



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**
Program Topic : **Emotional and social development in early Childhood (LOVE)**

Guidelines to the presenter

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion rather than telling people what to do.
- Encourage people to seek further information
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

Topic:

Emotional and social development in early childhood

Objectives:

- Encourage parents to support their children’s social and emotional development
- Create understanding of what self-regulation skills are and how they can be developed.
- Encourage parents to help children identify their feelings and those of others
- Encourage parents to provide opportunities for children to socialize with others, and to use these opportunities to learn about relating and getting on with others.

Introduction

Supporting your child's emotional and social development is essential for their overall development. This enables to understand and manage their feelings and helps them to get along and work with others. Good social and emotional development is linked to later school and life success. Self-regulation, the management of emotion, is critical for school success. Warm, responsive, caring environments build children's confidence, emotional intelligence and self-regulation.

It's important that we are aware of this and provide opportunities for children to socialize with others and use moments of conflict with others to help your child learn about cooperation and self-regulation.

Questions	Facts/Information
<p>1. <i>We have discussed many times how important the early years of a child's life are for their future development – why is it important to also focus on their emotional development in these early years?</i></p>	<p>Birth to school age is the period of greatest growth and development. The early childhood years are not only a time for taking first steps or for saying first words. They are also when, through their relationships with others, children are building expectations about their world and the people in it and are developing their first:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sense of self including feeling good about themselves and what they can do• social skills to get along in life with others• emotional skills such as recognising, expressing and managing a wide range of feelings.

<p>2. <i>What are social and emotional skills?</i></p> <p>3. <i>Why are these skills so important?</i></p>	<p>These first skills are very important as they form the foundations for children’s ongoing development and affect their mental health and wellbeing, now and into the future.</p> <p>Social and emotional skills are linked but not the same. We all have emotions and we all need to learn to manage them, so they enable us to make the most of our own lives and develop respectful and fulfilling relationships with others. Emotional skills are about learning to manage and express feelings appropriately. Social skills are about relating to others. They involve being able to be a friend, to negotiate our needs and difficulties, to be assertive without being aggressive and to relate effectively with adults and peers.</p> <p>The evidence for the importance of social and emotional learning is overwhelming. Without social and emotional skills children cannot learn as effectively and cannot make the most of their learning. A child who is afraid in the classroom or in the schoolyard or bringing fears from home cannot concentrate on learning. A child who has not learned to consider others cannot use what they learn to make effective</p>
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<p>4. <i>But don't social and emotional skills develop naturally?</i></p> <p>5. <i>How do small children develop emotionally and socially?</i></p>	<p>negotiations in the real world.</p> <p>Children who have good feelings about themselves and about others and who know how to express their emotions and relate to others will be more effective learners, achievers and citizens.</p> <p>Data shows that children who are systematically taught social and emotional skills like how to manage their distressing emotions better, empathize and collaborate do better: have fewer problems such as substance abuse and violence, like school more and pay more attention in class—and score significantly better (11%, on average) on academic achievement test scores.’(Goleman from Emotional Intelligence)</p> <p>The ability to recognize and regulate emotions and to form relationships with peers and family do not just appear naturally -- those concepts are taught through play and other experiences in the early childhood years.</p> <p>Children’s social and emotional skills are developing all the time. Skills may develop differently for different children. Children benefit from having many learning and</p>
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<p>6. <i>Does this change as babies get older?</i></p>	<p>practise opportunities. Babies are born communicators and are capable of experiencing and expressing a wide range of emotions. Through their many positive interactions with caregivers, they learn to feel good about themselves and to enjoy relating with others. They also learn how to manage a range of feelings and to communicate effectively to get their needs met.</p> <p>As babies grow into toddlers and later preschoolers, they can manage more things by themselves but still need guidance and support from their caregivers. Toddlers want to please adults and also to be themselves. They do this by imitating others and build their self confidence by 'helping' during everyday experiences such as cooking, cleaning, and shopping. They also adapt their behaviour according to their caregivers' responses and are learning ways to cope with conflict and to solve problems through their relationships with significant adults in their lives.</p> <p>Preschoolers develop their social and emotional skills through a wide network of social relationships including other adults and children. Supported by their increased language, thinking and planning capabilities,</p>
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<p>7. <i>So during this time they are learning to manage their emotions and get on with others?</i></p>	<p>preschoolers are more able to wait for things they want, to negotiate solutions to everyday problems and make decisions for themselves and with others.</p> <p>Yes. Often this is described as learning to regulate their emotions. Toddlers and preschoolers also tend to throw tantrums, but as they grow older and through strategies such as time-outs, children learn to regulate their emotions. Toddlers find it hard to share and do not quite understand what their peers feel. Forcing a toddler to share might result in a fit, but often talking to your child about sharing and teaching him to calm down in the midst of a tantrum will give him emotional regulation skills. Practicing sharing and turn-taking also helps teach self-control.</p>
<p>8. <i>Could you explain more about self-regulation?</i></p>	<p>Children experience ups and downs when they are trying to manage their feelings and behaviours. Finding ways to balance this is called self-regulation. Emotional and behavioural self-regulation contributes to young children’s growing independence. It is this growing ability to control their own feelings and behaviour that eventually allows a child to become more skilled in their relationships with children and adults</p>

<p>9. <i>How is this self-regulation developed?</i></p>	<p>As part of life, children are exposed to new events and experiences such as their first day at childcare, moving house or the birth of a sibling. Babies and young children may be frightened and upset by these new experiences and express their distress in a number of ways such as crying, withdrawing, bedwetting or clingy behaviour.</p> <p>When parents and carers respond in a caring way, for example, with a calm tone of voice, holding, rocking and gentle touch, children learn they can feel comfortable and safe again. They learn others will be available to help them notice and understand their feelings and behaviours and provide comfort when needed. Parents and carers act like an 'emotion coach' and with their help, children can learn to regulate their feelings and behaviours.</p>
<p>10. <i>So the role of the caregiver is really important in developing self-regulation?</i></p>	<p>Sensitive and comforting care from warm, supportive and trusted adults helps children develop self-regulation. Just like newborn babies need help regulating basic needs like body temperature, heart rate and sleeping, they also need help regulating their emotions. Parents and carers are also important models for their children in their</p>

<p><i>11. Why is self-regulation so important?</i></p>	<p>day to day life. When children see parents and carers effectively regulate their own emotions and actions, it helps them to learn how to manage their own feelings and behaviours. Children learn over time how to self-regulate without the presence of a parent or carer. For example, a three-year-old may be able to share a toy for a short time when a parent or carer is present but find it more difficult when the parent or carer is away from them. However, by the time children are about four, they are more able to understand and manage their emotions, slow down their behaviour and focus attention on tasks.</p> <p>Self-regulation skills are linked to how well children manage many other tasks during early childhood. With these skills, children are more able to manage difficult and stressful times that occur as part of life. As a child learns to self-regulate, skills such as concentrating, sharing and taking turns also develop. This enables a child to move from depending on others to beginning to manage by themselves.</p>
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<p><i>12. How do you know if a child is struggling with self-regulation?</i></p>	<p>Some of the signs of self-regulation difficulties in children include ongoing difficulties with concentration (e.g., being unable to listen to a story), looking very sad and uninterested in daily activities (e.g., playing with other children), or becoming easily upset and worried so they are unable to move on. These types of self-regulation difficulties can interrupt important tasks of childhood such as learning, maintaining relationships and understanding of feelings and behaviour. It is when difficulties occur often and for an extended time that seeking advice from a health professional may be necessary.</p>
<p><i>13. So how can families support this development in their children?</i></p>	<p>Families can support children’s developing social and emotional skills by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• being affectionate and warm• providing security for children by being consistent and predictable• having frequent face-to-face interactions, including making eye contact, smiling and laughing together• responding to your child’s signals and preferences (e.g., knowing when to stop playing when your baby turns away signalling they have had

enough for now

- talking with children about what is happening and what will happen next
- being comforting and helping children to manage their feelings
- encouraging children to explore, play and try new things
- using social and emotional skills yourself and showing children how they work (e.g., by talking with children about your own mistakes, saying sorry and trying to make things better for the child you show them that these are a part of life and can be learning opportunities for everyone)
- describing and labelling emotions (e.g., "I enjoyed doing the puzzle together with you. It was fun!"; or "Are you feeling sad today because your friend is not here?")
- storytelling, playing games, singing, dancing, and imaginary play
- supporting children to make choices and solve problems as appropriate for their developmental level (e.g., "Do you want to wear your red dress or your blue dress?")

<p><i>14. Could you give some examples of how you help children to learn to describe and label their emotions?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing opportunities for interactions with others (e.g., going to play groups with other children, inviting a child to your home for a play, going to the park where there are other children playing). <p>Start by inquiring about your child's own feelings, asking questions about events in your child's life. "How did you feel when you lost your toy?" "How did that story make you feel?" Once children become skilled at expressing their own emotional reactions, begin asking questions about how other people may feel. "How do you think Nadia felt when you took away the toy she was playing with?" By posing such questions, children can begin to think about how their own actions might impact the emotions of those around them. Parents can also boost empathy and build emotional intelligence by encouraging their children to think about how other people feel.</p>
<p><i>15. How can you help your child learn to play well with others?</i></p>	<p>Social competence not only involves the ability to cooperate with peers; it also includes such things as the ability to show empathy, express feelings, and share</p>

generously. Fortunately, there are plenty of things that you can do to help your kids develop these all important social and emotional skills.

The best way is by **Modeling appropriate behaviors**. Observation plays a vital role in how young children learn new things. If your child sees you sharing, expressing gratitude, being helpful, and sharing feelings, your child will have a good solid understanding of how to interact with other people outside the home. You can model these responses in your own household with both your child and other members of the family. Every time you say "please" or "thank you," you are demonstrating how you would like your children to behave. Most importantly, be sure to offer praise when your children demonstrate good social behaviors.

16. Why is praise so important?

Praise and reinforcement of good behavior not only makes young children feel good about themselves, it helps them understand why certain behaviors are desirable and worthy of praise. Helping your children feel good about themselves also plays an important role in developing a sense of

<p><i>17. I guess that to develop social skills, children need to spend time with others?</i></p> <p><i>18. And how do you teach children to get along with others and work together?</i></p>	<p>empathy and emotional competence. By creating a positive climate where children are allowed to share their feelings, children will naturally begin to become more generous and thoughtful.</p> <p>It is important that you provide opportunities for your child to interact with others (going to the park with other children, going to a playgroup, spending time with other families) . Importantly, you need to also support these interactions – find moments to encourage co-operation and help your child to learn to play and work cooperatively with others.</p> <p>Cooperation is one skill that benefits tremendously from direct experience. Giving your child the opportunity to interact and play with other kids is one of the best ways to teach your child how to relate to others. While your toddler may find playing with other kids his age frustrating at times, since kids often lack patience and the ability to share, things will gradually begin to improve with age and experience. As children play and interact, they also begin to develop social problem solving skills. Early attempts might involve plenty of</p>
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<p><i>19. Are there keys things parents can do in difficult situations when their children are struggling to get on with others or manage their emotions?</i></p>	<p>arguments and conflict with siblings and peers, but eventually kids learn how to negotiate and compromise with other children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When issues arise, no matter what, let your child know that you are there to help them. • Really listen. Children who don't feel heard, cannot hear you. • Notice and act when you see your child is having some difficulty; for example, being left out, being aggressive, being very quiet, being fearful, not being aware of others' needs, not attending and so on. Acting early will help you find ways to resolve issues early.

<p>Learning outcomes</p>
<p>After listening to this show the audience should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding what supporting their children's social and emotional development means. • Be aware that children need to be supported to identify their feelings and those of others. • Understand how opportunities for children to socialize, learn about relating and getting on with others can be identified.