

# Social Emotional Development

Ways to Support Transitional Kindergarten  
Students

Elizabeth Magruder, M.Ed.

*Early Childhood Educational Consultant*

April 12, 2012

Tulare Transitional Kindergarten Summit II



## What Research Tells Us...

- About 20 percent of children entering kindergarten do not yet have the necessary social and emotional skills to be “ready” for school.
- Of very low-income children, as many as 30 percent may not have the necessary skills.
- Social and emotional development is important both in its own right and because aspects of it facilitate cognitive development.
- When children are young, the adults around them are the most important influences on their social and emotional development.



## What Teachers Know...

Kindergarten teachers rate motivational and social emotional skills as more important to school success than being able to hold a pencil or read.

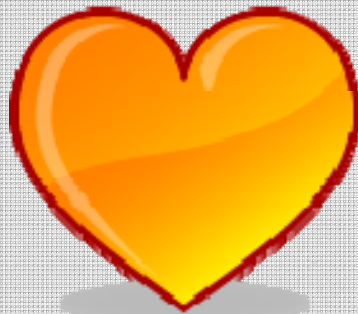




## What Teachers Want...

Kindergarten teachers want children to be *ready* for learning...

...to be able to cooperate, follow directions, demonstrate self-control, and “pay attention”.





# Social Emotional Development: Let's Define It

It involves the acquisition of a set of skills. Key among them are the ability to:

- identify and understand one's own feelings,
- accurately read and comprehend emotional states in others,
- manage strong emotions and their expression in a constructive manner,
- regulate one's own behavior,
- develop empathy for others, and
- establish and sustain relationships.



*National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2005)*



Social-Emotional Development



Language and Literacy



English-Language Development



Mathematics



Visual and Performing Arts



Physical Development



Health



History/Social Science



Science



# California Preschool Learning Foundations

Volume 1

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION • SACRAMENTO, 2008



Map of the Foundations -  
Social-Emotional Development

Self

Strand

Domain

Substrand

Age

**1.0 Self-Awareness**

*At around 48 months of age*

*At around 60 months of age*

**1.1** Describe their physical characteristics, behavior, and abilities positively.

**1.1** Compare their characteristics with those of others and display a growing awareness of their psychological characteristics, such as thoughts and feelings.

Foundation

Foundation description

Children view their characteristics and abilities positively, enjoy demonstrating them, and assert their own preferences and desires. Children also want to be viewed positively by adults who matter to them.

Children are confident in their abilities and characteristics, sometimes (depending on cultural values) comparing them favorably with those of others. Children also regard themselves in terms of their past abilities and remain sensitive to how they are viewed by adults, peers, and other people whose opinions matter to them.

**Examples**

**Examples**

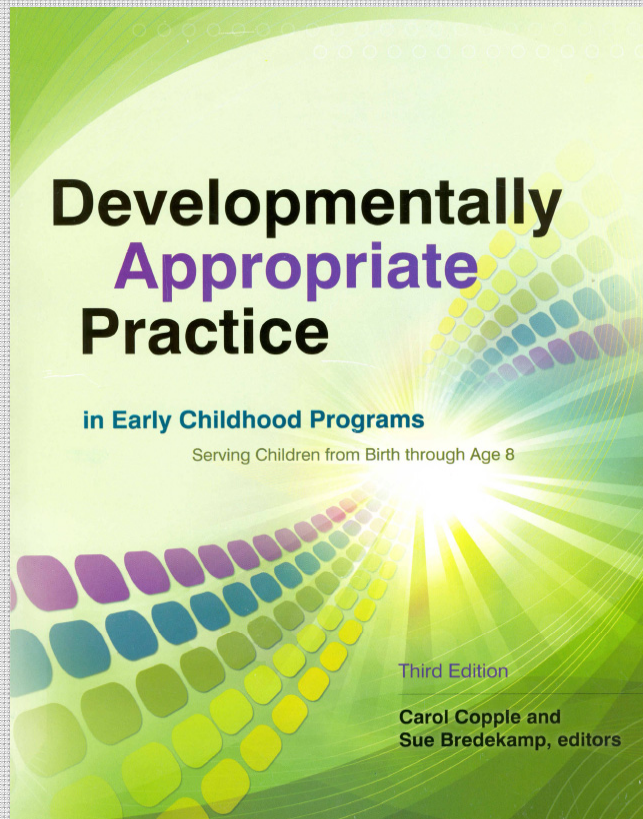
- Seeks to do things by himself, sometimes refusing an adult's assistance, and communicates, "Do it myself."
- Communicates, "I like rice!" or "See my picture!" or "I don't like getting wet" or "Look what I did!"
- Shows a painting or demonstrates an accomplishment to elicit the acknowledgment of the teacher or parent and smiles when the adult responds.
- Communicates, "My skin is brown," in a positive manner.
- Seems dismayed and withdraws after her behavior is disapproved of by an adult.

- Communicates, "I can ride a bike, but my baby sister doesn't."
- Smiles with delight at accomplishing something that was difficult to do and looks to the teacher for acknowledgment.
- Communicates, "I couldn't do that when I was little."
- Communicates, "Sometimes I just want to be by myself."
- Seems disappointed if a drawing or demonstration of physical skill does not elicit the expected acknowledgement from an adult.
- Tries new things, even those that may be too

Examples



# Developmentally Appropriate Practice



Chapter 4 p. 111  
The Preschool Years Ages 3-4

Chapter 6 p. 187  
The Kindergarten Year Ages 5-6

Chapter 7 p. 217  
The Kindergarten Year  
*Examples to Consider*



# Social Emotional Development in the Classroom A Layered Approach



Intensive  
Individual  
Interventions

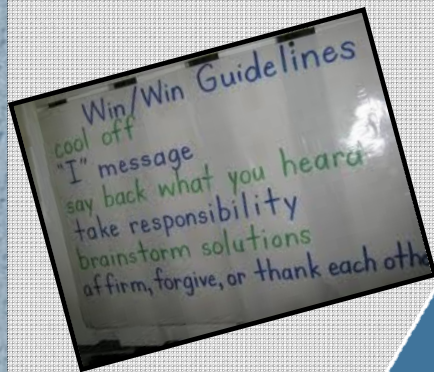


Social &  
Emotional  
Teaching  
Strategies

Classroom  
Preventative Practices



Building Positive Relationships



The teaching pyramid model (Fox et al. 2003) Young Children and CESEFL





# Supporting the Child...

## Engaging Interests & Experiences

- o Get to know your students and families!
- o Design a structured system within a “free flow” environment!
- o Integrate Social Emotional Development into your daily routines!
- o MODEL, MODEL, and MODEL some more!
- o Provide opportunities for students to practice!
- o Observe, facilitate, and extend language!



# The Classroom Environment

The design of the environment should include:

- open spaces for collaboration





# The Classroom Environment

The design of the environment should include:

- table groupings for shared exploration





# The Classroom Environment

The design of the environment should include:

- areas for investigation, role play, and invention





# The Classroom Environment

The design of the environment should include:

- materials and supplies for group interaction





# Interest Area Centers

- o Library /Reading Area
- o Listening Area
- o Writing Area
- o Computer Area
- o Science Discovery Area
- o Math Area
- o Block Area
- o Dramatic Play Area
- o Sand and Water Area
- o Art/Painting Area







# Planning Routines



- o Create a schedule and a system from the beginning
- o Have students participate in building their learning community
- o Be flexible
- o Create consistency not chaos
- o Use transitions as a teaching tool
- o Have choices for students when they need to make a change





# Purposeful Planning... Creating the Roadmap

- Design “Big Ideas” around building relationships



FRIENDSHIP

FAMILY

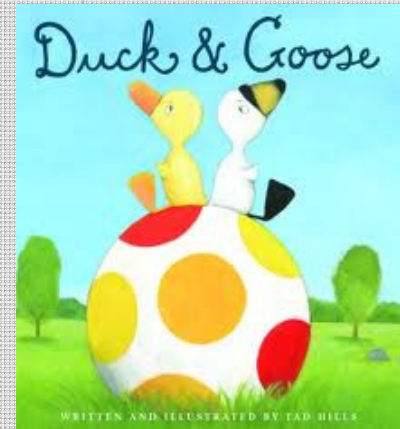
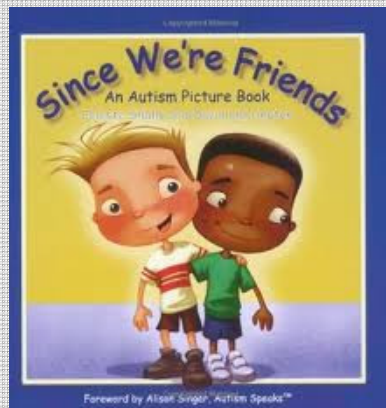


ALL ABOUT ME



# Purposeful Planning... Creating the Roadmap

- o Integrate content by planning activities that promote healthy actions and dialogue

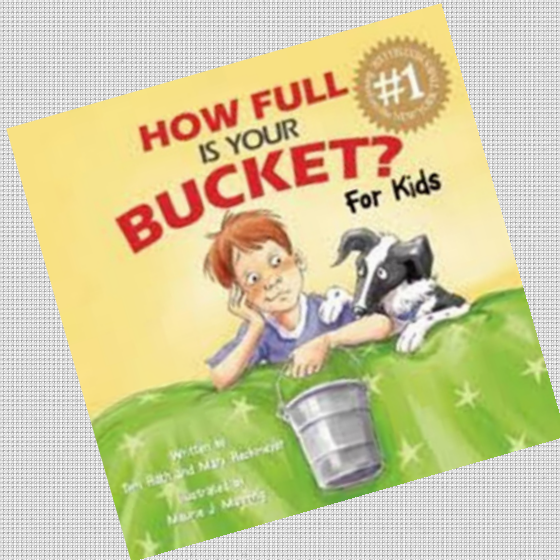




# Intentional Teaching...

## Structuring language for kids

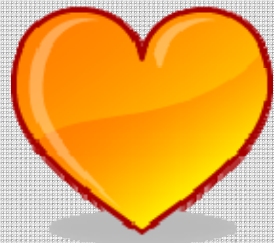
You are a good friend when you share!



You did it! You waited for your turn!

Is there another way we could say it? Like...





# Intentional Teaching...

- enhances emotional literacy
- strengthens self concept
- promotes problem solving skills
- builds relationships





# Surviving the First Weeks...

## Tips to Consider

- o Plan for adult support
- o Prepare open-ended activities
- o Design units of study around child-centered themes
- o Teach one area of exploration at a time
- o Student choice gives you flexibility to facilitate and observe
- o Keep whole group time brief and special
- o Use music, movement, and outdoor play A LOT!!!



# Resources

- o Elizabeth Magruder: [esmagruder@gmail.com](mailto:esmagruder@gmail.com)
- o Vanderbilt University: The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)  
<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#list>