



# Social Emotional Teaching Strategies



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**The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning**



**Child Care Bureau**



**Head Start Bureau**

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## Learner Objectives

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- Participants will be able to discuss why it is important to be more intentional about teaching social emotional skills.
- Participants will be able to identify strategies for supporting the development of friendship skills.
- Participants will be able to define emotional literacy and identify activities that build “feeling vocabularies.”
- Participants will understand the importance of providing opportunities for children to begin to understand their own, as well as others’ emotions.
- Participants will understand why children need to learn to control anger and handle disappointment and will be able to identify strategies to teach anger management skills.
- Participants will understand the importance of teaching problem solving and will be able to identify problem solving steps.

## Suggested Agenda

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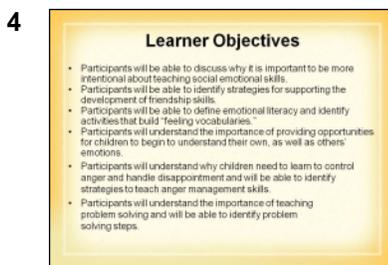
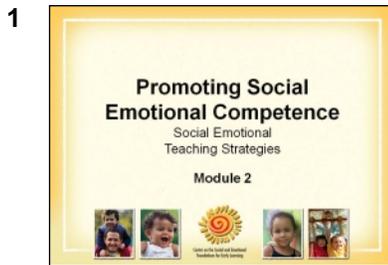
	<b>Time</b>
I. Introduction	10 min.
II. Identifying the Importance of Teaching Social Emotional Skills	20 min.
III. Developing Friendship Skills	60 min.
IV. Enhancing Emotional Literacy	90 min.
V. Identifying Feelings in Self and Others	30 min.
VI. Controlling Anger and Impulse	30 min.
VII. Developing Problem Solving Skills	30 min.
VIII. Pulling It All Together	30 min.

## Materials Needed

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- Agenda
- Powerpoint
- Chart Paper or White Board and Markers
- Video Clips**
  - 2.1 Children Playing
  - 2.2 Play Organizing Skills
  - 2.3 Sharing Skills
  - 2.4 Being Helpful
  - 2.5 Giving Compliments
  - 2.6 Using Puppets
  - 2.7 Friendship Art
  - 2.8 Friendship Book
  - 2.9 Super Friend
  - 2.10a Happy, Sad, Mad, & Scared Activity
  - 2.10b Happy/Mad Activity
  - 2.10c Using a Book to Discuss Emotions
  - 2.11 Hands are Not for Hitting
  - 2.12 Glad Monster Sad Monster
  - 2.13 Turtle Technique
  - 2.14a Solution Kit Example 1
  - 2.14b Solution Kit Example 2
- Handouts**
  - 2.1 Participants' Powerpoint Slides
  - 2.2 Embedding Friendship Activity
  - 2.3 You've Got to Have Friends
  - 2.4 On Monday When it Rained Book Nook
  - 2.5 Book Activity
  - 2.6 Enhancing Emotional Vocabulary in Young Children
  - 2.7 Helping Young Children Control Anger and Handle Disappointment
  - 2.8 Pulling it All Together Activity
  - 2.SE Session Evaluation Form

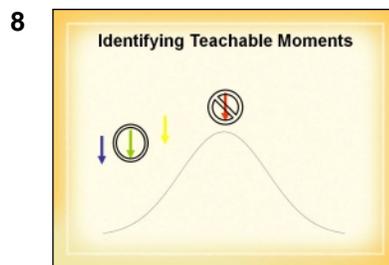
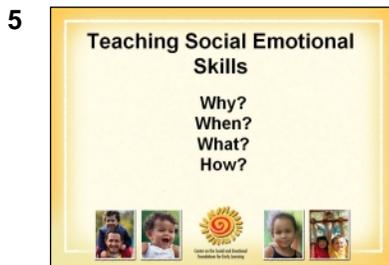
## I. Introduction (10 minutes)



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- A. Introduce Module (**Slide 1**). Show **Slide 2**, the CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid that was introduced in Module 1. Tell participants that we are now at the third level of the pyramid – social emotional teaching strategies. Remind participants that in Module 1 we talked about the importance of building positive relationships and designing supportive environments (including rules, schedules, materials, and activities) to support children’s social emotional development and prevent challenging behavior. In Module 2, we will continue to build on these ideas by discussing the use of effective strategies, ideas, and resources to help **“teach”** children social emotional skills (friendship skills, emotional literacy, development of empathy, impulse control, and problem solving).
- B. Show **Slide 3** and go over the agenda with participants.
- C. Review the learner objectives, shown on **Slide 4**, with the participants.
- Participants will be able to discuss why it is important to be more intentional about teaching social emotional skills.
  - Participants will be able to identify strategies for supporting the development of friendship skills.
  - Participants will be able to define emotional literacy and identify activities that build “feeling vocabularies.”
  - Participants will understand the importance of providing opportunities for children to begin to understand their own, as well as others’ emotions.
  - Participants will understand why children need to learn to control anger and handle disappointment and will be able to identify strategies to teach anger management skills.
  - Participants will understand the importance of teaching problem solving and will be able to identify problem solving steps.

## II. Identifying the Importance of Teaching Social Emotional Skills: Why, When, How and What (20 minutes)



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- A. Show **Slide 5**. Tell participants that there are several things that we want them to think about throughout this module: why it is important to be more intentional about teaching social emotional skills, when we should teach, and ideas and resources for how we can teach these skills. The following slides address these areas:
- Show **Slide 6** (social emotional development/skills for young children). Remind participants that they talked about these skills in Module 1. We now want them to think about these skills in relation to the following questions:
    - Ask participants why they think it is so important for us to “teach” children social emotional skills. Add to their comments by sharing that these are some of the skills that we know that children need in order to be more successful and to prevent challenging behavior—not only in early care and education settings, but also in future educational settings. While we tend to be very thoughtful and intentional about teaching literacy, cognitive, and other skills, we need to be just as intentional about teaching social emotional skills.
    - Show **Slide 7**. Ask participants what happens when children don’t have these skills? Have them think about children in their settings who don’t have these skills. What have they noticed about these children? (Answers might include everything from specific challenging behaviors to quiet and withdrawn). How do we help children learn these social emotional skills? We “teach” them!
  - Show **Slide 8** (Identifying Teachable Moments). Now that we have discussed why it is important to teach social emotional skills, we are going to talk about “**when**” during the day we might teach these skills.
    - Describe a typical situation that might happen in a classroom or child care setting. For example, Trey is building a castle in the block area. Blair comes to the

block area to play and decides that she needs the block that is right in the middle of Trey's castle. Blair grabs the block, and Trey's castle crumbles. Trey hits Blair and takes the block away. Blair starts crying (red arrow).

2. Ask participants to generate ideas about what teachers or child care providers might say to Trey and Blair at this point (e.g., "Use your words." "Hitting is not okay." "Say you're sorry." "Ask nicely if you want something." "Get an adult if you need help." "Calm down.").
3. Point out that it is often at the crisis (red arrow) point that teachers try to teach new social skills. Discuss that while this is a teachable moment, and can be a social skills lesson for Trey and Blair, this might not be the most effective teachable moment because:
  - a. The incident has already happened.
  - b. Both children are upset.
  - c. Blair may find the teacher reinforcing ("Wow, I might do this again so I can get the teacher's attention!").
4. Discuss effective teachable moments (referring to the green arrows at the left-hand side). The main point here is that we want to make sure that these "crisis moments" are not the only time that we are "teaching" social skills! Social skills can be embedded into almost any part of the daily schedule—Intentional, planned times as well as taking advantage of naturally occurring moments throughout the day.

- C. Display **Slide 9**. Remind participants that as we think about "**when**" to teach social emotional skills, we also need to consider stages of learning that should affect "**how**" we teach these skills:

9

**Stages of Learning**

- **Acquisition** – new skill or concept
- **Fluency** – the ability to immediately use the skill or concept without a prompt
- **Maintenance** – continuing to use the skill or concept over time
- **Generalization** – applying the skill or concept to new situations, people, activities, ideas, and settings



1. **Acquisition** – When children learn how to do something new, they acquire new skills or concepts. To support children’s acquisition of new skills, we need to explain and demonstrate the skill/concept and encourage children as they attempt to learn the skill. Skills can easily be lost at this stage – so encourage, encourage, encourage!
2. **Fluency** – Once children acquire a new skill, they need to be able to use the skill proficiently or fluently. We need to provide multiple opportunities for them to practice and master this skill/concept, as well as prompt children to use their new skills in new situations.
3. **Maintenance** – Once children are fluent with their new skills, they need to be able to use the skills (or “maintain” the skills) without support or prompting from an adult.
4. **Generalization** – When children apply their new skills to new situations, people, activities, and settings they demonstrate generalized use of these skills. For example, a child might learn a new skill at child care and then generalize that skill by using it at home (a different setting) or a child might learn a new skill with a grandparent and generalize it by using it with their aunt (different people).
5. Summarize by explaining to participants that each learning stage requires intentional, purposeful planning on our part. This means that we need to plan “**when**” (during our daily schedule) we will teach new skills in order for children to have opportunities to acquire new skills and to become fluent with their new skills. But, we can’t stop at that point! We also need to continue to plan opportunities for children (and encourage them) to practice using their new skills throughout the day without “us” so they can show maintenance and generalization.

- D. Being more aware of supporting learning also “tunes” us in to being purposeful and direct as well as not missing opportunities to encourage children when they are spontaneously learning and using their new skills. We want to take advantage of both planned and unplanned opportunities!
- E. Tell participants that we will now focus on the “**what**” and “**how**” to teach part. Highlight that we will spend the rest of the day discussing teaching strategies and ideas (“**how**”) for promoting friendship skills, emotional literacy skills, development of empathy, ideas for controlling anger and impulse, and problem solving skills (“**what**”).

**III. Friendship Skills**  
(60 minutes)

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**A. What Behaviors Lead to Friendship Skills?**

10

1. Show **Slide 10** and explain that we are now going to talk about friendship skills. Have participants think about children who have lots of friends. What have they noticed about these children that makes it easier for them to make friends? Write responses on **chart paper**.



11

OR

(video clip 2.1)

- a. Show **Slide 11/Video Clip 2.1**. Ask participants to watch the three children playing at center time shown in **Video Clip 2.1**. What helped the children be successful or unsuccessful playing together as friends? Discuss observations and add to the list on the **chart paper**. To play video double click on the photograph on the slide. To advance to the next slide, click the down arrow on your keyboard.

12

- b. Show **Slide 12**. Discuss that when children are successful at making friends, they have opportunities to learn and practice many social skills such as cooperation, sharing, turn taking, problem solving, and conflict resolution. Explain that there are several discrete behaviors that young children engage in during play with each other that seem to be directly related to having friends (Tremblay et al., 1981). That is, children who do more of these behaviors are more likely to have friends. These specific behaviors are described in more detail below. Explain that several of the slides have video

examples. Share with participants that the two children that they will see in Video clips 2.2 (play organizers), 2.3 (sharing), and 2.4 (being helpful) did not know each other before they were video taped playing together. This is significant because it demonstrates that when children have these skills, it makes it easier for them to have more positive experiences in playing together and making new friends. (Note to presenter: each slide is organized around five areas: rationale, descriptions, demonstrations, practice, and promotion opportunities).

13



1) Play Organizers. Show **Slide 13** and briefly discuss the following:

- a) Rationale – Children who are able to organize play situations can create play opportunities for themselves and others.
- b) Describe the skill – Play organizers might try to get a friend's attention, give a friend a toy, or give an idea of what they might do with a toy or material. With preschoolers, play organizers are usually “Let’s” statements, such as, “Let’s play trucks.” Often these “Let’s” statements are followed by suggestions about roles (e.g., “You be the driver and I’ll put the logs on the truck”) or specific activities (e.g., “Roll it to me.”).
- c) Demonstrate – Discuss how you can build children’s play organizing skills by demonstrating or role playing “right” and “wrong” ways to organize play situations when you want other children to play with you.
- d) Practice – Remind participants about the stages of learning that we discussed earlier. It is really important for us to provide opportunities for children to practice play organizing. As mentioned above, we might have children role play or we can join in their play and model ways to organize play situations.

14



or



(video clip 2.2)

15



- e) Promote – Discuss how we need to make sure that we are not only providing opportunities for children to practice these skills, but that we are also promoting, supporting, and encouraging children as they “try out” their new skills.
- f) Show **Slide 14/Video Clip 2.2** as an example of play organizing skills. These are the two children mentioned above who had never met each other before this play session.

2) **Sharing**. Show **Slide 15** and briefly discuss the following:

- a) Rationale – Children who are able to share toys and materials often have more positive experiences interacting with peers. In turn, since having this skill allows them opportunities to practice and experience positive social interactions, they also begin to learn how to better handle situations when they don’t want to share what they are playing with. As adults, we often expect young children to share without helping them understand what it means to do so (Kemple, 2004).
- b) Describe the skill – Sharing takes many forms among preschoolers. Children might offer to share materials they are playing with, respond to requests from other children to share (“Can I have some of your paint?”), ask others to share what they are playing with as well as refuse to share what they are playing with.
- c) Demonstrate – Discuss how you can build children’s “sharing” skills by demonstrating or role playing ways to share toys and materials as well as ways to respond to requests from other children to share. It is also important to discuss (and include in demonstrations/role plays) that sometimes they might not want to share what they are

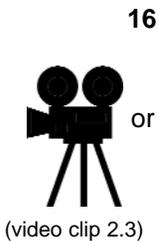
playing with and that is okay. Discuss what the children might say or do in those situations.

- d) Practice – Again, it is really important for us to provide opportunities for children to practice sharing, in direct and indirect teaching situations. For example, before children leave large group ask them what they might share during center time and who they might share with, or set up an activity where children can work together and share materials.
- e) Promote – Promote, support, and encourage children as they share. When you see children sharing—comment. Have a “sharing” day where everyone (including adults) tries really hard to share all day! Discuss ahead of time the ways that children might share across the different parts of the daily schedule.

f) Show **Slide 16/Video Clip 2.3** as an example of sharing.

3) Being Helpful/Team Players. Show **Slide 17** and briefly discuss the following:

- a) Rationale – Being helpful or a team player is another skill that makes it easier for children to play and respond to others.
- b) Describe the skill – Being helpful or assisting others takes many forms at the preschool level. Children might help each other onto or off of an apparatus, they can tell or show a friend how to do something; or they can assist someone in distress.
- c) Demonstrate – Demonstrate and role play what it means to be helpful to others. Use puppets to demonstrate situations where one puppet needs help or is upset and have the other puppet respond in appropriate, helpful ways. Also demonstrate or role play



situations where a child or puppet doesn't respond and discuss how that might make the other child feel.

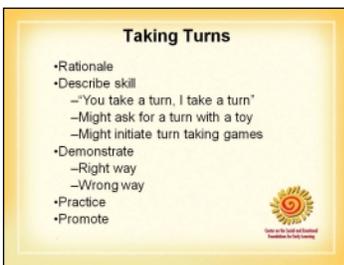
- d) Practice – Role playing, as mentioned above, is a great way for children to practice being helpful. Adults can also set up situations and ask for help so children have opportunities to respond. During group time, situations can be read or acted out and children can hold up a smiley face for helpful behavior or a frown for unhelpful behavior. Small group activities can also be planned where children need to help each other in order to complete a task.
  - e) Promote – Promote, support, and encourage children when they are being helpful or responding to another child in a stressful situation.
  - f) Show **Slide 18/Video Clip 2.4** as an example of children being helpful.
- 4) **Taking Turns.** Show **Slide 19** and briefly discuss the following:
- a) Rationale – In addition to engaging in the behaviors listed above, the formation of friendship is equally dependent upon two patterns of interaction:
    - 1) First, it is necessary for children to be reciprocal in their interactions (each has a turn). Reciprocity has two dimensions. Initially, children need to be responsive to the social bids/requests of others. Also, over a period of time (say several months), it is important that there be a relatively equal number of occasions that each member of a friendship dyad starts an interaction.
    - 2) In addition to reciprocity, friendship patterns of interaction are also characterized by the length of

18



(video clip 2.4)

19



interaction occurrences. That is, friendship pairs engage in gradually longer play episodes and interactions.

- b) Describe the skill – Turn-taking might involve children playing a game where “you take a turn, I take a turn”, they might ask for their turn with a toy, they might get a friend’s attention to initiate play by looking, tapping, or calling them, or holding out their hand to indicate initiation of play and turn taking.
  - c) Demonstrate – Once again, demonstrations and role playing to show ways to initiate play and turn taking are very effective.
  - d) Practice – Teaching children games (board games, games with balls, etc.) is a great way to support development of turn taking skills. Planning activities where each child has to take a turn to complete the task also allows for practice.
  - e) Promote – Promote, support, and encourage children as they initiate play and engage in turn taking.
- 5) Giving Compliments. Show [Slide 20](#) and briefly discuss the following:
- a) Rationale – Although these behaviors do not often occur among preschoolers, they tend to have a powerful effect on the formation of friendships.
  - b) Describe – Preschoolers compliment one another’s successes, buildings, and appearances. They might say, “Good job Juan,” “He’s a smart boy,” “I like the way you painted that picture of your house.”

20



- c) Demonstrate – When adults give compliments, it sets up an atmosphere in the classroom that promotes complimenting each other. This can be a great model for children. Demonstrations and role playing can also help children learn what compliments are and what words they might use to compliment someone.
- d) Practice – Role playing and having a compliment circle where children can compliment each other about something that they did during the day allows children opportunities to practice using compliments.
- e) Promote – Promote, support, and encourage children as they compliment each other.
- f) Show **Slide 21/Video Clip 2.5** (Giving Compliments). This is a great example of what happens when the adults in a classroom give compliments - children begin to give compliments also!

21



or  
  
 (video clip 2.5)

22

**Knowing How and When to Give Apologies**

- Rationale
- Describe skill
  - Children might say, “I’m sorry I hit you when you took my ball.”
  - “I didn’t mean to push you.”
- Demonstrate skill
  - Right way
  - Wrong way
- Practice
- Promote



- 6) Knowing When and How to Give Apologies. Show **Slide 22** and briefly discuss the following:
  - a) Rationale – Learning when and how to give apologies, just like learning how to give compliments, can have positive effects on the formation of friendships. Children begin to learn how to pay attention and be more responsive to their friends’ feelings as well as how their behavior affects others.
  - b) Describe – Children might say, “I’m sorry I hit you when you took my ball,” or “I didn’t mean to push you.”
  - c) Demonstrate – Demonstrating and role playing are great ways to help children learn what it means to give an apology. Use puppets to demonstrate apologies.

23



d) Practice – Role play different situations and let children try to figure out what they might say to apologize. Have children make up a story in which the characters need to apologize for something.

e) Promote – Promote, support, and encourage children as you hear them apologizing.

### B. Setting the Stage for Friendship (Show [Slide 23](#)).

1. Prior to “teaching” friendship skills, adult caregivers need to set the stage by including the following five elements in their early childhood settings (e.g., Head Start, Child Care, Family Day Care home):
  - a. An inclusive environment where all children are meaningfully included in natural proportions is critical to setting the stage for friendships (Guralnick, 1990).
  - b. Having cooperative use toys and materials increases the opportunities for social interaction. Cooperative use toys are those that naturally lend themselves to two or more children playing together. Some examples of cooperative use toys are balls, puppets, wagons, two telephones, dramatic play materials, rocking boats, and board games.
  - c. Examine daily routines and embed friendship and social interaction instruction and practice opportunities throughout the day (refer back to the stages of learning discussed earlier).
  - d. In order to ensure that friendship and social interaction instruction gets the necessary attention, teachers and caregivers need to include related goals and objectives on a child’s IEP/IFSP. Although these goals are likely to be the most critical for the child’s later development, they often do not appear on IEPs or IFSPs (McConnell, McEvoy, & Odom, 1992), perhaps because many assessments do not include these skills as test items.

- e. Most importantly, teachers and caregivers need to devote energy toward creating an atmosphere of friendship. When you walk into a classroom, child care, or home day care setting where an adult has successfully created this climate, you see adults giving time and attention to children when they engage in friendly behaviors, you hear adults talking nicely to one another, and you hear children supporting one another's friendly behavior. Overall, you get a sense that friendship is the ultimate goal. Ask participants what else they can do to promote this atmosphere of friendship.

24



### C. Strategies for Developing Friendship Skills. (Show Slide 24).

1. Setting the stage is a necessary step in supporting children's developing friendships and teaching the critical skills described above. There are several ways to teach children these skills: teaching the concept, modeling appropriate behavior, providing practice opportunities with feedback, and supporting children's use of the behavior in context. Discuss the following strategies:
  - a. **Modeling.** Modeling can include adults or peers demonstrating the friendship skill or video based modeling with short vignettes of children engaging in friendly behavior (Webster-Stratton & Hammond, 1997). Often, it is effective to model both examples and non-examples followed by opportunities for correct responding. There are three guiding principles of effective role-play modeling strategies:
    - 1) Use invisible support, that is, call on the child who you are confident will model the skill appropriately before calling on a child who will need more support.
    - 2) Sometimes when children are modeling the friendship skill in front of their peers, they can get carried away with being silly or inappropriate. It is important to give children another chance and more support so that they

are successful in demonstrating the skill appropriately. This approach allows them to receive encouragement from the teacher and other children for doing the skill.

- 3) Because role-plays typically involve only one or two children at a time, it is necessary to plan ways for the rest of the children to be actively engaged. Strategies for including children who are not involved in the role-play include having them give a thumbs up for friendly behavior and a thumbs down for unfriendly behavior; patting themselves on the back if this is a behavior they do; clapping when the role-play is over; saying “ready, set, action” before the role-play begins; or having a Popsicle stick sign with a happy face on one side and a sad face on the other (children show the happy face when the behavior being modeled is friendly and the sad face when the behavior being modeled is unfriendly). It is also important to keep track of who has had a chance to role-play and ensure that all of the children in the class get a turn during the week.
  - 4) Whenever possible, using small groups to teach these skills will be useful in terms of giving all children opportunities for practice.
- b. **Modeling with Video**. The use of video to help model friendship skills can be very effective with young children. Video-based modeling is particularly effective for several reasons:
- 1) Videos can capture real-life examples of children using friendly behavior. These examples can be used to generate discussion about the friendly behavior and the context in which it is used in the video. Video vignettes can also display non-examples. These vignettes can be used to teach children to discriminate between friendly and unfriendly behavior and prompt children to develop and share alternative behaviors and solutions if initial ideas are not effective.

- 2) Video clips can be paused, and children can be prompted to attend to the salient features of the friendly behaviors and the context in which they occur. Children can also make predictions about “what will happen next” when the child featured in the video uses a friendly or unfriendly behavior.
  - 3) Children love watching videos, which makes this format particularly powerful in engaging and keeping children’s attention.
- c. **Modeling with Puppets.** Similar to videos, puppets are very engaging to young children:
- 1) Because adults are in control of the puppet, the puppet can always be a responsive play partner. The puppet can model friendly play and, when appropriate and planned, can model non-examples. Puppets in the image of children are particularly effective because they provide a proximate model. That is, children are more likely to emulate the behavior of models that look like themselves. But, any puppet will work!
  - 2) Additionally, some children will disclose more about their feelings and friendship problems to puppets than to adults, especially if adults are historically not seen as trustworthy by the child.
- d. **Preparing Peer Partners.** When typical children are assisting their peers with special needs to acquire friendships skills, it is necessary for them to learn to suspend social rules in order not to feel rejected. In the usual course of events, interactions between typical children are usually quite reciprocal. If someone asks nicely to play, they usually get a positive response. On the other hand, as some children begin to acquire peer interaction skills, they often reject the social overtures of their peers and they may not initiate play. Using role-play and rehearsal strategies, there is a well-researched set of procedures for

teaching children to be persistent with their social behavior while their peers are becoming more fluent. For example, adults model peer rejection, provide verbal feedback (“That’s what might happen when you ask kids to play.”), and then provide a behavioral alternative that they reinforce (“If that happens, try again”—“good, you tried again.”).

- e. **Buddy System.** Often it is helpful to utilize a “buddy system” when trying to increase the friendship skills of children. Right before a free-play period, children are assigned to a buddy role, meaning that they begin free play in some planned play activity with a certain child. In utilizing a buddy system, there are several rules to follow.
- 1) It is important to always have two or more buddies for each child who needs them. This arrangement helps to keep the play interesting for the socially competent children, and it helps to create the conditions for maximizing the number of diverse play ideas.
  - 2) It is also important to rotate buddies for several reasons:
    - a) First, rotating buddies helps to ensure that children have the opportunity to engage in friendship skills with the widest variety of playmates.
    - b) Second, rotating helps to avoid buddy burnout, a condition in which children come to respond negatively to their helper role because they always play with the same individual.
  - 3) One can optimize the buddy system by pairing the most popular and liked children with those who need the most help. This type of pairing can lead to other children simultaneously helping their peers because the “cool” kids are doing it.

- 4) At the end of a play period, children should receive specific feedback for being buddies and, provided with feedback that specifically enumerates the friendship skills they used in interacting with their assigned partner.
- f. **Priming.** Teachers can increase the likelihood of children using friendship skills with specific priming strategies. For example, prior to a free-play period, teachers can ask children who they are going to play with; they can ask what specific toy or material they are going to share; and they can provide practice opportunities. A practice opportunity might include, “Hey, Jaymin, let’s pretend I am Cody and you are going to ask me to play trucks.” Jaymin would then practice asking, with or without adult prompting, and the adult would provide encouragement or feedback for Jaymin’s social initiation to play. Other play ideas include the following.
- 1) Teachers can increase the duration of peer play by providing suggestions or prompting role reversals.
  - 2) Expanding play ideas can occur by suggesting new ways of playing with the materials, new ways for dramatic play to unfold, and new ways of including more children in a game or activity.
  - 3) When a teacher notices that children are disengaging from play with one another, he or she can prompt the children to reverse dramatic play roles (“How about you be the mom now and she can be the baby?”). This strategy can reengage children in the play sequence and lead to more lengthy social encounters.

- g. **Direct Modeling.** Another way to keep children engaged in friendly play is to directly model desired behaviors as a play partner. When teachers notice that children are becoming less engaged, they can join the play and provide specific models of friendly behavior. For example, a parent might join two children who are playing together and begin to share the materials available.
- h. **Reinforcement.** Although it is important to acknowledge children for their use of friendship skills, it is also the case that the effective use of acknowledgement requires ongoing attention to several key factors:
- 1) Timing of reinforcement delivery is crucial. As long as children are engaged in friendly behavior, it is a good idea to withhold reinforcement. Although this approach may seem counterintuitive, evidence suggests that adults' delivery of attention to children at play can have the immediate effect of terminating their play. Given this fact, it is advisable to comment on children's friendly play shortly after the fact.
  - 2) When commenting on children's friendly play, it is essential to describe the specific friendly behavior(s) that you observed. Instead of saying, "You're playing so nicely together," say, "You are taking turns and saying nice things to each other." This descriptive commenting provides children with specific feedback about what they are doing well.
  - 3) For many children, caregivers may need to provide lots of reinforcement early on. Once children start to use their friendly behaviors, however, adults need to begin the process of slowly removing their specific feedback from the ongoing play. The goal is not to remove all adult reinforcement, but to provide sufficient opportunity for friendly play in and of itself to become reinforcing.

25



### D. Examples of Activities to Support the Development of Friendship Skills.

1. Show **Slide 25** to discuss some examples of activities to support the development of friendship skills. It is very important to point out that all of these activities build on the skills needed to develop friendships and allow children opportunities to practice using these skills. They don't just use the word "friend." These types of activities also help in establishing a classroom atmosphere of "being friends," sharing and helping each other out.
  - a. **Friendship Can** – During large group time, have children generate a list of different things they can do to be a friend. Introduce the "friendship can" – which is a decorated can with names of all of the children in the can. Have each child draw out a name. Children can then use their friendship skills to do something with or for their "friend" throughout the day. They can make something special for their "friend," play with their friend, share with their friend, compliment their friend, help their friend, etc. During the day (as well as summarizing at the end of the day), children and teachers can talk about how they are using their friendship skills with their friend.
  - b. **Planting Seeds of Friendship** – Have children plant seeds ("seeds" of friendship) in small cups throughout the year. As new children join the classroom, children can give them one of their "friendship cups" to welcome them to the classroom. Each "friendship cup" has a welcome note that was made by the children (along with their teacher!). To introduce this activity, tell the children that you are all going to work together to make "seeds of friendship" so that new children will feel welcome and be able to make new friends! Talk about how hard it can be to be the "new" child! Ask children what friendship skills they can use to help new children feel welcome (play with new child, share toys, help new child learn the rules, schedule, names of other children, etc.).

- c. **Friendship Tree/Compliment Tree** – Make a big tree without leaves that can be displayed on a wall. Have leaves made from construction paper stacked by the tree. As adults and children notice others using friendship skills, write the skill that was used on a leaf and add it to the tree. At the end of the day, “celebrate” the new leaves that were added to the tree. Describe the specific friendship skills that were used each day. You can also use the same idea to make a compliment tree.
- d. **Books about Friendship** – Use books that talk about “friends” and what it means to be friends. Some examples are: *Fox Makes Friends*, *The Rainbow Fish*, *Big Al*, and *Making Friends*. Ask participants to share books that they have used that Relate to Friends. Teachers can talk about what friendly behaviors the characters are using and have children guess what they think will happen next based on what the characters are doing. Teachers can also help children write a story together or individually about friendship.
- e. **Friendship Quilt** – Children make a quilt out of construction paper squares that hang together on the wall. Each square has pictures of children in the classroom (labeled with their names) as well as pictures of children using friendship skills like sharing, playing together, or helping each other (which are also labeled). This is a good activity to use at the beginning of the year to help children learn everyone’s name as well as friendship skills. Squares are added to the quilt as children use their new friendship skills. This is a great idea for home providers if they have children of different ages. They can make pictures that show what children can do to be a good friend based on their age and skills.

- f. **Friendship Journal** – Create a friendship journal that has friendship skills and pictures of the children in the classroom using these skills. This journal can be added to the book area for children to look at throughout the year.
- g. **Music/Songs** - Teachers and children can make up songs about being friends. There are also commercial CDs that have songs about being friends.

5. Explain to participants that the next several slides will show some examples of activities to build friendship skills (similar to the ones above). **Slide 26/Video Clip 2.6** shows a teacher using a puppet to discuss a situation and what happened; **Slide 27/Video Clip 2.7** shows a teacher demonstrating a friendship art activity and **Slide 28/Clip 2.8** shows a teacher reading a book about being friends.
6. Show **Slide 29/Video Clip 2.9** (Super Friend) as another example of building friendship skills (this video shows children figuring out how to take turns). These types of activities (Super Friend) are often used as a means to encourage children to use their friendship skills. One of the advantages of this type of approach is that children start noticing when they see other children using friendship skills and what skills they used! You will often hear them say, “ Oh look, we have a super friend! Maria just shared her favorite toy with Cameron”. It is very important to make sure that all children have opportunities to be successful in using friendship skills in order to get the opportunity to wear the super friend cape!
7. Note to Presenter: the videos in these modules are designed to provide examples that can be used to describe, reflect, and refine teachers’ practices. They are not intended to be the best way, the only way or the right way to do something.
8. Introduce the Super Friend video as follows: This video is one teacher’s idea for how to acknowledge children’s use of “friendship skills.” Watch this video and think about the following questions:

26



or



clip 2.6

(video clip 2.6)

27



or



clip 2.7

(video clip 2.7)

28



or



clip 2.8

(video clip 2.8)

29



or



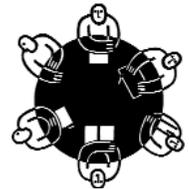
clip 2.9

(video clip 2.9)

- a. What do you like about how this teacher acknowledged the children’s use of friendship skills by figuring out how to take turns?
  - b. What would you do differently?
8. Participants often have concerns about using this video. As a trainer, you will want to think about how you might respond to participants’ concerns. Listed below are some examples of “issues” that might arise with this specific video.
- a. The teacher “rewards” the child with a cape rather than supporting the child’s development of internal motivation.
  - b. It appears that the wrong child might be getting acknowledged for something another child does.
  - c. The teacher disrupts the entire class to acknowledge what the one child did.
  - d. The cape could choke the child.

**E. Embedding Friendship Opportunities Across the Daily Schedule Activity**

- 1. Have participants find someone in the room who they do not know (or don’t know very well). They will work with this person (their new friend!) for this activity.



30

Activity	
Embedding Friendship Opportunities into Daily Routines and Activities	
Arrival	
Circle Time	
Center Time	
Small Group	
Outside	
Snack	
Story Time	
Good-bye Circle	
Transitions	

- 2. Using [Slide 30](#), divide participants so that each part of the schedule is being worked on. Have participants use [Handout 2.2](#) to think of ways that they can embed friendship opportunities throughout the day (or in other words – how they can be more “intentional”). After 10 minutes, have participants share some of their ideas. Make sure to get ideas across the different parts of the schedule. Listed below are some examples of possible answers for each area:

Module 2 Embedding Friendship Opportunities		
Activity		
Embedding Friendship Opportunities into Daily Schedules		
Actual	Schedule	Opportunity
Circle Time		
Center Time		
Small Group		

**Handout 2.2**

- a. Arrival – assign a child to be the “greeter” who greets the children by name as they arrive; find a “buddy” to walk with from the bus.
- b. Circle Time – Select a child to pass out the circle time props to each classmate, as the child progresses around the circle, he calls each child by name and says “pick a \_\_\_\_.” Each child responds with, “Thanks (child’s name)”; children identify a friend to play with at center time and then decide together where they will play first.
- c. Center Time – watch for friendly behavior, comment and encourage.
- d. Small Group – plan cooperative art projects; teach children to play board games (examples: Barnyard Bingo, Candy Land, Don’t Spill the Beans).
- e. Outside – pre-select cooperative use toys for outside play (wagons, tricycles, balls, etc.); adults organize peer play (Duck, Duck, Goose; Red Rover; tag).
- f. Snack – have each child in charge of different snack items, children have to ask each other for the snack items.
- g. Story Time – read books about friends; discuss what friendship skills the characters in the book used, write a classroom friendship book.
- h. Good-bye Circle – have a compliment circle (children have a chance to give each other a compliment as they pass around the compliment bear); one child can pass out back packs; one child can say good-bye to each child as he or she leaves.
- i. Transition – during center time instead of transitioning to a new center – transition to a new friend (could use a friend picture schedule); children can hold hands going from one activity to another.

31



3. Refer participants to **Handout 2.3** (“You’ve Got to Have Friends” by Joseph & Strain.)
4. Show **Slide 31** of girls playing together and being friendly at a water table. Ask participants if they have any questions or additional ideas they would like to share about facilitating friendship skills.

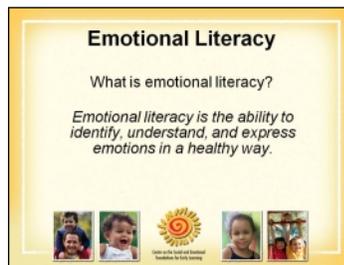


Handout 2.3

5. To transition to the next section, summarize by discussing how peer interactions and development of friendship skills are a great context for children to learn about regulating emotions. Think of all the issues that come up when children are playing (or attempting to play) together. They have many opportunities to practice organizing play situations, sharing, being helpful, taking turns, giving compliments, and apologizing! Friendships also foster children’s empathy skills, giving them opportunities to begin to understand other children’s feelings and perspectives. One way to help children be more successful in developing friendship skills is to “teach” them to label, understand, express, and control emotions. In the next section, we will discuss ideas for enhancing children’s emotional literacy.

IV. Enhancing Emotional Literacy (90 minutes)

32

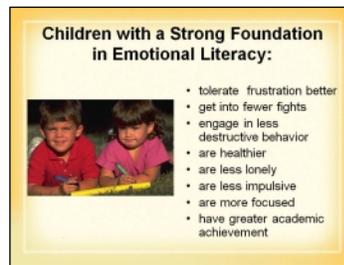


IV. Enhancing Emotional Literacy (90 minutes)

A. Increasing Children’s Emotional Literacy

1. Show **Slide 32**, and discuss the definition of emotional literacy.
2. Show **Slide 33** and discuss some of the things we know about children who have a strong foundation in emotional literacy. Children who don’t learn to use emotional language have a hard time labeling and understanding their own feelings as well as accurately identifying how others feel.

33



3. Show **Slide 34** and have participants list feeling words that they would want to teach preschoolers. Record their “feeling words” on **chart paper**. Ask them to count the number of positive and negative feeling words. Stress the importance of teaching both positive and negative words.



34



4. Now have them look at the range of words they suggested. Explain the importance of teaching preschoolers feeling words that go beyond the basics (happy, sad, mad). An increased vocabulary allows children to make finer discriminations between feelings and to better communicate with others about their feelings. These skills help children to become better interpersonal communicators.

**35** **Enhancing Emotional Literacy...**

- Direct Teaching
- Indirect Teaching
- Use of Songs and Games
- How would you feel if...?
- Checking In
- Feeling Dice and Feeling Wheel
- Use of Children's Literature



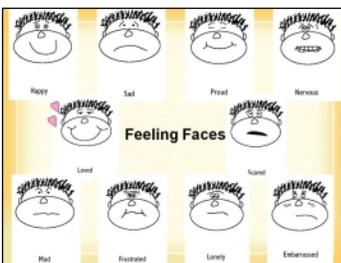
B. Show **Slide 35** which describes several different ways that adults can increase children's feeling vocabularies: direct teaching, indirect teaching, use of songs and games, playing "how would you feel if...", the feeling wheel/feeling dice, and use of children's literature. Each of these will be discussed in the following slides:

**36** **Direct Teaching of Feeling Vocabulary**



1. **Direct Teaching**— Show **Slide 36**. Direct teaching involves planning specific activities/opportunities for children to increase their emotional vocabulary as well as to start to discriminate what different facial expressions/emotions might look like.

**37** **Feeling Faces**



a. Show **Slides 37** with examples of emotion faces that represent a range of emotions. Tell participants that they can download these "faces" from the csefel website. They are available in English, Spanish or English/Spanish. Explain that you will be discussing many different ways to use the "faces" and they will probably come up with many more ideas!

**38** **Classroom Example**



b. Display **Slide 38**. This slide shows how a teacher hung a mirror with a feeling poster beside the mirror so children could make different "feeling faces." They also drew their own "feeling faces," which were displayed above the mirror. The teacher would often join children at the mirror and start conversations about the feeling faces they were making in the mirror and what happened to make them feel this way.

c. Show **Slide 39** as another example of how a teacher used one of the feeling words (proud) for children to have an opportunity to learn what "proud" means. They cut pictures out of

39 **Classroom Example**

magazines that showed people feeling proud. They also took pictures of children in the classroom who were feeling proud! They picked a different emotion each week and used the same process. This would be a great idea for home care settings.

40 **Indirect Teaching**

- Provide emotional labels as children experience various affective states - "Tamika and Tanya seem really happy to be playing together! They keep hugging each other!"

2. **Indirect Teaching** – Show **Slide 40**. An example of indirect teaching would be when a teacher provides emotion labels – “you’re happy” or “you’re frustrated” – as children experience various affective states. Use the example on the slide and note how the teacher describes what the two children are doing that helped her figure out how they were feeling.

41 **Use of Songs and Games**  
**Sample Song**

- If you are happy and you know it... add new verses to teach feelings
  - If you're sad and you know it, cry a tear, "boo hoo"
  - If you're mad and you know it, use your words "I'm mad"
  - If you're scared and you know it ask for help, "help me!"
  - If you're happy and you know it, hug a friend
  - If you're tired and you know it, give a yawn.

3. **Use of Songs and Games** – Show **Slide 41**, which shows an example of a favorite song (“if you’re happy and you know it...”) that has been changed to use feeling words. There are also many commercial CDs that have fun songs about emotions. An example would be Jim Gill’s “I’m so Mad I Could Growl” song.

42 **Sample Game**

- How does your face look when you feel proud?
- What makes you feel proud?

- a. Show **Slides 42, 43, and 44** as fun examples of emotion games. Note that two of the games use feeling faces from the csefel web site. The Bingo game would be appropriate for a wide range of children. If each feeling face is done in a different color, children who might not be able to “read” the words could match the colors. Children might also be able to match the faces by the expressions. Children who are starting to read can match the words as well as the faces. Be sure to choose words that you are teaching and talking about in class.

43 **Sample Game**

Sad      Happy      Frustrated

**Make a \_\_\_\_\_ face.**

44 **Sample Game**

Bingo

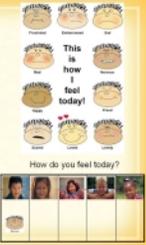
**45** **Play: How Would You Feel If?**

- Discuss typical situations that happen when children are together: "How would you feel if this happened to you?"
  - Example: Jeremy wanted to play ball with Katie and Wu-ying today, but they wouldn't let him. How do you think that made him feel? How do you think you would feel if that happened to you? What could Jeremy try next time?



**46** **Checking In**

- Teachers and children can "check in" each morning by choosing a feeling face that best depicts their affective state and putting it next to their name. Children can be encouraged to change their feeling faces throughout the day as their feelings change.



**47** **Feeling Dice/Feeling Wheel**



**48**



or



(video clip 2.10a)

**49** **Video 2.10b: Emotional Literacy Activities (Happy/Mad Activity)**



or



(video clip 2.10b)

**50**



or



(video clip 2.10c)

4. **Play "How Would You Feel If?"** – Show **Slide 45**. Have children role play typical situations that happen when they are together and then talk about "how would you feel if this happened to you?" Use the example on the slide.

5. **Checking In** – Show **Slide 46**. Children can "check in" each morning by putting their name by a feeling face picture that best depicts their affective state. Children can be encouraged to change their feeling faces throughout the day as their feelings change. Adults should also participate by putting their name by a feeling face and changing it throughout the day. They can talk about how their feelings change as they change their feeling face to help children understand that feelings can change many times during the day.

6. **Feeling Dice and Feeling Wheel**

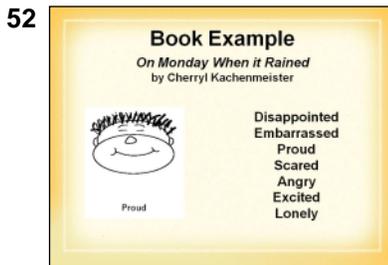
a. Show **Slide 47**. Make a Feeling Wheel with a spinner that children can spin and then label the feeling face that the spinner lands on and talk about a time they felt that way. Share with participants that the Feeling Wheel can be downloaded from the csefel web site.

b. Make Feeling Dice by covering milk cartons with paper and drawing different feeling faces on each side. Children can toss dice; label the feeling face and describe a time they felt that way.

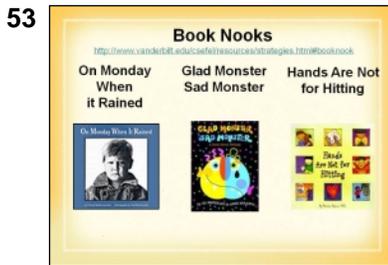
c. Explain to participants that they will observe several different activities to enhance emotional literacy skills in the following video clips: **Slide 48/Video Clip 2.10a** shows a happy, sad, mad, and scared activity. **Slide 49/Video Clip 2.10b** shows a happy/mad activity, and **Slide 50/Video Clip 2.10c** shows an example of using a book to discuss emotions.



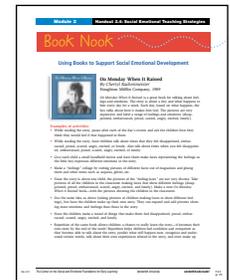
7. **Use of Children's Literature** – Show **Slide 51**. Explain that books are a great and engaging way to teach about emotions. Many books are written explicitly about feelings and contain numerous feeling words. Most of us already have books in our settings – so this is an easy and fun way to be more “intentional” about supporting children’s social emotional development.



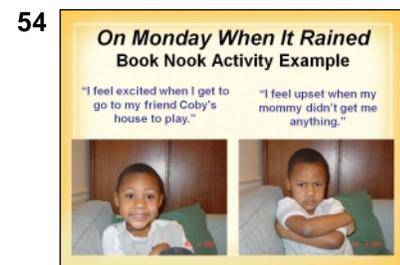
a. Show **Slide 52**. Read the book *On Monday When it Rained* by Cherryl Kachenmeister to participants as an example of a social emotional book. This book is about a little boy and the things that happen to him during the week. It is a good example of using literature to promote emotional literacy because of the little boy’s clear facial expressions as well as the range of feeling words (disappointed, embarrassed, proud, scared, angry, excited, lonely) presented in the book.



b. Show **Slide 53** (Book Nooks). Now introduce the Book Nook example for *On Monday When it Rained* (**Handout 2.4**). Explain that Book Nooks give examples of activities to expand on social emotional concepts while reading the book during story time. A different concept from the book, with related center activities, is focused on each day of the week. Point out that reading the same book for several days is a great way to support children’s social emotional development. Children learn the story, they can re-tell the story, and it becomes their story! They feel successful, confident and competent! Give participants a few minutes to look at the Book Nook.



**Handout 2.4**



c. Show **Slide 54** as an example of one of the suggested activities listed on the Book Nook. (The suggested activity is to take pictures of children in the classroom or home care setting that shows the children making feeling faces and then explaining a time when they felt that way).

55



OR  
  
 (video clip 2.11)

56



OR  
  
 (video clip 2.12)

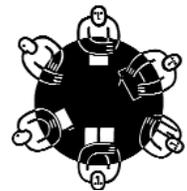
57



Tell participants that they can find more Book Nooks on the CSEFEL web site.

- d. Show [Slide 55/Video Clip 2.11](#) and [Slide 56/Video Clip 2.12](#) as examples of teachers using Book Nook suggestions!
- e. Explain that the example that we just gave (*On Monday When it Rained*) is a book that focuses on emotions. But, it is also important to use other types of book that don't specifically focus on "emotions" to build on social emotional concepts. (Note to the trainer: we don't want participants to think that we are just talking about using books that specifically focus on social emotional concepts. They could do this with almost any book!). One example would be *Corduroy* (this is a good example because most people are familiar with this book). This Book Nook can be found on the CSEFEL website.

- f. Show [Slide 57](#). Tell participants that we are now going to practice using books to support social emotional development by doing a fun book activity. Have participants get into groups of 5-10 people. Give each group one book. One member will read the book to the group and then the group will answer the questions listed on [Handout 2.5](#). Ask participants to choose a reporter to report back to the large group. (Note to Trainer: If you do not have enough books for each group to have a different book – ask participants to bring a social emotional book with them to the training). Tell participants that they can download a Book List of examples of books that support social emotional development on the CSEFEL web site.



[Handout 2.5](#)

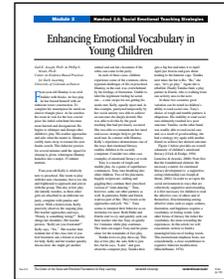
58

**Characteristics of Classrooms That Foster Emotional Literacy**

- Books about feelings are read and are available in the story center.
- Photos of people with various emotional expressions are displayed.
- Teachers label their own feelings.
- Teachers notice and label children's feelings.
- Activities are planned to teach and reinforce emotional literacy.
- Children are reinforced for using feeling words.
- Efforts occur daily.



g. Summarize by showing **Slide 58** (characteristics of classrooms that foster emotional literacy.) Refer participants to **Handout 2.6** (Enhancing Emotional Vocabulary in Young Children by Joseph & Strain).



**Handout 2.6**

h. Transition to the next section by telling participants that helping to support the development of emotional literacy skills is a “prerequisite” skill for emotional regulation, successful interactions, and problem solving.

**V. Identifying Feelings in Self and Others**  
(30 minutes)

**V. Identifying Feelings in Self and Others** (30 minutes)

59

**Identifying Feelings in Self and Others**

- Learning words for different feelings
- Empathy training
- Learning to recognize how someone else is feeling
  - Facial cues
  - Body language
  - Tone of voice
  - Situational cues
- Learning how to control anger, relax, and calm down



A. Discuss that it is impossible for a child to be able to coordinate their own feelings with those of others unless they are aware of others’ feelings and unless they care about the effect of their behavior on others (Hyson, 2004).

B. Show **Slide 59**, which discusses ways in which children learn to identify feelings in themselves and others. Explain to participants that we are going to continue to build on the ideas and strategies that we just talked about for building children’s emotional literacy skills.

60

**Empathy**

Empathy is the identification with and understanding of another’s feelings and situation.



C. Start by asking participants to define empathy. Show **Slide 60**. Empathy is the identification with and understanding of another’s feelings and situation.

61

**Teaching Empathy**

- Model empathy
- “Alike” & “different” activities
- Draw children’s attention to how others are feeling
- Role plays and role reversals
- Reinforce empathy behaviors



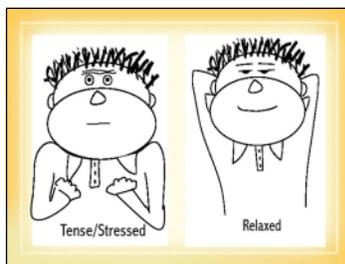

D. Show **Slide 61** and discuss the following ways to teach empathy skills:

1. Model empathy for children.
2. Do “alike” and “different” activities to show how we are all alike in some things and different in others, and that is what makes us special.
3. Draw children’s attention to how others are feeling. Talk about the use of storyboards as potential teaching tools. With storyboards,

teachers have large paper dolls without mouths. An assortment of different feeling faces (happy, sad, mad, nervous, excited, etc.) is available. The teacher then tells a story about the boy/girl paper doll and pauses to allow the children to identify the feeling the paper doll might be experiencing. Children can also cut pictures of different feeling faces out of magazines and then talk about how the person in their picture feels and how they know that is how the person feels (happy/smile on face, sad/tears running down face, mad/scowl on face). These kinds of activities help children understand how others are feeling.

4. Role play situations so children have opportunities to see how they might respond to another person who might be sad, hurt, etc.... Ask children how they would feel if they were crying and another child tried to help them feel better. How would they feel if no one paid any attention to them if they were crying?
5. Reinforce empathy behaviors.
6. Ask participants to share some other ideas about teaching children “empathy”.

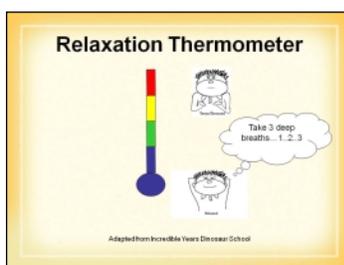
62



E. Emotional Regulation. Show **Slide 62**. Present two feeling words that we don't typically teach young children but that are very powerful. Those are “tense” or “stressed” and “calm” or “relaxed.”

1. Explain that young children are often told to “calm down” but are not aware of what this means. First, they need to be taught the distinction between “tense” (like a tin man) and “calm” (relaxed – like a Raggedy Ann doll) (Webster-Stratton, 1990). Then describe how you get children from tense to relaxed. One way is by taking three deep breaths. Emphasize that these need to be very deep belly breaths (like you are blowing out birthday cake candles).

63



2. Describe the relaxation thermometer activity for children (Webster-Stratton, 1990) (**Slide 63**). The relaxation thermometer is used to teach children to calm down using the following steps:

- a. Children can decorate their relaxation thermometer with pictures of feeling faces from “happy” and “relaxed” in the blue (or cool) section of the thermometer—all the way up to “angry” or “stressed out” in the red (or hot) section of the thermometer.
- b. The adult can then ask children to describe a recent conflict and together with the child retrace the steps that led to the angry outburst. The adult writes down the child’s actions, thoughts, and words that indicated an escalating anger pattern (e.g., thinking “He always takes my toys,” yelling, kicking).
- c. Then the adult discusses with the child the thoughts, words, and actions that the child can use to reduce his or her anger.
- d. As adults retrace the steps of the angry outburst, they help the children identify the place where they were aware they were getting angry. This place is marked as the “Danger Point” on the thermometer. Once children have established their danger points, they give it their own name (e.g., chill out, cool down, code red, hot engine, etc.). This code word can be the adult and child’s signal that anger or stress has reached the threshold, which triggers the use of an agreed upon calming strategy, such as taking three deep breaths.

64

**Key Concepts with Feelings**



- Feelings change
- You can have more than one feeling about something
- You can feel differently than someone else about the same thing
- All feelings are valid – it is what you do with them that counts

3. Show **Slide 64**. Emphasize the “key concepts” about feelings for young children.

**VI. Controlling Anger and Impulse (30 minutes)**

**VI. Controlling Anger and Impulse (30 minutes)**

**A. Recognizing Anger in Self and Others**

65

**Controlling Anger and Impulse**

- Recognizing that anger can interfere with problem solving
- Learning how to recognize anger in oneself and others
- Learning how to calm down
- Understanding appropriate ways to express anger



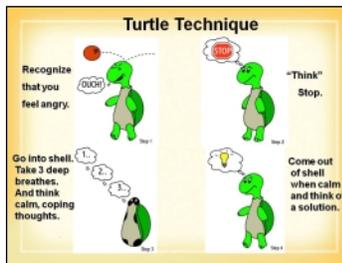
Step 2

1. Show **Slide 65**. Describe how anger can interfere with thinking. Children need to learn how to recognize anger in themselves and others and understand appropriate ways to express anger. We just talked about several ways for children to learn to recognize anger (list ideas from above). We are now going to talk about some ways to teach children how to handle anger. It is important to

teach young children effective ways to control their anger and impulse in conflict situations because:

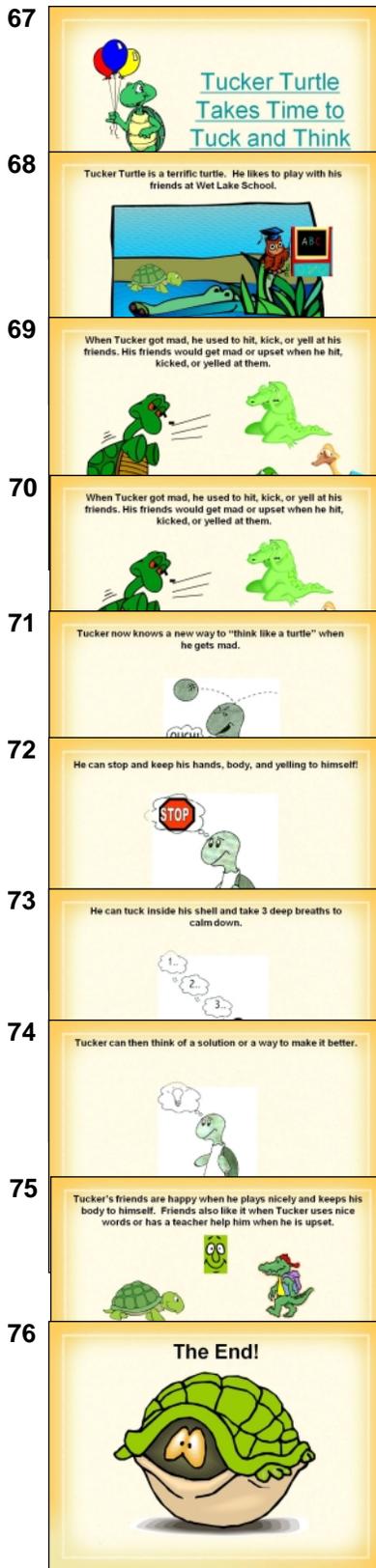
- a. Aggression and inadequate impulse control are perhaps the most potent obstacles to effective problem solving and successful relationships in childhood.
- b. Aggressive children are more likely to experience peer rejection and continued social problems for years afterwards.
- c. Evidence also suggests that aggressive children are more likely to misinterpret another peer's or person's intentions as hostile or threatening.

66



### B. The “Turtle Technique”

1. Show [Slide 66](#). Describe how to teach children to recognize anger in themselves.
  - a. Ask participants how they feel physically when they are upset or angry.
  - b. Point out that children feel anger in different ways—just as we do.
2. Describe the “turtle technique.” The turtle technique was originally developed to teach adults anger management skills and later was successfully adapted for school-age children (Schneider, 1974). Since then, the turtle technique has been adapted and integrated into social skills programs for preschoolers (Kusche & Greenberg, 1994, Webster-Stratton, 1990). Describe the basic steps of the turtle technique (show [Slide 66](#)).
  - a. Recognizing that you feel angry.
  - b. Thinking “stop.”
  - c. Going into your “shell,” taking three deep breaths, and thinking calming, coping thoughts: “It was an accident. I can calm down and think of good solutions. I am a good problem solver.”
  - d. Coming out of your “shell” when calm and thinking of some solutions to the problem.



3. In essence, the turtle technique seeks to help children learn to replace aggressive acts with a more effective and efficient behavioral alternative.
4. Teaching the turtle technique to young children can happen at large and small group times. A turtle puppet is helpful and keeps children engaged during the lesson.
  - a. The teacher can begin by introducing the turtle to the class. After the children get a chance to say hello and perhaps give a gentle pet, the teacher shares the turtle’s special trick for calming down.
  - b. The turtle describes a time he got upset in preschool (selecting an incident familiar to the children is best). He demonstrates how he thinks to himself, “STOP,” then goes into his shell and takes three deep breaths; After he takes three deep breaths, he thinks to himself, “I can calm down and think of some solutions to solve my problem.” At this point in the process, the turtle technique is used to demonstrate that when he is calm, he comes out of his shell and is ready to problem solve peacefully.
  - c. To create a sufficient level of practice, the teacher can then invite the children to practice the turtle’s secret. For example, children can practice “going in their shells” as they go under a large sheet and take three deep breaths or an individual child can model the “turtle technique” in front of the class. Practice in small group activities can include making paper-plate turtles with moveable heads and arms that “go in their shell.” Children can then rehearse the steps with the paper-plate turtle. Tell participants that there is a turtle pattern on the CSEFEL web site that can be used to make the paper plate turtles.
5. Show **Slides 67-76**. This shows an example of a social story, Tucker the Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think, that can be used to teach the turtle technique. This story can also be placed in the reading area of the classroom so children can practice the technique! Tell participants that this social story can be downloaded from the CSEFEL web site.



77

or

(video clip 2.13)



78

**Super Turtle Letter**

Dear Parent,

Billy did a great job today handling frustration and not getting angry when we ran out of his favorite cookie at snack. Instead of getting upset, Billy took three deep breaths and decided he would try one of the other cookies. That was a great solution and he really liked the new cookie too!

You can help Billy at home by: Asking him what he did at school today when we ran out of his favorite cookie. Ask him how he calmed down. Comment on what a great job he did. Tell him that you hope that he will do that again when he gets frustrated about something.

Thank you so much!  
Mr. Phil

79

**Use Turtle Technique within Daily Lessons**

**VII. Developing Problem Solving Skills**  
(30 minutes)

6. Show **Slide 77/Video Clip 2.13**—which shows a class of 2 year olds learning about Tucker the Turtle!
7. Show **Slides 78 and 79** which show examples of ideas for involving families and using the turtle technique.
8. Refer participants to **Handout 2.7** (Helping Young Children Control Anger and Handle Disappointment by Joseph & Strain)



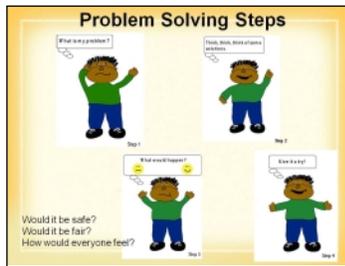
**Handout 2.7**

**VII. Developing Problem Solving Skills** (30 minutes)

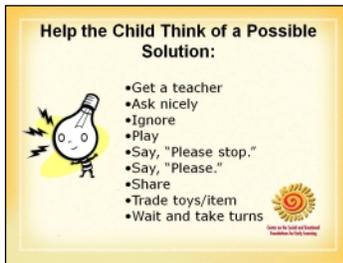
**A. Recognizing When You Have a Problem**

1. Discuss that when presented with interpersonal problem situations, some children, or all young children in some situations, find it difficult to think of alternative responses. We want children to learn problem solving steps, to be able to think of alternative solutions, and to learn that solutions have consequences.
2. Preschool-age children can effectively be taught problem-solving skills (Shure & Spivack, 1980, 1982; Webster-Stratton & Hammond, 1997).
3. Children learn problem solving step by step. Some published problem-solving curricula have as many as 11 steps, which can be too many steps for young children.

80



81



82



4. Present the problem-solving steps in [Slide 80](#) as an example of a problem solving process with fewer steps. There are four essential problem-solving steps for young children to learn and act on. Briefly review the steps on slide 80 and use the notes below to expand.
- What is my problem? Children should be taught to pay attention to their feelings as a first step in problem solving. When children are experiencing a negative emotion (e.g., anger or frustration), this feeling is the cue that they have a problem. This is why teaching young children an emotional vocabulary is an essential prerequisite skill to being an effective problem solver (see Joseph & Strain, 2003; Webster-Stratton, 1999).
  - After children recognize that they have a problem, they next need to describe the problem. Adults and/or puppets can model the problem for children. Children can practice by looking at cards depicting a problem and describing what the problem is. Initially, children will need guidance to reframe defining the problem as the other person's problem ("They won't let me play.") to their problem ("I want to play with them."). This reframing, although subtle, will help children generate more appropriate solutions.
  - Show [Slides 81 and 82](#) – Solution Kit. What are some solutions? Young children need help generating multiple alternative solutions to interpersonal problems. A lot of time should be spent directly teaching children alternative solutions to common problems and having children generate solutions independently. At this point in the instructional process, the key is to teach children to generate as many solutions as they can think of rather than thinking of a solution that will work best. Describe how young children need to spend time learning to generate alternative solutions.

83



or

(video clip  
2.14a)

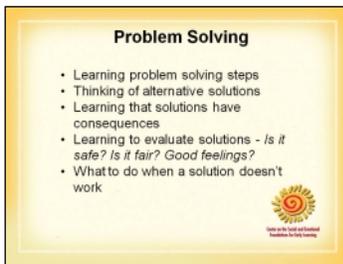
84



or

(video clip  
2.14b)

85



- d. Show [Slide 83/Video Clip 2.14a](#) and [Slide 84/Video Clip 2.14b](#) (examples of the solution kit in “action!”). Point out the teacher’s strategies to keep the children engaged in the problem-solving process (lots of encouragement to keep trying, asking other children to help). Ask participants if they have any other suggestions of what the teacher might have tried or any ideas that they have tried to support problem solving.

## B. Consequences

1. What would happen next? Show [Slide 85](#). After children have experienced generating multiple alternative solutions to problems, they can begin to evaluate consequences. This strategy can be communicated to children in terms of “What would happen next?” Three questions can guide a child’s decision to determine if the consequences would be good or bad:
  - Is the solution safe?
  - Is the solution fair?
  - How would everyone feel?
2. Understanding consequences can best be taught to children through role-plays. Children can generate a solution to a problem and then act it out with a puppet. The teacher can then prompt the child to think: Did anyone get hurt? Was it fair? How did you feel? How did the other person feel?
3. Give it a try! At this step, children are taught to act on the best solution that they generated. They are also taught what to do when a solution doesn’t work. When a prosocial solution doesn’t work, children can draw upon the other solutions they generated earlier that they believe will have positive consequences.

86

**Problem-Solving Activities**

- Problematize everything
  - “We have 6 kids at the snack table and only one apple. We have a problem. Does anyone have a solution?”
- Play “What would you do if...?”
- Children make their own “solution kits”
- Children offer solutions to problems that occur in children’s stories



C. **Problem-Solving Activities (Slide 86).** Several activities can be planned to reinforce problem-solving skills.

1. Adults can “planfully sabotage” or “problematize” activities throughout the day and encourage children to generate solutions. For example, the teacher can bring one apple to the table for snack and say, “Oh my goodness! We have a problem. There is only one apple and five kids—what can we do?” The teacher can then encourage the children to generate as many different solutions as possible.
2. Adults can play “What would you do” with children. To play, the teacher thinks of and writes down several problems on slips of paper. These slips are then put in a bag and passed around the circle until the music stops. The child who is holding the bag when the music stops, selects a problem that an adult can read for the child. The child can then think of as many solutions as possible. He or she may even consult the “Solution Kit” if necessary.
3. Children can make their own solution kits by drawing different solutions to problems they have had. Some children may want to color pre-drawn solution cards.
4. Adults can select children’s books that feature characters who are having some kind of problem. The teacher can pause when reading and ask children to generate solutions to the problem. Then, as the teacher continues reading and the children learn how the character solved the problem, they can determine if it is a good or bad solution. Children can also create their own story (written by the teacher), where a character in the story has a problem and comes up with solutions to solve the problem.

87

**Supporting Young Children with Problem-Solving in the Moment**

- Anticipate problems
- Seek proximity
- Support
- Encourage
- Promote



D. **Supporting Young Children with Problem Solving in the Moment** (show [Slide 87](#)). Adult caregivers can keep in mind the following five steps as they assist young children in the problem-solving process:

1. Anticipate problems.
  - a. Expect problem situations to arise in your classroom. When over a dozen children are in a room with few adults and limited materials, it is natural for problems to occur.
  - b. There will also be certain situations when the teacher can predict that there will more likely be a problem. For example, there is a new dinosaur toy in the block corner, and the teacher anticipates many children will want to play with it. Or the teacher notices that a boy in her class has a scowl on his face when he gets off the bus—which last time meant a very troublesome day.
  - c. When teachers anticipate problems, they are available to support children when a problem occurs.
2. Seek proximity.
  - a. When a teacher is aware that a problem may ensue, seeking proximity is key.
  - b. This strategy is not necessarily to prevent the problem from occurring, but to ensure that the teacher is close enough to begin prompting a child through the problem-solving steps.
  - c. When the teacher notices a child getting agitated and upset, she can cue the child to “calm down” by remembering the Turtle Technique (see Joseph & Strain, 2003).
  - d. Once a child is calm and the teacher is in proximity to support, the child will be ready to problem solve.

3. Support.
  - a. Young children will need support from the teacher to remember the problem-solving steps and to stay in the situation.
  - b. Children who feel they are not skilled at problem solving will be prone to flee the situation.
  - c. So, sometimes support means keeping the child physically in proximity to the other child or children involved.
  - d. Support also means prompting the child through the problem-solving steps. This prompting can be done with the added support of visuals depicting the problem-solving steps. These visuals can be placed strategically around the room to remind children of the steps when an adult is not available.
4. Encourage.
  - a. It is almost a certainty that even good solutions don't work all of the time. So, children need to be encouraged to keep trying at generating alternative solutions.
  - b. When children cannot think of any more solutions, they can be prompted to look through a "solution kit." The solution kit provides children with picture cues of various solutions to interpersonal problems. Show examples of some solution cards. Cards are available on the CSEFEL Web site at [csefel.uiuc.edu/practical-ideas.html](http://csefel.uiuc.edu/practical-ideas.html).
  - c. Children will need support to remain in the situation and to keep trying in the face of adversity. After each try, it is essential that an adult acknowledge a child's efforts ("Wow! You have thought of two really good solutions! I know you have some other ideas.") and encourage them to go on ("Boy, this is a tough problem, and you have thought of so many good solutions. You are such an amazing problem solver. What else can you think of?").

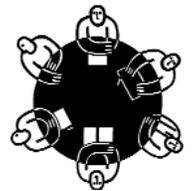
5. Promote.

- a. The last task to supporting a child’s “in the moment” problem-solving efforts is to reinforce the child’s success. This kind of promotion can be done in informal and formal ways.
- b. Informally, teachers can give children high-fives, thumbs-up, a wink, verbal acknowledgement of positive behavior, hugs, and so on.
- c. Formally, teachers can plan mini-celebrations when a child has done a great job of problem solving. These mini-celebrations send a clear message to all of the children in the class that peaceful persistence at problem solving is valued.
- d. It is not long after a teacher focuses on promoting problem solving before you see children supporting, encouraging, and promoting each other’s efforts.

VIII. Pulling It All Together (30 minutes)

VIII. Pulling It All Together (30 minutes)

A. Explain to participants that now that we have talked about the why, when, what, and how of being more intentional about teaching social emotional skills, we are going to do an activity to integrate the first three levels of the pyramid (Module 1 and Module 2) before we move on to Modules 3a and 3b. Remind participants that in Module 1, they discussed the importance of relationships, environments, schedules, rules, transitions, and providing positive feedback and encouragement. Have participants look at **Slide 88/Handout 2.8**. The first page shows an example of the activity that they will be completing. Review Jack’s behavior, why he might be doing these things, what we can do to try to prevent the behavior, and what new skills we can teach him so he doesn’t have to use that behavior.



88

Pulling It All Together Activity		
What is the behavior?	Why might Jack be doing this?	What are skills we want to teach?
Jack is not getting up and leaving his seat.	He is bored. He has trouble listening to the teacher. He is not understanding his work. He is not interested in the work. He is not happy. He is not happy to be in school. He is not happy to be in school. He is not happy to be in school. He is not happy to be in school.	When Jack gets up, he should be able to sit down and listen to the teacher. He should be able to understand his work. He should be able to be interested in the work. He should be able to be happy to be in school. He should be able to be happy to be in school.
He doesn't listen when he is told.	He is not happy to be in school. He is not happy to be in school.	When he is told to do something, he should be able to listen to the teacher. He should be able to understand his work. He should be able to be interested in the work. He should be able to be happy to be in school. He should be able to be happy to be in school.

Pulling It All Together Activity		
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He doesn't listen when he is told.	He is not happy to be in school. He is not happy to be in school.	When he is told to do something, he should be able to listen to the teacher. He should be able to understand his work. He should be able to be interested in the work. He should be able to be happy to be in school. He should be able to be happy to be in school.

Handout 2.8

89

**Key Point: Intentionally Teach!**  
(Teach me what to do!)

- Friendship skills
- Emotion words/feelings
- How to recognize feelings in oneself and others
- How to "calm down"
- How to control anger and impulse
- How to problem solve



B. After reviewing the example, divide participants into groups of 5-10 and have them complete one of the handout forms using the teaching pyramid (building relationships, creating supportive environments and intentionally using social emotional teaching strategies) as their guide. There are two behaviors on each form. If you have a large group, you might have each group address one of the behaviors. Once groups have completed their form, they can report back and share ideas. (Note to Presenter: A blank form has been provided for you to individualize this activity, if needed, based on the group being trained, The blank form can also be given to participants and they can think of a child and complete the form based on the behaviors that particular child has been using.)

C. Show **Slide 89** (Key Points). Review the key points with participants, emphasizing "teach me what to do!" Ask if they have any questions/parting thoughts/ideas they want to go back and try.

**Video Credits** Educational Productions, [www.edpro.com](http://www.edpro.com)

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