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Supporting Young Children's Social-Emotional
Literacy (Ages 18 months - 7 years): Effective and
Evidence-based PBS Strategies

Pamelazita Buschbacher, Ed.D., CCC-SLP

Moderated by:
Amy Hansen, MA, CCC-SLP, Managing Editor, SpeechPathology.com



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- Two opportunities to pass the exam



Supporting Young Children's Social-Emotional Literacy (Ages 18 months - 7 years): Effective and Evidence-based PBS Strategies

Pamelazita Buschbacher, Ed.D., CCC-SLP
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May 17, 2018

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Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to:
 - Define emotional 'attachment', 'emotional literacy', and their relationship to young children's behavior.
 - Identify the 6 essential elements in the 'emotional literacy' schemata.
 - Identify at least 5 evidence-based practices to support young children in their development of a rich 'emotional literacy.'

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‘School Readiness?’

What is it?

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“School Readiness” Mistakes

- Child attributes in the absence of other ecological variables
 - Readiness is conceptualized as a trait,
 - ‘ready’ for speech & language therapy
 - ‘ready’ for preschool
 - ‘ready’ for kindergarten
- Compliance and uniformity
 - One Size Fits All
 - Skills taught in fragments and isolation
- Standardization of testing and instructional practices

All too often readiness focuses on the “achievement gap.” (Pretti-Frontczak, et al, 2016, p. 48)

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A New Definition for Readiness

“Readiness is a developmental process, largely unpredictable and highly influenced by the child’s **social relationships and interactions.**

Readiness requires a whole-child perspective where individual differences are expected, valued and celebrated.”

Pretti-Frontczak, et al, 2016

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Readiness is not in the child's head.
Readiness is a **relationship** not a trait.
Readiness always refers to the relation
between the child and the demands
and/or the expectations that are being
imposed upon him or her.

(Elkind, 2014, p. 193)

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Readiness Remedies

(Pretti-Frontczak, et al, 2016, p. 49)

- Conceptualizing readiness as a relationship
 - Complex and ever changing as the child interacts with adults and peers
 - Teaching and learning is a social endeavor
- Seeing the child as an integrated whole
 - Each child develops at a natural pace that can't be accelerated by targeting developmentally inappropriate outcome
 - Ex. wanting children to demonstrate self control or "use your words" when they are upset
 - We must assess, nurture & teach the skill within context

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Readiness Remedies (cont'd)

(Pretti-Frontczak, et al, 2016, p. 49)

- Expecting and valuing differences in children
 - Social
 - Cultural
 - Developmental

To demand that all children be at the same developmental or achievement level because they are the same age is simply a denial of our biological and environmental variability. (Elkind, 2014, p.193)

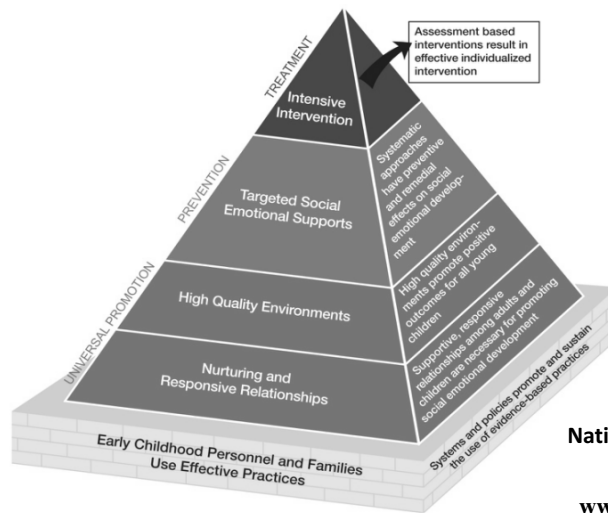
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Pretti-Frantczak, et al.(2016)propose a transactional shift which is integrated and personalized in nature.

- Prioritize and foster positive relationship
- Engage in authentic, integrated and developmentally appropriate learning experiences.
- Ensure readiness in all of the child's environments
 - Home, school and community

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The Pyramid Model: Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children



National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations

www.challengingbehavior.org

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The Pyramid Model: Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children

- Was developed by identifying evidence-based practices that:
 - Promote the social and emotional outcomes of all children,
 - Promote the skill development of children with social, emotional, and behavioral delays to prevent the need for more intensive supports; and
 - Intervene effectively when children have persistent challenging behavior.

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Many of those practices are available in user-friendly “**What Works Briefs.**”

- NCPMI ⇔ Evidenced Practices ⇔ What Works Briefs
- 24 briefs
- Many in English and Spanish
- Sample Topics
 - #3 Helping Children Understand Routines & Classroom Schedules
 - #4 Helping Children Make Transitions Between Activities
 - #8 Promoting Positive Peer social Interactions
 - #21 Fostering emotional Literacy in Young Children
 - #24 Attachment: What Works?

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Emotional Attachment

Is defined as “the continuing and lasting relationship(s) young children form with one or more adults, especially, the child’s sense of security and safety when in the company of a particular adult.”



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Young Children who Experience Secure Attachments

- Trust their needs will be met by adults
- Trust that adults will be emotionally available to them
- Learn to communicate in a variety of ways
- Begin to manage their strong emotions with help from adults
- Are more affectionate with peers
- Can focus on learning
- Demonstrate more empathy for others

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Young Children Who Do Not Experience Secure Attachments

- Learn not to trust adults will be there for them
- Stay close to an adult to get their needs met
- Learn to not seek out an adult when distressed to help them with their emotions
- Hide their strong feelings and withdraw
- Seem disorganized and confused about how to behave in relationships with peers and adults

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We Can Make a Difference

- Support the parent-child relationship
 - Support parent(s) in feeling competent and confident
 - *Positive Solutions for Families*

(www.challengingbehavior.org)

****Implementation ➡ Family Engagement ➡
Related Resources ➡ General Resources



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Positive Solutions for Families

1. Keep your expectations realistic.
2. Plan ahead.
3. Clearly state your expectations.
4. Offer limited, reasonable choices
5. Use "First..., Then...."
6. Catch your child being good.
7. Stay calm.
8. Use neutral time.

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We Can Make a Difference

- Foster a secure relationship with the child
 - Interact with other adults in child's environment in healthy ways
 - Be warm, responsive and affectionate with all children
 - Engage in meaningful conversational interactions with children
 - Be physically and emotionally available
 - Comfort children when they are distressed
 - Follow child's lead
 - Set safe behavior boundaries
 - Be consistent
 - Be a resource for parents needing mental health support

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Emotional Literacy



Emotional literacy is the ability to read (identify), label, understand, and act upon the feelings (emotions) of oneself and others in a healthy and socially acceptable manner.

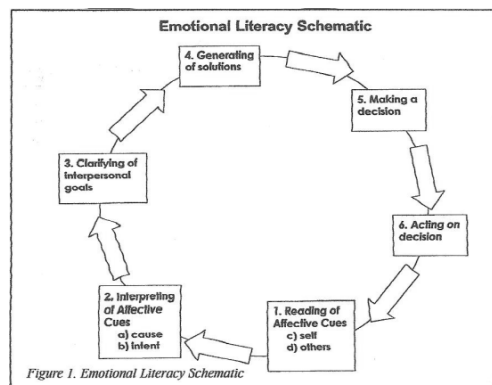
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Variables Impacting on a Young Child's Emotional Literacy Development

- Child's temperament
- Developmental status of the child
- Parental socialization skills
- Parental mental health
- Environmental support
- Disability
- Educator/therapist support of child emotional literacy

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Emotional Literacy Schemata



Joseph, G., Strain, P., Ostrosky, M.M. (2005) *Fostering emotional literacy in young children: labeling emotions.* www.challengingbehavior.org

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Evidenced-based Practices Supporting Young Children's Emotional Literacy

- Healthy expression of emotions by adults
- Labeling and concrete descriptions of “all” emotions felt by adults and children
- Acknowledging and encouraging pro-social behaviors
- Visual supports
- Planned activities to teach and reinforce emotional literacy

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Why Acknowledge Positive Behaviors?

Research Supports Use of This Strategy

- Adults, often, attend to children for misbehavior & take for granted pro-social behavior
- Negative attention is better than no attention
- Negative adult reaction will only temporarily reduce challenging behavior (emotional expression)
- Most behavior is strengthened/weakened by what immediately follows a behavior
- More desirable behavior often has to be taught and reinforced

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Adults Can Acknowledge Positive (Pro-social) Expression of Emotions

- Responding positively to desired emotional expression
- Ignoring most negative behavior
- Redirecting child to acceptable behavior
- Recording the number of times positive behavior occurs
- Designing and implementing a written positive behavior support (PBS) plan to be implemented by all adults in all the child's environments

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What Can Adults Do?

- Label your own feelings
- Label children's feelings
- Provide environmental supports
- Teach social-emotional skills through
 - Games
 - Songs
 - Books (Bibliotherapy)
 - Apps and computer games

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Communication is Key



COMMUNICATION IS KEY

1. Tell a child what to do instead of what not to do.
2. Show the child by modeling or using a picture of the action.
3. Clearly and simply state what you expect the child to do.
4. Remember young children use inappropriate behavior because they may not understand the social rules yet.
5. Talk to young children using language they understand. Young children may not understand words like "don't" because it is a short word for "do not" and he/she may not know what the "negation" of a word means.
6. Encourage the child in a way that lets him/her know that he/she is exhibiting the desired behavior
7. Be enthusiastic and generous with encouragement. Children can never get enough!

Examples:

Avoid	Say/Model	Remember
Don't run!	Walk; Use walking feet; Stay with me; Hold my hand	Way to go! Look at you, using your walking feet. Thanks for walking!
Stop clinking!	Keep your feet on the floor	Wow! You have both feet on the floor!
Don't touch!	Keep your hands down; Look with your eyes	You are such a good listener; you are looking with hands down!
No yelling!	Use a calm voice; Use an inside voice	[In a low voice] Now I can listen, you are using a calm (inside) voice.
Stop whining!	Use a calm voice; Talk so that I can understand you; Talk like a big boy/girl	Now I can hear you; that is so much better. Tell me with your words what's wrong.
Don't stand on the chair!	Sit on the on the chair	You are sitting on the chair! Wow you're sitting up big and tall!
Don't hit!	Hands down; Hands are for playing, eating, and hugging; Use your words (Give child appropriate words to use to express emotion)	You are using your words! Good for you!
No coloring on the wall!	Color on the paper	Look at what you've colored! Tell me about your picture.
Don't throw your toys!	Play with the toys on the floor	You're playing nicely. Your friends are having fun playing with you!
Stop playing with your food!	Food goes on the spoon and then in your mouth; Say "all done" when finished eating	Great! You're using your spoon! What nice manners, you said "all done," you can go play now.
Don't play in the water/junk!	Wash your hands	Thanks for washing your hands! I can tell they are really clean!
No biting!	We only bite food; Use your words if you're upset (Give child appropriate words to use to express emotion)	You're upset, thanks for telling me!
Don't spit!	Spit goes in toilet/toilet/press; Use your words (Give child appropriate words to use to express emotion)	Thanks for using your words!

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Environmental Supports

- Emotion Boards
- Emotion Sign-in/Sign-out Charts
- Feeling Face Collage
- Solution Kit (www.challengingbehavior.org)
- Classroom Rules (4-5)
 - Stated prosocially

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Solution Kit

(www.challengingbehavior.org)



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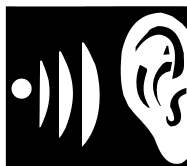
Classroom/Therapy Rules

- Have a few simple rules (4-5)
- Involve children in developing the rules
- Address:
 - Noise level; movement inside; and interactions with property, peers, and adults
- Post visually and at the child's eye level
- Teach rules systematically
- Place classroom/therapy rules on a cue card ring for portability
- Reinforce rules at high rates initially and also throughout the year

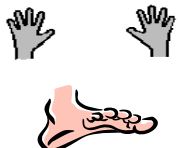
34

Classroom/Therapy Rules

Look with your eyes. Listen with your ears.



Gentle Hands & Feet



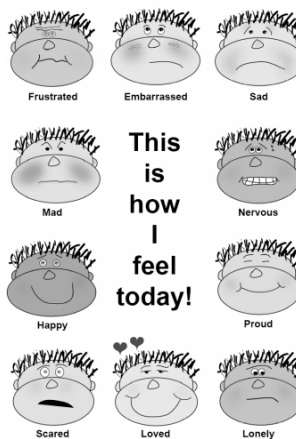
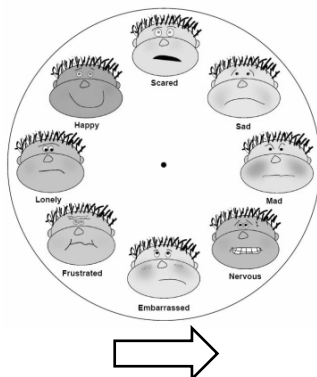
Talk nicely.



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Feeling Charts

Feeling Wheel



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Games & Songs

- “If You’re Happy and You Know It”
- ‘Feeling Face’ Charades
- Musical Emotions (like Musical Chairs but.....)
- Feeling Scavenger Hunt

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Social-emotional books

- Tell a good story in their own right & are well-crafted
- They are an easy and fun way to be more intentional about supporting social-emotional development
- Are written explicitly about feelings/behaviors
- Address challenging issues within a storyline:
 - Directly as part of the storyline
 - Indirectly by including coping/problem solving as part of the broader story
 - In real-life situations
- Build feeling vocabularies and/or provide information about behavioral expectations

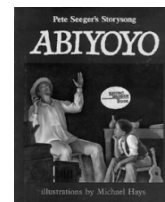
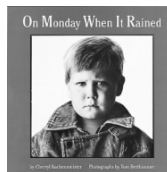
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Social-emotional books

- Can provide information on friendship skills, emotional literacy, empathy, impulse control
- Can help children cope with a range of challenges: broken toys, friend not sharing, new sibling, sibling rivalry, moving, unemployment, deployment, incarceration, divorce, death
- Can help children generalize to different settings/people/situations
- Can be used as the starting point for a teaching experience

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Social-emotional books



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I Can Be a SUPER FRIEND!



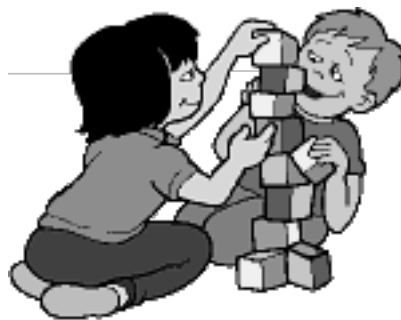
Created for Tim by Lisa Grant & Rochelle Lentini
2002

Created using pictures from Microsoft Clipart®

The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations

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continued™



**I like talking and playing
with my friends
at school.**

42

continued™

CONTINUED™



Sometimes, I want to play with what my friends are playing with.

When I play, I sometimes feel like taking toys, using mean words, or hitting and kicking.

My Friends get sad or mad when I hit, kick, use mean words, or take toys.



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CONTINUED™

If I want to join in play, I need to join nicely or ask to play with my friends' toys.



I can say, "Can I play with that toy?" or "Can I play with you?".

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CONTINUED™



First I stop, then I think about what a Super Friend would do.
Super Friends use:



Use nice talking,



Gentle hands and feet,



Look with their eyes,



Listen with their ears,



Take turns with toys.

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Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think

A scripted story to assist with teaching the
 “Turtle Technique”

By Rochelle Lentini

March 2005



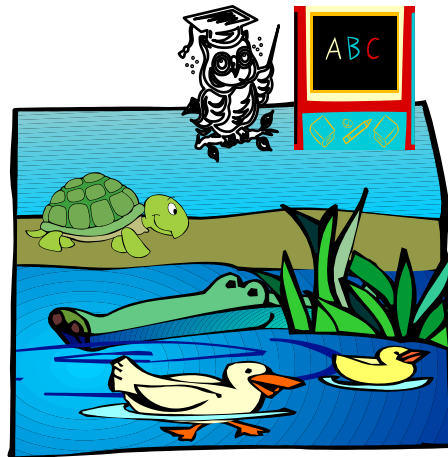
Lentini, R., Vaughn, B.J., & Fox, L. (2005). Teaching Tools for Young Children with Challenging Behavior. University of South Florida.

Created using pictures from Microsoft Clipart® and Webster-Stratton, C. (1991). The teachers and children videotape series: Dina dinosaur school. Seattle, WA: The Incredible Years.

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continued™

Tucker Turtle is a terrific turtle. He likes to play with his friends at Wet Lake School.



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continued™

But sometimes things happen that can make Tucker really mad.

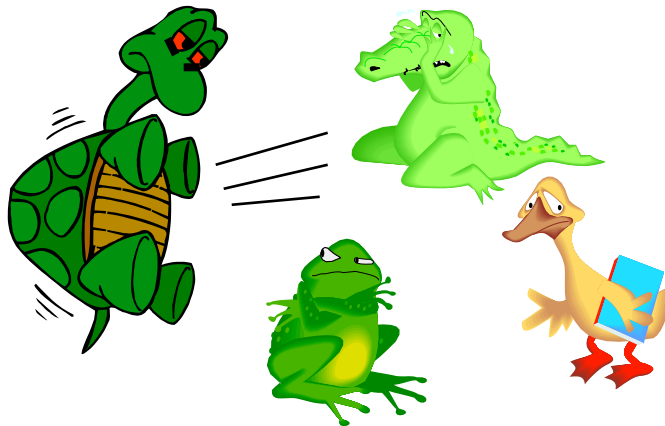


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continued™

continued™

When Tucker got mad, he used to hit, kick, or yell at his friends. His friends would get mad or upset when he hit, kicked, or yelled at them.



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continued™

Tucker now knows a new way to “think like a turtle” when he gets mad.



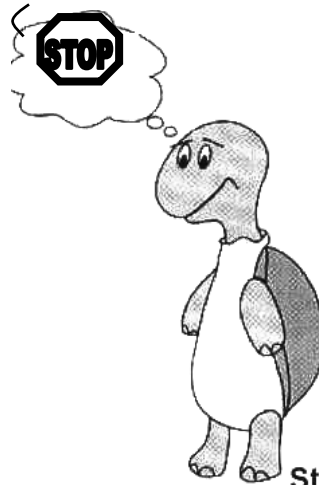
Step 1

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continued™

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He can **stop** and keep his hands, body, and yelling to himself!



Step 2

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continued™

He can **tuck** inside his shell and take **3 deep breaths to calm down.**



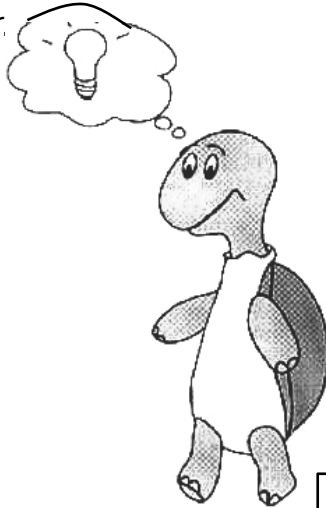
Step 3

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continued™

continued™

Tucker can then **think of a solution** or a way to make it better.



Step 4

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continued™

What are Social Stories®?

Social stories® are short stories written in special style and format for teaching social skills to children with autism and related disabilities, providing accurate information about those situations that they may find difficult or confusing. This tool has proven to be effective for ages preschool through adulthood

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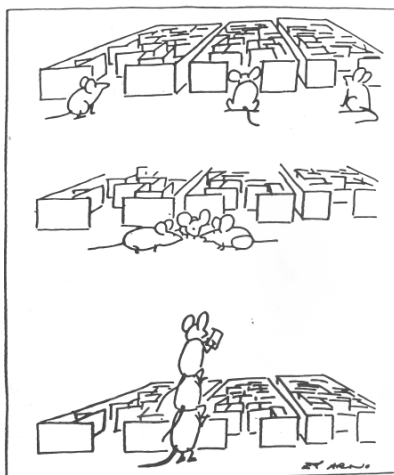
Sample – Social Story®

**I Can Make Good Choices
When I Feel Upset!**



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Family Engagement



At every tier of the Pyramid Model, educators encourage family input and collaboration.

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Backpack Connection Series

National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations

(www.challengingbehavior.org)



Series of one page teacher-to-parent tip sheet concerning topics related to behavior, emotional literacy, emotional regulation and social skill development

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Backpack Connection Series – Sample Topics

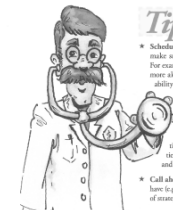
- Addressing Behavior – How to Help Your Child Stop Biting
- Addressing Behavior – How to Help Your Child Stop Hitting
- Emotions – How to Help Your child Understand Anger
- Emotions – How to Help Your child Understand and Label Emotions
- Social Skills – How to Help Your Child Learn to Share
- Social Skills – How to Help Your Child Take Turns

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"Making Life Easier" Tip Sheet Series



Going to the Doctor/Dentist



Doctor and dentist visits can be very stressful for young children. Routine check-ups can cause anxiety, fear and distress in toddlers and preschoolers. Some common fears for young children include:

- separation from you;
- pain and discomfort;
- stranger anxiety; and
- unfamiliar procedures and people.

The following tips will help ensure that these visits are easier for you and your child.

Tip: Prepare for the doctor/dentist visit.

- **Schedule smartly.** When you make an appointment for your child, make sure to schedule a time that you believe will work well for him. For example, many children do best early or mid-morning when they are more alert. Avoid skipping naps or meals as this may leave your child's ability to cope with any negative feelings he might experience.
- **Choose well.** Choose a doctor/dentist who has experience working with young children and is open to making adjustments based on your child's special needs. Some doctors and dentists specialize in caring for children with developmental disabilities. This is especially important if your child has medical complications, communication and/or behavior challenges. Certain disabilities are at increased risk for dental problems (e.g., Down syndrome and cerebral palsy) and might need more frequent dental visits.
- **Call ahead and inform the staff of any special needs** that your child might have (e.g., sensory issues, difficulty waiting, sensitive mouth and throat) and of examples that work for him. Develop a plan with the staff for the actual

- Designed specifically for parents and caregivers
- Regarding tips to make, sometimes, challenging events and/or routines
- easier to navigate,
- and even enjoyable, for both caregivers and children

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Sample of "Making Life Easier" Topics

- Bedtime and Naptime
- Diapering
- Going to the Doctor/Dentist
- Holidays: Strategies for Success
- Running Errands

NCPMI ⇌ Implementation ⇌ Family Engagement ⇌
Making Life Easier

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Some Apps

- Children's books
- Emoji
- Emoticon
- Touch and Learn – Emotions
- ABA Flash Cards & Games – Emotions
- Emotions from I Can Do Apps
- Autism Apps - Choiceworks

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Adults Who Support Young Children's Emotional Literacy Can Expect

- Fewer challenging behaviors
- Improved emotional self-regulation
- Larger and more complex feeling vocabulary
- More developmentally sophisticated and enjoyable peer social interactions
 - Successful peer interactions
 - Better problem-solving skills

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Some Resources That Might Help

- ❑ www.pyramidproducts.com
- ❑ www.socialstories.com
- ❑ www.do2Learn.com
- ❑ www.lessonpics.com
- ❑ www.challengingbehavior.org (Now called **The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations**)
- ❑ www.freespirit.com
- ❑ www.csefel/vanderbilt.edu
- ❑ www.pinterest.com – Managing Behaviors & Social Skills

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- Elkind, D. (1987). *Miseducation: Preschoolers at risk*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
- Pretti-Frontczak, K. Harjusola-Webb, S. Chin, M. Grisham-Brown, J. Acar, S. Heo, K. Corby, M. Zeng, S. (2016). Voices for the field: Three mistakes made world-wide in “Getting children ready” for school. *Young Exceptional Children*, 13-1, 48-51.

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continued™

Three things I can do in the next week to support emotional literacy in the children I teach

1.

2.

3.

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continued™

Questions?



www.corbis.com

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