

LET'S CHAT ABOUT STARTING BIG SCHOOL

What are Social and Emotional Skills and why are they important?

Social and Emotional Skills center around making positive relationships and being aware of the emotions of ourselves and others. Emotional skills are about learning to manage and express feelings appropriately. Children need social and emotional skills when coming to school so that they can communicate effectively and start to build great friendships.

Speech and language are important for building good friendships and for ensuring a child's needs are met. They are crucial for effective communication.

Can the child express themselves verbally and can they be understood?

Often when children cannot be understood or cannot communicate their needs, it can lead to frustration and at times we see this frustration

expressed through undesirable behaviour. As well as being able to communicate their own needs, being able to negotiate with peers is important.

Can the child share, take turns and play with others positively?

Once a child begins school there will be lots of opportunity for collaborative learning which involves learning and working with others. Having good social skills will make these learning experiences more positive and fun for the child.

Can the child engage in learning activities with others?

Helpful emotional skills involve things like recognising emotions within themselves and others.

Can the child name how they are feeling and why? Can the child use clues like the body language of others to understand how those around them are feeling?

Being able to regulate their own emotions is a valuable skill children bring to kindergarten.

Do things seem to escalate quickly when the child is upset? Can they be settled or can they settle themselves?

Peer conflict is a normal part of early childhood; in fact most relationships and friendships will develop some conflict at times. Good emotional skills enable a child to express their feelings positively in a conflict situation.

Can the child express how they feel verbally without the conflict escalating to pushing or hurting?



What types of experiences lead to children developing solid social and emotional maturity?

LOTS OF EXPOSURE AND PRACTISE!!

Children will learn and develop social and emotional skills by being in environments where they have to use these skills and practise them.

Good practise comes from lots of playtime with friends or family members. By attending preschools or playgroups, children will gain lots of experience being social.

Children are able to practise turn taking and problem solving in these environments. They also learn how to be a good friend by being exposed to social situations and the emotions of others.

Children learn and develop emotional maturity by being around others and through modelling

by peers and adults. They will learn how to express their emotions positively by watching how others around them express their emotions.

Sometimes, children copy the behaviour of others around emotional expression. This is developmentally appropriate at preschool age. Consistent modelling of positive emotional expression is therefore very important.

Most children will learn how to self soothe as they navigate social situations and learn about emotions.

