

Tips to Promote Social-Emotional Health in Young Children

Parents must do their part to help young children develop the ability to form close relationships, express and control their feelings and explore the places and things around them. A child who is social and emotionally healthy will find it easier to manage behavior, make friends and adjust to school.

Many resources and partners exist to help parents develop healthy social-emotional growth in your young child. Here's what you can do:

- ❖ Praise your child for good behavior. Include achievements like being a good listener or playing nicely with others.
- ❖ Teach your child how to act by modeling behaviors you want copied.
- ❖ Set household and safety rules and be consistent about enforcing them. Ask other caregivers to apply the same rules.
- ❖ Encourage your child to learn from mistakes.
- ❖ Find ways for your child to play with other children of the same age.
- ❖ Play with your child daily. Try to do an activity both of you enjoy, like walking or biking.
- ❖ Establish routines. Have regular family meals. Watch TV together. Talk or read before bedtime. Bedtime routines promote healthy sleep.

As your child's first teacher, the best way to help him or her develop the emotional and social skills needed is by setting a good example.

