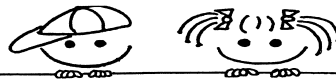




Parenting Corner: *Social/Emotional*



IUSD Early Childhood Learning Center
Early Start • Head Start • Montessori International • School Readiness • Special Education Preschool
(949) 936-5870



If I Had My Child to Raise Over Again

*If I had my child to raise all over again,
I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.
I'd finger paint more, and point the finger less.
I'd do less correcting, and more connecting.
I'd take my eyes off my watch,
And watch with my eyes.
I'd care to know less and know to care more.
I'd take more hikes and fly more kites.
I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.
I'd do more hugging and less tugging.
I'd see the oak tree in the acorn more often.
I'd be firm less often and affirm much more.
I'd model less about the love of power,
And more about the power of love.*

-Diane Loomans

Helpful Hints

“Each child deserves to be acknowledged and cherished for the qualities that make her [or him] unique.”- Lee Salk, Ph. D.,
Child Development Specialist

Fast Facts

Research shows that social skills and emotional development (reflected in the ability to pay attention, make transitions from one activity to another, and cooperate with others) are a very important part of school readiness. - PBS, The Whole Child

What Encouragement Sounds Like

To help our children build their self-esteem, as parents we need to avoid the tendency to discourage bad or inappropriate behavior and instead focus more of our energy on encouraging good or appropriate behavior. We will see more positive behavior if we look for it more often. We can use the power of encouragement to build courage and self-esteem, and also to promote positive behavior, values, and attitudes.

Instead of ...

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| • focusing on mistakes | → | <u>build on strengths</u> |
| • expecting too much - perfectionism | → | <u>show acceptance</u> |
| • negative expectations | → | <u>show confidence</u> |
| • expecting too little - overprotection | → | <u>stimulate independence</u> |

Here are some words and phrases to actively encourage your child:

Nice job	Super	I appreciate that	You did it
Wow	Awesome	Good for you	I'm proud of you
Thank you	Wonderful	Nice try	Gimme five

Social and Emotional Development

To be ready for learning, children need to be able to cooperate, follow directions, demonstrate self-control and pay attention. Social and emotional development involves the acquisition of a set of skills, most importantly being able to:



- Identify and understand one's own feelings
- Accurately read and comprehend emotional states in others
- Manage strong emotions and their expression in a constructive manner
- Regulate one's own behavior
- Develop empathy for others
- Establish and maintain relationships



Milestones of Social and Emotional Development

Children ages 3-4 are: improving their self-help skills, becoming more independent, following a series of simple directions, completing simple tasks with food, washing hands unassisted, blowing their nose when reminded, becoming more interested in other children, learning to share toys, taking turns with assistance, and beginning to join in dramatic play.

Children ages 4-5 are: becoming more aware of themselves as individuals, showing some understanding of moral reasoning, exploring ideas of fairness, good and bad behavior, comparing themselves with others, developing friendships, expressing more awareness of other's feelings, and enjoying imaginative play with other kids.

Story Time



Through stories and illustrations books open up new worlds for preschoolers. Here are a few books you can share with your child to promote social and emotional development while reading together.

Support: *Oh My Baby, Little One*, written by Kathi Appelt, illustrated by Jane Dyer. A little bird feels loved by a parent when they're together- and apart. A story that shows many ways to give love and support.

Empowerment: *Mouse, Look Out!* written by Judy Waite, illustrated by Norma Burgin. A mouse goes exploring, empowered by adventure, yet he needs to keep an eye out or safety- from the cat. Preschoolers will delight in shouting, "Mouse, look out! There's a cat about!" as the story unfolds, and they'll love the story's fun twist at the end.

Social Competencies: *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type*, written by Doreen Cronin, illustrated by Betsy Lewin. A group of barnyard animals show how to build resistance skills, peaceful conflict resolution skills, and interpersonal skills when they advocate for their needs. A humorous book that stretches preschoolers' imagination.

** For more reading resources check out NEA's Read Across America website at www.nea.org/readacross/parents.html.**

Ways to Enhance Self-esteem

1. **Notice positive behaviors.** Recognize the positive aspects of your child's achievements and behaviors. What is your child doing right rather than what was not done. Catch your child being good!
2. **Compare your child with his own growth.** Do not compare your child to his siblings or your friends' children. That way he can always succeed and feel good about himself.
3. **Allow your child to own his own feelings.** Do not tell him he doesn't feel the way he does or he should feel some other way. You want your child to understand the congruency of feelings, words and actions. Reflective listening helps him know you understand his feelings.
4. **Allow your child to do things for herself.** Doing things autonomously is the way we learn to feel self-mastery, to trust ourselves and to know our own value. Don't do for a child regularly what she can do for herself. Also allow her to help you make a contribution to the situation whenever possible.
5. **Allow your child to make her own decisions** - whenever possible, within her capacity and your limits.
6. **Allow him space or time to form his own response** - before you step in and do it for him. Also help him to have the success instead of you doing it better.



Helpful Resources

Meet your own needs as well as your child's. Give yourself time alone to reflect or meditate on the lovable, capable, valuable parent you are.

Counseling For Parents

Low cost, short term, solution-focused counseling is available for parents and families with children birth thru five who are experiencing personal, family or parenting problems. Call School Readiness clinician Cathy Vaughn, L.C.S.W. at (949) 936- 5863 for information.

Visit the IUSD School Readiness Program at www.iusd.org/eclc/ and click on ECLC programs.

Time Together: Children's Journal

A great way to help children express and understand their feelings is by creating a journal. Bind blank sheets of paper together with either yarn or staples. Have your child write their name on the cover and decorate however they want. Let your child use this journal to express their feelings and thoughts through words or pictures. To help children get started, parents can ask about their day at preschool or Kindergarten, have children draw pictures of each family member and talk about them, after going on a trip or outing have children draw a picture of their favorite part of the day, or if they are upset about something use the journal to problem solve possible solutions. Parents and children will love this creative outlet.

