

The Crucial Role of Social-Emotional Development in School Readiness

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S-M-I-L-E

It isn't any trouble just to s-m-i-l-e

It isn't any trouble just to s-m-i-l-e

So smile when you're in trouble

It will vanish like a bubble

If you only take the trouble just to

S-M-I-L-E!

Social Intelligence

- Social development covers the broad range of skills people use to relate to, play with, learn from, and teach others. Social skills are important for survival and for a good life.

Social Skills

- Assessing the feelings of others
- Relating to the feelings, motives, and concerns of others
- Reading and responding to social cues
- Negotiating and resolving conflicts

Emotional Intelligence

- Healthy emotions allow people to express and constructively manage the full range of human feelings, to postpone gratification, to find constructive outlets for negative emotions, and to understand and appreciate how others feel. Healthy emotions lead to self satisfaction and joy.

Emotional Skills

- Identifying and labeling feelings
- Exercising feelings
- Assessing the intensity of feelings
- Managing feelings
- Delaying gratification
- Controlling impulses
- Knowing the difference between feelings and actions
- Reducing stress

Stress Management

- Bringing hands to the center of the body
- Stretching
- Listening to relaxation music
- Breathing
- Exercising
- Releasing
- Talking to a friend
- Imaginary trips

How Social Intelligence Abilities Fit into the Emotional Intelligence Model

Emotional Intelligence

Self-awareness

Self-management

Social Intelligence

Social awareness

Primal empathy

Empathy accuracy

Attunement

Social cognition

Relationship management

Synchrony

Self-presentation

Influence

Concern

Characteristics of Social-Emotional Intelligence

- Exhibits self confidence
- Expresses interest (natural curiosity)
- Knows what behavior is expected
- Controls impulses
- Can delay gratification (wait)
- Follows directions
- Seeks adult help when needed
- Expresses needs
- Gets along with other children

Current Trends Among Children

Ages 2 to 18

- Depression (1.22 million to 3.22 million in last decade)
- Use of antipsychotic drugs (5 fold in decade)
- Eating disorders (7 million girls)
 - Overweight (1 in 2 children)
 - Obese (1 in 5)
- Cutting (2 million girls each year)
- Sleep deprivation (67% miss 1 to 2 hours per night)
- Children are being diagnosed with anti-social personality disorder.

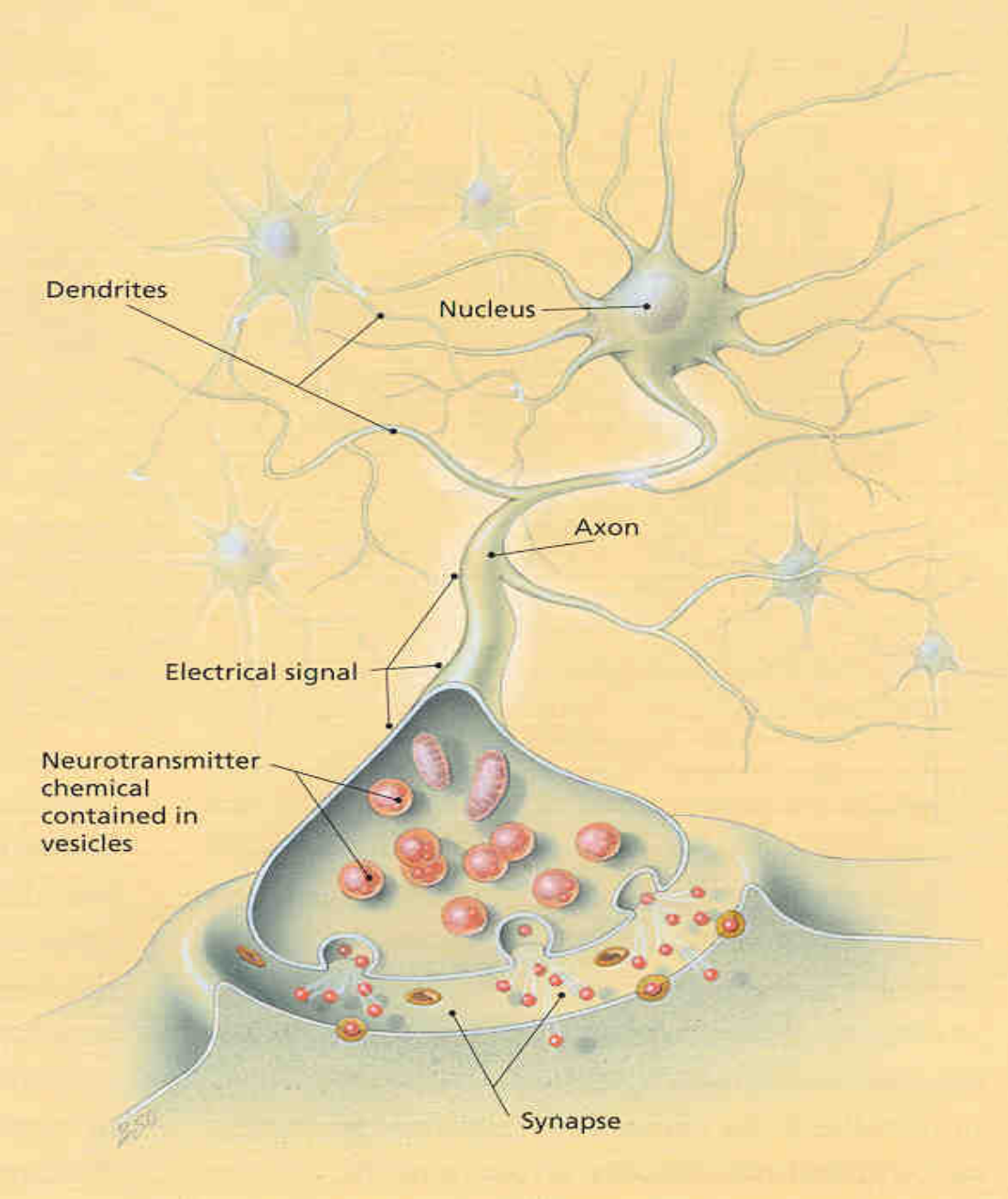
In total, one-third of our children are now diagnosed with some significant mental or physical disorder.

Brain Research Finding

- The Role of Experience
 - Mirror neurons
 - Spindle cells
- Nature/Nurture Equation
- The Windows of Opportunity
- Relationships
- Stress/Deprivation/Trauma

Experience wires the brain.

Repetition strengthens the wiring.



**Humans have more than
1,000,000,000,000
neurons.**

There are several different kinds of neurons,
each performing a specific task.

Mirror neurons and spindle cells are
responsible for social wiring.

Mirror Neurons

- Mirror Neurons:
 - reflect back the actions of other.
 - fire as we watch others.
 - make emotions contagious.
 - Help us know the intent of others.

“When you smile the whole world smiles with you.”

Empathy

The Heart of Social-Emotional Intelligence

- Knowing the feeling of others
- Feeling what that person feels
- Responding compassionately

Scientists say that the more active a person's mirror neuron system, the stronger their empathy.

Spindle Cells

■ Spindle cells

- make us socially aware and sensitive.
- put the snap in snap judgments.
- create our interpersonal intelligence.
- position themselves in the brain during the first 4 months of life. How prolific they are depends on factors such as stress (for worse) and loving atmosphere (for the better).

Humans, apes and whales are the only animals with spindle cells.

The Nature—Nurture Debate

- There are probably more differences in human brains than in any other animal, partly because the human brain does most of its developing in the outside world.

Robert Ornstein and Richard Thompson

The Amazing Brain

- Seventy percent of what is given to us genetically is brought to fruition by our environmental experiences.

Daniel Goleman

Social Intelligence

- Brain development is contingent on a complex interplay between genes and the environment.

Roadmap to Individual Differences

Characteristic	Genetic	Environmentally Influenced	Emergence
Learning Style		✓	20 months
MI Profile	✓	✓	30 months
Personality	✓	✓	11 months
Temperament	✓	✓	15 months

Temperament Variables

Temperaments

High Level

Low Level

Novelty
Seeking

Thrill seeking, intuitive
adventurous, fickle
disorderly, impulsive

Orderly and organized,
Self-controlled, loyal,
analytical, direct, stoic

Harm
Avoidance

Anxious, pessimistic,
inhibited, easily
fatigued, given to
depression

Confident, optimistic,
highly energetic, carefree
even in the face of
danger, uninhibited

Reward
Dependence

Dependent on
emotional support and
feedback of others,
sentimental, sensitive
to social cues

Socially detached, loner,
non-conformist, cynical,
socially insensitive

Persistence

Eager, ambitious,
determined

Uninterested in
achievement,
unambitious

Dimensions of Character

- Self-directedness
- Cooperativeness
- Self-transcendence

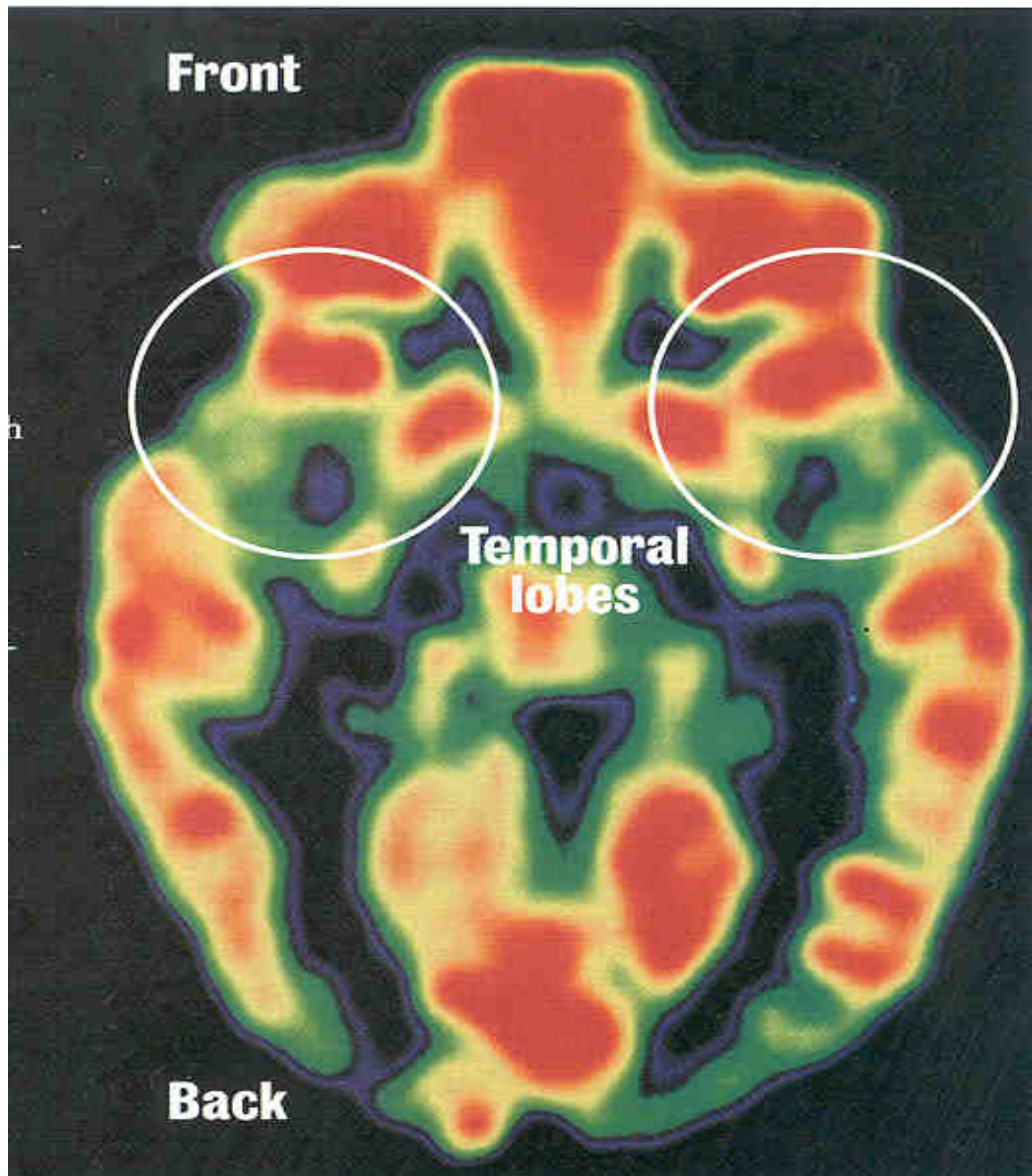
Windows of Opportunity

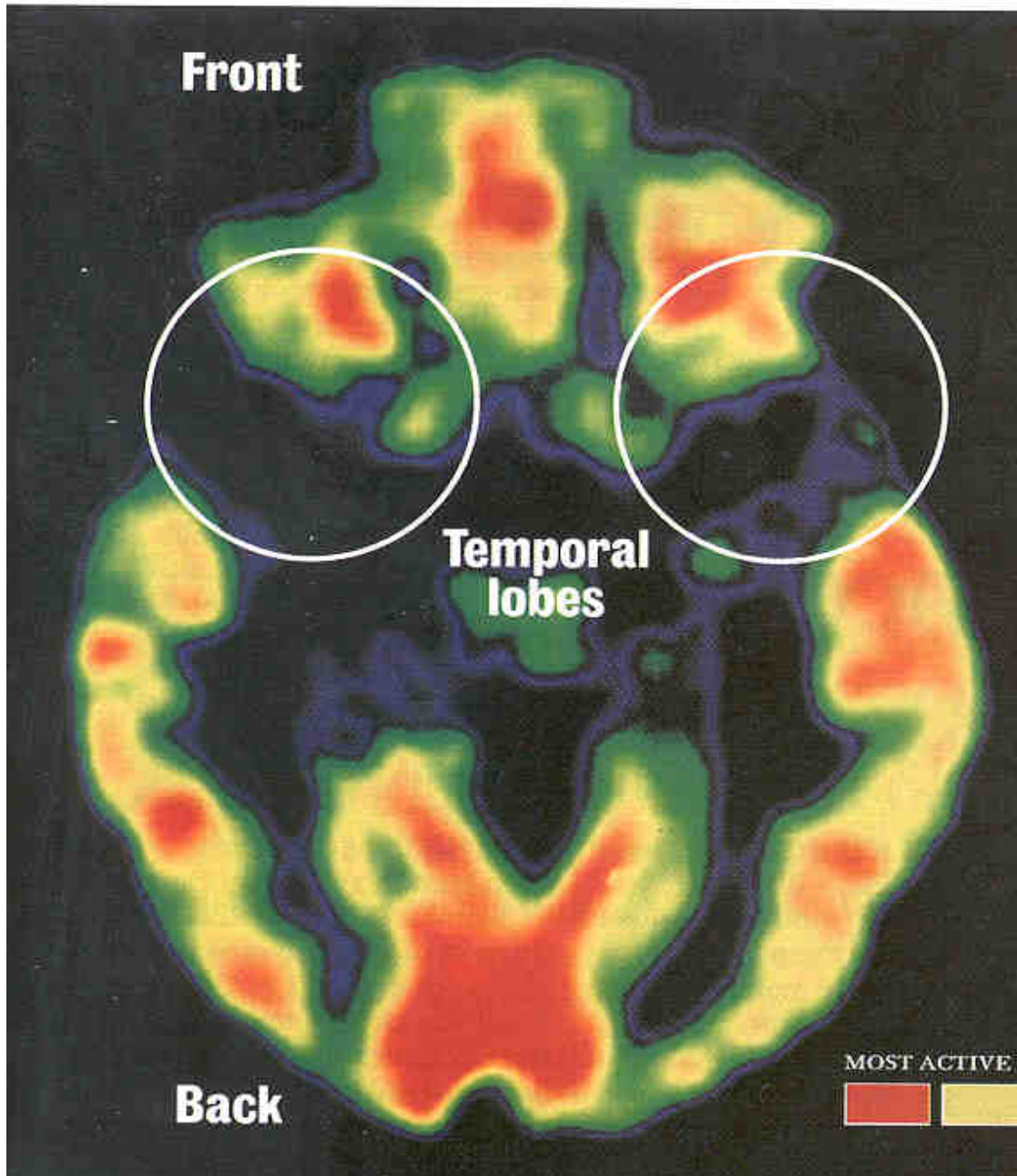
Window	Wiring Opportunity	Greatest Enhancement
Emotional Intelligence	0 - 48 months	4 - 8 years
Trust	0 - 14 months	
Impulse Control	16 - 48 months	
Social Development	0 - 48 months	4 years to puberty
Attachment	0 - 12 months	
Independence	12 - 24 months	
Cooperation	24 - 36 months	
Thinking Skills	0 - 48 months	4 years to puberty
Cause and Effect	0 - 16 months	
Problem-Solving	16 - 48 months	
Motor Development	0 - 24 months	2 years to puberty
Vision	0 - 24 months	2 years to puberty
Reading Foundation Skills	0 - 24 months	2 - 7 years
Early Sounds	4 - 8 months	8 mos. - 10 yrs.
Vocabulary	0 - 24 months	2 - 5 years

Relationships play a major role in the wiring of social-emotional intelligence.

“Caregivers, parents and teachers, hold in their hands the chance to shape a child’s entire future. High on the list of priorities are the social interactions and emotional exchanges between caregiver and child.”

Bruce Perry, MD.
Texas Medical Center





Seven Key Ingredients of School Readiness

1. Confidence
2. Curiosity
3. Intentionality
4. Self-control
5. Relatedness
6. Capacity to communicate
7. Cooperativeness

If You're Happy

If you're happy and you know it laugh out loud...Ha, ha, ha! (laugh)

If you're sad and you know it say, "I'm sad."
(words)

If you're surprised and you know it say,
"Yippee." Yippee (words)

If you're angry and you know it stomp your feet. Stomp, stomp (feet)

Five Strategies for Developing Social-Emotional Intelligence

- ❖ Model
- ❖ Discuss
- ❖ Practice
- ❖ Acknowledge
- ❖ Reflect

Confidence

- Challenge children to the edge of their competency.
- Balance abilities and limitations.
- Keep physical space cozy.
- Avoid perfectionism.
- Provide opportunities for children to practice problem-solving. Embrace failure.
- Be “fully present.”
- Use encouragement as opposed to praise.

Use Encouragement instead of Praise

■ Findings:

Extrinsic reward inhibits intrinsic motivation.

The brain functions optimally when stress is low and safe challenges are high.

■ Applications:

- Eliminate the use of stickers and privilege rewards.
- Be honest and sincere with compliments.
- Encourage children to critique themselves.
- Avoid comparisons.
- Focus on process instead of product.

Negative Impacts of Praise

- Too much praise burdens—it pressures children to live up to your expectations.
- Value - driven praise results in children equating good with pleasing others and bad with displeasing others. We raise people-pleasers instead of thinkers.
- If you praise for only completed tasks, you send a message that effort doesn't matter.
- Bottom line: You can't build confidence from the outside.

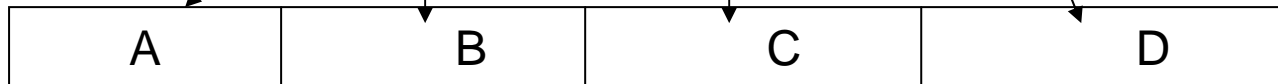
Encouragement Strategies

Notice, Acknowledge, and Appreciate

- Notice and describe behavior
 - “Look at you. You finished the puzzle. That took determination.”
 - “You did it. You came down the slide feet first and landed right in my arms.”
- Link actions to enjoyment and satisfaction instead of a tangible reward.
- Use encouragement especially when children make a poor choice.
 - “I feel confident that you will find a better way.”

What's my Problem?

What are my Alternatives?



What strategy will best meet my needs?

What resources do I have?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What resources do I need?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What steps will complete my strategy?

Implement Strategy

How can I check my decision?

Books about Problem-solving

- *Imogene's Antlers* by David Small
- *Swimmy* by Leo Lionni
- *Domino* by Claire Masurel
- *Pickle-Chiffon Pie* by Roger Bradfield
- *Mr. Pine's Purple House* by Leonard Kessler
- *Benjamin Dilley's Thirsty Camel* by Roger Bradfield
- *Mouse Paint* by Ellen Stoll Walsh
- *Ant Attack!* by Ann James
- *The Doorbell Rang* by Pat Hutchins

Curiosity

- Set up an environment that allows children to “fall in love” with their world. Keep the environment safe for exploration.
- Accept the non-traditional.
- Consider ways to offer novelty.
- Provide interesting materials for exploration.
- Ask “what if” and other open-ended questions.
- Redefine failure—with children, it is called “determination.”
- Stimulate imagination. Encourage dreams.
- Follow the interest of the children.
- Use literature to simulate curiosity.

Curiosity	results in	Exploration
Exploration	results in	Discovery
Discovery	results in	Pleasure
Pleasure	results in	Repetition
Repetition	results in	Mastery
Mastery	results in	New Skills
New Skills	results in	Confidence
Confidence	results in	Self esteem
Self esteem	results in	Sense of Security
Security	results in	More Exploration

Perry, Bruce (2001) "Curiosity: The Fuel of Development." *Early Childhood Today*. NY, Scholastic.

Did Curiosity Kill the Cat? What Kills Curiosity?

- Fear
- Disapproval
- Absence of inspiration opportunity

Books that Encourage Curiosity

- *Curious George* by Hey A. Ray
- *How Come?* by Kathy Wollard
- *Why?* by Catherine Ripley
- *In the Forest* by Pierre de Hugo
- *Edward the Emu* by Sheena Knowles
- *The Rainbow Mystery* by Jennifer Dussling
- *The Nose Knows* by Ellen Weis
- *What's that Sound?* by Mary Lawrence

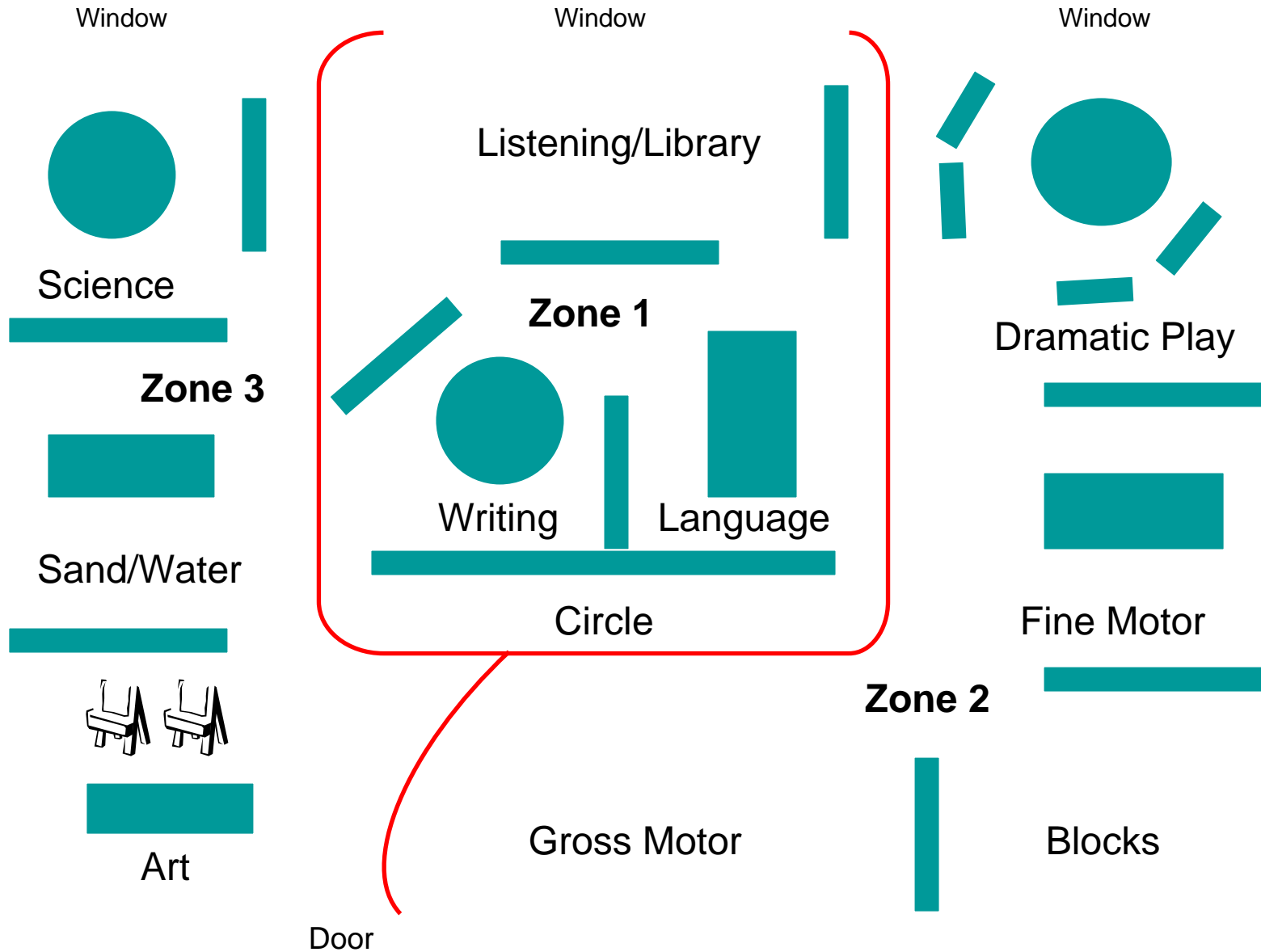
Intentionality

- Offer choices. Teach children how to make thoughtful choices.
- Discuss the difference in what we want to do and doing the right thing.
- Use the choices that characters in literature make as a springboard for discussion.
- Allow time for focusing and reflecting.
- Encourage persistence and commitment. Insist on finishing what is started.
- Encourage internal satisfaction.



Books about Intentionality

- *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman
- *The Little Red Hen* (traditional)
- *Itsy Bitsy Spider* by Iza Trapani
- *Dream Carver* by Diane Cohn
- *A Chair for My Mother* by Vera Williams
- *Something for Me* by Vera Williams
- *The Little Painter of Sabana Grande* by Patricia Markum
- *The Little Engine that Could* by Watty Piper



Self-Control

- Ensure physical needs are met.
- Use clear, simple rules. Hold boundaries.
- Allow children to help set the rules.
- Be consistent. Be firm. Be fair.
- Provide opportunities to practice patience.
- Have appropriate expectations.
- Use natural and logical consequences for inappropriate behavior.
- Ignore attention-getting behaviors.
- Offer limited choices.
- Avoid over-stimulation.
- Read books about self-control.

Goals of Misbehavior

Goal	Child's Perspective	Adult's Response	Strategies for Change
Attention	I am only important when I am being noticed.	Annoyed	Ignore when possible. Give unexpected attention. Give attention to positive behavior.
Power	I only count when I am in control.	Provoked Angry	Withdraw from conflict. Redirect constructively when calm. Establish equity.
Defiance	No one likes me. I hurt. I feel better when I hurt others.	Hurt	Maintain order with minimum restraint. Build trust. Check for fairness. Avoid retaliation.
Display of inadequacy	I can't do anything right so I won't do anything at all.	Hopeless Discouraged	Be patient. Encourage any effort. Have faith in the child. Refrain from pity or criticism.

Books about Self-Control

- *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak
- *Be Brown* by Barbara Bottner
- *Harry the Dirty Dog* by Gene Zion
- *Noisy Nora* by Rosemary Wells
- *Julius, the Baby of the World* by Kevin Henkes

Relatedness

- Discuss feelings: in stories, in class situations and in songs.
- Express your feelings as appropriate.
- Teach basic rules of politeness.
- Teach verbal clues.
- Teach strategies for negotiating and resolving conflicts (Cooperative-Problem Solving).
- Model empathy. Teach empathy. Praise empathy.
- Encourage an environment that reflects the classroom as a community of learners.
- Read books about relationships.

Books about Relatedness

- *Chester's Way* by Kevin Henkes
- *Matthew and Tilly* by Rebecca Jones
- *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes
- *Best Friends* by Steven Kellogg
- *Old Henry* by Joan Blos
- *That's What Friends Are For* by Florence Heidi
- *That's What Friends Do* by Kathryn Cave
- *The Lion and the Mouse* (Aesop fable)

Capacity to Communicate

- Build trust.
- Listen with interest. Be “fully present.”
- Expand vocabulary. Strive for a common vocabulary base.
- Encourage appropriate language.
- Treat Show and Tell like oral reporting.
- Use sign language as a beginning with toddlers, reluctant speakers or second language speakers.
- Model vocabulary that shows compassion and empathy.
- Read books about communication.

Books about Communication

- *Marti and the Mango* by Daniel Moreton
- *The King who Rained* by Fred Gynne
- *Epossumondas* by Coleen Salley
- *Tops and Bottoms* by Janet Stevens
- *The Gardner* by Sarah Stewart
- *Dear Mr. Blueberry* by Simon James
- *The Old Man and the Door* by Joe Cepeda

Cooperativeness

- Play games that promote cooperative effort.
- Participate in community and school events.
- Work on class projects.
- Encourage children's friendships.
- Encourage sharing and taking turns.
- Use peer tutoring and the buddy system.
- Model: Say "please" and "thank-you."
- Lend a helping hand.
- Read stories that focus on cooperation.

Books about Cooperativeness

- *The Great Big Enormous Turnip* by Alexei Tolstoy
- *Stone Soup* by Heather Forest
- *The Little Red Hen* (traditional)
- *Fox Tale Soup* by Tony Bonning
- *The Blind Men and the Elephant* by Karen Backstein
- *Eight Animals Bake a Cake* by Susan Middleton Elya

Whether a child enters kindergarten the first day of school ready to learn depends greatly on his or her level of social-emotional maturity.

Those who say that social intelligence amounts to little more than general intelligence applied to social situations might do better to reason the other way around: to consider that general intelligence is merely a derivative of social intelligence, albeit one our culture has come to value.

Daniel Goleman

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