



Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Strengthening Families Alaska Style

What is it?

Social and emotional skills are the most important skills young children learn during their first years of life. How you respond to your child's emotions impacts how he or she learns to understand and cope with feelings of anger, happiness, and sadness that are a normal part of the human experience.

Parenting is a two-way street. As children grow and develop the ability to interact with the family and others in a positive manner, it is easier for parents to respond in the same way. One of the most important ways you can nurture your child's social and emotional development is to spend time every day reading, talking, and really listening.

Family Check-In: How are you doing?

Rate the following:

My child is a pleasure to be around.

1	2	3	4
Once in a while	Sometimes	Often	Most of the time

Parents today have a lot on their plates. Juggling the demands of work, home and other responsibilities leaves many parents feeling like they do not have nearly enough time with their children. But even small acts of kindness - a hug, a smile, or loving words - make a big difference to children.

Five tips to help your child build social and emotional skills:

- 1 Take a break from "screen time," sit on the floor, and play with your child.
- 2 Read books together that both you and your child enjoy.
- 3 Have family dinners together at least a few times a week.
- 4 Follow a regular routine of meals, bedtime, baths, and family time.
- 5 Check out the library or websites for fun activities to do together:
www.familyeducation.com (the first parenting site on the web!)
www.bestbeginningsalaska.org (activities with Imagination Library books)
www.pbskids.org (read, view, and do activities)