Social & Emotional Development 101

Our Children are our future, and with the right tools, they can lead Maine into prosperity.

What is Social and Emotional Development?

Social emotional development refers to a child's ability to appropriately deal with their emotions and interact with other individuals. Brain research on young children tells us that the early years set the foundation for later cognitive, social and emotional development.

Why is it important?

A recent 20-year study from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation found a connection between a child's social and emotional skills in kindergarten and success later in life.

For every one-point increase on the 5-point scale in a child's social competence score in kindergarten, he/she was:

- Twice as likely to attain a college degree in early adulthood;
- 54% more likely to earn a high school diploma;
- 46% more likely to have a full-time job at the age of 25.

Core Social Emotional Skills

Graphic & Definitions from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.

Self-Management

The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations.

Self-Awareness

The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior.

Social Awareness

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

Relationship Skills

The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups.

Responsible Decision-Making

The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

In recent years, Maine and the U.S. has experienced increased reporting of challenging behaviors in very young children. These children often lack the social emotional skills that are required for them to adjust to group and classroom settings. We need to promote evidence-based practices to help teachers, providers, and parents help children gain the skills they need to be successful in school and life.

Maine Children's Alliance

Sources:

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3. http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/core-competencies/
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