

# Social-Emotional Health

Special Education Services

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## Teach Your Kids Social-Emotional at Home

When you're home, the best way to teach social and emotional skills is to do activities that involve social interaction and involve emotional responsibility, or the ability to respond emotionally. The best way to do that is to **PLAY FUN GAMES**. To do things where you're active. To get your kids away from technology and headsets. Those are often the escape zones of kids who have poor social-emotional skills. Do things that are really FUN.

Have a *joke-a-day calendar* on your refrigerator and do it and get some laughter out of that. Have your kids find a joke and read it to you in the morning when you're eating breakfast together, or during dinner, or whenever it might be.

We're *making cookies!* What kind of face do you want to put on it? Show me the face on you first. Show me a happy face, there you go; let's put it on the cookie! Show me a sad face, make it into something else that goes beyond the kid. Do things that require silliness, foolishness, if you are comfortable with it.

Act out different things. Do grab-bag dramatics. Do fun things. Watch a Funny TV shows together. Listen to silly things, silly audio tapes, whatever it might be, while you're working. The default setting for too many parents if they're trying to teach social and emotional skills is to catch a kid not doing it right and give them a correction on the moment. That's great if you kid is asking your feedback for that, but most kids aren't.

So, a way to be efficient in this is to create situations that require social interactions and emotional responses and doing a play in your home is a really good way to do it, if your kids are that ilk.

Example: Just say we're going to have a TV SHOW, we're going to bring our video camera out, and you play the part of, or you pick this part, and here's your job, and let the cameras roll at home. You can do that pretty easily. And it can be a five-minutes interlude. You know, kids are taking pictures of themselves all over the place anyway but have them use their cell phones and the cameras on their cell phones to "do something that reflects a social behaviour."

Example: I want to see if you know what it looks like to be very happy. I'm going to say "go" and I'am going to show the picture let's look at it, and chances are this kid will laugh about it. The laughing brain is not anxious brain. The laughing brain is a learning brain, and its important to remember that when you're doing these kinds of thing.

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## AT A GLANCE

- ✓ Kids can learn to manage their emotions and work on social skills.
- ✓ You can help your child with social-emotional learning (SEL) by playing fun games at home.
- ✓ There are lots of simple games you can play during everyday activities