

Kindergarten Ready: Social & Emotional Skills



A child's social/emotional wellbeing during their preschool years will have a powerful impact on their relationships in kindergarten and beyond. When we think about social/emotional skills we often think about a child's ability to express feelings and understand the feelings of others. Social-emotional development, however, involves more than just the communicating of emotions. A child ready for kindergarten should be able to demonstrate that they can take turns, become independent in following routines, interact with peers and play cooperatively, control their own emotions and impulses, and focus on a single activity for more than just a few minutes. These skills are crucial for a child's successful participation in school, at home, and for overall growth.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS READINESS KIT

Check out our Social-Emotional Readiness Kit that has been carefully cultivated to provide hours of education and entertainment for your preschooler. This kit includes books, cds, a board game, and more to develop those important social-emotional skills!



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ACTIVITIES TO TRY AT HOME

READ ABOUT EMOTIONS

Include emotion words in conversations with your children, and make books available that discuss feelings and social interactions. Titles like, *I Was So Mad*, *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, and *The Feelings Book* give children the words to express his or her feelings. Talk about their emotions and ask questions: what does it mean to feel scared, angry, lonely, or frustrated? What actions are appropriate when you feel that way? What can you do to calm those intense feelings and emotions?

PRETEND PLAY

Imaginary play is so important for your child! It encourages creativity and stretches their vocabulary, independence, and imagination. Play with your child and let them direct the scene to promote independence. Are you at a restaurant or market? Perhaps you're at a school, a veterinary clinic, or saving a princess from a dragon. Make sure to have plenty of props and encourage talking. These role-playing opportunities help your child develop empathy as their take on new roles and consider new perspectives. Have fun, get silly, and slay those dragons!

MUSIC

Children of all ages express themselves through music. Many preschoolers make up songs and sing to themselves as they play. Music helps the body and mind work together and creates an opportunity for your child to practice self-expression. Share music with your child and encourage them to alternate their body movements from fast to slow, or from one activity to another (like hopping too skipping). *Jim Gill's Irrational Anthem (and More Salutes to Nonsense)*, *Sesame Street: Splish Splash*, and *Best of Raffi* are fun albums to sing, dance, and play along with!

