

Skills for Building Safe and Trusting Environments



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Goals

Nurture Social, Emotional, Cognitive and Physical Development



Keeping aware of the developmental domains, our goals are

To Help Children Develop

- > Problem Solving Skills
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Self Awareness
- Identity within a Community

 - Sensitivity and Caring for Others

Emotional Development

Self Esteem
Self Regulation
Awareness of Feelings
Empathy

Social Development

Pro-Social Behaviors giving, helping, caring, sharing Social Competence making friends self assured

Cognitive Development

Perspective Taking Critical Thinking Decision Making Problem Solving

Physical DevelopmentImpulse Control

Peace Education

Conflict Resolution
Collaboration
Anti-Bias Approach
Community
Action



The Developmental Domains are interrelated.

- Development in one domain can facilitate or limit development in others.
 - Models that focus on all the developmental domains "Teach the Whole Child"
- The Peace Education model has a significant positive effect on each of the developmental domains.

Emotional Development

Self Esteem
Self Regulation
Awareness of Feelings
Empathy

Cognitive Development

Perspective Taking
Critical Thinking
Decision Making
Problem Solving

Peace Education

Social Development

Pro-Social Behaviors
giving, helping, caring
sharing
Social Competence
making friends, self
assured

Physical Development

Impulse Control



Cognitive Development

Critical Thinking Skills Definition

Critical thinking skills include reasoning, questioning, making judgments, listening, communicating, creative thinking and problem solving.



Critical Thinking Skills

- Open ended questions provoke critical thinking —closed type questions do not.
- Brainstorming encourages risk taking....there is never a "wrong" answer – only an opportunity to learn.
- Thinking is motivated by questions "How can we keep our school a safe place to learn and play?"
- When encouraged, the child takes a more active role in creative thinking and reasoning.



Rules — are frequently phrased in negative language

- Insufficient RulesChildren's safety at riskLearning Environment not protected
- Over Abundance of Rules
 Difficult for children to remember
 Stifles children's creativity & spontaneity
 Teachers spend *most* of their time enforcing rules

See Workbook p.53 From Policing to Participation: Overturning the Rules and Creating Amicable Classrooms



NonViolence in the Lives of Children Project

Kick Ball Rules

Co-created by 3-year olds

- Tree Stump is the Goal , 1 pt
- Teacher tosses the ball
- Start over at 5 points
- No Grabs
- Two Kids only in Grabs
- No Handsies
- Mandsies OK in the Woods
- "T" for Times (to rest)

 Everybody sits on balance beam



Agreements – are usually phrased in positive language

- Addresses the dilemma of reversal thinking
- Safety and respect are the standards
- Young children are capable of co-creating guidelines for behavior
 - What do we want to see?
 - What do we want to hear?
- Process nurtures cognitive, emotional, social and physical development



Creating Class Agreements

Creating their own class agreements is a wonderful way for children to develop trust, autonomy and selfregulation.

See Workbook p. 60. Excerpt from *Hearing Everyone's Voice* on how to guide children in making agreements.



Critical Thinking is enhanced through Problem Solving

Abundant Opportunities for Problem Solving occur during Unstructured Play

- Problems relating to Physical Activity
 - helping peers, building, use of play materials
- Problems connected to Dramatic, Fantasy, Imaginative Play
 - Deciding roles, props and script



Social and Emotional Development

Problem Solving during Physical Activities

Helping One Another fosters trust, patience, and the development of meaningful relationships.



Problem Solving during Dramatic Play

- Decision making skills roles, script, props,
- Communication skills
 explaining, listening,
 directing, dialogue
- Dramatic Play is essential for self-regulation

See workbook p. 67 Recognizing and Supporting the Development of Self-Regulation in Young Children.



Social Problem Solving

Teaches skills of

- self-control
- listening
- y respectful communication
- how to give and receive help
- and how to work cooperatively and fairly in groups.



Scaffolding Conflict Resolution Skills Support Structures

- Feelings Curriculum
- Communication Skills
- Sign language
- Awareness of basic human needs
- Awareness of child development



A Feelings Curriculum undoubtedly supports social and emotional development.

- Children learn to recognize and identify their own feelings
- Children learn to recognize and identify the feelings of others.
- The foundation for empathy is the ability to recognize and identify the feelings of others.



Feelings Curriculum

Photographs, drawings

Storybooks – reading and acting out

Songs and chants

Flannel stories & puppets

Co-created children's stories and songs

Child-made feelings book

Focused discussions - brainstorming



Feelings Curriculum Story Books

Happy: A Snowy Day, A Whistle for Willie (Keats)

Sad: *The Last Puppy* (Asch), *My Friend Gorilla* (Morozumi)

Scared: When I feel Scared (Spelman & Parkensen), Go Away Big Green Monster (Emberly)

Angry: Let's Be Enemies (Udry), Don't Need Friends (Crimi)



Feelings Curriculum, cont.

Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak

The Wild Things roll their terrible eyes, gnash their terrible teeth and show their terrible claws!



Feelings Curriculum, Cont. - Sad

Sad Little Bird flannel board song

I'm a sad little bird

Because I'm lonely

All alone in the tree

I'm a sad little bird

Because I'm lonely,

All alone - alone in

The tree



Feelings Curriculum, cont. — Scared

Thunder song

I looked up in the sky and saw a big black cloud!

And then I heard the thunder, it was loud, loud, loud

My Mommy said don't worry about that roar, roar, roar

For it only means that soon the rain will pour, pour, pour



Feelings Curriculum, cont. - Angry Anger Chant

Fee Fi Fo Fum
I'm getting angry, here it comes!
My anger's here like popcorn popping
My anger's here like rabbits hopping
What am I gonna do? Hummm?
What am I gonna do?



Communication Skills

- Children learn to listen to one another
- Children learn to express their feelings and needs
 - "I statements" *I feel frustrated when my sand castle gets smashed. I need to have a turn.*



Sign Language for feelings

nurtures impulse control

If you're happy and you know it,
sign like this (x2)
If you're happy and you know it,
then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it,
sign like this.

If you're sad... If you're scared... If you're mad





Awareness of Basic Human Needs

- y Connection − love, relatedness, belonging, closeness
- Autonomy freedom to think for oneself, empowerment
- Competence feeling adept, capable, creative
- Safety trust, emotional & physical safety, security



Awareness of Child Development

Young children think in

- concrete terms
- y in the immediate moment and
- from their own point of view

See Workbook p. 74 *Making Peace in Violent Times: A Constructivist Approach to Conflict Resolution.*



Awareness of Child Development, cont.

Young children need a good deal of assistance in defining the problem.

Use concrete terms "I see two children want one shovel"

They need assistance in seeing that there are two viewpoints.



Awareness of Child Development, cont.

- They need emotional support.
- They need assistance in thinking about cause and effect.
- They need to trust the process and know that their ideas will be respected and valued



Peaceful Conflict Resolution

See Workbook p. 84 Conflict Resolution as an Educational Tool



Basic Steps to Peaceful Conflict Resolution

Assess the situation to see if there is immediate danger of someone getting hurt, or if the children are resolving the conflict in an equitable manner themselves. That includes verbal as well a physical equality. If you determine you are needed, approach the children quickly and **calmly**.



Basic Steps to Peaceful Conflict Resolution

y Defuse Anger

Anger is such an intense feeling that it must be defused before any negotiations can begin.

Basic Steps to Peaceful Conflict Resolution

Calm children and acknowledge their feelings.
 Feelings must be acknowledged & understood before children can move into problem solving.

"I can see that you are really upset."

- 2. Ask children, "What is the problem?"
- 3. When the children are calm, ask each child to express what they want or need.

"Can you tell Sam what you need?"

4. State the problem clearly and non-judgmentally.

"Both Sam and Bill want to use the shovel? Is that the problem?"

5. The children brainstorm ideas about how to resolve the conflict.

"How can we solve this problem?"

6. Try the idea (take action) and evaluate.



A Safe and Trusting Environment

When children master these skill, they see themselves as

- capable and competent problem solvers
- graph caring members of their community.



Caring Members of the Community

Alturism

"Altruism is the purest form of caring—selfless and noncontingent upon reward—and thus the predecessor of pro-social cognitions and behaviors"

Robinson & Curry, Journal of the Association for Childhood Education International Winter 2005/06 "Promoting Altruism in the Classroom"

See Workbook p. 90. *Growing Greater Good: Roots of altruism in early childhood.*



When children

- understand their own feelings and the feelings of others,
- have been encouraged to be assertive, self govern and problem solve,
- trust that they will be heard and valued,

they are able to open their hearts to others while remaining true to themselves.



Acts of kindness engender acts of kindness.

Stories from Stepping Stones Preschool:

Regan notices Kacey struggling to climb the slide and offers to give her a hand. They play "helping hand" for the rest of the morning.



Kacey notices Christopher crying because he cannot find any "campfire sticks."

Kacey says, "Here, Christopher, I'll help you find some sticks." She takes his hand and together they gather quite a bunch!



Christopher discovers Loren crying at the tree stump.

He asks, "Loren, are you sad?" Loren nods.

Christopher says,

"Can I hold your hand?"

Loren nods. They stand together by the stump for a long time, holding hands.

