

Social and Emotional Development: 3-5 Years

Children recognize and value their own individuality, emotions, and strengths. 1

a Demonstrate awareness of and recognize the value of their personal traits, including their strengths and interests. 1A

1a. 3 Years 3.1A

1 Choose picture books from the library that have main characters who look like them. 3.1A.1

1a. 4 Years 4.1A

2 Point out, while a familiar adult reads the book *Abuela* to the group, that the Spanish words in the story are the same language they speak at home with their family. 4.1A.2

1 Announce successes and accomplishments, such as “Look, I can climb to the top of the slide!” 4.1A.1

1a. 5 Years 5.1A

1 Compare their drawing of a tree to the illustration in a book. 5.1A.1

2 Volunteer to explain what the Spanish words in *Abuela* mean while a familiar adult reads the story. 5.1A.2

b Demonstrate willingness to explore independently and try new things. 1B

1b. 3 Years 3.1B

- 1 Watch other children's play with interest. 3.1B.1
- 2 With encouragement, "join in" with play by sitting down nearby to play with the same objects (such as building their own tower near someone else's construction). 3.1B.2
- 3 Explore new materials or experiences (like a playground structure) with a familiar child or adult. 3.1B.3

1b. 4 Years 4.1B

- 1 Join a group of familiar children in playing a new game. 4.1B.1
- 2 With encouragement, introduce themselves to an unfamiliar child and go play with them. 4.1B.2

1b. 5 Years 5.1B

- 1 Watch other children play for a moment or two to get a sense of what's happening and then go to join in 5.1B.1
 - 2 Be reluctant to try new things that may require skills they haven't mastered. 5.1B.2
 - 3 May resist repeating experiences they were not previously successful with. 5.1B.3
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Children recognize the connections between their emotions and reactions and begin to control their impulses in different situations. 2

a Express their emotions freely, and begin to identify and manage those emotions, with support from familiar adults. 2A

2a. 3 Years 3.2A

- 1 Continue to express emotions physically or in big ways, such as squealing and twirling in a circle, throwing a toy, or shouting “No!” 3.2A.1
- 2 With adult support, practice using words or signs to express their emotions, needs, and wants. 3.2A.2
- 3 Announce that “He’s funny” when laughing at an adult being silly. 3.2A.3

2a. 4 Years 4.2A

- 1 Seek out a familiar adult to explain their interpretations of what is happening to cause their emotions. “Billy is being mean to me!” 4.2A.1
- 2 Continue to sometimes express emotions physically, such as knocking down another child’s block tower because that child wouldn’t let them play. 4.2A.2
- 3 Verbally express what they are feeling. 4.2A.3
- 4 Say, “That was fun!” or “I don’t like that,” after trying a new activity. 4.2A.4
- 5 With adult support, identify their emotions and use breathing techniques to manage them. 4.2A.5

2a. 5 Years 5.2A

- 1 Express disappointment by crumpling a paper they made a mistake on. 5.2A.1
- 2 Express themselves through words or signs and attempt to explain the whole story of why they feel the way they do. 5.2A.2
- 3 Use “belly breathing,” “bunny breathing,” or other techniques to manage their own emotions. 5.2A.3
- 4 Verbally express what they are feeling using a bigger and more detailed vocabulary, such as saying, “I’m excited because my mom is taking me to gymnastics today,” or “I’m proud of me and Josie because we built the tallest tower.” 5.2A.4
- 5 Tell a familiar adult that they are mad, angry, or sad because another child took the toy they were playing with. 5.2A.5

b Demonstrate flexibility and an increasing ability to adapt to changes and setbacks. 2B

2b. 3 Years 3.2B

- 1 Readily cooperate with routines and tasks when provided with the opportunity to make choices throughout their day. 3.2B.1
- 2 Demonstrate an understanding that different settings have different routines and expectations, such as home and school. 3.2B.2
- 3 Show understanding that they can run on the playground but not indoors. 3.2B.3
- 4 Tolerate and enjoy a moderate degree of change, surprises, uncertainty, and potentially puzzling events. 3.2B.4
- 5 Manage transitions and follow routines most of the time. 3.2B.5

2b. 4 Years 4.2B

- 1 With support, retry a difficult task. 4.2B.1
- 2 When a paint stroke spatters across the paper, look to a familiar adult for reassurance, and then with that support, incorporate the spatters into the painting as stars or something else. 4.2B.2
- 3 When it is time to transition from learning centers to lunch, help carry the transition sign around to inform their peers. 4.2B.3

2b. 5 Years 5.2B

- 1 Establish and maintain a familiar goodbye routine for separating from a family member at school, such as turning around at the door to blow a kiss goodbye. 5.2B.1
 - 2 Follow routines with little prompting, such as going to put a coat on when a familiar adult says, "It's time to go outside." 5.2B.2
 - 3 Notice that a chosen activity is "full" and make a different choice. 5.2B.3
 - 4 Persist in a challenging task, such as putting together a puzzle and working through trying a puzzle piece in different spots until it fits. 5.2B.4
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Children demonstrate a growing ability to show care and understanding for the way other people feel, and begin to recognize that people may think, feel, and experience things differently from each other. 3

a Recognize other people’s emotions and respond with care, sensitivity, and later empathy. 3A

3a. 3 Years 3.3A

- 1 Recognize and respond to other children’s expression of strong feelings, such as laughing when other children are laughing. 3.3A.1
- 2 Notice and label, with increasing accuracy, non-verbal indicators of others’ strong feelings, such as “Jalen’s mad!” when another child stomps their foot. 3.3A.2

3a. 4 Years 4.3A

- 1 Try to predict and identify the cause and/or consequence of others’ emotions, such as “My puppy loves me. He barks and wags his tail and licks me when I come home!” 4.3A.1
- 2 Briefly try to help someone who is upset by thinking about that person’s specific needs. For example, Donetta is sad, and Francesca gets Donetta’s blanket from her cubby to help or goes to tell an adult that Donetta needs help. 4.3A.2
- 3 Notice more subtle expressions of emotion from others, such as recognizing that a child who is standing outside a group of children playing a game might be shy or nervous to join in. 4.3A.3

3a. 5 Years 5.3A

- 1 Try to predict and identify the cause and/or consequence of others’ emotions in stories, such as “I think the pigs are scared of the wolf, even though they’re acting brave when they say, ‘not by the hair of my chinny chin chin.’” or “I think the wolf is getting angry because the pigs are teasing him.” 5.3A.1
- 2 Begin to respond to others with empathy – “I’m sorry your grandma couldn’t come to the lunch today, Jordan. You can sit with me and my grandma!” 5.3A.2
- 3 Accurately recognize and label the emotions of others with increasing consistency, especially those who are familiar, but also growing to include strangers and those in stories and other media. 5.3A.3

b Recognize and respond to social cues. 3B

3b. 3 Years 3.3B

- 1 Interact with another child who is playing in the block corner alongside them. 3.3B.1
- 2 Understand facial expressions, vocal tone, and physical tension as cues to engage or not engage with another person. 3.3B.2
- 3 Wave someone “toward them” to show them something or seek help. 3.3B.3

3b. 4 Years 4.3B

- 1 Comment on what another child is doing. 4.3B.1
- 2 Give a hug to a child who is crying. 4.3B.2
- 3 Begin to play with friends, for example playing games or building together. 4.3B.3
- 4 Talk with other children during snack or mealtime. 4.3B.4

3b. 5 Years 5.3B

- 1 Understand the difference between helpful and hurtful ways to get something or meet a need. 5.3B.1
- 2 Move a toy or chair out of the path of a child in a wheelchair or walking with leg braces. 5.3B.2
- 3 Notice when there is space in a play area for them to join, and recognize non-verbal cues, such as the other children looking up and smiling at them when they approach, as a tool to help them decide if they will ask to join. 5.3B.3

c Demonstrate an understanding that the diverse community of people around them have unique strengths and experiences to share and should be treated with respect. 3C

3c. 3 Years 3.3C

- 1 Show increased understanding of their own strengths and interests in contrast to others'. "I'm a good climber!" and "You like purple, but I like green." 3.3C.1
- 2 Describe their interests, ideas, and likes and dislikes when prompted. For example, responding with a color name when a familiar adult asks which colors, they want to play with, or answering a question about their favorite animal. 3.3C.2
- 3 Draw pictures of their family or share a special object related to their family traditions or cultural heritage. 3.3C.3

3c. 4 Years 4.3C

- 1 Show increased understanding that others have differing interests, thoughts, beliefs, ideas, feelings, and strengths. "Seanan is fast when she runs!" "Miguel likes to play in the kitchen." 4.3C.1
- 2 Begin to differentiate themselves more clearly from others. "My dad doesn't like to fish, but me and my grandpa do." 4.3C.2
- 3 Share a story about a family gathering or otherwise describe their connections to their family and community. 4.3C.3

3c. 5 Years 5.3C

- 1 Identify themselves as being part of various groups, such as their family, their neighborhood community, their faith, their school community, as well as their racial, cultural, linguistic, and gender identities. 5.3C.1
 - 2 Ask for help with something from another child because they recognize it is a strength of the other child. 5.3C.2
 - 3 Describe themselves and others using multiple characteristics, including physical features, talents, culture, and interests. 5.3C.3
 - 4 Share stories about being part of a different group than the one they're talking to. "When I was at the family reunion..." 5.3C.4
 - 5 Recognize and name similarities and differences in their roles, expectations, and behaviors across different groups and settings. 5.3C.5
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Children interact and communicate to form deep, caring connections, friendships, and other relationships, and to manage conflict. 4

a Demonstrate healthy attachment to and trust in familiar adults in their lives. 4A

4a. 3 Years 3.4A

- 1** Begin to comfortably interact with an increasing number of significant people in their lives beyond families and primary caregivers. 3.4A.1
- 2** Glance back at familiar adults to reassure themselves they are not “alone.” 3.4A.2

4a. 4 Years 4.4A

- 1** Look to or ask adults for comfort and help when needed. 4.4A.1
- 2** Seek out affection from familiar adults. 4.4A.2

4a. 5 Years 5.4A

- 1** Show comfort and confidence in expressing themselves to familiar adults. 5.4A.1
- 2** Be eager to share their accomplishments with familiar adults. 5.4A.2
- 3** Sit near or lean against a trusted familiar adult. 5.4A.3

b Demonstrate an ability to initiate and sustain interactions and communication with others, primarily in their home language. 4B

4b. 3 Years 3.4B

- 1 Show preference for certain children and greet them by name. 3.4B.1
- 2 Communicate their own ideas and ask for help when needed. 3.4B.2
- 3 Begin engaging in social play by mimicking other children's play, such as when other children are playing a running game, begin to run and check if they've been noticed and included. 3.4B.3
- 4 Enter play by making suggestions for other children's play, such as holding out a lion toy to children building a zoo and saying, "You could put the lion in that one!" 3.4B.4
- 5 Engage in simple cooperative play with others and begin to extend the length of that play.. 3.4B.5
- 6 Engage in longer reciprocal (back-and-forth) interactions with adults to talk about their experiences. For example, a child might tell a familiar adult, "I went to the zoo!" and then answer a series of questions about what they saw at the zoo. 3.4B.6

4b. 4 Years 4.4B

- 1 Play cooperatively with others with increasing intentionality, including making plans with other children about what to play and how (the "rules" of their game or play, for example). 4.4B.1
- 2 Show excitement or relief when they can make themselves understood in their home language. 4.4B.2
- 3 Begin to show interest in the feelings, likes and dislikes, and general wellbeing of familiar adults. 4.4B.3
- 4 Engage in longer interactions with both familiar and new adults, with more backand-forth communication. 4.4B.4
- 5 Usually respond to requests and directions from familiar adults. 4.4B.5

4b. 5 Years 5.4B

- 1 Usually engage with adults by saying hello or goodbye without prompting, respond to requests or directions from familiar adults, and ask or wait for permission from a familiar adult if they are not sure about something. 5.4B.1
- 2 Engage in joint play with others, with increasing intentionality, including making plans for goals, roles, rules, and expectations of their play—and demonstrate willingness to include others' ideas in that planning. 5.4B.2
- 3 Maintain and show enjoyment (smiles, laughter, etc.) of positive interactions with other children. 5.4B.3
- 4 Use new or additional strategies to enter play with others: suggest something to do together ("Do you want to play hide and seek?"), offer to share a toy, and join into existing play ("Can I be the dad in the family?"). 5.4B.4
- 5 Take turns in conversation with other children. 5.4B.5

c Develop and maintain deep, caring connections, friendships, and other relationships with people of various cultures, family structures, home languages, racial identities, genders and gender identities, abilities and disabilities, religious beliefs, and socio-economic classes. 4C

4c. 3 Years 3.4C

- 1 Show preferences for playing with specific children. 3.4C.1
- 2 Engage in pretend play that allows them to explore the roles of favorite adults. 3.4C.2
- 3 Spontaneously play alongside or join in play with other children, familiar or unfamiliar. 3.4C.3
- 4 With support and prompting, introduce themselves to unfamiliar children. 3.4C.4

4c. 4 Years 4.4C

- 1 Ask other children and familiar adults questions about their families and home lives. 4.4C.1
- 2 Stand on the edge of a group of children they would like to join. 4.4C.2
- 3 Play with the same few children consistently. 4.4C.3
- 4 Engage in play with unfamiliar children and, with reminders, introduce themselves. 4.4C.4
- 5 Ask to play with a new friend again. 4.4C.5

4c. 5 Years 5.4C

- 1 Identify “best friends.” 5.4C.1
- 2 Engage in conversation and play with unfamiliar children. 5.4C.2
- 3 Form quick connections with other children who have similar interests or other common ground. 5.4C.3

d Express disagreement and begin to manage conflict in safe, developmentally appropriate ways. 4D

4d. 3 Years 3.4D

- 1 Continue to express emotions physically or in big ways, such as shouting “No!” when they disagree or don’t want to do something. 3.4D.1
- 2 With adult support, practice using words or signs to express their feelings, as well as the reason for a disagreement or conflict, and their ideas for how to resolve the issue. 3.4D.2
- 3 Seek out a familiar adult to help resolve conflicts with other children. 3.4D.3
- 4 Use signs, words and phrases that have been modeled for them, when attempting to resolve conflicts. “I don’t like that.” 3.4D.4

4d. 4 Years 4.4D

- 1 Seek out a familiar adult to explain their interpretations of what is happening to cause their emotions. “Billy is being mean to me!” 4.4D.1
- 2 Continue to sometimes express emotions physically, such as knocking down another child’s block tower because that child wouldn’t let them play. 4.4D.2
- 3 With adult support, identify their big emotions and use breathing techniques to manage them. 4.4D.3
- 4 With adult support and reinforcement, listen to another child’s perspective about a conflict, and work together to come up with ideas for a resolution. 4.4D.4
- 5 Suggest ideas to help resolve conflicts. “I’m playing with this doll, but you can have that one.” 4.4D.5
- 6 Sometimes take turns or work out other small conflicts with other children. 4.4D.6

4d. 5 Years 5.4D

- 1 Express disappointment in others by announcing that they “hate” the other person. 5.4D.1
 - 2 Express themselves through words or signs and attempt to explain the whole story of a particular conflict and why they feel this way. 5.4D.2
 - 3 With reminders, use “belly breathing,” “bunny breathing,” or other techniques to manage their own emotions during a conflict. 5.4D.3
 - 4 Tell a familiar adult that they are mad, angry, or sad because another child took the toy they were playing with. 5.4D.4
 - 5 Negotiate with other children to decide who will get the first turn, with adult support. 5.4D.5
 - 6 Share, and ask to share, toys with other children, most of the time. 5.4D.6
 - 7 Apologize for stepping on another child’s toy. 5.4D.7
 - 8 Seek out a familiar adult when they need help to resolve a conflict. 5.4D.8
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Children demonstrate an awareness of the ways their choices and actions may impact the emotional and physical well-being of themselves and others. 5

a Begin to make choices that reflect their understanding of fairness and unfairness, as well as the boundaries and expectations of various situations. 5A

5a. 3 Years 3.5A

- 1 Point out that they are “allowed” to do something or behave a certain way in another situation – “But Papa says I can!” 3.5A.1
- 2 Inform other children of an expectation they’re not following, for example “You can’t climb on that!” 3.5A.2

5a. 4 Years 4.5A

- 1 Tell a familiar adult when other children aren’t following expectations or boundaries, such as “Arisa didn’t put the markers away.” 4.5A.1
- 2 Expect fairness in all situations. 4.5A.2
- 3 Expresses frustration when boundaries or expectations are not applied consistently – “That’s not fair” and “Why can’t I do that too?” 4.5A.3
- 4 Question a familiar adult’s instructions (“Why do I have to do that?”) while another child quietly and immediately complies. 4.5A.4

5a. 5 Years 5.5A

- 1 Recognize and express frustration or confusion about the differences between their own families’ expectations and the expectations of other families for their children – “But Salim’s mom lets him do it!” 5.5A.1
- 2 Verbalize or demonstrate their internal debate around whether or not to break a rule or follow expectations – “I want more crackers, but Mr. Taylor told me to wait.” 5.5A.2

b Show a desire to positively participate in their community (family, learning environment, school, community) through showing care and consideration for others. 5B

5b. 3 Years 3.5B

- 1 Express spontaneous affection—running up to give a hug, for example—to the people with whom they spend a lot of time. 3.5B.1
- 2 Engage with their day-to-day routines with increasing levels of interest, participation, and responsibility, such as taking on the role of “gardener” to water the plants or offering their opinion on which of two story choices they should read as a group. 3.5B.2

5b. 4 Years 4.5B

- 1 Participate in a group discussion to decide on expectations in the learning environment. 4.5B.1
- 2 Repeat the language of a particular expectation when they see another child acting outside that boundary. 4.5B.2
- 3 Follow expectations or boundaries set in varying situations, most of the time. 4.5B.3
- 4 Show increasing comfort in taking on different roles in their environment (e.g., helping others, turning off the water, holding the door). 4.5B.4
- 5 Put their own belongings away with prompting. 4.5B.5

5b. 5 Years 5.5B

- 1 Participate in a group discussion to decide on expectations for the learning environment and offer detailed suggestions. 5.5B.1
- 2 Continue to follow expectations or boundaries set in varying situations, most of the time. 5.5B.2
- 3 Care for the environment with increasing responsibility and skill (e.g., cleaning up, wiping the table, flushing the toilet, helping others). 5.5B.3
- 4 Offer help to peers when they notice someone is struggling with an activity. 5.5B.4
- 5 Put their own belongings away without prompting, most of the time. 5.5B.5