BUILDING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

When young children develop social-emotional skills, they manage their feelings better and are more successful in relationships. These skills help children talk about their own emotions and better understand how others feel.

**Easy Steps You Can Take**

- Label your child’s emotions and make happy, mad, and silly faces.

- Describe your own emotions calmly. Use “I feel” statements.

- Praise your child when he/she successfully navigates a stressful situation.

- Remind your child of appropriate behaviors when conflict arises.

- Have your child describe events in his/her own words.

- Give your child choices during daily routines to nurture independence and self-worth.

- Story time and songs before bed can help your child feel calm. Make this a special reading time.

- Praise your child often.

**Signs Your Child is Developing Social-Emotional Skills**

- Understands fairness and right or wrong behavior.

- Develops friendships with non-family members.

- Plays imagination games with other children, such as dress-up.

- Listens while others speak.

**Did You Know?**

Children are not born knowing how to manage their emotions and get along with others. They need to learn and practice skills like sharing, calming themselves, and controlling their feelings in order to focus in school and build strong relationships.

Children continue to develop their social-emotional skills well into adulthood. They learn these skills from watching the way people around them behave.