





# Social and Emotional Development in Childhood

	<b>Emotional Awareness: Emotional Recognition Emotional Regulation</b>	<b>Social Skills</b>	<b>Relationships</b>	<b>Self-Identity and Self-Esteem</b>	<b>What can the adults do to support</b>
 <p><b>TODDLERHOOD</b></p>	<p>Toddlers begin to express a broad range of emotions, including joy, anger, frustration and affection. Their facial expressions and body language become more varied. Toddlers' vocabulary expands rapidly. They start using words to express their feelings, which helps with emotional expression and understanding.</p> <p>Toddlers start to learn basic strategies for managing their emotions, usually with the help of their caregivers, e.g. they may seek comfort from a trusted adult when upset. Individual differences in temperament become more apparent, with some toddlers leaning towards being more "easy going" while others may seem to be more sensitive or intense.</p> <p>Toddlers may experience temper tantrums as a way to cope with growing frustration. This is normal and often occurs as toddlers are struggling to communicate their needs and emotions effectively.</p>	<p>Toddlers tend to enjoy imitating the actions and emotions of the people around them. This helps them to learn social norms and expectations.</p> <p>Toddlers engage in parallel play, where they play alongside other children. This is an early form of social play.</p> <p>Language helps toddlers to understand social cues and to respond to simple social requests, e.g. They learn to say "Please" and "Thank you" with prompting. Toddlers learn by observing the behaviour of others, especially their caregivers. They imitate the actions and emotions they see.</p> <p>Toddlers test boundaries as they explore their world, which is a normal part of their development, as they seek to understand limits and consequences.</p>	<p>The attachment bond between toddlers and their caregivers continues to strengthen. Consistent and responsive caregiving builds a sense of security.</p> <p>Toddlers begin to show signs of empathy, such as comforting others when upset</p>	<p>Toddlers are in the early stages of developing their sense of self-identity.</p> <p>Toddlers begin to recognise themselves as separate individuals from others.</p> <p>Toddlers start to express preferences for certain activities, toys, foods, and clothing. They may show clear likes and dislikes, indicating emerging preferences that reflect their individuality.</p> <p>Toddlers demonstrate a growing sense of agency and autonomy as they explore their environment and make choices independently. They may assert their preferences, desires, and opinions, asserting themselves in simple ways.</p> <p>They want to do things by themselves, which can lead to moments of frustration at some times and pride when they achieve small tasks at other times.</p> <p>Toddlers begin to develop a rudimentary understanding of gender identity, recognizing themselves as boys or girls and exhibiting gender-typical behaviours and preferences based on societal norms and expectations.</p>	<p>Caregivers play a critical role in supporting toddlers' social and emotional development. Providing a secure and nurturing environment, offering consistent and loving care, and responding to their emotional needs helps toddlers to develop a strong foundation for future social and emotional development.</p>
 <p><b>EARLY CHILDHOOD</b></p>	<p>Children expand on their emotional vocabulary, learning to label and express a wider range of emotions. This helps in understanding their own feelings and in empathising with others.</p> <p>Children at this stage can develop strategies to regulate their emotions, such as deep breathing or seeking comfort from caregivers. This skill helps them to cope with frustration, anger or sadness.</p> <p>Children at this stage learn to cope with challenges and setbacks, fostering resilience when faced with difficult situations.</p>	<p>Forming and maintaining friendships becomes significant. Children learn cooperation, negotiation and problem solving through play and interaction with their peers.</p> <p>Children develop basic conflict resolution skills, including sharing, turn taking and apologising. These skills are crucial for successful social interactions.</p> <p>Children grasp societal norms and manners, understanding what is acceptable behaviour. They learn politeness, waiting their turn and respecting personal space.</p> <p>Play becomes more imaginative and cooperative. Group play helps in understanding social roles and enhances communication abilities.</p>	<p>Empathy at this stage becomes more sophisticated. Children can understand and share the feelings of others, leading to more compassionate interaction.</p> <p>Children continue to strengthen their attachment to their caregivers, giving them a secure base for exploring the world.</p> <p>Interactions with peers become more sophisticated. Children at this stage engage in imaginative play, share experiences and form bonds with specific friends.</p>	<p>Children develop a clearer sense of self, understanding their abilities, preferences, and roles within their social environment</p> <p>Positive experiences, encouragement and support from caregivers and peers contribute to the development of self-esteem. Children who feel loved and valued have higher self-esteem.</p> <p>Understanding of gender roles and differences in social expectations starts to emerge, influenced by cultural and familial factors.</p>	<p>Positive reinforcement and encouragement significantly influence the development of a healthy self-concept. At this stage, social and emotional development is interconnected with cognitive and physical growth. Positive and nurturing environments, both at home and in educational settings, play a crucial role in fostering health social and emotional development. Encouragement, positive reinforcement and opportunities for social interaction contribute significantly to a child's emotional intelligence and social competence.</p>
 <p><b>MIDDLE CHILDHOOD</b></p>	<p>As children encounter more complex social situations and emotions, they continue to develop their emotional regulation skills. They may learn new coping strategies, such as taking a break to calm down, and become more aware of their own emotional states.</p>	<p>Children's ability to understand others' perspectives and empathize with them becomes more sophisticated during middle childhood. They may begin to understand more complex social situations and be better able to navigate social conflicts.</p> <p>Middle childhood is an important time for the development of moral reasoning and understanding of social norms. Children start to understand the importance of fairness, honesty, and kindness, and may be more likely to follow rules and respect authority figures.</p>	<p>Middle childhood is marked by the increasing importance of peer relationships. Children form close friendships with peers who share their interests and values, and they may start to experience social hierarchies and cliques.</p> <p>Unfortunately, middle childhood is also a time when bullying can become more prevalent. Children may experience teasing, exclusion, or physical aggression from peers, which can have significant negative impacts on their social and emotional development.</p>	<p>Children's self-concept becomes more complex and nuanced during middle childhood. They start to define themselves based on a variety of factors, including their abilities, interests, and social groups.</p> <p>Children's understanding of gender roles and expectations continues to develop during middle childhood. They may start to understand gender stereotypes and may become more aware of gender differences in behaviour and appearance.</p>	<p>There is much change and growth at this stage Children become more independent, form close friendships with peers, and continue to develop important social and emotional skills. Parents, caregivers, and educators can support this development by fostering positive relationships, modelling prosocial behaviours, and providing opportunities for children to develop and practice their social and emotional skills.</p>
 <p><b>ADOLESCENCE</b></p>	<p>Adolescents experience changes in their emotional regulation, as they learn to manage the intensity of their emotions and cope with stress and adversity. Adolescents may be more susceptible to experiencing negative emotions such as anxiety and depression, and may need support and guidance in developing healthy coping strategies.</p>	<p>Peer relationships become increasingly important during adolescence, as young people seek to establish their identity and form close bonds with others outside of the family. Adolescents may experience a range of emotions related to peer relationships, including excitement, anxiety, and social stress.</p> <p>Adolescence can also be a time of strain on parent-child relationships, as young people assert their independence and parents struggle to find a balance between supporting their child's autonomy and maintaining boundaries and guidance.</p>	<p>Adolescents are also developing their sense of self, including their values, beliefs, and goals. This process can be challenging, as young people struggle to balance their desire for autonomy with their need for social connection and acceptance.</p>	<p>Adolescence is also a time of identity formation, as young people begin to explore different aspects of their identity, including their gender, sexuality, and cultural identity. This process can be challenging, as adolescents grapple with societal expectations and navigate conflicting values and beliefs.</p>	<p>Supporting positive social and emotional development during adolescence requires a holistic approach that takes into account a wide range of factors, including those related to individual differences, family dynamics, and broader social and cultural contexts. Encouraging healthy communication, promoting positive coping strategies, and supporting young people in developing a strong sense of self and purpose can all contribute to positive social and emotional outcomes during adolescence.</p>