*

- Set the stage for interaction
- Maintain child's interest and attention
- Establish reciprocal roles (turn-taking)
- Match and follow
- Support and Scaffold Learning



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Set the Stage for Interaction



- Position self and child so that mutual gaze and joint attention are possible
- Provide objects and events appropriate to the child's development and understanding
- Physically support the child if needed for interaction with others and objects

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Video Example



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Maintain the Child's Interest and Attention



- Establish self as an interesting partner
- Maintain warm, encouraging manner
- Provide clear emotional signals
- Use novelty and exaggeration to capture interest
- Be sensitive and responsive to child's emotional expressions
- Regulate pace of interaction in response to child's mood, emotional cues, and temperament.
- Recruit child's attention when unengaged or unfocused
- Introduce new focus or activity when needed

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Establish Turn-taking

- Respond to child's initiations
- Establish predictable, reciprocal interaction routines
- Provide time for child to take a turn
- Let child know that a response is expected... then WAIT
- Imitate...then WAIT



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Peekaboo



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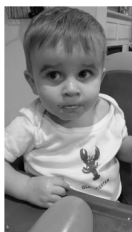
Match & Follow

- **Wait, watch,** and then **join** the child's play by following their lead and matching their focus of attention or interest
- Comment on child's activities and interests
- Acknowledge child's emotions



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Lights



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Support and Scaffold Learning



- Elaborate on child's communicative attempts
- Add new actions and elements to established interaction routines
- Balance support (e.g., suggestion, demonstration) with opportunity and expectation for independence
- Pose "dilemmas" for child to solve

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Hair Routine

<https://youtu.be/Fz9yPuhYjR0>

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