

# Social Emotional Development



Children begin developing social-emotional skills at birth. When a child's emotional and physical needs are met, learning pathways to the brain are formed, which lead to learning in all developmental domains. As children mature and develop, their social-emotional skills become less centered on having their own needs met by their caregivers and more focused on participating in routines and enjoying experiences with friends and caregivers.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL MILESTONES	
Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looks at your face and smiles when you talk or smile.</li> <li>• Begins making early noise sounds of laughter when prompted to laugh.</li> <li>• Knows familiar people but is shy, clingy or fearful of strangers.</li> <li>• Plays by grabbing her foot while laying on her back.</li> <li>• Shows several facial expressions like happy, sad, angry or surprised.</li> <li>• Lifts his foot for shoes or socks when you dress him.</li> </ul>
Toddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claps when she's excited and shows you affection.</li> <li>• Points to show you something of interest.</li> <li>• Shows defiant behavior as well as more and more independence.</li> <li>• Plays next to other children and sometimes with them.</li> <li>• Calms down within 10 minutes after you leave.</li> <li>• Notices when others are hurt or upset.</li> </ul>
Preschoolers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plays make believe with dolls, animals or people.</li> <li>• Dresses and undresses himself.</li> <li>• Would rather play with other children than alone.</li> <li>• Can name 2 or more friends; wants to please friends and be like them.</li> <li>• Shows a wide range of emotions.</li> <li>• Can tell you her first and last name as well as age.</li> </ul>

\*If your child is not meeting the expected developmental milestones then he may benefit from a developmental screening.

# Activities to help promote social-emotional development:

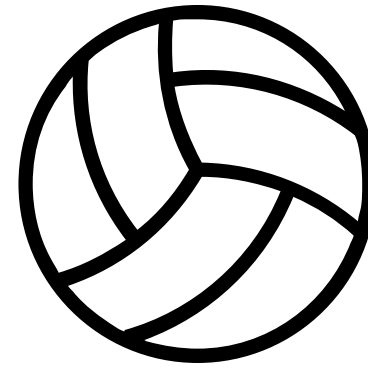
## Infants:



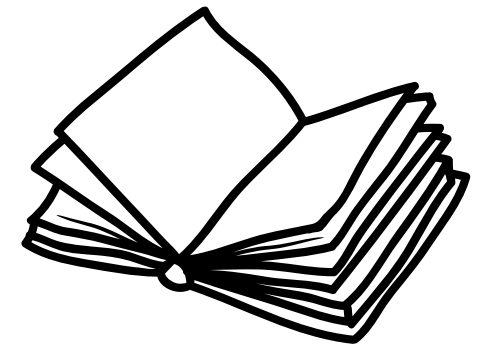
Place your baby in front of a mirror: talk, smile & make silly faces as he learns to recognize himself.



Play "Peek-a-boo" during dressing or "Pat-a-cake" with her feet after changing her diaper.

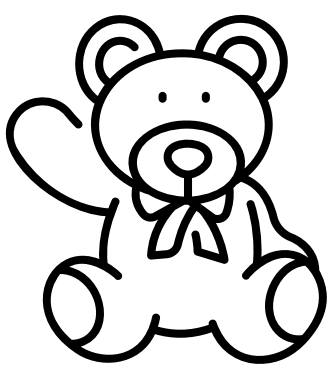


Play games like "my turn, your turn" with a ball or toy to have fun together!

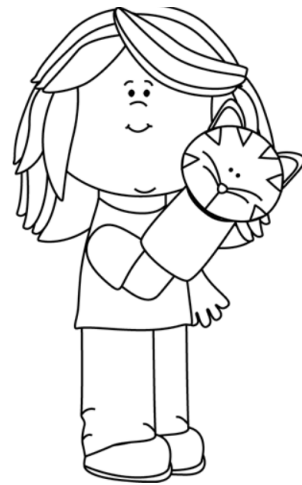


Read books or tell stories using a quiet voice: point to words or pictures as you read.

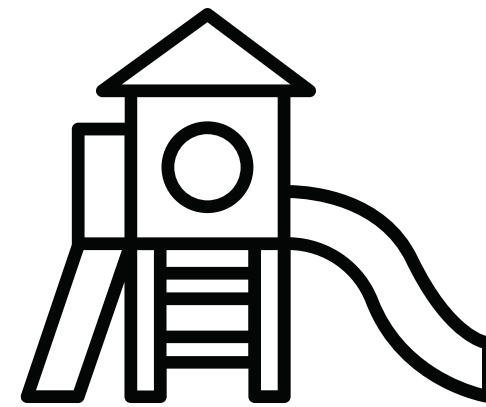
## Toddlers:



Have your toddler choose a toy then hide it for them to find. Use a flashlight to add more fun!



Make puppets with your child & use them to create a story about emotions.



Pretend play! Using dolls, toys or the playground, play make-believe with your child!

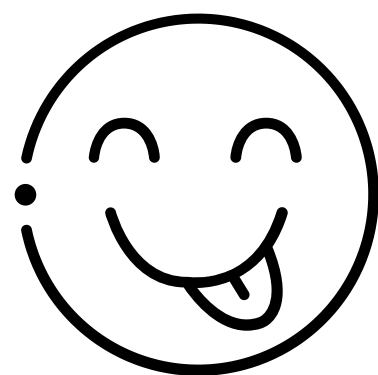


Model emotions. When you feel sad talk about it with your child so he can learn.

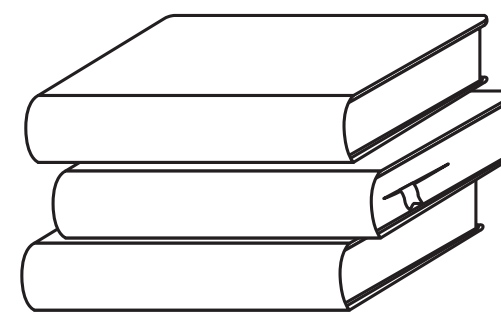
## Preschoolers:



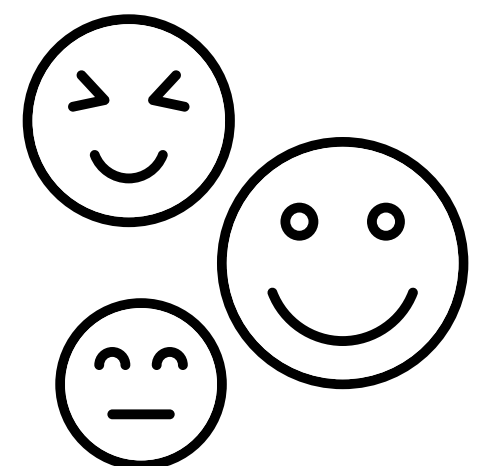
Play "Simon says" or "red light, green light" with your preschooler!



Practice recognizing emotions with a game. Make faces and ask your child to guess the emotion!



Check-out books from the R&R or library about emotions and read them with your preschooler.



Use an emotions chart and daily ask your preschooler how he is feeling! Share how you are feeling too!

\*For more ideas check out the CDC's *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* campaign online.