

# DEVELOPING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CAPACITIES

Getting along with others and handling or expressing emotions are key skills for school success. You are helping your child build the skills for making and keeping friends when you teach your child how to apologize, take turns, and share. It takes a lot of repetition to learn these skills. Feeling comfortable about trying new activities, accepting responsibility for actions, and not giving up too quickly are some other important skills for classroom success. Watch how your child approaches problem-solving opportunities, and affirm all efforts.

Here are some activities to do with your child that will help build trust, self-esteem, and self-control:

- Hug your child frequently, and talk about the best part of your child's day.
- Read stories with your child. Help your child describe the characters in the stories. Take turns "reading" the pages.
- Play a simple game together. Many games, such as Simon Says and Red Light, Green Light require only your time and attention. Talk about taking turns and winning and losing.
- Make a "pretend" store. Let your child tell you what to do and say.
- Take turns pretending to be an animal. Guess what animal the other person is imitating. Encourage dramatic movements and expressions.
- Talk about your plans for the day. Make a time line of the day, and illustrate the activities with drawings or pictures cut from magazines.
- Ask your child to help you "plan" lunch or a simple picnic. Work together to make your event happen.
- After playing together, have your child help you clean up. It is important that you model this process and have realistic expectations.
- Talk with your child about the people and activities in family photographs.
- Help your child learn your address and telephone number.
- Visit the library and borrow books. Mark the due date on a simple calendar. Make a plan for the day you will return the books.
- Let your child help you pick out or make greeting cards for other family members.
- Provide structured, supervised time for your child to play with other children. Talk about sharing and teamwork with the children.

