

Emotional development in Early Childhood

Catherine Korah, CEBM Coordinator



Emotional development in early childhood

Emotional development in the early years focuses on fostering emotional growth and well-being, through:

- Getting to discover one-self in relation to emotions
- Exploring, experiencing and developing the abilities to express, feel and begin to temper emotions
- Recognizing different bodily sensations related to each emotion
- Building comfort and confidence in working through emotions

Emotional development

Being emotionally MATURE means to have the ability to “**temper**” one's emotions. However, before a child can build the capacity for self-regulation, they need to have sustained experiences of emotional co-regulation with a caring adult.



Younger children still need the support of adults around them to develop recognizing, naming, expressing and managing their emotions.

Relationship with caregivers are crucial for this development

- All **caring behaviour** develops in the context of the deep connection between a child and his or her caregiver
- A deep and secure attachment is needed for healthy ***emotional*** development to occur



Defining EMOTION

- **Emotion** means “to be stirred up and to be moved” (happens to us and pushes us around)
- Children’s experience and awareness of emotions will develop as they age **if we provide the right conditions**



Young children's emotions are **BIG** and shift quickly

With an event such as starting school, there will likely be some big emotions that shift quickly

Adult's role:

- Accept child's emotions
- Normalize child's emotions
- Make room for emotions



A child's emotional well-being

It starts with a
**sense of safety
& predictability.**

When a child feels
better, they do
better.

- ✓ Rely on structures and routines to create an environment that is consistent, predictable and reliable.
- ✓ Provide lots of opportunities for exposure and practice, especially with novelty. Give the child access to times when they can experience a comforting and calming feelings through their senses (e.g. play soft music, dim lighting, offer soft, comfy textures and sensory materials, show them calming nature scenes and use comforting scents, etc.)
- ✓ Be generous and patient when being asked for help.
- ✓ Children need downtime/respice, movement, play (both indoor and outdoor) and opportunities for emotional release in order to feel safe.

Feeling Safe *'Enough'*

Being their teacher does not mean you automatically have an attachment or that you are a safe person to them.

Intentionally work at building a safe attachment with each child in your class. This may look different from child to child (e.g. their level of defense).



Assess what works with each child - observe what best meets their needs, try different options to best meet their needs - what, how, when, where, in the classroom and outside.

Sensitive children (shy, anxious, trauma, neurodiverse) will take more time before they will trust and feel safe with new adults.

** Children can't explore and leap forward if they don't feel safe. Their brain cannot learn and grow if they are alarmed or in survival mode.*

Fundamental **NEEDS**



They need to PLAY

- to practice life in a space free of consequences



They need to REST

- from having to make things work



They need to have their TEARS

- the outward manifestation of the adaptive process at work

They are not
little adults

Young Children

and their
SEPARATION
problems

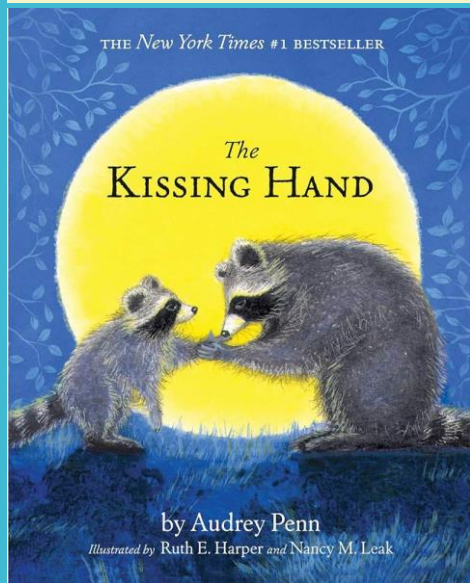
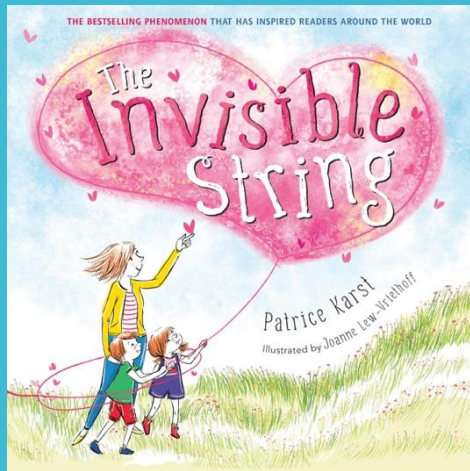
A FEAR OF SEPARATION that can be
overwhelming and crippling.

A HUNGER for CONTACT and CONNECTION
that takes precedence over any other need.



WHY?

Their capacity for relationships is not yet developed enough to enable them to hold on when apart. This is such an important development for humans that the first six years of life are primarily devoted to it.

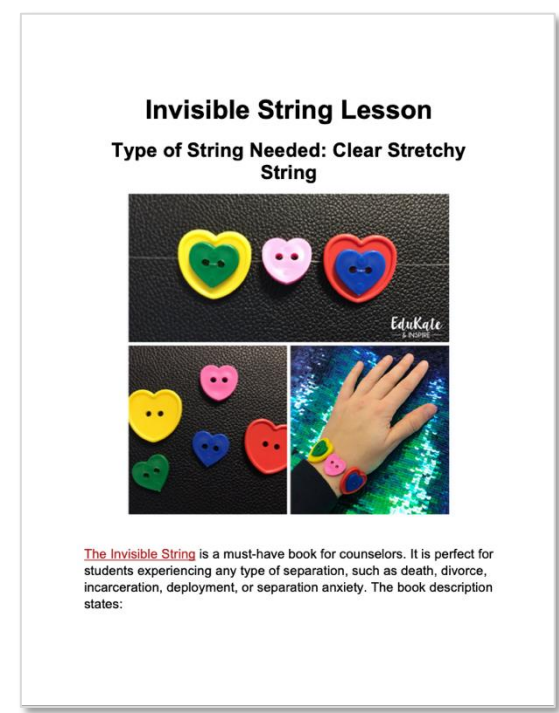


Nature's solution to not being able to handle separation

MORE ATTACHMENT, not less!

- The more ways a child can form attachments, the less they need contact, closeness, and physical proximity.
- Children do not need to learn how to handle separation, instead they need to develop the ability to hold on when they are apart.

Home-school MATCHMAKING: Building the 'attachment village'



<https://macnamara.ca/infographics/>

https://www.cebmmember.ca/files/ugd/931e65_1ad369acd5ba4788a8bd8a1bc4fa2095.pdf

<https://confidentcounselors.com/school-counseling-activities-using-string/>

**They are not
little adults**

Young Children

**and their
UNTEMPERED
nature**

They have BIG EMOTIONS!

**1 thought – 1 feeling – at a time
very little filter (brain immaturity)**

All impulses felt are expressed. They cannot do dissonance. They register only one feeling or impulse at a time. All conflicting impulses and thoughts are momentarily eclipsed.



WHY?

This is Nature's way of making it as easy as possible for young children to find their dominant feeling and experience it fully, by removing any confusing elements or complicating signals.

EXPECTING SELF-REGULATION	PROVIDING CO-REGULATION
Focusing on external elements to fix/control the problem.	Being aware of the adult's own emotional state and stress response as a priority.
Focusing on the student's behavior (what they've done wrong) and their intention to correct it.	Focusing on the student's sense of safety, sensations and feelings, as well as the adult-student dynamic.
When escalating, looking to stop the inappropriate behavior through the adult's authoritative posture and tone.	When escalating, helping the student regulate through the adult's own soothing posture and tone.
Upping the ante when the student is hostile to attempt to shut it down. Acting like a thermometer that reacts to the rise of the student's behavior.	Supporting the student in their dysregulation even when hostile (adapting the circumstances accordingly). Acting like a thermostat to hold a steady temperature.
Focusing on the outcome and how to achieve it (e.g. by applying consequences).	Meeting the student's needs through the application of specific support measures and emotion regulation strategies.
Intervening when an incident occurs. No specific plan for debrief or follow up beyond the incident.	Providing a debrief and follow up. Working proactively around the incidents by creating a preventative plan of action.



What happens when emotions are **SUPPRESSED?**

** when emotions are suppressed, they come out as
challenging behaviours*

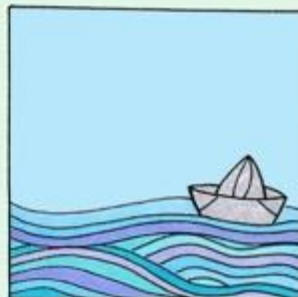
**EMOTIONS NEED TO BE RELEASED
AND EXPRESSED**

Children need ADULTS to grow the capacity to temper their emotions

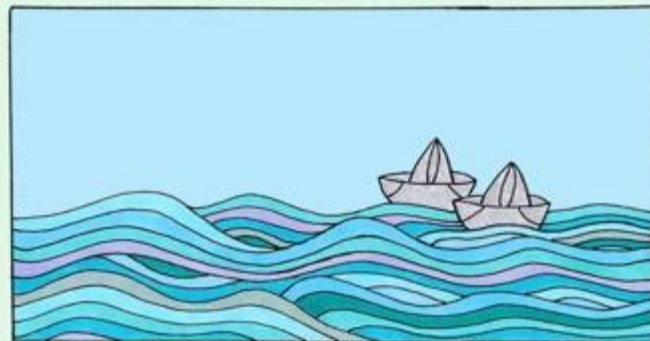
WHEN THEIR STORM



MEETS OUR CALM

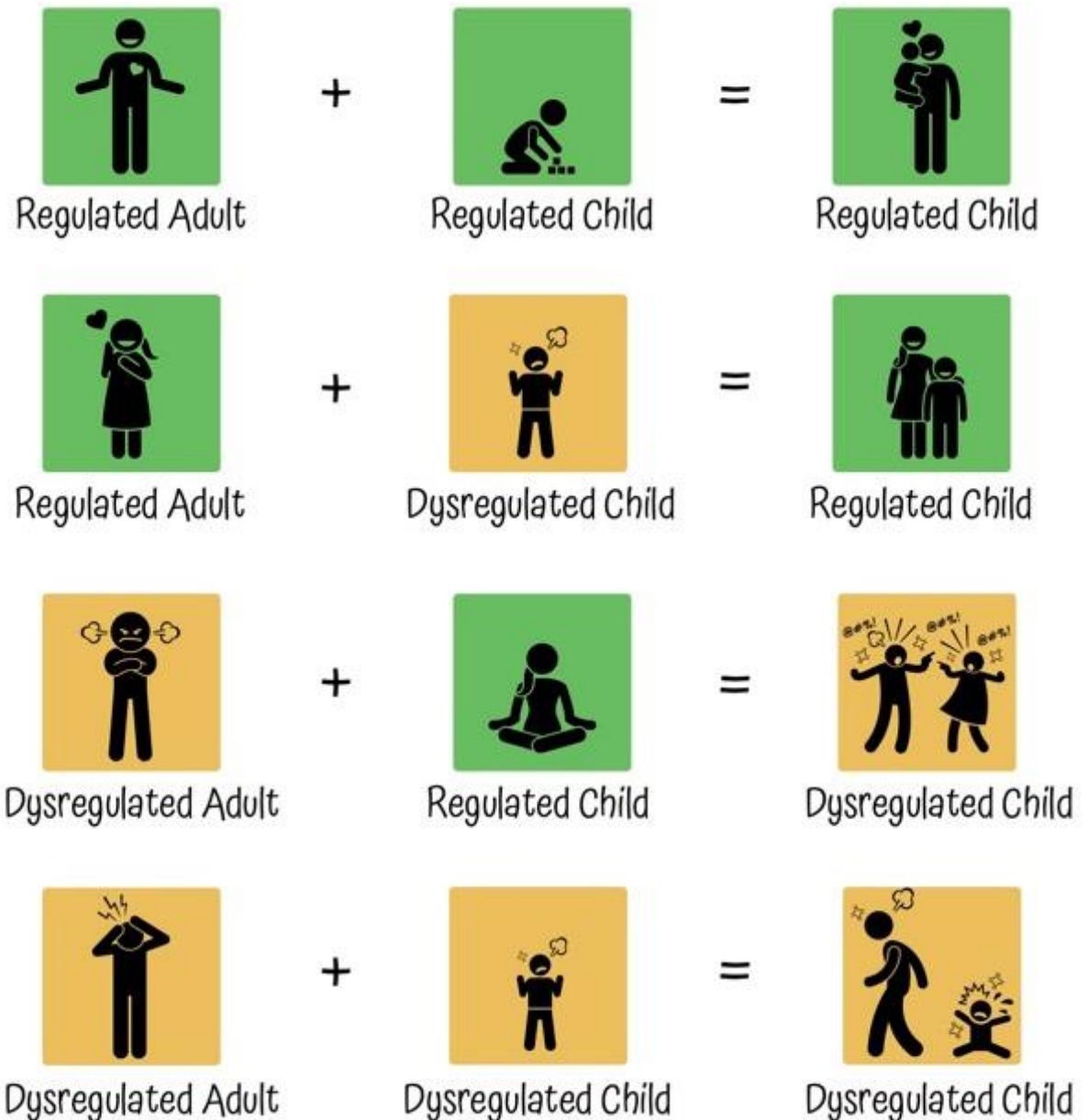


CO - REGULATION OCCURS



Emotional support and accompaniment must come first and pave the way towards emotional self-control.

The importance of adult regulation



A child's capacity to regulate their emotions

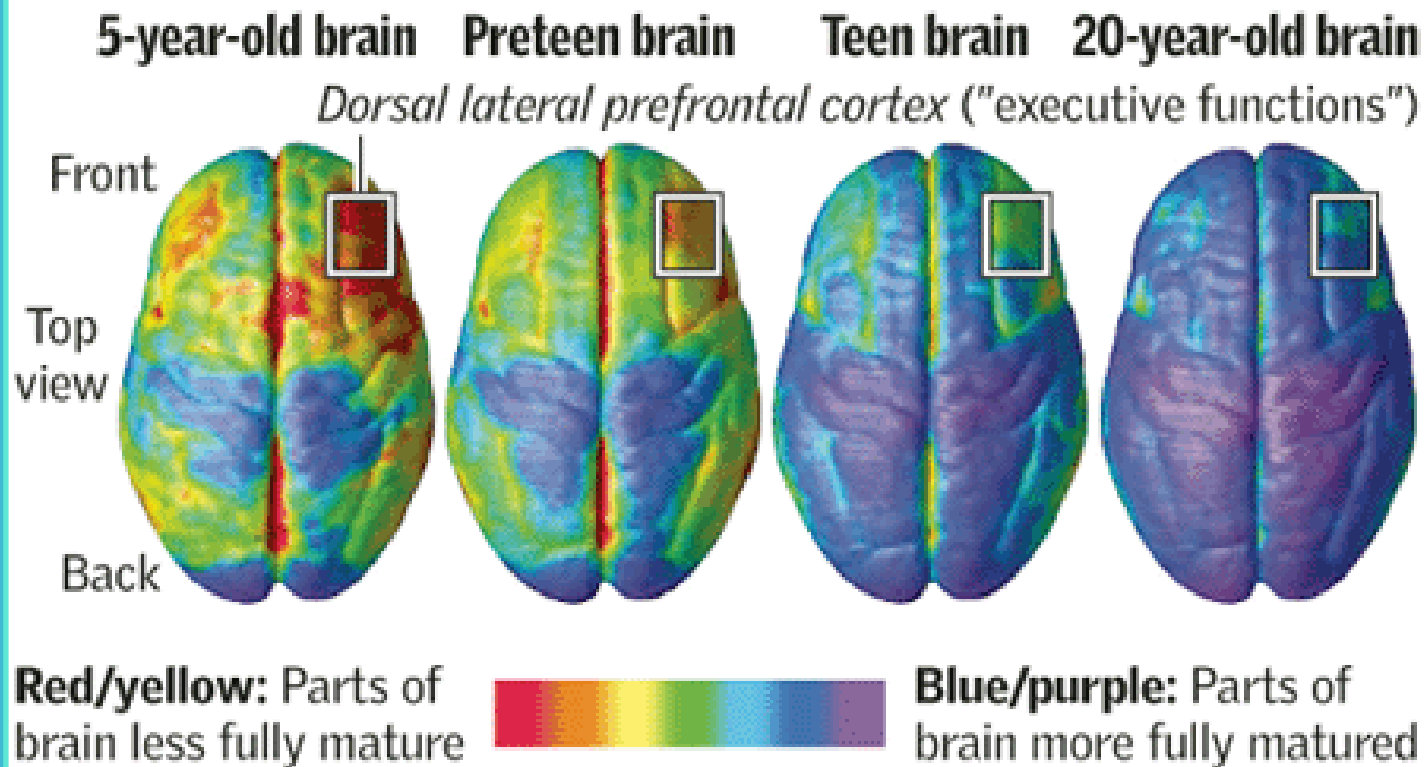
It starts with
co-regulation.

Younger children have no filter and can only do one emotion at a time, which makes 'managing their emotions' quite difficult.

- ✓ Come alongside their big emotions and act as a grounding element for them, modeling ways to manage emotions.
- ✓ Use the proper name of each emotion to show that they are valid. Be careful not to categorize emotions as good or bad.
- ✓ Set up games and engaging/playful activities that will help children express their emotions safely (to make headway, we must work preventatively around incidents).
- ✓ Provide opportunities for emotional development that go beyond the focus of self-regulation (inviting the children to explore and express their emotions).

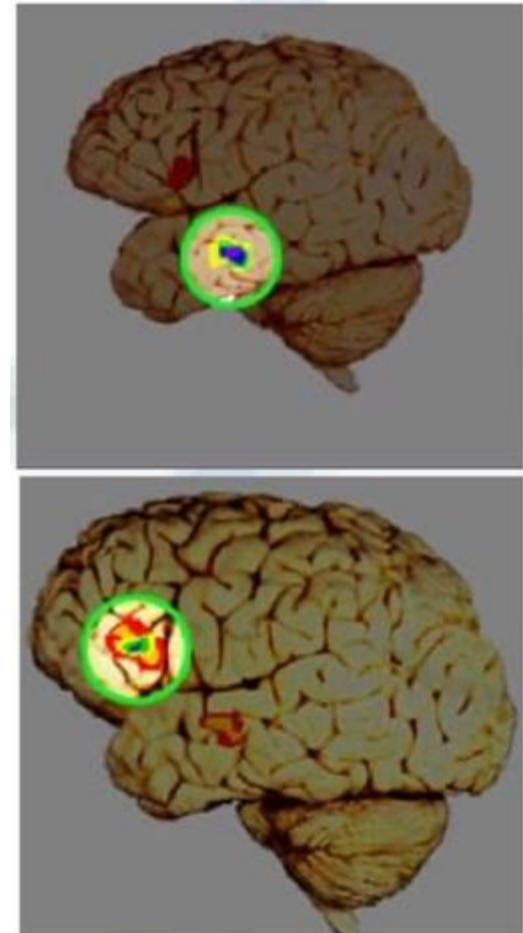
Judgment last to develop

The area of the brain that controls "executive functions" — including weighing long-term consequences and controlling impulses — is among the last to fully mature. Brain development from childhood to adulthood:

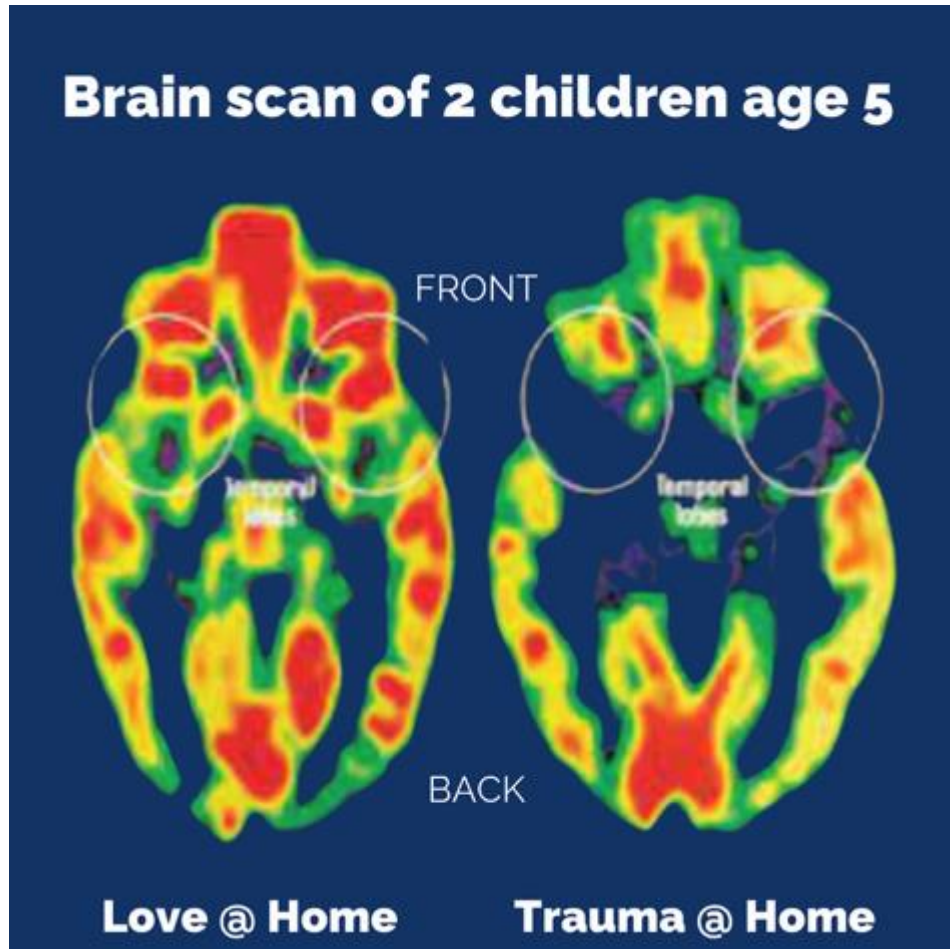


Emotional regulation requires Prefrontal cortex development

- Young children don't yet have a fully developed pre-frontal cortex, which means their emotions cannot be well filtered or slowed down.
- They also don't experience much cognitive dissonance or mixed feelings (ONE thought or emotion at a time).
- They have great difficulty with perspective taking and with reflection, especially when upset.



Helping the adults **ADJUST** their expectations



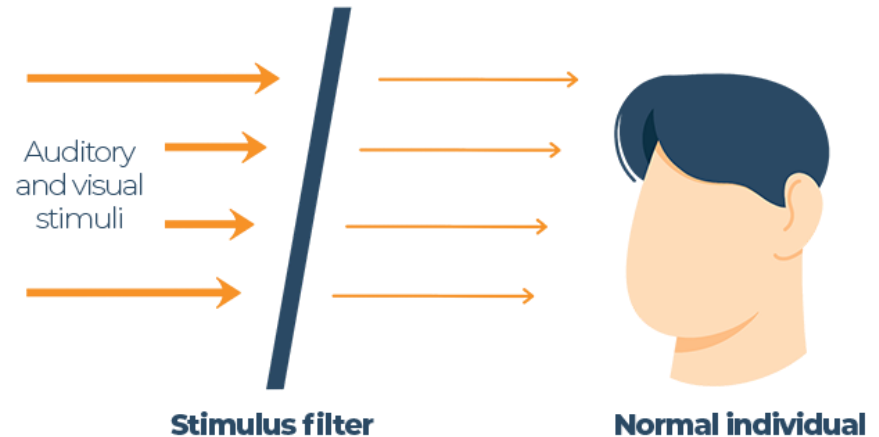
- Maturation is NOT inevitable
- Only in ideal conditions is a child disposed to maturation (trauma can stunt brain development).
- In these conditions, growth of the prefrontal cortex begins between the ages of 5 and 7 and continues well into the twenties and thirties.

Helping the adults **ADJUST** their expectations

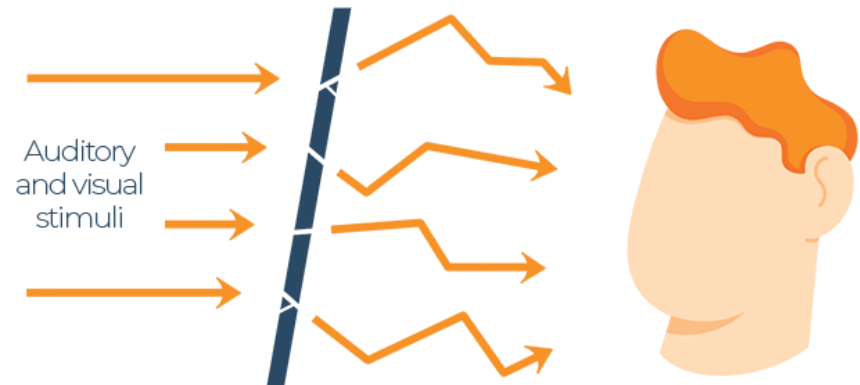


If a child is **hypersensitive** the 5-7 gap of development will rather be at 7-9 years old

Neurotypical Sensory Gating



Compromised Sensory Gating



Playing out emotions

Play is like a release valve – it allows the emotions to flow through.



Why is PLAY important?

- Helps children make sense of their world
- Builds the brain through experiences not lessons
- Allows children to work through their emotions
- When play is interrupted, emotional well-being and brain development are affected



Opportunities to play with, express and release **big emotions**

HEAR YOUR EMOTIONS



THE FRUSTRATION MONSTER !



MAKE YOUR EMOTIONS MOVE !



SOCK PUPPET ROLE-PLAYING



A child's self-awareness

It starts with opportunities for exploration in the **play mode** and attempts to try out different identities.

- ✓ Create time and space for play to occur.
- ✓ Provide a variety of materials and props to accompany their play.
- ✓ Ensure to offer tools to help the child discover their body sensations as well (body silhouette, sensory box, etc.)
- ✓ No need to get involved; let play do its thing.

Self-awareness and consciousness



- From ages 5 to 7, a child develops a sense of SELF, as they put up boundaries (what “I” feel, what “I” like, etc.)
- After around age 7, a child begins to be able to mix with others without fusing and “losing” themselves.
- Having a ‘soft heart’ and feeling our emotions is required for this process to unfold.

A child's confidence and positive self-regard

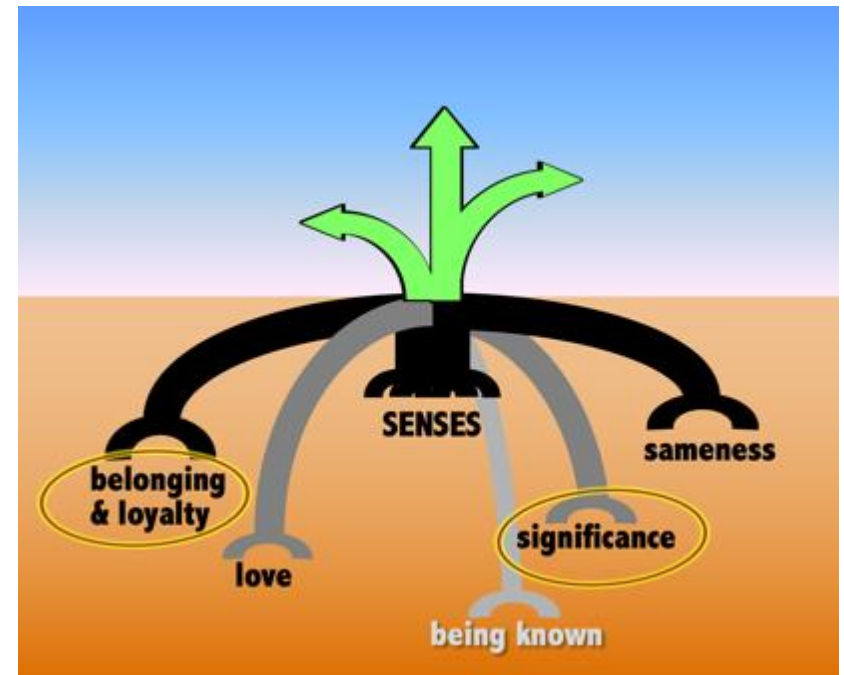
It starts with a sense of **belonging & mattering.**

Support them in feeling cared for, important, included, listened to and understood.

- ✓ Greet each child and show interest by asking them about their loved ones, interests, plans and activities.
- ✓ Encourage them to try new things and highlight their efforts. Introduce the concept of the '*Power of YET*' (help the children visualize that, with practice and determination, they will eventually be able to accomplish what is currently challenging for them).
- ✓ Convey that everyone makes mistakes and that it's okay.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for the child to experience being helpful, such as being the teacher's helper and setting up the calendar, daily schedule, song for the day, today's weather, etc.

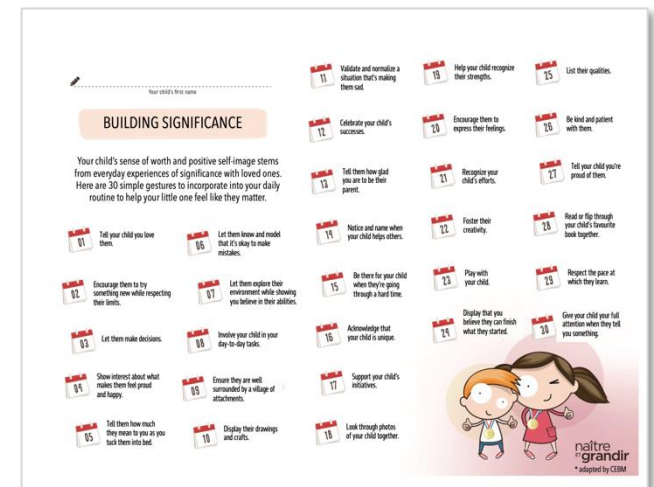
Quest for value through attachment

- Having an accurate self-perception and good self-confidence requires an acceptance of oneself and positive self-worth.
- These fruit stem from a fulfilled sense of **belonging** (feeling welcomed and included) and **significance** (feeling valued and cherished).



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Quest for value through attachment



<https://macnamara.ca/infographics/>

<https://naitreetgrandir.com/documentsng/pdf/en/cartes-101gestes-en.pdf>

https://www.cebmmember.ca/_files/ugd/931e65_86889b8234144d93977e5bec47ef4e9c.pdf

CEBM Pyramid of Support

Tier 1 universal practices



Tier 2 targeted practices



Tier 3 individualized practices



List of considerations



<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 tier of 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.

Common Practices to Avoid

August Practices

Tier 1 Universal Practices

Tier 2 Targeted Practices

Tier 3 Individualized Practices

Practices during Transitions

Secondary Practices

FR

Paradigm Shift

CEBM Distinctives

COMMON PRACTICES TO AVOID

Pyramid of Interventions

K4-K5 Corner

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

Tier 1 universal practices



Tier 2 targeted practices



Tier 3 individualized practices



Considerations



PRESENTATION: MAKING SENSE OF OUR K4-K5 CHILDREN



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>

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	At 5 years old
❑ Their prefrontal cortex has not yet started to develop – little or no signs of executive function abilities ❑ Doesn't yet have a well-developed relationship with oneself ❑ Has big raw emotions (only experience one emotion at a time), unable to regulate emotions, tears are very common, difficulty with verbalizing emotions ❑ Doesn't yet learn from their mistakes and struggles to adapt in confronting situations ❑ Their increasing imagination gives them the ability to anticipate bad things happening to self or others (this triggers many fears but struggles to verbalize them) ❑ Reacts on impulse with little or no filter ❑ Is egocentric (doesn't yet have the ability to hold two perspectives at once, which impacts their consideration and empathy towards others) ❑ 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 ❑ 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) ❑ Needs to rest (may still be taking naps) ❑ Mood often shifts when tired and/or hungry ❑ Needs to play – their job is to play (may still parallel play) ❑ Displays shyness around new adults and struggles with having to respond to several adults at once (they orient themselves towards one adult at a time) ❑ Struggles with transitions and unstructured/unsupervised contexts – needs to know what comes next for reassurance	❑ Their prefrontal cortex development has barely begun (if the 'right' conditions are in place) – beginning stages of executive function abilities (may be easily eclipsed) ❑ Still getting to know themselves (likes, dislikes, preferences, etc.) ❑ Also, big raw emotions (only one at a time) – starting to verbalize emotions ❑ Still developing the ability for adaptation ❑ May have a better ability to play out fears and voice concerns ❑ Has impulses with little filter depending on the day and emotion being triggered ❑ Is still egocentric, although we may observe at times the beginning stages of consideration for others ❑ May have some tolerance for separation (this will depend on the child and their ability to attach) – when they feel vulnerable this will be altered ❑ May have a slight better attention span (but still short - approx. 12-15 min - this depends on the activity at hand and the child's interest), also needs to move ❑ Needs some respite/downtime ❑ 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 ❑ Needs to play – their job is to play (may have a better ability to play with others) – Learning takes place through play ❑ 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 ❑ May do somewhat better with transitions if they are consistent/predictable and are limited in number; still struggles with unstructured/unsupervised contexts ❑ May have better fine motor and gross motor abilities ❑ 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. Hypersensitivity, sensory overload, and intense/overwhelming emotions may also have an impact on delaying the unfolding of these.	

Developmentally appropriate Preschooler Traits at each Tier

Developmentally appropriate Preschooler Traits at each Tier – K4-K5		
Tier 1 universal practices	Tier 2 targeted practices	Tier 3 individualized practices
❑ Manages well in a whole group context with sufficient universal support measures in place ❑ Curious and interested in exploring/learning new things ❑ Playful (their job is to play – play is the foundation to learning) ❑ Open-minded and easily amazed – has a good ability for imagination and believes in magic ❑ Egocentric – still developing the ability to be considerate of others – fairness to them is they get most/all ❑ May struggle to share with others at times, especially with an item of interest ❑ Spontaneous and impulsive at times (even if they're skillful at verbalizing what they 'should' be doing, sometimes they can't do better) – reacts instinctively ❑ 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 ❑ Potential for emotional outbursts depending on the circumstances, but can be easily regulated with the help of an adult ❑ Need for attachment – difficulty with separation from home (Sept. and following time away from school, such as holidays)	❑ Benefits from blocs of time in a small-group context with structure, supervision, and targeted support measures in place in addition to the existing universal practices ❑ Also displays some of the same traits observed at Tier 1 in terms of curiosity, playfulness, experiencing one emotion at a time, and egocentrism ❑ May struggle to share with others (depends on the child and situation) ❑ Can get overly excited and impulsive, especially in times of play related to their interests ❑ Easily upset/frustrated – can pout for a certain time – may have difficulty with verbalizing emotion ❑ Can be triggered emotionally for a longer period of time (depends on the child and situation) ❑ Requires support and accompaniment through co-regulation when overwhelmed emotionally ❑ 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	❑ Benefits from one-to-one intensive and personalized support measures in place in addition to the existing universal and targeted practices ❑ Benefits from blocs 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) ❑ Also displays some of the same traits observed at Tier 1 in terms of curiosity, playfulness, experiencing one emotion at a time, and egocentrism ❑ Struggles to share with others in general ❑ Gets overly excited and impulsive on a regular basis – agitated restless energy that benefits from being discharged via outdoor active games ❑ Gets highly reactive when things don't go their way ❑ Frustration may be omnipresent with the child – difficult at times to get them out of it ❑ Emotional triggering may lead to big outburst/meltdowns that are difficult to get out of – child may have no ability to recognize or verbalize emotions ❑ Requires ongoing support and accompaniment through co-regulation when overwhelmed emotionally ❑ Absent or fragile attachment (may challenge the relationships to the adults present)

Suggestions of [Emotional Development](#) Practices at each Tier

Tier 1 universal practices	Tier 2 targeted practices	Tier 3 individualized practices
❑ Providing universal whole group accompaniment for emotional development during class time ❑ Providing opportunities for emotional development, which goes beyond the focus on self-regulation ❑ Being mindful of the differences between the 4-year-old and the 5-year-old ❑ Inviting expression of all emotions, each are required to find balance (e.g. like colours and shades in a rainbow) ❑ Being careful with categorizing emotions (association to a negative connotation) to bring out guilt and/or shame around the expression of some of these emotions (e.g. not using the colour red for frustration) ❑ Allowing for moments of emotional release and expression through different playgrounds (e.g. Inside Out Handbook by Hannah Beach) ❑ Matching the right word to the emotional experience (could use characters and stories to illustrate examples) ❑ Helping the child at Tier 1 feel safe 'enough' (e.g. through adult greeting/engaging children, adult posture, predictable structures and routines) to connect with and become aware of their emotions (body and mind connection) ❑ Providing 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 targeted small-group (2-4 children) accompaniment for emotional development, either in class (during station-based activities) or in an alternate location (at recess/lunch, indoors or outdoors) ❑ Helping the child at Tier 2 feel safe 'enough' and have 'enough' softness (e.g. through check-ins and other targeted attachment rituals, adult posture at Tier 2, targeted structures and routines, etc.) to connect with and become aware of their emotions (body and mind connection) ❑ Setting up a variety of ways to play out emotions (e.g. role-playing, masks, puppets, etc.) – this can be done outdoors through games and activities (please refer to the CEBM frustration tool guide for ideas of activities and materials) ❑ Offering a variety of emotional creative art activities (e.g. music, dance, painting, colouring, etc.) ❑ Providing a variety of tools to illustrate emotions (e.g. mirror, photographs, emotion cards with actual children's faces, children's books, etc.) ❑ Offering a variety of tools and materials to discover body sensations (e.g. body silhouette, sensory box, etc.)	❑ Providing intensive and personalized one-to-one accompaniment for emotional development in an alternate location ❑ Allocating an alternate space to explore and name emotions (e.g. Emotions Corner in the Nurturing Support Center- NSC) ❑ Helping the child at Tier 3 feel safe 'enough' and have 'enough' softness (ex. through check-ins, softening defenses and other individualized attachment rituals, adult posture at Tier 3, ensuring the adult is well regulated, individualized structures and routines, etc.) to connect with and become aware of their emotions (body and mind connection) ❑ Providing individualized support measures to allow additional expression, movement, respite, or channeling energy, which helps with emotional support: - Individualized scheduled respite/downtime - Individualized gross-motor activities - Individual bin and personal tool board - Building and creating activities - Sensory corner in NSC - and more... ❑ Offering a variety of emotional creative art activities (e.g. music, dance, painting, colouring, etc.) ❑ Providing a variety of tools to illustrate emotions (e.g. mirror, photographs, emotion cards with actual children's faces, children's books, etc.) ❑ Giving access to a private space (e.g. Emotions Room) to release and express emotions – applying de-escalation strategies if needed

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

CEBM K4-K5 Toolkit for Emotional Development



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



CEBM RESOURCES CENTER Framework for Student Support



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

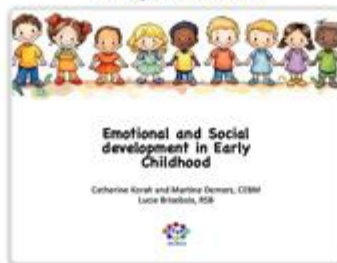
Through children's literature, this resources page aims to provide a range of tools and resources to help make emotional development more concrete and engaging for K4-K5 children.

CEBM would like to extend a special thank you to all the [key people](#) who have contributed to 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 emotional development

Intro presentation



Practices by tier



List of books by timeline



Books by theme



Summary of activities by theme



YouTube links



Editorials by theme



K4-K5 Social Development

Emotions Intervention Materials

Brain Break Activities

Physical Outlet - Movement Station

Fine Motor & Quiet Activities

Sensory Materials

Cocoon Area

Building & Creating Activities

Lego Resource Package

Flexible Classroom

Accessibility to Work Tools

Personal Bin

Puzzle Activities

Play-Drama-Dress-up

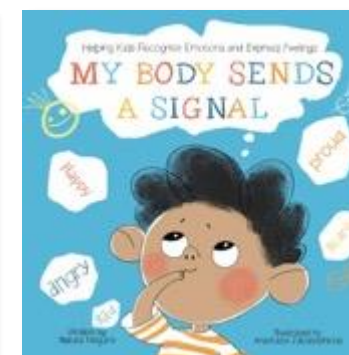
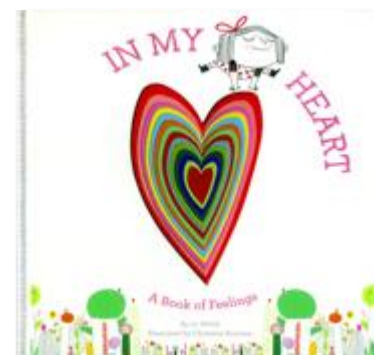
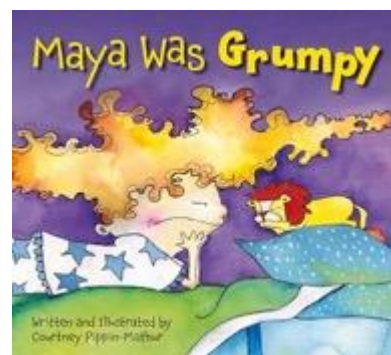
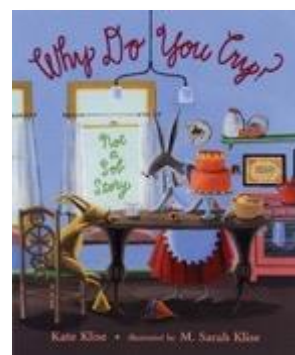
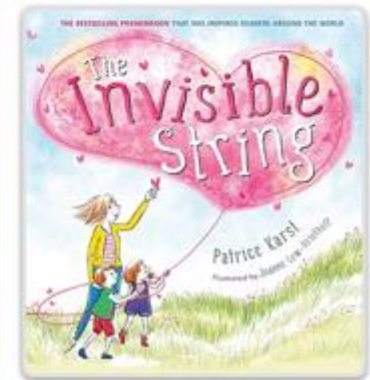
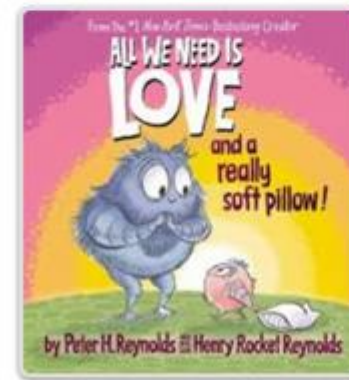
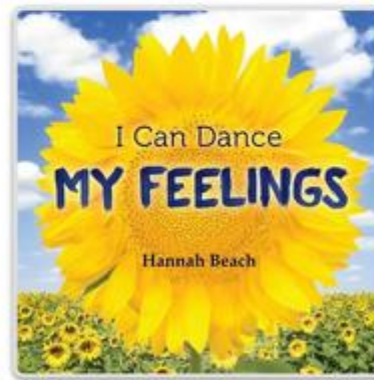
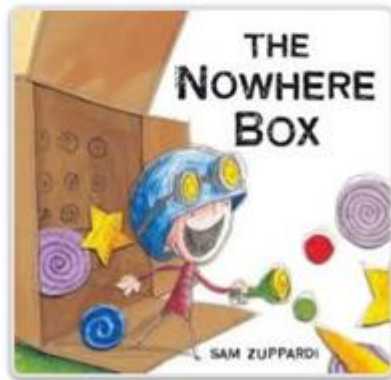
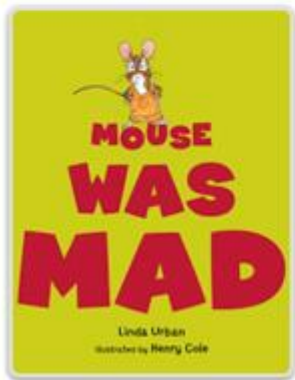
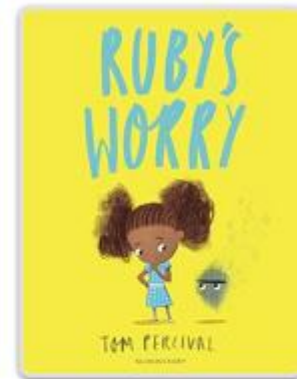
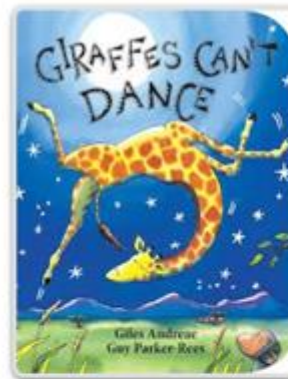
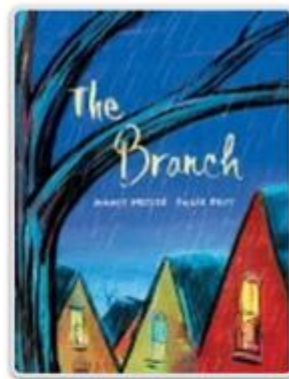
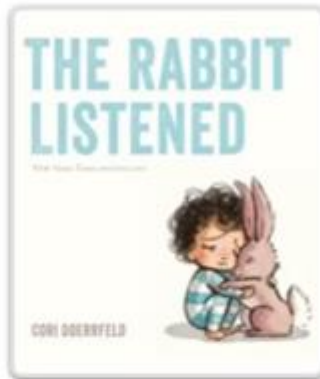
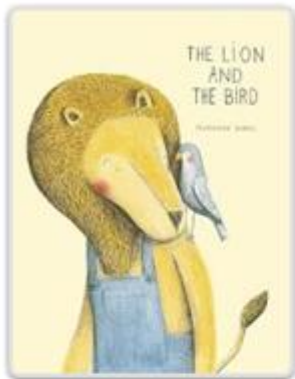
Children's Literature

Academic Resources

K4-K5
Practices

K4-K5
Corner

Examples of children's books on emotional development



Themes in Emotional Development

Attachment,
belonging

Naming,
recognizing
emotion

Range and
intensity of
emotion

Expressing,
releasing
emotion

Grumpiness,
frustration,
upset

Fear, worry,
being brave

Sadness,
loneliness, tears

Emotional
safety, comfort

Bodily
sensations

Knowing and
appreciating
oneself

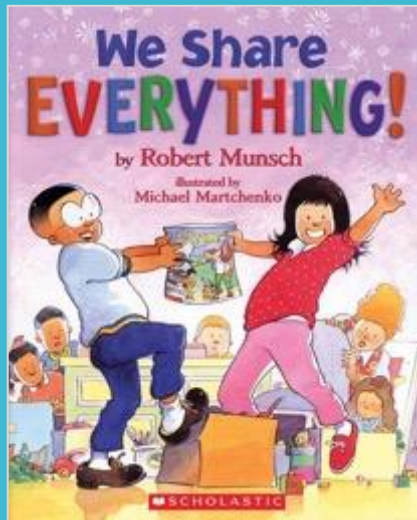
Hypersensitivity,
neurodiversity

Emotional co-
regulation

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

Teacher toolkit to accompany emotional and social development

Books



Activity cards



Ready-to-use games and activities

Sorting game, 'We share, we don't share everything'



* The accompanying sheet offers a variety of games and activities, along with materials that are ready to use and available to download from the CEBM Resources Centre.



Teacher toolkit to accompany emotional and social development



Indoor games/activities

Engaging, playful activities that build emotional awareness, cooperation, and communication.



Outdoor games/activities

Nature-based and active experiences that support well-being, confidence, and social connection.



Same activities adapted for each tier of support

Inclusive strategies that ensure all children can participate, grow, and succeed.



Parent component

Resources and ideas to strengthen the home-school connection and support consistent growth.



Consideration for 4-year-olds and Tier 3

Developmentally appropriate strategies and targeted support for young learners needing extra guidance.



Consideration for special needs EHDA

Inclusive, individualized approaches that honour diverse needs and abilities.



CEBM K4-K5 Teacher Toolkit on Emotional and Social Development

EN / FR



The Invisible String by Patrice Karst

Book synopsis: People who love each other are always connected by a very special string made of love. Wherever you are and wherever they are.

Themes covered:

- Attachment, safety, beginning of school year

Time of the year:

- August

Secondary books linked:

- *The Kissing Hand* (EHDA collection)
- *Mommy in My Pocket*



Tier 1 universal practices – for the whole group

- **Reading the story** with the **whole group** (teacher is reading a physical copy of the book with the group, rather than having them listen to the story on video).
- **NOTE: Simplify the text** when reading to K4-K5 as the text is very wordy. However, the message is excellent and highly relevant for this age group.
- 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. a roll of stretchy clear string and heart-shaped beads to thread onto it) can help increase the children's interest in the story.

Tier 2 targeted practices – for some children in a small-group setting

- **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).
- Video link to read aloud version for parents:
https://youtu.be/xm7syTd9xSs?si=eJ4UWj_blnzMrRuD

Tier 3 individualized practices – for few children on a one-to-one basis

- **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**.
- Video link to read aloud version for parents:
https://youtu.be/xm7syTd9xSs?si=eJ4UWj_blnzMrRuD



= social development



= emotional development



= special needs



This toolkit was developed by Martine Demers and Catherine Korah (CEBM), and Lucie Brisebois (RSB) with the collaboration of K4-K5 teachers

Tier 1 universal



Tier 2 targeted



Tier 3 individualized



Types of accompaniment per Tier

Tier 1 For all	Tier 2 For some	Tier 3 For few
• It is meant to be an approach, woven into daily interactions, rather than a one-off program • Built into times of connection (greeting rituals, circle time) and routine practice sessions • Incorporated during story time (match the book to the theme being covered) • Included within the choices of stations set up • Integrated during the block of time reserved for going outside	• Targeted support measures, which help the child be more regulated and available for emotional and social growth • Complimentary activities are done in stations while the other children in the class group have their own task • Complimentary activities are done in a small group context, with the help of Support Staff, outside the classroom (in an alternate space or outdoors)	• Individualized support measures, which help the child be more regulated and available for emotional and social growth • Complimentary activities are done one-to-one, with the help of Support Staff, outside the classroom (in an alternate space or outdoors)

** It is possible for an activity to have several objectives, covering both SEL and academics.*

Emotional development practices

- Setting up the context to **accompany emotional development** by using:
 - ✓ children's books and games on 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**
- Offering a variety of tools and materials to discover **body sensations** (body silhouette, sensory box, etc.)



CEBM SENSORY BOX

Providing different experiences via the senses to help the children discover (embrace) their sense of comfort and inner calmness



- Dimming the lights, blinds partway down
- Using flashlights, light-up toys or glow sticks
- Playing nature scenes on the Smartboard (ex. birds singing, waterfalls)
- Lava lamp, sensory bottle/jar with glitter or other substance



- Playing soft music (instrumental or nature sounds)
- Closing the classroom door to block noise from the hallway or noise cancelling headphones
- Using small musical instruments (like bells, maracas, or a mini xylophone)



- Cooking with the children - smells of warm food can be very comforting (ex. apple sauce, popcorn)
- Air diffuser with different smells - some children are sensitive to smells or have allergies. This could be a negative trigger for some.
- Range of hand creams and soaps to smell.
- Scented stickers or scented playdough (lavender, chamomile, peppermint)
- Herbs or dried flowers (like lavender sachets or rosemary)
- Seasonal smells - ex. wet leaves, pine trees.



- Allergies MUST be taken into account with these exploratory activities
- Introduce categories of tastes. You can begin with food they bring from home. E.g. fruit juice (sweet), crackers (crunchy, salty), cheese (squishy, salty)
- Cooking activities can provide new opportunities to try new foods - some children may be reluctant, tread carefully

Note: Each activity should be introduced, experienced and then encourage the children to name what they liked, disliked and name how it made them feel.

This become precious information to help the child get to know what THEY like and WHAT helps them feel good or uncomfortable.

Only when children are able to experience, recognize and name these, can we lead them to naming and managing their emotions and their emotional expressions.



CEBM SENSORY BOX

Providing different experiences via the senses to help the children discover (embrace) their sense of comfort and inner calmness



- Setting-up a Touch & Feel station or Wall of Textures with a wide of items to touch ex. soft, rough, ridged, smooth, crinkly, stretchy, squishy, etc.
- Warm and soft blanket to be wrapped into or a weighted object to help feel more grounded
- Selection of hand creams - scented and unscented
- Sensory bin (with sand or lentils) or sensory bag with hidden items to touch, feel and match together
- Cooking activities - provide foods with different textures - have them experience, describe and name how this makes them feel



- Trying out various slow movements to soft music
- Taking the time to do soft stretching exercises
- Experimenting different yoga positions that encourage slow and calm movements



- Helping the child feel grounded by placing a weighted animal on the lap or on the shoulders
- Trying out simple poses (e.g. standing on one foot, certain yoga poses) to practice balance and grounding
- Removing shoes and socks to feel the ground with bare feet



- Trying out a mindful body scan from head to toe (one body part at a time) and noticing different sensations
- Introducing various breathing exercises (e.g. belly breathing, inhale/exhale variations) with the help of visuals and breathing tracing cards
- Drinking a warm beverage while being mindful of its effect on the body
- Deep pressure exercises (e.g. massager)

Note: Each activity should be introduced, experienced and then encourage the children to name what they liked, disliked and name how it made them feel.

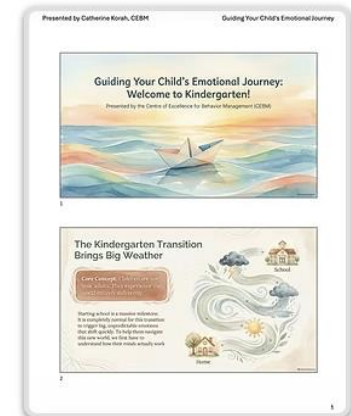
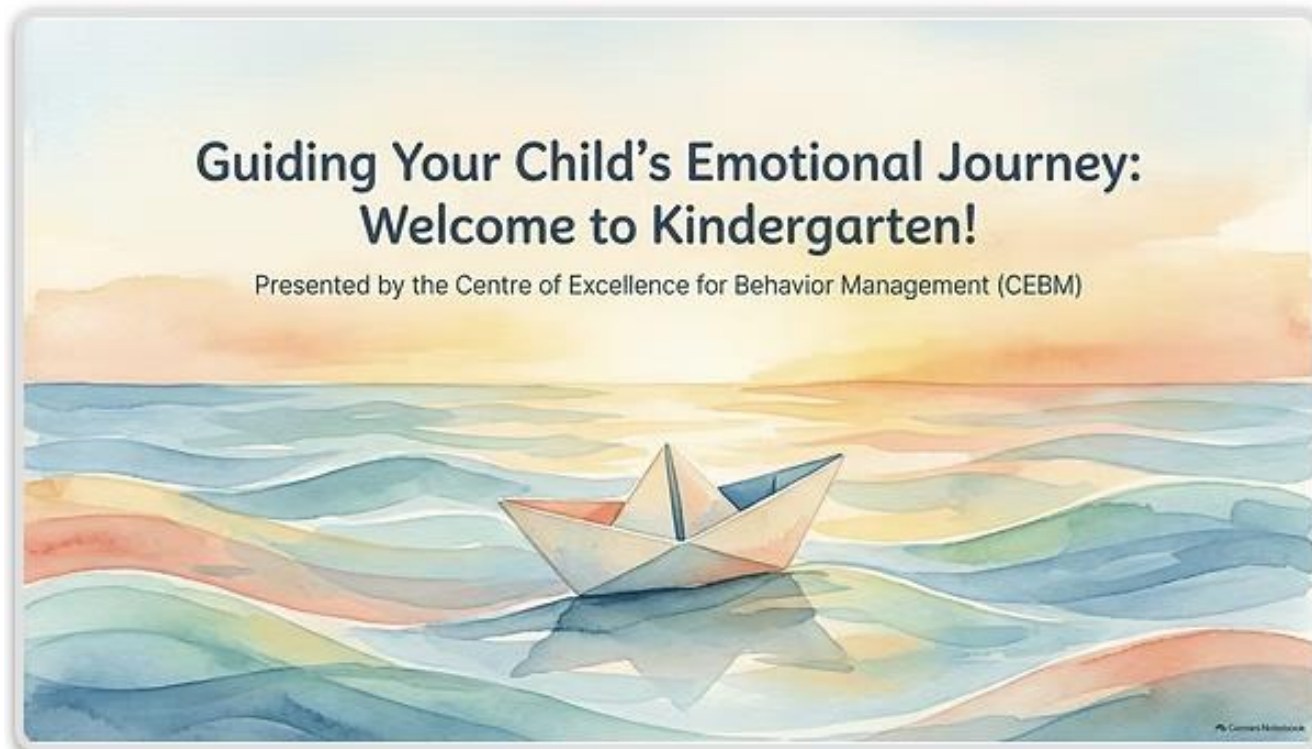
This become precious information to help the child get to know what THEY like and WHAT helps them feel good or uncomfortable.

Only when children are able to experience, recognize and name these, can we lead them to naming and managing their emotions and their emotional expressions.

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)

Resources for parents on emotional development



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

Resources for parents on emotional development



CEBM K4-K5 toolkit for emotional and social development

YouTube read aloud weblinks

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (in alphabetical order)

- All We Need is Love: <https://youtu.be/9ENMofRF0RY?si=CdFi-UiCm-GYETep>
- Charlie's Balloons: No link available
- Giraffes Can't Dance: https://youtu.be/1a2Smau__Dk?si=SKye9yXJ7tnDZly6
- Happy: <https://youtu.be/EKI9QpNzBDs?si=mMuqT426Kb-HyPv->
- I am One: https://youtu.be/mZ2_0ni0Td4?si=ZXxoYM7r9KxTnymK
- I Like Myself: <https://youtu.be/HVp8DtaWUvO?si=hrTW8CgynMikgFQ>
- I've Lost My Cat: <https://youtu.be/kLax5J5FWcl?si=ceGmMGk31FM65Ck>
- Marvin Gets Mad: <https://youtu.be/QTZOtmNgT0?si=2fMw3fEkaAF6vulG>
- My Brain is a Race car: https://youtu.be/145U_4ZdHls?si=WT5OJ1oYvUvB_WHZ
- My Shadow is Purple: <https://youtu.be/JDLvFOk7E2Q?si=Ii5oXNh0lcNCB7ld>
- Our Class is a Family: <https://youtu.be/rw9NstM1Q4E>
- Ravi's Roar: https://youtu.be/0dJLs7wWrdY?si=dSeYaPMhL50wt2_A
- Ruby Finds a Worry: <https://youtu.be/VCyilH2SJU?si=zuwGRnu7yh0fBkdS>
- The Bad Mood and the Stick: https://youtu.be/NjryYgc_eAQ?si=Yp9hJlnZFdQlxsKp
- The Branch: <https://youtu.be/3roTrrgjsG?si=2GOa2aYWhps7fxcm>
- The Invisible Boy: <https://youtu.be/9f17dBpzDG8?si=nY-Kv17By3zkmtl>
- The Invisible String: https://youtu.be/xm7syTd9xSs?si=eJ4UWl_blnzMKrUd
- The Kissing Hand: <https://youtu.be/C5XMX5GCCe4?si=4AR87Dv1POXFvB08>
- The Lion and The Bird: <https://youtu.be/BBt4A-iiWU?si=x8N2fujnpYwNEvL>
- The Nowhere Box: <https://youtu.be/PC3UB3oz02M?si=aHuZXbkqXkop-UyF>
- The Rabbit Listened: <https://youtu.be/rBjAWkog9n0?si=F3sH30EmxEL1dCU1>
- Why Do You Cry: <https://youtu.be/XYB6jRCFrgw?si=LoZSPohFqjNwuh2L>



CEBM K4-K5 toolkit for emotional and social development

ADULT RESOURCES – Articles by theme

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Attachment, safety, belonging

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/post/answering-a-child-s-hunger-for-connection-why-relationships-matter>
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/post/why-kids-don-t-need-attention-but-an-invitation-for-relationship>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/can-a-child-be-too-attached-to-their-parent/>
<https://hannahbeach.ca/when-drop-offs-are-hard-helping-kids-feel-safe/>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/5-things-parents-say-to-kids-that-can-turn-the-tables-on-their-relationship/>

Naming and recognizing emotion

<https://naitreetgrandir.com/en/feature/our-children-s-emotions/>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/five-things-you-might-not-know-about-human-emotion/>
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/post/the-emotional-lives-of-young-children>

Expressing, releasing and regulating emotion

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/post/challenging-behaviors-why-we-shouldn-t-expect-kids-to-self-regulate-too-soon>
<https://hannahbeach.ca/kids-need-a-safe-space-to-feel/>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/freedom-of-expression-guiding-kids-emotions-into-maturity/>
<https://hannahbeach.ca/emotional-safety/>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/true-play-why-kids-need-play-sanctuaries-for-their-emotions/>

Grumpiness, upset, frustration, tantrums

<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/when-push-comes-to-shove-the-answer-to-childrens-aggression/>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/what-our-kids-need-us-to-understand-about-aggression/>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/ten-things-not-to-do-when-a-child-is-frustrated-or-having-a-tantrum/>
<https://hannahbeach.ca/frustrating-play/>

Worry, fear, being brave

<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/what-kids-worry-and-fear-at-different-ages/>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/when-the-worry-bugs-are-in-your-tummy-helping-a-child-with-anxiety/>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/taming-bedtime-monsters-when-sleepy-time-is-scary/>
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/post/separation-anxiety-when-saying-good-bye-is-hard>
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/post/starting-school-four-strategies-for-helping-with-separation-anxiety-and-settling-in>
<https://hannahbeach.ca/when-drop-offs-are-hard-helping-kids-feel-safe/>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/helping-kids-bounce-back-the-keys-to-resiliency/>
<https://naitreetgrandir.com/en/feature/common-childhood-fears-and-how-to-deal-with-them/>

Sadness, loneliness, tears

<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/how-tears-cultivate-resiliency-in-kids/>
<https://hannahbeach.ca/why-we-cry-over-small-things/>
<https://monadelahooks.com/when-a-child-cries-ignore-the-experts-not-the-tears/>

Knowing and appreciating oneself, accepting making mistakes

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/post/cultivating-self-worth-in-kids-what-it-means-to-matter>
<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/5-ways-to-grow-confident-kids/>
<https://neufeldinstitute.org/editorials/in-praise-of-limiting-praise/>
<https://hannahbeach.ca/paralyzed-by-perfection-the-power-of-emotional-safety/>
<https://childmind.org/article/12-tips-raising-confident-kids/>

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

Resources for parents on emotional development

Emotional Development

Suggestions for PARENTS

- Support your child in feeling **CARED FOR**, important, and included. Show interest in their likes, plans and activities. Set up regular family activities without screens. *A child's well-being starts with them feeling like they MATTER and BELONG.*
- Come alongside their big **EMOTIONS**. Focus on naming them and making room for their expression even when it's uncomfortable. *Self-regulation starts with CO-REGULATION.*
- Create time and space for **PLAY** and let it do its thing. Opportunities to explore through play facilitate the process for children to develop their sense of self. *Self-awareness starts in the PLAY mode.*
- Be **PATIENT** when your child makes a mistake. Convey that it's okay and that mistakes happen to all of us. Encourage trying new things and highlight efforts. *Self-appreciation and confidence starts with a strong sense of SIGNIFICANCE.*
- Provide what your child **NEEDS** to thrive. Rest, play and emotional release are key for children to feel safe. *When a child FEELS BETTER, they do better.*

Younger children have no filter and can only do 1 emotion at a time, which makes managing their emotions quite difficult. The fruit of development follows.

Centre of Excellence for Behavioural Research

BINGO

THE MOOD STATIONS

Materials needed

- Soccer balls (balls), a soccer or hockey field
- Long pieces of bubble wrap
- Toy microphones
- Bin with lots of tennis balls
- Two balloons filled with water, plastic glasses
- Hoops to set up a jumping sequence

MOOD Stations – Setting up different stations outside for the children to explore, moving from one to another. Each station should have a different focus:

- Kicking station** – large bin containing numerous soccer balls that can be kicked into a bin. A goal is not necessary as the objective is to kick out as much energy as possible.
- Snooping station** – laying out long pieces of bubble wrap for the children to stomp on.
- creaming station** – providing toy microphones for the children to scream into. It is recommended that this station is set up furthest from the classroom windows.
- Throwing station** – a large bin filled with tennis balls to throw against the school wall.
- Running station** – placing water buckets at opposite ends with small plastic glasses for the children to fill from the starting point. They should then run to the end point and pour what's left in their glass into the bucket.
- Jumping station** – setting up a row of consecutive hula hoops, leaving a small distance in between.

NOTE: Numerous other stations can be set up to create a circuit for children to move through and burn off plenty of energy.

Feeling Wheel

7 MINUTE HIIT WORKOUT FOR KIDS

DO AS MANY OF EACH MOVE AS YOU CAN IN 15 SECONDS. TAKE A 15 SECOND BREAK IN BETWEEN.

- FROG JUMP** – Jump into a frog and hold for 15 seconds.
- BEAR WALK** – Walk with your hands and feet on the floor. Keep your back straight.
- GORILLA WALK** – Walk with your hands and feet on the floor. Keep your back straight.
- STARFISH JUMPS** – Jump into a starfish and hold for 15 seconds.
- CHEETAH RUN** – Run like a cheetah for 15 seconds.
- CRAB WALK** – Walk like a crab for 15 seconds.
- ELEPHANT STOMPS** – Stomp like an elephant for 15 seconds.

Keep EXTRAORDINARY. You're doing an extraordinary workout.

FEELING EMOTIONS

Children between the ages of 2 and 5 cannot manage their emotions alone. Your role is to allow them to experience and express all of their emotions.

Handling temper tantrums

- Stay close, keep calm,** and have them feel safe.
- Name their emotions** – "You look angry because you don't like the way you were treated."
- Talk things out when they've calmed down** – "What can we do to make you feel better?"
- Accept your child's emotions without judgment** – "What's going on, sweetheart?"
- Listen to your child** – and look them in the eye when they talk to you.
- Help them get past their outburst** – "You were angry because you were hungry."

Are words not working? Try giving your child a hug or making one of their stuffed animals talk. If your child is sulking, it's probably because they don't know how else to respond to the emotion. Be there for them. "I'll be there for you. Come see me when you're ready."

Quebec

MANAGING STRESS

Stress is a normal part of life. Your role is to support your 3 to 5-year-old when dealing with it.

Help your child

- Acknowledge their emotions** – "You feel sad because we left your doggie at home yesterday."
- Find time to play and laugh** – "What's your favorite game to play?"
- Encourage discovery** – "What's your favorite thing to do?"
- Try some relaxation techniques** – "Close your eyes, take a deep breath, and count to 10."
- Give them some free time** – "You can play with your toys when you're ready."
- Help them overcome challenges** – "You can do it! You're a strong kid!"
- Slow down** – "Take a break. Let's take some deep breaths and count to 10."

Moving a routine that allows for physical activity, proper sleep, and a balanced, varied diet helps to minimize stress.

Quebec

LOVING

Spending time with your 3 to 5-year-old will help the love of your bond. Your role is to make intentional moments.

With your child

- Show them love by respecting their boundaries** – "I understand you don't want to share your toys."
- Find ways to make them smile** – "You're a great kid!"
- Arguing is normal. When you lose your temper, try the following:**
 - Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.
 - Take a break if you need to. Don't go back to your child until you're calm.
 - Express your emotions. "I'm feeling angry because you didn't listen to me."
 - Provide solutions. "You can do this together. I'll help you with your homework."

Sometimes, you may lose your temper and yell. Try saying "I'm sorry for yelling. I was tired of repeating myself."

Quebec

PLAYING

Play is important for your 3 to 5-year-old's development. Your role is to allow them to play a variety of age-appropriate games.

With your child

- Moving develops:**
 - their brain
 - their balance
 - their muscles
- Playing with others teaches:**
 - how to share, resolve conflicts, and negotiate.
- Expressing their ideas during play develops their language skills.**
- Encourage play**
 - Schedule time to play with your child and make sure they get to play with their toys.
 - Show interest in what they're doing: "You're a great artist!"
 - Give them access to a variety of toys, such as blocks, beads, string, and glue.
 - Take them to different places to play, such as the park, the library, the beach, or the pool, so they can explore.

When you let your child play with dolls or trucks, or let them pick out their own costumes, they develop their curiosity and discover their preferences.

Quebec

BUILDING SIGNIFICANCE

Your child's sense of worth and positive self-image stems from everyday experiences of significance with loved ones. Here are 30 simple gestures to incorporate into your daily routine to help your little one feel like they matter.

1. Validate and normalize a situation that's making them sad.
2. Calculate your child's successes.
3. Tell them how glad you are to be their parent.
4. Have a special time to sit and play with them.
5. Have a special time to sit and play with them.
6. Be there for your child when they're going through a hard time.
7. Acknowledge that your child is unique.
8. Support your child's decisions.
9. Look through photos of your child together.
10. Tell them how much they mean to you and how much you love them.
11. Display their drawings and crafts.
12. Celebrate their achievements.
13. Tell them how proud you are of them.
14. Tell them how much you love them.
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Quebec