# Caregiver Social-Emotional Practices

| **Environmental Arrangement** |
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| *Position and arrange interaction partners, materials, activities, and routines to support the child's use of the target skill.* |
| 1.  Use family or child **physical or environmental supports** that facilitate interactions with people or objects, when needed. |
| 2.  Use **family or child materials, toys, or objects** that the child prefers to engage the child in interactions or play. |
| 3.  **Position or arrange** the interaction partner and materials to encourage the child to interact and communicate (for example, sit on the floor eye to eye; place preferred toys in sight but out of reach; give smaller portions of snack so the child asks for more). |
| **Contingent Responding** |
| *Contingent responding is when the caregiver notices, responds, models, and expands the child's use of target skills.* |
| 4.  **Adapt** daily routines and activities by **matching** the child's preferences and responses (for example, follow the child's toileting and eating patterns, hold a child who is fearful around a new person, stay calm and quiet if needed, alternate quiet and busy activities). |
| 5.  **Provide specific praise** when the child does something a caregiver wanted him/her to do, or does something that caregiver wants the child to do in the future (for example, "I like the way you are using gentle hands with the dog," "Thank you for giving your brother one of your cars").* |
| 6.  **Encourage and respond** to the child's communication and interaction attempts by imitating and/or expanding on what the child does or says. |
| 7.  **Comment on a child's behavior** and facial expressions using varied feeling words (for example, happy, sad, mad) and ask the child questions about his or her feelings.* |
| 8.  Use gestures, words, facial expressions, and physical positioning (for example, on the floor at eye level, face-to-face) to **respond to the child's cues** that he/she is ready to engage (for example, the child is looking at a toy or another person; child is reaching for an object). |
| 9.  Encourage sibling or peer interaction (for example, **acknowledge and comment on children's interest in other children**; encourage their attempts to join play).* |
| **Wait Time** |
| 10.  **Wait and watch** to see what the child is interested in and join the child's routines and activities by following their lead (for example, talking about what the child is doing, interacting with the materials the child has chosen, allowing the child to direct the pace of the activity or routine). |
| 11.  **Pause** and look expectantly at child, providing a nonverbal cue for the child to perform the target behavior, and then wait for 2-5 seconds for the child to perform the skill.* |

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| **Extra Cues (Prompting)** |
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| *Caregiver uses least to most or most to least support to encourage the child to engage in target behavior.* |

12. Help the child learn about family routines through **verbal cues, tangible objects related to the routine,** and **pictures** (for example, show the child a diaper when it is time for a change; tell the child she needs her shoes to be ready to go outside).

13. Give the child **choices** of toys, objects, food, and activities.

14. **Obtain the child's attention** when he or she is not actively engaged and introduce a new activity or adapt the activity when needed.

15. Help the child learn new words, phrases, or gestures by providing the child with **extra cues.** Start with cues that provide the least amount of support (for example, saying the word or phrase to the child) and increase the amount of support, if needed (for example, saying the word or phrase to the child followed by a request to say the word or phrase "ball, say ball").

16. **Model** playing alongside children (for example, when a child is pushing a toy car, caregiver gives a car to her sibling and suggests rolling the cars to each other).

17. **Show** and talk about photographs, pictures, and books, that include children expressing various emotions.*

18. Use opportunities within everyday activities and routines to help the child identify how another child might be feeling by **pointing out** facial expressions, body language or words, and labeling how the child might be feeling.*

19. **Show** the child how to take turns by taking a turn in an activity and then giving the child a turn.*

| **Affection** |
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| *Caregiver behaviors that help the child feel close and connected to the caregiver.* |

20. **Demonstrate affection** by smiling at the child and speaking in a positive tone.

21. Remain physically close enough to the child (i.e., within arm's reach) to easily **soothe, show affection, or give help or reassurance** (for example, placing the child in your lap as you read a story together).

22. **Provide physical and emotional forms of comfort and support** (for example, holding infant close; holding toddler's hands while walking; sitting close while reading, talking, singing, or interacting and playing; having a positive affect when interacting with your child; matching your child's affect).

23. Use opportunities within everyday activities and routines to **help the child understand or share** the feelings of another person and talk about ways to help the person feel better).*

| Anticipatory Guidance |
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| 24. **Prepare** the child for transitions (for example, let the child know when the caregiver will be leaving the room, tell child you are going for a ride in the car before putting him or her in the car seat), and follow regular sequences during routines. |
| 25. State and **model** behavior expectations positively and specifically (for example, "Please be gentle with your hands, like this" or "water stays in the bathtub").* |

| Responding to Challenging Behavior |
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| 26. Implement developmentally appropriate strategies (for example, redirection, planned ignoring) in response to challenging behavior.* |
| 27. Respond to child by stating the expected behavior in positive terms (in other words, telling the child what to do) or providing instruction in an acceptable alternative behavior.* |
| 28. Provide positive attention or positive descriptive feedback to the child when the child begins behaving appropriately.* |

* Indicates this practice is most appropriately used with toddlers. Beyond the child's age, providers and caregivers should consider the individual appropriateness and cultural relevance of each practice.

### Sources for the Caregiver Social-Emotional Practices

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