



Topic II

Social-Emotional Development

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Introduction

Social-emotional development indicates how preschool children acquire the social skills, self-awareness, and personal qualities that are interconnected with learning in a classroom. Children who have the greatest difficulties in learning are hindered by the lack of these social-emotional qualities more than by the inability to identify letters or numbers (*California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1*).

Self

Early learning deeply engages the self. In a preschool program, learning is a social activity. Therefore, preschool children's success in learning depends on their capacities to understand and participate constructively in the social environment (*California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1*).

Social Interaction

Group learning always involves social interaction. The ease and skill with which children interact with adults and peers in a preschool classroom or family child care program, and the competence with which they assume their roles and responsibilities as group members, significantly influence how they learn (*California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1*).

Relationships

Relationships shape young children's learning. In the classroom, young children's relationships with special adults and friends contribute to their enthusiasm for preschool and the activities that contribute to their development. Equally important, as these central relationships are bridged through the teacher's efforts to reach out to the family and to guide the growth of friendships, young children's close relationships contribute in concert to the growth of early learning. (*California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1*).