

Social development in Early Childhood

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

Tier 1 universal practices	Tier 2 targeted practices	Tier 3 individualized practices
❑ Providing universal whole group accompaniment for social development during class time ❑ Providing opportunities for social development, which goes beyond the focus on getting along ❑ Understanding the K4-K5 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 ❑ Being mindful of the differences between the 4-year-old and the 5-year-old ❑ Using explicit and playful ways to introduce, model and prompt a response to the adult's expectations (e.g. sharing, waiting their turn, standing in line, participating in group activities, interacting with others, etc.) - through structures and routines, stories, chants, puppets, role-playing, games, etc. - modeling and narrating, in a positive and engaging way, examples of ‘what to do’ and ‘what not to do’	❑ Providing targeted small-group (2-4 children) accompaniment for social development, either in class (during station-based activities) or in an alternate location (supported lunch and/or indoor-outdoor play) – may require the help of an additional adult ❑ Using story books, in a small group setting, to accompany the children in exploring a range of social situations. ❑ Using games and activities, in a small group setting, to explore and practice a range of social situations (e.g. using LEGO, puppets, figurines/dolls, masks, role-playing, etc.) – refer to CEBM K4-K5 Teacher Toolkit for more ideas - Modeling the expected social interactions and narrating the positive examples ❑ 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/triggering situations, as well as conflicts faced, and helping them walk through it (e.g. using LEGO, puppets, figurines/dolls, masks, role-playing, etc.) – this is meant to be a child-lead activity	❑ Providing intensive and personalized one-to-one accompaniment for social development in an alternate location (sheltered lunch and/or indoor-outdoor play) – lead by Support Staff or another assigned adult ❑ Giving access to an alternate space to explore and discuss a variety of social situations (e.g. Oasis room, sensory room, Nurturing Support Center - NSC, etc.) ❑ Setting up parameters to help them stay out of trouble by: - Providing close supervision when playing with others - Accompanying them in co-managing a difficult social context (e.g. board games, group activities/sports, etc.) - Applying de-escalation strategies if needed ❑ Using story books, on a one-to-one basis, to accompany the child in exploring a range of social situations. ❑ Using games and activities, on a one-to-one basis (could invite a friend), to explore and practice a range of social situations (e.g. using LEGO, puppets, figurines/dolls, masks, role-playing, etc.) – refer to CEBM K4-K5 Teacher Toolkit for more ideas - Modeling and scripting the expected social interactions – narrating the positive examples

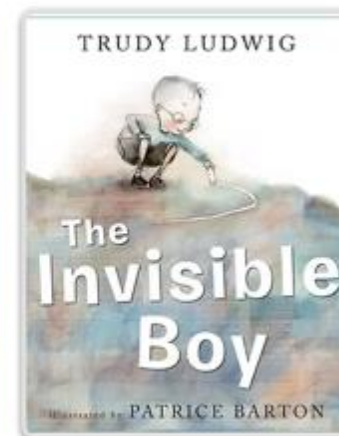
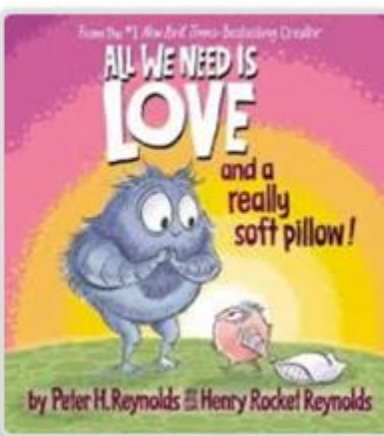
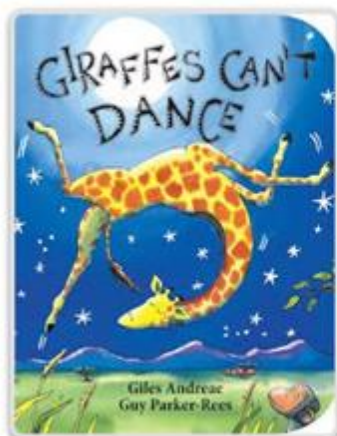
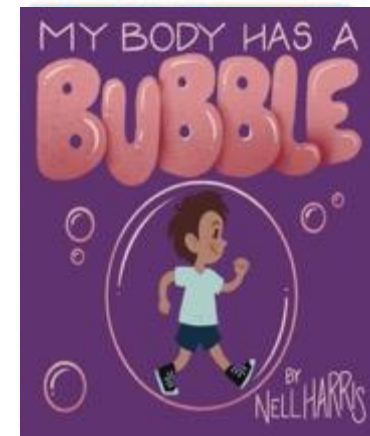
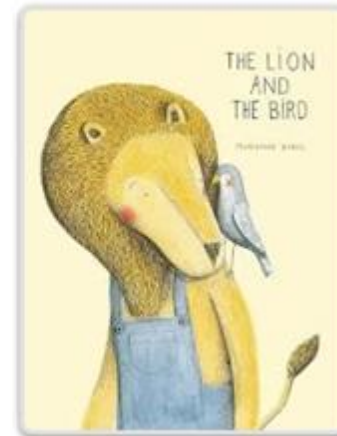
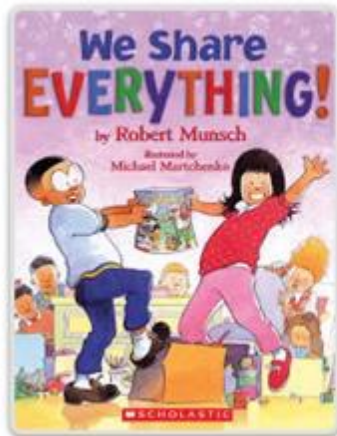
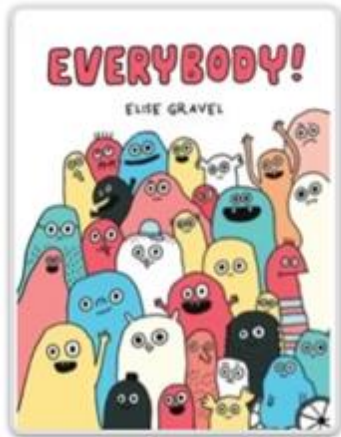
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/k4-k5-social-development>

Types of accompaniment per Tier

Tier 1 For all	Tier 2 For some	Tier 3 For few
• It is meant to be an approach, weaved 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 bloc 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 done in stations, while the other children in the class group have their own task • Complimentary activities 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 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*

Examples of children's books on social development



Themes in Social Development

Attachment,
togetherness

Similarities and
differences

Acceptance,
inclusion

Boundaries,
personal space

Friendship

Conflict, being
sorry

Kindness,
helping

Sharing,
cooperation

Taking turns,
waiting in line

Making
mistakes,
loosing

Social manners

Listening,
following rules

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



The child's brain needs time to become oriented to the world and who they are.

To do this they are present in the moment with their dominant thought or emotion, and no other thoughts or emotions coming in.

They are lost in examination and cannot see more than they can handle.

They don't always listen because they can only attend to one thing at a time, and it isn't always us.

Deborah MacNamara

A child's capacity to listen and follow directives

It starts with **adult guidance and encouragement.**

Younger children's brains are immature and still under construction, which makes the transition to school quite difficult.

- ✓ Set up a visual schedule and checklists for various routines to help structure them.
- ✓ Help them through role playing, rehearsing and practicing. E.g. waiting their turn, standing in line, etc.
- ✓ Practice those routines regularly through a playful and engaging approach. E.g. using music or a puppet to demonstrate.
- ✓ Be mindful of your stance and tone when giving directives. Make sure to engage the child before focusing on the task at hand. This will help getting the child on board and minimize their potential resistance.
- ✓ Make room for their frustration and give them space to voice what is bothering them.

They are not
little adults

Young Children

and their
INCONSIDERATE
relating

For them fair is they get it **ALL!**
don't yet have the concept of sharing

An innocent **EGOCENTRISM** that renders the
whole world about themselves.



A purity of action which leads
to a lack of **DIPLOMACY**:
Saying things like “she stinks!”
while pinching their nose.

A SINGLE-MINDEDNESS and a take on **UNFAIRNESS** that
is definitely **ONE-SIDED** in nature that renders another's
reference point irrelevant.

Why does the
young child by
design lack
consideration?



This is Nature's way of protecting a child from any social considerations that could overwhelm and undermine the **emergence of a tender new self**.

"They are egocentric because in order to share yourself with another person you first have to have a self to share".

Deborah MacNamara

A child's capacity to share and to be kind to others

It starts with
feeling
important &
cared for as well
as **having a soft**
heart.

- ✓ Make yourself accessible and let children get to know you by sharing commonalities, interests and preferences.
- ✓ Model being kind by responding with generosity when they appear needing help.
- ✓ Be aware that your reactions can have an impact on children's sense of well-being.
- ✓ Be patient when the child struggles with sharing. Assist challenging situations by finding work arounds.
- ✓ Propose fun and engaging games that naturally promote sharing (e.g. Mr. Potato Head) and practice adapted problem solving strategies around sharing.

Keep in mind that young children are naturally egocentric, because being considerate of others requires executive functioning, which is still in development

DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL OF EMPATHY

Caring is a natural spontaneous emotion evoked when properly **attached** and **being felt** when hearts are soft

*gives empathy its **ROOTS**,
HEART & SPIRIT*

CARING + CONSIDERATION = EMPATHY

*gives empathy
its civilized **FORM***

Consideration is a fruit of **integrative functioning**, which results from healthy development, which requires a soft heart and 'right' relationship

A child's success in managing conflict

It starts with
creating a
**developmentally-
friendly
environment.**

Provide what they
need to thrive and
do their best.

- ✓ Display a strong adult posture and rely on managing the circumstances. Don't expect the child to be able to sort out challenging conflicts on their own.
- ✓ Rest, play and emotional expression are keys to allow children to feel safe and, in turn, be more disposed to getting along.
- ✓ When a child is having a hard time dealing with their emotions, provide a quiet space to help them reset.
- ✓ Convey understanding when the child gets into conflicts. Young children get easily triggered emotionally. Don't force apologies, rather focus on the gesture of reparation when ready.

Guidelines for handling conflict BETWEEN CHILDREN

Don't try to figure out "who did what to whom" and who was in the "right".

- The conflict is often more than what it seems – it may be a build-up of previous frustration that spills over into the next situation.
- There is no point to focus on "who did what to whom". We may not have the full picture (e.g. non-verbal behaviours that we may have missed).
- The immature will INSIST on their perspective as they do not have the prefrontal cortex development that allows them to see the situation from the other person's perspective.

Guidelines for handling conflict BETWEEN CHILDREN

Come alongside
each child's
experience

Try to reflect back the EMOTIONAL experience:

- **Frustration:** *"That really wasn't working for you – not what you had in mind."*
- **Alarm:** *"That was scary – you were worried."*
- **Pursuit:** *"You really wanted him to play with you."*
- **Sadness:** *"That was upsetting – you feel hurt and sad."*

Guidelines for handling conflict BETWEEN CHILDREN

Don't try to
teach a lesson
and don't talk
too much

Instead: Do what you have to do to diffuse the situation – ACT **don't** TALK

- Kindly separate the children – preserve their dignity
- Give one child something else to play with
- Or ask the children to help you with something

If needed, address the incident only once the children's emotions have subsided.

Guidelines for handling conflict BETWEEN CHILDREN

Don't force a
'sorry' unless
genuine



- An insincere apology is not effective. Even young children know when it is not a genuine “sorry”.
- Young children feel badly AFTER the incident even if they cannot temper themselves during the incident. They need to know we understand how hard it is for them to “control” themselves.
- Instead: Go to the child who has been affected and take the time to name and validate their “pain”. Model to the children by saying you’re sorry the situation turned out the way it did. Let them know you are taking charge of the situation.
- Then: wait until emotions have subsided and focus on the gesture of reparation (get the child’s input)

A child's ability to collaborate and problem solve

It starts with **adult modeling and support.**

- ✓ Model regularly expected behaviour. Be explicit by showing them what the expectation looks like concretely.
- ✓ Talk aloud on how to do things: "when I have this situation, I like to..." "when I feel this way..." "In this class we..." "In this school we..."
- ✓ Be playful through games, songs and chants to address expected behaviour.
- ✓ Providing opportunities for social development, which goes beyond the focus of 'getting along'.

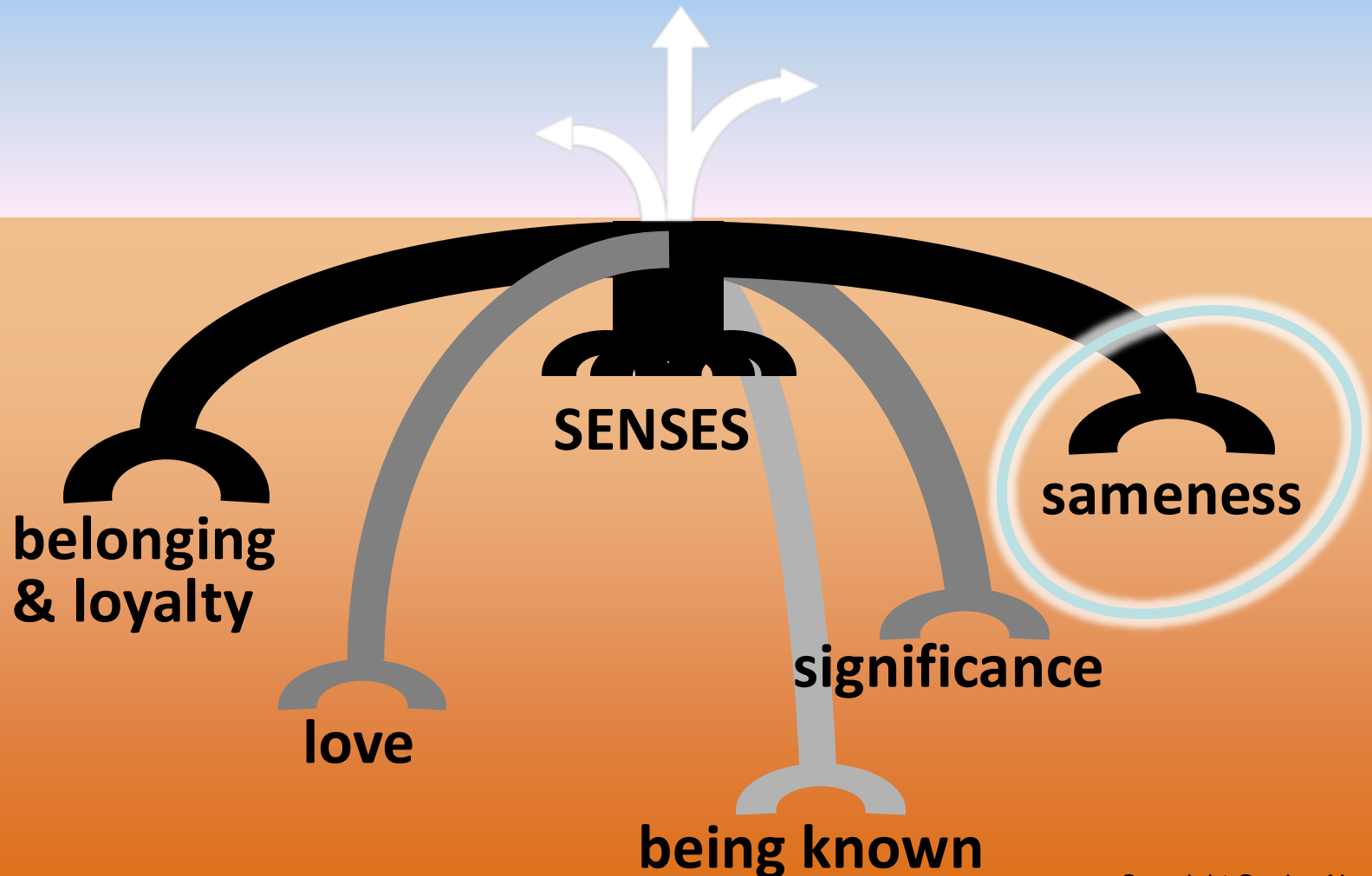
It starts by using
**play and engaging
activities** to guide
them.

A child's ability to **interact socially**
(make and manage friendships, be inclusive, etc.)

- ✓ Create a class climate that celebrates diversity, equity and inclusion.
- ✓ Propose fun and engaging games that naturally promote belonging and collectivity (e.g. group mural) and that help the children practice being inclusive.
- ✓ Benefit from story books (or individualized social stories for some) to accompany the children in exploring a range of social situations.
- ✓ Use games and activities to practice a range of social situations (e.g. imaginary play and role-playing with puppets, masks, figurines, dolls, Lego, game like red light/green light, Simon says, statue game, musical chairs, etc.)

Keep in mind that young children naturally gravitate towards those that are similar to them.

Connection and closeness through having something in common (i.e. acting the same, looking the same, having the same tastes, being of the same culture, etc.). This triggers in children a preoccupation social conformity and with being 'normal', as well as the threat of differences.



They are not
little adults

Young Children

and their
SEPARATION
problems

“NO! I do it myself, but don’t make me!”

don’t have the capacity for independence

***THEIR NEED FOR DEPENDENCE
MUST BE FULFILLED FIRST***



The more we push for independence (getting dressed on their own, accomplishing tasks by themselves, etc.), the more they will become concerned with the need to depend.

A child's ability to become independent

It starts by
fulfilling their
**need for
dependence.**

- ✓ Allow them to depend on you, every so often, when they need the help. Offer them to accomplish the task together. Over time, providing generous support will awaken in them a natural emergence to do things themselves.
- ✓ At times, their reluctance is related to their fear of failing. Convey that mistakes are merely an opportunity to build a better understanding and to solidify the learning.
- ✓ Be patient when a child struggles with accomplishing a certain task on their own, as they are quite attuned to our responses.
- ✓ Be aware that outside pressure towards independence placed too prematurely can trigger frustration, resistance and opposition.

Resistance and/or **opposition** can potentially happen when the experience of **outside pressure** is greater than the child's sense of their **own WILL**

expectations

>

initiative

pressure

>

purpose

demands

>

desires

have to's

>

want to's

directives

>

intentions

input

>

curiosity

incentives / rewards

>

interest

Resources for parents

Video capsule



Social Development

Suggestions for PARENTS

- Make the **RELATIONSHIP** with your child a priority. Be mindful of your own reactions, as they have an impact on your child. Allow them to lean on you when they need help.
Having a caring child starts by being CARED FOR
- Use **PLAY** to guide and direct your child. It will help minimize resistance. This can be done through games, stories, songs and chants.
Engage their DESIRE to follow your lead
- Be **PATIENT** when your child struggles with sharing. This is to be expected developmentally given their limited ability to consider others. Assist challenging situations by finding work arounds.
HELP THEM OUT instead of correcting them
- Convey **UNDERSTANDING** when your child gets into conflicts. Young children get easily triggered emotionally. Don't force apologies until feeling sorry.
A child's success in managing conflict starts with ADULT SUPPORT and MODELING
- Provide what your child **NEEDS** to do their best. Structure, predictability, opportunities for movement and respite are key for children to succeed.
When a child has the 'RIGHT' CONDITIONS, they do better

Younger children's brains are immature and still under construction, which makes the transition to school and 'getting along' quite difficult.
The fruit of development takes time

Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management

SAY SORRY LIKE YOU MEAN IT

Cultivating caring and empathy in kids

HOW TO SAY SORRY

IF NO, THEN WE MIGHT LEAD WITH ...

WHAT IS CARING?

IT IS OUR JOB ...

WHAT ERODES CARING?

FORCING CARING BEHAVIOUR IS NOT THE SAME AS NURTURING A CHILD'S CARING SPIRIT

HOW TO READ THE SORRY PLANE WITH KIDS

THE SORRY PLANE

CEBM KS KS list of children's books for emotional and social development

YouTube read aloud weblinks

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (in alphabetical order)

- All We Need is Love: <https://youtu.be/7b7m9f0R70k>
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: <https://youtu.be/7b7m9f0R70k>
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: <https://youtu.be/7b7m9f0R70k>
- Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: <https://youtu.be/7b7m9f0R70k>
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CEBM KS KS list of children's books for emotional and social development

ADULT RESOURCES - Articles by theme

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Attachment, safety, belonging

Helping and encouraging emotion

Expressing and releasing emotion

Overcoming, upset, frustration, tantrums

Worry, fear, being brave

Adolescence, teens

Knowing and appreciating oneself

LEARN

Children aged 3 to 5 have EVERYTHING to learn.

Help your child...

Share

Understand privacy

Be patient

Win and lose

Resolve conflicts

Adapt

FOLLOWING RULES

Following what is said and not allowed is necessary for a 3- to 5-year-old.

Each rule must be...

Clear

Concrete

Consistent

Logical

Keeping your home safe and secure helps reduce the number of rules you need to set.

PLAYING

Play is important for your 3- to 5-year-old's development.

Moving develops:

Playing with others teaches:

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

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



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)

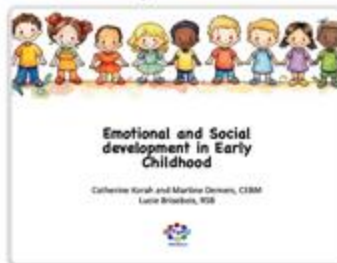
Through children's literature, this resources page aims to provide a range of tools and resources to help make social development more concrete and engaging for K4-K5 children.

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



Summary of activities by theme



YouTube links



Editorials by theme



K4-K5 Emotional Development

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

FR

K4-K5
Practices

K4-K5
Corner