PRISM Training Modules

Promoting Positive Peer Interactions

Pyramid Resources for Infant-Toddler Social-Emotional Development
University of Kansas

Adapted from:
The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
Vanderbilt University

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Learner Objectives

Learn how to:

- **Facilitate positive peer interactions**

- **Support the development of social and friendship skills**

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Training Agenda

- **Setting the Stage**
- **Facilitate positive peer interactions**
- **Support the development of social and friendship skills**
- **Wrap-up, Reflection, and Action Planning**

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Our Learning Environment

What can the trainer do to facilitate a safe learning environment?

How can other training participants help make the training environment conducive to your learning?

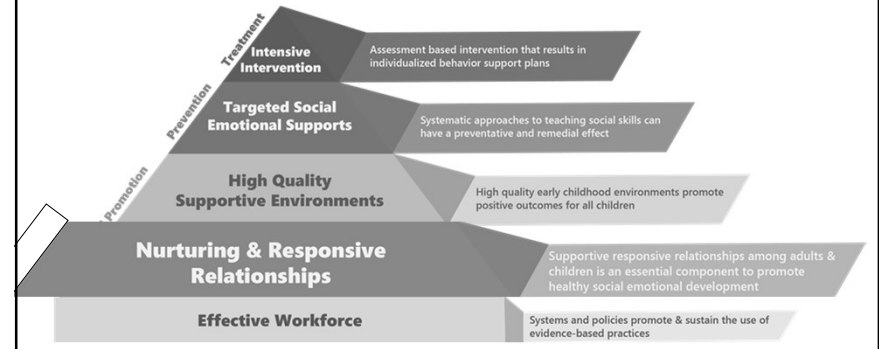What are some agreements we can make?

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Possible Shared Agreements

- **Confidentiality**
- **Take Care of Yourself and Others**
- **Demonstrate Respect**
- **Right to Pass and Take Risks**
- **Assume Positive Intent**
- **Recognize We Are All Learning**

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The Pyramid Model: Promoting Social-Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children

Treatment

Intensive Intervention — Assessment based intervention that results in individualized behavior support plans

Prevention

Targeted Social Emotional Supports — Systematic approaches to teaching social skills can have a preventative and remedial effect

Promotion

High Quality Supportive Environments — High quality early childhood environments promote positive outcomes for all children

Nurturing & Responsive Relationships — Supportive responsive relationships among adults & children is an essential component to promote healthy social emotional development

Effective Workforce — Systems and policies promote & sustain the use of evidence-based practices

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CSEFEL Definition of Social-Emotional Development

The developing capacity of the child from birth through five...

- **to form close and secure relationships;**
- **experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways; and**
- **explore the environment and learn;**

...all in the context of family, community, and culture.

Adapted from ZERO TO THREE, 2001

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Developing Social & Friendship Skills

"The single best childhood predictor of adult social adaptation is not school grades or classroom behavior, but rather, how well a child gets along with other children."
- Hartup

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4 Months - Likes to play with people

cdc.gov/Milestones

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Development of Social & Play Skills Handout 3

Age	Play
Birth to 3 Months	• Responds to caregivers • Coos and smiles • Responds to familiar voices • Focuses on objects
8 to 12 Months	• Begins to imitate play actions or behavior of others, especially caregiver • Plays hiding games, songs & rhymes with adult • Plays alone without caregiver for short periods
25 to 36 Months	• Some cooperation and talking with other children • Some pretend play • Still plays alone frequently • Interactive level moving toward (cooperative play)

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What are Friendship Skills?

- **Organizing Play**
- **Sharing**
- **Assisting Others**
- **Giving Compliments**
- **Reciprocal Interactions**
- **Responsive to the social bids of others**

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Why is Supporting Positive Peer Interactions Important?

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Friendship Skills: Setting Up the Environment

Space for social activities

Daily schedule

Materials & equipment

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Friendship Skills: Promoting Development

Encourage helping and togetherness	**Model social behaviors**
Provide positive verbal support for play between children	**Read books about friends**

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Friendship Skills – Turn-taking and Sharing

Gradual	Learned

Sharing: Cultural Considerations

Independence (Individualist Culture)	Interdependence (Collectivist Culture)
• Children encouraged to do things on their own	• Children encouraged to rely on others
• Child must understand self as "possessor" before learning to share	• Sharing is stressed from birth; ownership is not emphasized
• Encouraged to share	• Sharing is not a choice

Iruka, I. U., Curenton, S. M., Durden, T. R., & Escayg, K. (2020). *Don't look away: Embracing ANTI-BIAS classrooms*. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House.

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Positive Peer Interactions: Play

Infants
- **Face peers toward each other during tummy-time**
- **Prompt and model gentle touches and greetings**
- **Point out peers' interests, actions, or feelings**
- **Use peers' names in play interactions**

Toddlers
- **Plan cooperative activities**

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Positive Peer Interactions: Meals & Snacks

Infants
Position facing one another
Use children's names
Encourage awareness of peers

Toddlers
Arrange seats in a circle or around a table
Ask toddlers to help serve
Model conversation
Respond to children's initiations

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Positive Peer Interactions: Clean Up

Infants
Place bin where all children can help put toys away
Model & prompt handing toys

Toddlers
Encourage children to help each other put toys away
Provide multiples of cleaning supplies
Assign roles or give choices

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Environment and Peer Interaction

Group activity

Handout 5

Classroom Environment & Peer Interaction
With your classroom team, find ways to use materials
already in your classroom to encourage peer interaction.

Mealtime
How can we set up tables, chairs, or the meal to encourage interaction between children?

What can we do before, during, and after meals to encourage peer interaction?

Play
What toys can we use to encourage children to notice and engage with each other?

How will we use these materials to encourage peer interaction?

Outdoors or Gym
What materials or equipment are available that can encourage peer interaction?

How will we set these materials up to encourage peer interaction?

Getting Ready
Which types of self-care activities would be appropriate opportunities to encourage children to notice and/or engage with each other?

How can we encourage interaction during these types of activities?

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Positive Peer Interactions: Reflection

Practice Implementation Checklist

Handout 6

Practice Implementation Checklist: Peer Interactions
Place a star next to the items you feel are a strength for you.
Then, check any of the boxes that apply.

Promoting positive peer interactions	I would like to...			
	Learn more about this	Do this more often	Do in other routines or differently	Do this in better ways
Encourage children to be aware of & care about their peers				
Encourage children to initiate or maintain interactions with their peers throughout the day				
Provide positive descriptive comments to children who are engaging in positive peer interactions				
Offer comfort when negative social interactions occur among children				
Model social skills for children such as sharing, gentle touching, requesting, or using words				
Help children understand their peers' intentions				
Use a variety of developmentally appropriate strategies, materials, and activities to encourage peer to peer interactions				

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Reflection

- **What questions do you have about the material we discussed?**
- **What insights, if any, do you have about your own practices, the children, and/or their families?**
- **What strategies did you see or hear that might be useful in your role and work?**

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Major Messages to Take Home

- **Positive peer interactions are the foundation for the development of social and friendship skills.**

- **Teachers can support positive peer interactions by setting up the environment to promote interaction, and throughout the day, during routines such as play, meals and snacks, and clean-up time.**