

## Rhode Island Early Learning Standards



### Strategies that Support Children in the Area of Social and Emotional Development

#### Self-concept

- Provide paint, crayons, markers, and construction paper in various skin tones<sup>1</sup>
- Make sure the learning environment is welcoming to every child and reflects his identity and culture. Use photos of children and family members, displays of children's work, and their names for functional purposes like taking attendance, storing belongings, or assigning jobs.
- Structure the environment to offer opportunities for children to share information about themselves, their families, and experiences.<sup>2</sup>
- Give positive feedback and encouragement:
  - ~ "You must feel proud of yourself for . . ."
  - ~ "You are a real problem solver for . . ."
  - ~ "you have worked so hard . . ."<sup>3</sup>
- Provide appropriate levels of challenge to work at something and feel a sense of accomplishment.<sup>4</sup>

#### Self-control

- Get to know each child, establish relationships with parents, and support their strengths as well as their needs.<sup>5</sup>
- Establish positive, warm, caring relationships with each child, especially those children whose behavior is difficult because they are in greatest need of positive support.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Diane Trister Dodge, Laura Colker & Cate Heroman. *Creative Curriculum for Preschooler*. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, 2002. 77.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Head Start Bureau. *The Head Start Leader's Guide to Positive Child Outcomes: Strategies to Support Positive Child Outcomes*. (Washington, D.C September 2003) 88.

<sup>3</sup> Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. 2003. <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>

<sup>4</sup> *The Head Start Leader's Guide*. 88.

<sup>5</sup> *The Head Start Leader's Guide*. 91.

<sup>6</sup> *The Head Start Leader's Guide*. 91.

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- Set clear limits for unacceptable behavior and enforce them with rational explanations in a climate of mutual respect and caring.<sup>7</sup>
- Label children’s emotions and your own with simple words such as angry, happy, and sad. Encourage children to name their own emotions. Wait to introduce children to new emotions vocabulary until the heat of the moment has passed.<sup>8</sup>

### Interactions with others

- Build relationships with parents so that children feel safe, secure, and comfortable with their teachers.<sup>9</sup>
- Build a caring community within the program so that children come to know and feel comfortable with administrators, other teachers, staff, and parents.<sup>10</sup>
- Provide opportunities for children to work and play together. Successful relationships need both time and content—something to do or think about together.<sup>11</sup>
- Draw children’s attention to the feelings or experiences of others by saying, “Look at her face. Can you tell how she feels?” Help them to develop empathy by reminding them of their own similar feelings or experiences: “You know what it feels like when someone says you can’t play.”<sup>12</sup>

### Sense of community

- Model the language of cooperation for children—“I would like to have a turn” or “May I play in your car?”<sup>13</sup>
- Involve children’s families in every aspect of the program so that children can learn about and compare each other’s personal characteristics, experiences, and cultures.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 91.

<sup>8</sup> Ann S. Epstein, *The Intentional Teacher: Choosing the Best Strategies for Young Children’s Learning* (Washington: NAEYC, 2007) 75.

<sup>9</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 93.

<sup>10</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 93.

<sup>11</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 93.

<sup>12</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 93.

<sup>13</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 92.

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- Demonstrate respect for various cultures and languages, making sure that children’s home languages and cultures are reflected in books, signs, and learning experiences.<sup>15</sup>
- Write class books about the children’s families, their homes, their mealtimes, their pets, and other aspects of their lives. Discuss what is the same and different about the children’s families.<sup>16</sup>
- Coach individual children who need help playing cooperatively with others. Give the child specific words to say or strategies for entering a play situation, demonstrating how to share a toy or how to take on a role.<sup>17</sup>
- Engage children in group discussions and role play how to resolve conflicts or negotiate social problems before they arise.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 94.

<sup>15</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 94.

<sup>16</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 99.

<sup>17</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 92.

<sup>18</sup> *The Head Start Leader’s Guide*, 92.