

Learning Objectives

- Participants understand the importance of social-emotional development and social competence in relation to academic success
- Participants identify developmental milestones and explore biological and ecological impacts on behavior
- Participants plan early learning environments that prevent challenging behavior and promote social competence
- Participants practice observation and positive guidance
- Participants increase competence in responding to conflict
- Participants reinforce the parent-caregiver relationship
- Participants develop strategies for emotional refueling and eliciting caregiver support



What's Right with This Picture? Elements of Quality Early Learning Environments

1. Clearly defined areas

- interest areas
- group meeting space
- pathways

2. Adequate space for play

- consider traffic-flow: How many children play in this space?
- consider energy level: What type of play happens here?
- consider location: Keep quiet areas away from block and dramatic play areas.

3. Low-shelving and no visual barriers

4. Aesthetically pleasing

- use of natural light
- soft colors
- presence of texture (soft pillows, woven rugs, visual art)

5. Developmentally appropriate materials

- organized
- materials should be stored in places that are visible and accessible
- labeled shelves and containers

6. Create private and personal space

- provide quiet nooks; use shelves and rugs to define the space
- give each child a place to store their personal belongings



Putting Positive Support Into Action



Be present

- Scan the environment
- Get low
- Observe
- Look for opportunities to get involved in children's play



Be available

- Respond to children's verbal and non-verbal cues
- Offer your services— Can I help you?
- Give children positive attention



Be supportive

- Look for the child's true intentions
- Sportscast and label emotions
- Facilitate communication and foster emotional understanding
- Redirect and channel energy – help children self-regulate by providing calming activities
- Help each child feel lovable and capable
- Model prosocial behavior