

1

## The emotional lives of young children

“As emotional creatures, young children are predictably unpredictable. They have big emotional worlds, which can be intense, loud, messy, chaotic, and most inconveniently timed, with few words to describe them. They are full of emotional energy, but have no way to control it. They pick up on and are affected by the emotions of others, but don’t understand their own. They have good intentions for their behaviour, but these are lost in the intensity of their emotional experience. They have untempered emotional expression that defies reason. Parents of any tantruming or resisting young child will readily attest to their **emotional immaturity**”.

Deborah MacNamara PhD (2016)  
*Rest, Play, Grow: Making Sense of Preschoolers*

2

## Safety is the starting point

“Too often, we assume that a child is intentionally misbehaving when they are actually responding to basic survival instincts, including the need to feel safe. I have often observed that, once a child’s safety needs are properly met, many behavior challenges fade away naturally because the underlying reasons for the behaviors no longer exist. Therefore, instead of focusing on ‘what we do’, we need prioritize ‘how we are’ with children. And instead of focusing on eliminating their behaviors, we need to favor practices that provide children with signals of safety”.

Mona Delahooke (2019) *Beyond Behaviors*

3

## Why This Initiative Began

- Many school staff working in the preschool cycle do not necessarily have early childhood training and feel ill-equipped to support 4- and 5-year-olds effectively.
- Even among those with early childhood training, knowledge of neurodevelopmental approaches rooted in play and attachment is often limited.
- Schools report feeling overwhelmed by the externalizing behaviors commonly observed in young children.
- While there is interest in the CEBM pyramid of interventions for Elementary, it did not align sufficiently with the realities and needs of the preschool context.

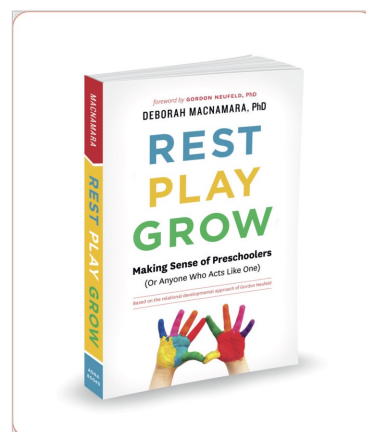
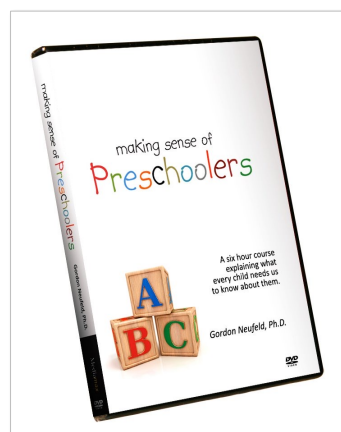
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## The objectives of the initiative

- **Establish a Common Framework:** develop a shared lens and language among educators working in the preschool cycle.
- **Align Expectations:** support adults in adjusting expectations to better reflect the developmental needs of 4- and 5-year-olds.
- **Offer Tiered Strategies:** provide universal, targeted, and individualized practices tailored to the preschool context.
- **Deepen Understanding:** share explanatory documents and resources to support the application of these practices.
- **Equip with Practical Tools:** present ready-to-use activities and tools to implement strategies in the classroom.
- **Support Through Coaching:** promote a coaching-based approach to guide teachers and support staff in their daily roles.

5

## A neurodevelopmental approach based on play and attachment



<https://www.institutneufeld.org>

6

## The initiative has two components

### Part 1: The Pyramid of Support

- Universal, Targeted, and Individualized practices
- Additional explanatory documents and appendixes
- Resources (webinars, video clips, editorials, infographics, planning tools, intervention tools, etc.)

### Part 2: The Teacher Toolkit (suggested books, games, and activities—by tier of support—in the classroom or outdoors)

- Emotional development
- Social development

7

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/k4-k5-practices>

**CEBM RESOURCES CENTER**  
Framework for Student Support

PHILOSOPHY THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK CHALLENGES PRACTICES MATERIALS INTERVENTION SPACE

**K4-K5 Practices** (this webpage is still under construction)

This webpage is dedicated to our 4-5 year olds, as they require a different kind of understanding and support, given their developmental level and related needs. The documents, tools and resources presented below have been designed with them in mind, catering to their budding immaturity, and compensating for their challenges, until their maturation unfolds.

CEBM would like to extend a special thank you to all the [key people](#) who have contributed to the development of this resources page. The following documents, tools and resources could not have been possible without their precious help.

**K4-K5 PYRAMID OF SUPPORT: preventive practices and alternate measures**

Tier 1 universal practices Tier 2 targeted practices Tier 3 individualized practices Considerations

**FR**

- Paradigm Shift
- CEBM Distinctives
- COMMON PRACTICES TO AVOID
- Pyramid of Interventions
- K4-K5 Corner

PRESENTATION: MAKING SENSE OF OUR K4-K5 CHILDREN

8

## CEBM K4-K5 Pyramid of Support

### Tier 1 universal practices



### Tier 2 targeted practices



### Tier 3 individualized practices



### K4-K5 considerations



<https://www.cebmmember.ca/k4-k5-practices>

9

## List of practices by section

Physical and social setup of the space

Attachment rituals

Adult posture

Structures and routines

Inclusive practices

Play based activities

Downtime and respite

Physical movement

Outdoor opportunities

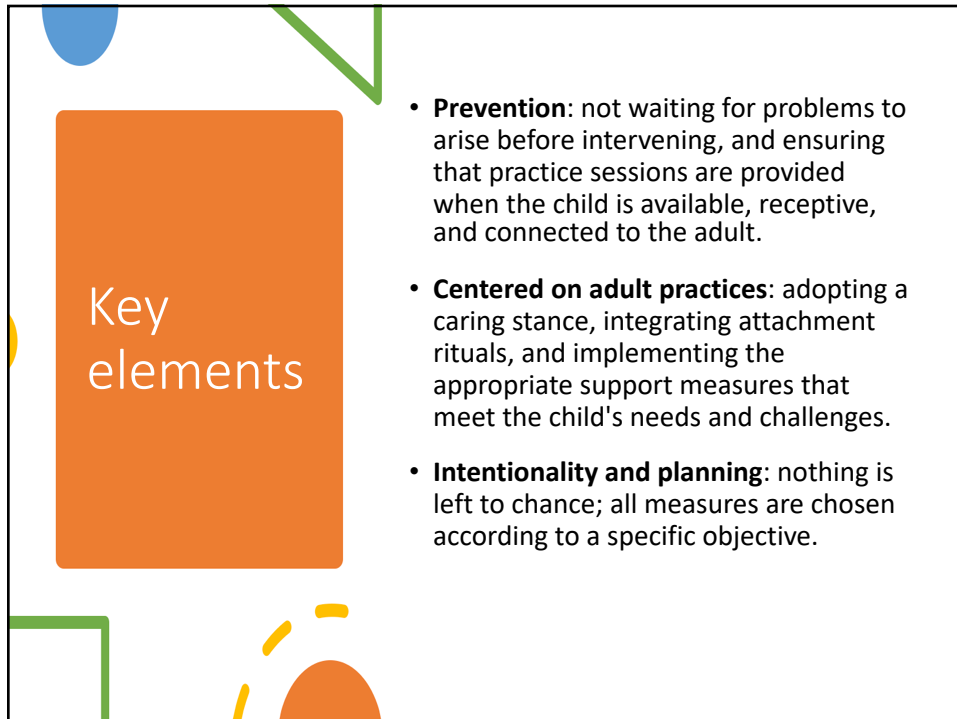
Emotional and social development

Parameters around transitions

Planning and considerations

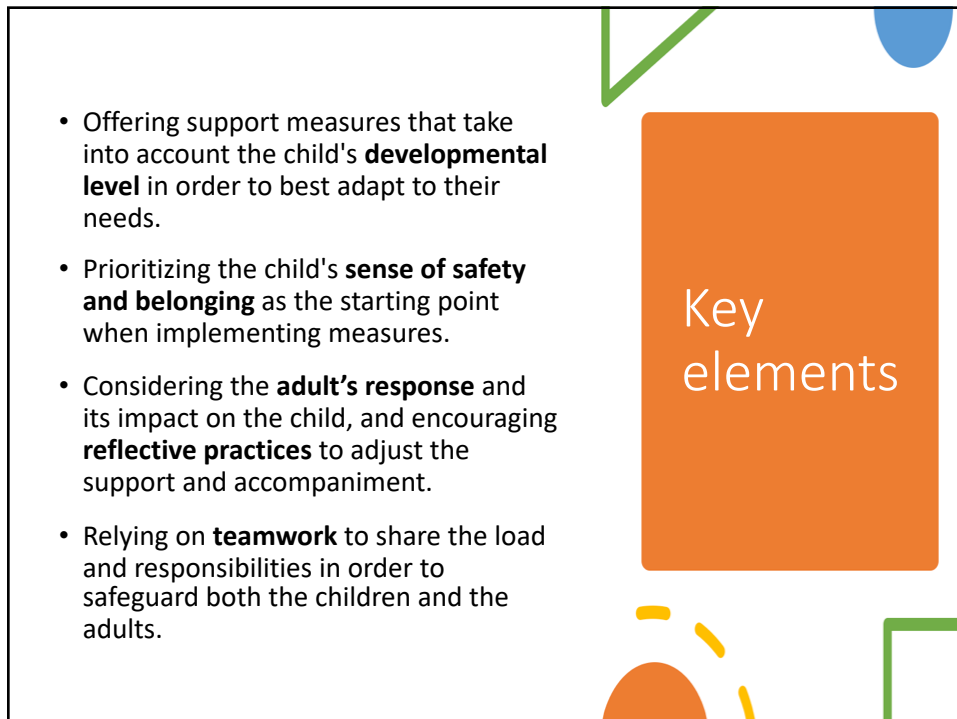
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/k4-k5-practices>

10

The slide features a large orange rectangle on the left with the text "Key elements" in white. To the right of this rectangle is a bulleted list. The slide is decorated with abstract shapes: a blue semi-circle in the top left, a green L-shaped line in the top center, a yellow dashed line and an orange semi-circle in the bottom center, and a green L-shaped line in the bottom left.

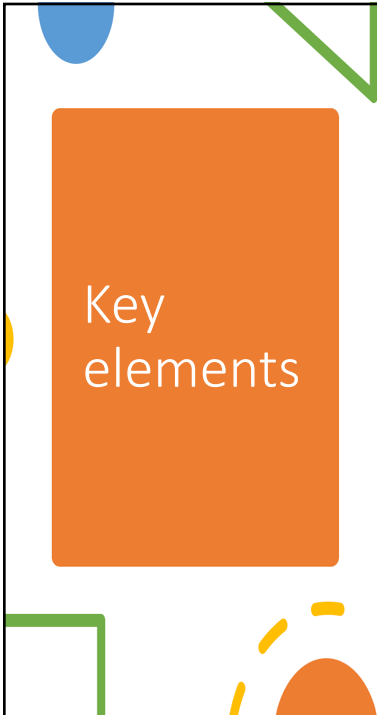
- **Prevention:** not waiting for problems to arise before intervening, and ensuring that practice sessions are provided when the child is available, receptive, and connected to the adult.
- **Centered on adult practices:** adopting a caring stance, integrating attachment rituals, and implementing the appropriate support measures that meet the child's needs and challenges.
- **Intentionality and planning:** nothing is left to chance; all measures are chosen according to a specific objective.

11

The slide features a large orange rectangle on the right with the text "Key elements" in white. To the left of this rectangle is a bulleted list. The slide is decorated with abstract shapes: a green L-shaped line in the top center, a blue semi-circle in the top right, a yellow dashed line and an orange semi-circle in the bottom center, and a green L-shaped line in the bottom right.

- Offering support measures that take into account the child's **developmental level** in order to best adapt to their needs.
- Prioritizing the child's **sense of safety and belonging** as the starting point when implementing measures.
- Considering the **adult's response** and its impact on the child, and encouraging **reflective practices** to adjust the support and accompaniment.
- Relying on **teamwork** to share the load and responsibilities in order to safeguard both the children and the adults.

12




Key  
elements

- Relying on the support measures in place (structures, routines, play, movement, respite, outdoor time, etc.) to help **compensate** for the child's potential challenges related to their immaturity.
- Expecting the adult to **adjust the circumstances and the environment** to facilitate the child's adaptation (or to support them in **co-regulation**), rather than attempting to control their behavior.

13

## Helping the adults adjust their expectations

The 4-year-old VS the 5-year-old



The differences and similarities between the 4 and 5-year-old

**At 4 years old**

- 1) Their prefrontal cortex has not yet started to develop - little or no sign of executive function abilities
- 2) Doesn't yet have a well-developed relationship with oneself
- 3) Has big raw emotions (only experience one emotion at a time), unable to regulate emotions, tears are very common, difficulty with verbalizing emotions
- 4) Doesn't yet learn from their mistakes and struggles to adapt in confusing situations
- 5) Their increasing imagination gives them the ability to anticipate but through happening to self or others (this triggers many fears but struggles to verbalize fears)
- 6) Reacts on impulse with little or no filter
- 7) Is egocentric (doesn't yet have the ability to hold two perspectives at once, which impacts their consideration and empathy towards others)
- 8) Has little or no tolerance for separation (especially in a new environment or with new adults - has not yet developed a good enough ability to hold on when apart)
- 9) Has a short attention span (approx. 8-12 min - this depends on the activity at hand and the child's interest), needs to move (high energy)
- 10) Needs to rest (may still be feeling hungry)
- 11) Mood often shifts when tired and/or hungry
- 12) Needs to play - their job is to play (may still parallel play)
- 13) Displays shyness around new adults and struggles with having to respond to several adults at once (they assert themselves towards one adult at a time)
- 14) Struggles with transitions and unstructured/unexpected contexts - needs to know what comes next for reassurance

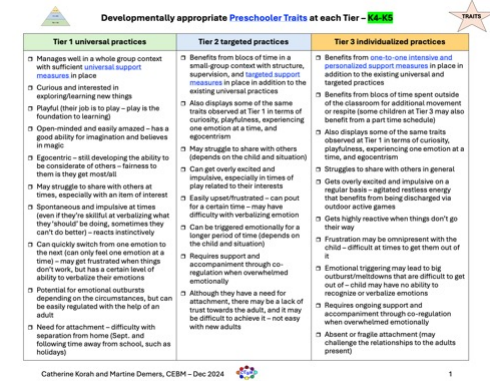
**At 5 years old**

- 1) Their prefrontal cortex development has barely begun (if the 'right' conditions are in place) - beginning stages of executive function abilities (may be easily enclosed)
- 2) Still getting to know themselves (likes, dislikes, preferences, etc.)
- 3) Also, big raw emotions (only one at a time) - starting to verbalize emotions
- 4) Still developing the ability for adaptation
- 5) May have a better ability to play out fears and voice concerns
- 6) Has impulses with little filter depending on the day and emotion being triggered
- 7) Is still egocentric, although we may observe at times the beginning stages of consideration for others
- 8) May have some tolerance for separation (this will depend on the child and their ability to attach - when they feel comfortable this will be altered)
- 9) May have a slight better attention span (but still about - approx. 12-15 min - this depends on the activity at hand and the child's interest), also needs to move
- 10) Needs some respite/downtime
- 11) May be able to name when they are tired/hungry or have other needs that require to be fulfilled. Some seek it intuitively and others need for the adults to orchestrate it
- 12) Needs to play - their job is to play (may have a better ability to play with others) - Learning takes place through play
- 13) May display some shyness around new adults, may have a better ability to respond to a few adults at a time if they have a relationship with them
- 14) May do somewhat better with transitions if there are consistent/predictable and are limited in number; still struggles with unstructured/unexpected contexts
- 15) May have better fine motor and gross motor abilities
- 16) May have better language development

Please note that the traits listed above are typically observed in children who have been exposed to optimal life conditions (attachment, safety, basic needs met, etc.). Adversity and trauma may have an impact on the development of some of these milestones. Hyperactivity, sensory overload, and intense/overwhelming emotions may also have an impact on displaying the following traits.

Catherine Korah and Martine Demers, CEBM - Dec 2024

### Developmentally appropriate preschooler traits at each Tier



Developmentally appropriate Preschooler Traits at each Tier - **K-5**

Tier 1 universal practices	Tier 2 targeted practices	Tier 3 individualized practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Manages well in a whole group context with sufficient universal support measures in place</li> <li>2) Curious and interested in exploring/learning new things</li> <li>3) Playful (their job is to play - play is the foundation to learning)</li> <li>4) Open-minded and easily amazed - has a good ability for imagination and believes in magic</li> <li>5) Egocentric - still developing the ability to be considerate of others - fairness to them is they get most/all</li> <li>6) May struggle to share with others at times, especially with an item of interest</li> <li>7) Spontaneous and impulsive at times (even if they're skilled at verbalizing what they 'should' be doing, sometimes they can't do better) - reacts instinctively</li> <li>8) Can quickly switch from one emotion to the next (can only feel one emotion at a time) - may get frustrated when things don't work, but has a certain level of ability to verbalize their emotions</li> <li>9) Potential for emotional outbursts depending on the circumstances, but can be easily regulated with the help of an adult</li> <li>10) Need for attachment - difficulty with separation from home (Sept. and following time away from school, such as holidays)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Benefits from blocks of time in a small-group context with structure, supervision, and targeted support measures in place in addition to the existing universal practices</li> <li>2) Also displays some of the same traits observed at Tier 1 in terms of curiosity, playfulness, experiencing one emotion at a time, and egocentrism</li> <li>3) May struggle to share with others (depends on the child and situation)</li> <li>4) Can get overly excited and impulsive, especially in times of play related to their interests</li> <li>5) Easily upset/frustrated - can pout for a certain time - may have difficulty with verbalizing emotion</li> <li>6) Can be triggered emotionally for a longer period of time (depends on the child and situation)</li> <li>7) Requires support and accompaniment through co-regulation when overwhelmed emotionally</li> <li>8) Although they have a need for attachment, there may be a lack of trust towards the adult, and it may be difficult to achieve it - not easy with new adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Benefits from one-to-one intensive and personalized support measures in place in addition to the existing universal and targeted practices</li> <li>2) Benefits from blocks of time spent outside of the classroom for additional movement or respite (some children at Tier 3 may also benefit from a part time schedule)</li> <li>3) Also displays some of the same traits observed at Tier 1 in terms of curiosity, playfulness, experiencing one emotion at a time, and egocentrism</li> <li>4) Struggles to share with others in general</li> <li>5) Gets overly excited and impulsive on a regular basis - agitated/restless energy that benefits from being discharged via outdoor active games</li> <li>6) Gets highly reactive when things don't go their way</li> <li>7) Frustration may be omnipresent with the child - difficult at times to get them out of it</li> <li>8) Emotional triggering may lead to big outbursts/meltdowns that are difficult to get out of - child may have no ability to recognize or verbalize emotions</li> <li>9) Requires ongoing support and accompaniment through co-regulation when overwhelmed emotionally</li> <li>10) Absent or fragile attachment (may challenge the relationships to the adults present)</li> </ul>

Catherine Korah and Martine Demers, CEBM - Dec 2024

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/k4-k5-practices>

14

## Supporting emotional and social development

### Emotional development at each tier

CEBM suggestions of Emotional Development Practices at each Tier - <b>K-5</b>		
Tier 1 universal practices	Tier 2 targeted practices	Tier 3 individualized practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing universal whole group accompaniment for emotional development during class time</li> <li>Providing opportunities for emotional development, which goes beyond the focus on self-regulation</li> <li>Being mindful of the differences between the 3-year-old and the 5-year-old</li> <li>Inviting expression of all emotions, each are required to find balance (e.g. like colours and shades in a rainbow)</li> <li>Being careful with categorizing emotions (association to a negative connotation) to bring out just what to share around the expression of some of these emotions (e.g. not using the colour red for frustration)</li> <li>Allowing for moments of emotional release and expression through different playgrounds (e.g. Inside Out Foundation by Hermann-Busch)</li> <li>Matching the right word to the emotional experience (could use characters and emotions to illustrate examples)</li> <li>Helping the child at Tier 1 feel safe 'enough' (e.g. through adult grasping/engaging children, adult voices, predictable routines and context) to connect with and become aware of their emotions (body and mind connection)</li> <li>Providing the context to help the children experience a comforting and spring feeling through the senses (e.g. play soft music, dim lighting, soft comfy textures, sensory materials, naming nature scenes, comforting scents, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing targeted small-group (2-4 children) accompaniment for emotional development, either in class (during lesson-based activities) or in an alternate location (e.g. recess, lunch, indoors or outdoors)</li> <li>Helping the child at Tier 2 feel safe 'enough' and have 'enough' release (e.g. through check-ins and other individualized attachment rituals, adult context at Tier 2, etc.) to connect with and become aware of their emotions (body and mind connection)</li> <li>Setting up a variety of ways to play out emotions (e.g. role-play, puppets, etc.) - this can be done outdoors through games and activities (e.g. refer to the CEBM Foundation tool guide for ideas of activities and materials)</li> <li>Offering a variety of emotional creative art activities (e.g. music, dance, painting, etc.)</li> <li>Providing a variety of tools to illustrate emotions (e.g. mirror, photographs, emotion cards with visual children's faces, children's books, etc.)</li> <li>Offering a variety of tools and materials to discover body sensations (e.g. body pillows, sensory bins, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing intensive and personalized one-to-one accompaniment for emotional development in an alternate location</li> <li>Allocating an alternate space to explore and name emotions (e.g. Emotions Corner in the Nursing Support Center (NSC))</li> <li>Helping the child at Tier 3 feel safe 'enough' and have 'enough' release (e.g. through check-ins and other individualized attachment rituals, adult context at Tier 3, ensuring the child is well regulated, etc.) to connect with and become aware of their emotions (body and mind connection)</li> <li>Providing individualized support measures to allow additional expression, movement, release, or channeling energy, which helps with emotional support                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individualized scheduled support/activities</li> <li>Individualized gross motor activities</li> <li>Individualized fine and personal choice board</li> <li>Building and creating activities</li> <li>Sensory corner in NSC</li> <li>and more...</li> </ul> </li> <li>Giving access to private space (e.g. Emotions Room) to release and express emotions - applying de-escalation strategies if needed</li> <li>Making sure the time spent in the Emotions Room is not only when the child is upset (they require emotional rest and connection to the adult to feel safe/comfortable in that space and to explore what works and doesn't work for them)</li> </ul>

### Social development at each tier

CEBM suggestions of Social Development Practices at each Tier - <b>K-5</b>		
Tier 1 universal practices	Tier 2 targeted practices	Tier 3 individualized practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing universal whole group accompaniment for social development during class time</li> <li>Providing opportunities for social development, which goes beyond the focus on getting along</li> <li>Understanding the K-5 children are not yet developmentally ready on a social level - they require ongoing structure and supervision to adapt well to their environment and cannot achieve this autonomously</li> <li>Being mindful of the differences between the 4-year-old and the 5-year-old</li> <li>Using explicit and playful ways to introduce, model and prompt a response to the adult's experience (e.g. waiting their turn, standing in line, participating in group activities, interacting with others, etc.)</li> <li>On a one-to-one basis (when the child is regulated and receptive - not immediately following an incident), having the child at Tier 2 replay challenging/higher-level social skills, as well as conflicts (e.g. using LEGO, puppets, figurines/toys, etc.) - refer to CEBM K-5 Teacher for more ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing targeted small-group (2-4 children) accompaniment for social development, either in class (during lesson-based activities) or in an alternate location (e.g. recess, lunch, indoors or outdoors) - need to be supported by another assigned adult</li> <li>Using story books, in a small group setting, to accompany the children in exploring a range of social situations, require the help of an additional adult</li> <li>Using games and activities, in a small group setting, to explore and practice a range of social situations (e.g. using LEGO, puppets, figurines/toys, etc.) - refer to CEBM K-5 Teacher for more ideas</li> <li>Modeling the expected social interactions and naming the positive examples</li> <li>On a one-to-one basis (when the child is regulated and receptive - not immediately following an incident), having the child at Tier 2 replay challenging/higher-level social skills, as well as conflicts (e.g. using LEGO, puppets, figurines/toys, etc.) - refer to CEBM K-5 Teacher for more ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing intensive and personalized one-to-one accompaniment for social development in an alternate location (e.g. recess, lunch, indoors or outdoors) - need to be supported by another assigned adult</li> <li>Giving access to an alternate space to explore and discuss a variety of social situations (e.g. Class room, sensory room, Nursing Support Center (NSC), etc.)</li> <li>Setting up parameters to help them stay out of trouble by                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing close supervision when playing with others</li> <li>Accompanying them in co-managing a difficult social context (e.g. board games, group activities, etc.)</li> <li>Applying de-escalation strategies if needed</li> </ul> </li> <li>Using story books, on a one-to-one basis, to accompany the child in exploring a range of social situations</li> <li>Using games and activities, on a one-to-one basis, to explore and practice a range of social situations (e.g. using LEGO, puppets, figurines/toys, etc.) - refer to CEBM K-5 Teacher for more ideas</li> <li>Modeling and naming the expected social interactions - naming the positive examples</li> </ul>

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/k4-k5-practices>

15

## Using the CEBM Pyramid of Support

ANALYSE



ENGAGE



ACT



REVIEW

- Support Through Coaching:** it is recommended that teachers and support staff be accompanied in their use of the CEBM Pyramid of Support through guided reflection and coaching.
- Resources for Reflection:** the list of suggested practices, considerations, and planning documents are intended to be used as references and sources of inspiration during team discussions and collaborative planning.
- Flexibility and Adaptation:** there is no expectation that all practices from the pyramid be implemented. Selection of support strategies should be guided by:
  - ✓ The composition of the group
  - ✓ The targeted and individualized needs of specific children
  - ✓ The preferences and comfort levels of the adults implementing the practices

16



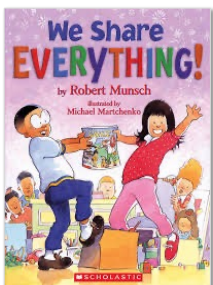
## Teacher toolkit to accompany emotional and social development

- This two-year project is funded by the Canada-Quebec Entente.
- Ten K4-K5 teachers were invited to collaborate on this project (on a formal and regular basis), as well as two K4-K5 teachers from REACH (special needs EHDA).
- An additional twenty K4-K5 teachers were consulted informally.
- Ten consultants and professionals, as well as other key individuals, from four different school boards were involved in the development of the documents and resources.
- The toolkit is available both in English and in French.


17

## Teacher toolkit to accompany emotional and social development


**Book**



**Activity sheet**



**Ready to use games and activities**



\* The accompanying sheet offers a variety of games and activities along with ready to use materials (available to download onto CEBM Resources Centre).

18

## Teacher toolkit to accompany emotional and social development

- Indoors games/activities (classroom or gym) as well as outdoors (schoolyard or nearby park)
- Activities are available at each tier of support (universal as a whole group, targeted in small-groups, individualized on one-to-one)
- Component for parents, whether inviting them to class or proposing an extended activity at home
- Considerations for Tier 3 children who require intensive one-to-one support
- Considerations for 4-year-olds vs. 5-year-olds
- Considerations for special needs (EHDA)

19

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/k4-k5-emotional-development>

The screenshot shows the CEBM Resources Center website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: PHILOSOPHY, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, CHALLENGES, PRACTICES, MATERIALS, and INTERVENTION SPACE. Below the navigation bar, the main content area is titled "K4-K5 Emotional Development (this webpage is still under construction)". It includes a paragraph about the resources page's purpose, a thank you note to key people, and a link to a list of books by theme. Below this, there is an "OVERVIEW: school staff resources for K4-K5 emotional development" section. This section contains several sub-sections: "Intro presentation" with a cartoon illustration of children, "Practices by tier" with a table of activities, "List of books by timeline" with a timeline of books, "Books by theme" with a list of books, "YouTube links" with a list of videos, and "Editorials by theme" with a list of editorials. The website also features a "CEBM" logo and a "CEBM RESOURCES CENTER Framework for Student Support" banner.

20

## Examples of children's books on emotional development



21

## Book series *I Can Dance*



<https://hannahbeach.ca/books-resources/i-can-dance-books/>

22

### Themes covered in the emotional development section

- Building an emotionally safe classroom climate
- Emotional expression, with or without words, through different emotional playgrounds, such as dance and drawing
- Emotional release through physical activities
- Recognizing and naming one's own emotions
- Emotions and bodily sensations
- Playing with colors and emotions (range and intensity of emotion)
- Feeling frustration and upset
- Feeling fear and worry
- Feeling sadness and tears
- Experiencing comfort, safety and emotional rest
- Emotion and hypersensitivity/neurodiversity
- Emotional regulation (with the support of co-regulation)

23

### Emotional development practices

- Providing a range of tools and resources to help make emotional development more **concrete and engaging**
  - ✓ children's books, games and activities to explore and experience emotions
  - ✓ photographs (using real faces to help children read actual facial expressions)
  - ✓ emotional creative art activities, dress-up, puppets, role playing, imaginary play, etc.
- Providing opportunities for **emotional release** through movement activities
- Offering a variety of tools and materials to discover **body sensations** (body silhouette, sensory box, etc.)

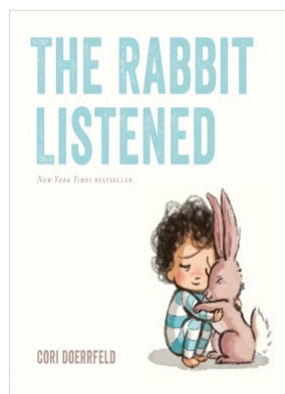
24

## Emotional development practices

- Creating the context to help the children experience a **comforting and calming feeling** through the senses (e.g. play soft music, dim lighting, soft comfy textures, sensory materials, calming nature scenes, comforting scents, etc.)
- Providing measures to allow for **play, movement, respite,** and time **outdoors**, which helps with emotional support
- Being careful with categorizing emotions, which may bring out guilt and/or shame around their expression – all emotions are important and play a key role
- Providing opportunities for emotional development, which goes beyond the focus of self-regulation (inviting the children to explore and express their emotions)

25

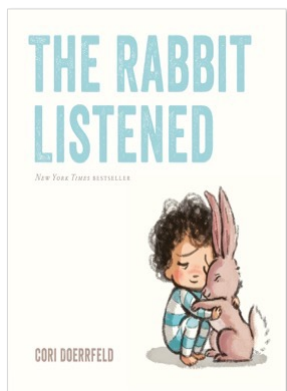
## Book on emotional development



When something sad happens, Taylor doesn't know where to turn. All the animals are sure they have the answer. The chicken wants to talk it out, but Taylor doesn't feel like chatting. The bear thinks Taylor should get angry, but that's not quite right either. One by one, the animals try to tell Taylor how to act, and one by one they fail to offer comfort. Then the rabbit arrives. All the rabbit does is listen . . . which is just what Taylor needs.

26

## Tier 1 Universal Practices (for ALL)



Reading the story with the **whole group** (using a physical copy of the book with the group, rather than having them listen to the story on video).

Asking the children questions about the book to keep them engaged and to take the message of the story one-step further (having a **bookmark** with pre-planned questions can be useful).

Using **props** (e.g. rabbit puppet or stuffed rabbit plush, wood or Architek blocks) can help increase the children's interest in the story.

27

## Tier 1 Universal Practices (for ALL)

### As a whole group



#### NAMING EMOTIONS ACTIVITY

Inviting the children to notice the differences in facial expressions from one card to the next (eyes, mouth, expression).

Asking the children to choose an emotion card then share what happened for them to feel this way, and what helped them feel better.

28

## Tier 1 Universal Practices (for ALL)

### As a whole group

#### MUSICAL CHAIRS



Setting up the children's chairs in a circle and placing a rabbit image on 3 chairs.

Each child must sit in a chair. The adult starts the music. The children walk calmly around the circle while the music is still playing. When the music stops, they need to find a chair.

Each child with a rabbit image will share a time when they experienced an emotion. The adult then provides an emotion card that illustrates the feeling the child has named.

29

## Tier 1 Universal Practices (for ALL) - outdoors

### As a whole group

#### MAKE YOUR EMOTIONS MOVE!



Selecting 4 or 5 emotion cards which are associated to a movement station (e.g. skipping ropes, jumping jacks, burpees, hopping on one leg then the other, frog hopping, squats, hoola hoops, etc.)

Reading a scenario card and asking the children to name which emotion this makes them feel.

Then, inviting them to run to the matching emotion photo-movement station to complete the predetermined exercise.

Calling the children back after a few minutes and repeating the exercise with additional scenario cards.

30



## Tier 1 Universal Practices (for ALL) Parent component



### SOCK PUPPET ROLE PLAYING

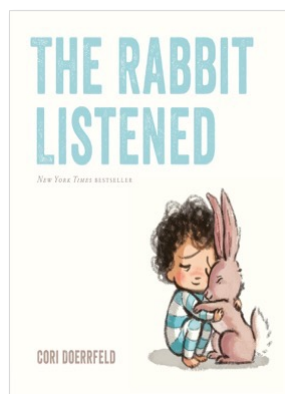
Inviting the parents to join their child in the classroom to assist them in making a sock puppet (using socks and different arts and craft supplies).

The sock puppet can then be brought home where the children can use it to act out their feelings. This activity might be more fun and engaging if the adult has their own puppet to join in!

*\* The teacher can model de role playing in class with the whole group to inspire the parents and children on different ways to use the puppet*

31

## Tier 2 Targeted Practices (for SOME)



Re-reading the same story **with a small-group of selected children** at Tier 2.

Owning a second copy of the book, which could be lent to each child at Tier 2 to read with their **parents at home** (book to be lent on rotation).

32



## Tier 2 Targeted Practices (for SOME)

In a small group (2-3 children)



### NAMING EMOTIONS ACTIVITY

Repeating the same photo card activity in a small group setting with the children at Tier 2.

The children will benefit from receiving added exposure that is more personal than the one encountered in the large group.

Having personal photos sent in by their parent(s) can be beneficial to help them relate on a more personal level.

33

## Tier 2 Targeted Practices (for SOME)

In a small group (2-3 children)



### MUSICAL CHAIRS

On an individual level, this game can be adapted using the emotion cards.

These need to be put face down on a table, and have the child move the cards around while the music is playing.

When the music stops, the child picks a card and then talks about the emotion illustrated, as well as a time when they felt this way.

Following this round, remove the card from the deck and continue playing with the rest of the cards.

34

## Tier 2 Targeted Practices (for SOME) - outdoors

In a small group (2-3 children)

### MAKE YOUR EMOTIONS MOVE!



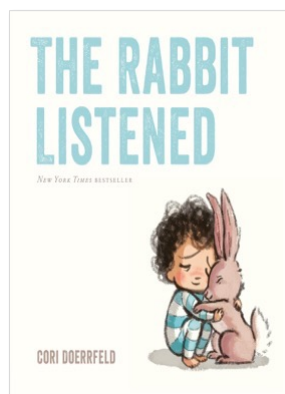
Repeating the same game in a small group setting with the children at Tier 2.

When playing again after the class group, the physical activities can be changed according to the children's suggestions.

Additional scenarios can be created based on events that have occurred with the children in this group so as to provide them with additional support in naming and working through their emotions.

35

## Tier 3 Individualized Practices (for FEW)



Re-reading the same story with a child at Tier 3 on a **one-to-one basis**.

Owning a second copy of the book, which could be lent to the child at Tier 3 to read with his/her **parents at home**.

36

## Tier 3 Individualized Practices (for FEW)

One-to-one with an adult or a friend



### NAMING EMOTIONS ACTIVITY

Repeating the same photo card activity on a one-to-one basis with the children at Tier 3, as they often struggle with recognizing different emotions felt within their body.

The adult can help by providing various examples to help the child to tune into different experiences.

Having personal photos sent in by their parent(s), or using a mirror, can be beneficial to help them relate on a more personal level.

37

## Tier 3 Individualized Practices (for FEW)

One-to-one with an adult or a friend



### MUSICAL CHAIRS (adapted)

On an individual level, this game can be adapted using the **emotion cards**.

The cards are placed face down on a table, and the child moves the cards around while the music is playing.

When the music stops, the child picks a card and talks about the emotion illustrated, as well as a time when they felt this way.

After each round, the adult removes the card that has been used from the deck, and continue playing with the rest of the cards.

38

## Tier 3 Individualized Practices (for FEW) - outdoors

One-to-one with an adult or a friend

### MAKE YOUR EMOTIONS MOVE!



Repeating the same game on an individual basis with a child at Tier 3. If possible, inviting a friend to join in to make the game more engaging.

While using the emotion photos, inviting the children to share a time when they felt the emotion, and then pick a physical activity to expend some energy.

Once an activity card is used, discarding it to encourage the children to use each of the physical activity cards.

39

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/k4-k5-social-development>

**CEBM RESOURCES CENTER**  
Framework for Student Support

PHILOSOPHY THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK CHALLENGES PRACTICES MATERIALS INTERVENTION SPACE

**K4-K5 Social Development** (this webpage is still under construction)

Through children's literature, this resources page aims to provide a range of tools and resources to help make social development more concrete and engaging for K4-K5 children.

CEBM would like to extend a special thank you to all the [key people](#) who have contributed to the development of this resources page. The following documents, tools and resources could not have been possible without their precious help.

The books presented below are those for which CEBM developed activity cards. Please consult the [list of books by theme](#) for additional suggestions. You can also consult this [list of books by timeline](#).

**OVERVIEW: school staff resources for K4-K5 social development**

Intro presentation

Practices by tier

List of books by timeline

Books by theme

YouTube links

Editorials by theme

FR K4-K5 Practices K4-K5 Corner

40

### Examples of children's books on social development



41

### Themes covered in the social development section

- Getting to know and appreciate oneself
- Considering similarities and differences in others
- Boundaries and personal space
- Friendship
- Kindness
- Acceptance and inclusion
- Sharing and cooperative play
- Waiting our turn and standing in line
- Making mistakes and losing
- Politeness and manners
- Conflict and being sorry
- Listening and following the rules

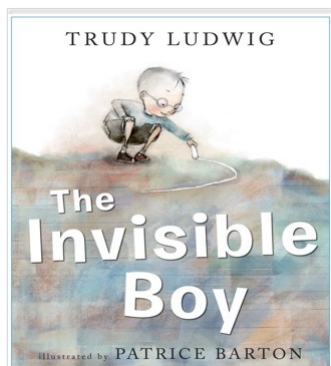
42

## Social development practices

- Using positive and playful ways to **introduce and model** adult expectations through stories, chants, role-playing, games, etc.
- Using story books to accompany the children in **exploring** a range of social situations
- Using games and activities to **practice** a range of social situations (e.g. imaginary play and role-playing with puppets, masks, figurines, dolls, Lego, etc.)
- Being careful with attributing behavior to the child's identity – normalizing and validating the emotions behind the behavior
- Providing opportunities for social development, which goes beyond the focus of getting along

43

## Book on social development



Meet Brian, the invisible boy. Nobody ever seems to notice him or think to include him in their group, game, or birthday party . . . until, that is, a new kid comes to class. When Justin, the new boy, arrives, Brian is the first to make him feel welcome. And when Brian and Justin team up to work on a class project together, Brian finds a way to shine.

44

## Tier 1 Universal Practices (for ALL)

### As a whole group



#### **ACTS OF KINDNESS**

Brainstorming with the children what kindness can look like. Inspiring them by naming acts of kindness which are already taking place within the group – being patient with each other, respecting each other's rhythm and differences.

45

## Tier 1 Universal Practices (for ALL) Parent component



#### **ACTS OF KINDNESS**

Parents are invited to assist their child in demonstrating an act of kindness through:

- donating a toy or a book
- participating in a food drive
- volunteering for a cause
- etc.

46



## Tier 1 Universal Practices (for ALL) - outdoors

### As a whole group



#### **DUCK DUCK GOOSE**

Inviting the children to sit in a circle, where one person goes around gently touching on the other children's head while saying "Duck, duck".

Then, when they decide to say "goose" instead, the child who got chosen must get up to catch the child who had touched them on their head.

The runner then becomes the next child to go around the circle to tap and select another player.

Since all children will want to have their turn, a new child must be chosen to be 'goose' at each game.

47

## Tier 2 Targeted Practices (for SOME)

### In a small group (2-3 children)



#### **ACTS OF KINDNESS**

Repeating the activity with a small group of children at Tier 2.

Brainstorming and choosing 1 or 2 acts of kindness they would like to try out with another child or adult.

Helping them to get ready should they require to prepare something (e.g. prop for the scenario).

This activity can be completed at school or at home.

48



## Tier 2 Targeted Practices (for SOME) - outdoors

In a small group (2-3 children)



### DUCK DUCK GOOSE

Replaying the same game with a small group of selected children at Tier 2.

The children will most likely enjoy it better in this setting, as they will not have to wait as for their turn in comparison with the whole group context (which may be frustrating for them).

49

## Tier 3 Individualized Practices (for FEW)

One-to-one with an adult or a friend



### ACTS OF KINDNESS

Repeating the activity with a child at Tier 3 on a one-to-one basis.

Brainstorming with them and inviting them to choose 1 or 2 acts of kindness they would like to try out with another child or adult.

Helping them to get ready should they require to prepare something (e.g. prop for the scenario).

This activity can be completed at school or at home.

50

## Tier 3 Individualized Practices (for FEW) - outdoors

One-to-one with an adult or a friend

### DUCK DUCK GOOSE



Replaying this game with a child at Tier 3 along with other selected children to create a small group.

The adult may need to model and coach the child at Tier 3 throughout the game to help them experience more success (e.g. waiting their turn, handling being touched on their head, catching the player who selected them, etc.)

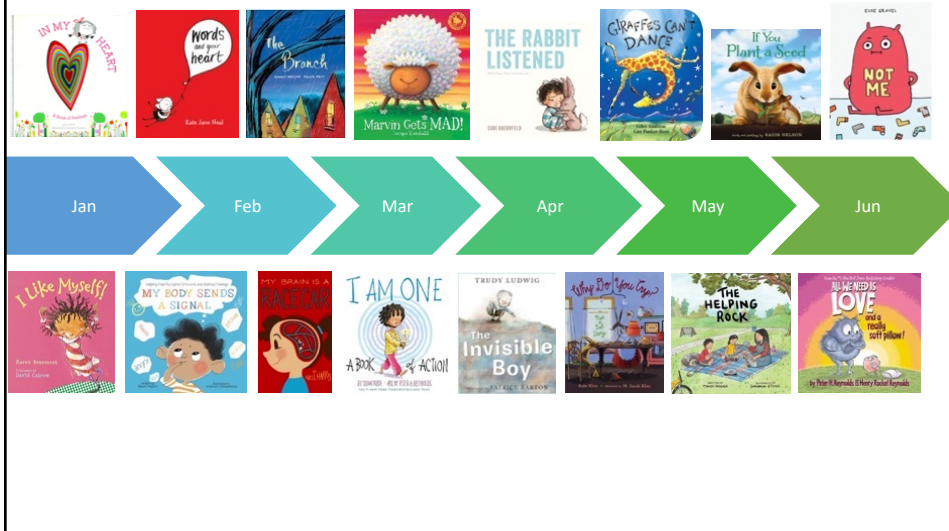
51

## Yearly timeline



52

## Yearly timeline



53

## Considerations for special needs (EHDA)

- Emotional and social accompaniment **embedded into the children's daily routine**. Uses natural learning moments to build connection and support regulation.
- **Flexibility and adaptation**: carefully selected children's books, reading adaptations, using descriptive language. Props to illustrate key story elements for better engagement and understanding.
- **Inclusive and sensory-friendly approaches**:
  - ✓ Adapted, simplified games and activities that support varied learning needs. Hands-on experimenting to help children process and integrate sensory and emotional experiences
  - ✓ A sensory-friendly mindset that includes flexibility, pacing, and awareness of overstimulation
  - ✓ Special considerations for children with diverse needs and neurodevelopmental profiles.
- **Communication and co-regulation tools**:
  - ✓ Emotion cards with real children's faces or personalized images
  - ✓ Visual supports: thumbs up/down, core communication boards, talk buttons/bars
  - ✓ Personalized social stories and scripted supports for common situations
  - ✓ Explicit instruction and adult modeling of emotional and social skills
  - ✓ A personalized toolbox with self-regulation items tailored to each child

54

Examples of children's books  
on emotional and social development (EHDA)



55