

EARLY LEARNING AT HOME

“The significance of social and emotional development is seen in every area of a child’s life. A child will have a strong foundation for later development if he or she can manage personal feelings, understand others’ feelings and needs, and interact positively with others.”

www.pbs.org/parents/childdevelopmenttracker/five/socialandemotionalgrowth.html

Getting Ready for Kindergarten: Social Emotional



PRESCHOOLERS | ages 3-5 years

Young children struggle with identifying and expressing their own emotions. Recognizing those same feelings in others can also be a challenge. How well children control themselves, express their feelings, and relate to others are important indicators of a child’s future success in school.

Making face flashcards out of differently colored shapes to illustrate emotions is a fun and multi-sensory way to help children learn to read faces. Talk together about different feelings and how our faces look when we’re experiencing them. Ask your child to make a face that shows the feeling you’re discussing. Build her emotional vocabulary, discussing what it feels like to be shy, jealous, confused, lonely, frightened, proud, embarrassed, excited, and more. Pick out shapes to make faces to match those feelings and stick them on the page. While you’re making faces together, talk to your child about that feeling. “Have you ever felt frustrated? “What did you do?”

Using shapes to make your pictures also develops your child’s early math and literacy skills. Try making new shapes with the stickers provided and build your child’s math vocabulary. Can you make a rectangle from two squares? A trapezoid from three triangles? A rhombus (diamond) from two triangles? Can you cut a circle in half to make a semicircle? Distinguishing between geometric shapes will also help her to recognize different letters when she begins to read.

Things to try at home:

Make more flashcards by drawing shapes to illustrate facial features and expressions. Reviewing your flashcards together can be a great opportunity to talk about how we can act on our feelings appropriately, reminding your child: “It’s okay to be angry, but it’s not okay to hit when we’re mad. What could we do instead?”

Make duplicates of your cards to create a Memory Game. Not only will your child get more practice distinguishing between same and different, he’ll also learn about taking turns.

Talking about feelings helps your child develop empathy, helping him to understand what someone else is feeling. Ask him to identify the emotion pictured on each card. Ask him to move his body to show that feeling or to act out something that might make him feel that way. Ask him what he’d do if his friend was feeling sad or angry or silly or whatever emotion is pictured on the card. In the mood to explore more feelings?

CHECK OUT THESE PICTURE BOOKS:

Happy by Mies van Hout

How Are You Peeling?: Foods with Moods by Paxton Freymann and Joost Elffers

Jafta by Hugh Lewin

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

On Monday When it Rained by Cherryl Kachenmeister

Quick as a Cricket by Audrey Wood

Susan Laughs by Jeanne Willis

Today I Feel Silly & Other Moods that Make My Day by Jamie Lee Curtis

When Sophie Gets Angry—Really, Really Angry by Molly Bang

