

# “How to Raise Emotionally Healthy Children”

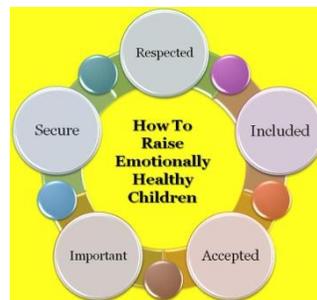
The Social Emotional Development plays an important role in the School Readiness. We, as Child Care Professionals, need to make sure that our programs support this area of development with tools that will enable us to promote social and emotional well-being in classrooms, homes and community settings.

We want the children to develop and engage in positive relationships and interactions with adults; to begin and demonstrate control over some of their feelings and their behaviors; to develop personal relationships with peers; to begin to learn and internalize rules, routines and directions and to develop a positive sense of competence and an identity that is rooted in their family and culture.

In the Early years, young children are faced with brand new experiences. Starting from birth, babies are learning who they are and how they are treated. Through every day interactions, parents, relatives and caregivers send messages that they shape the young children’s self-esteem in a positive or negative way.

Young children sometimes cannot succeed on their own in some of these situations and/or are dependent upon other people to meet their needs. New situations sometimes frustrate some adults and it is worse for young children who cannot understand and regulate their emotions yet. It has been observed that young children sometimes experience strong negative emotions and if the adults teach them how to cope with these emotions, they will learn them quickly when feeling supported and loved. If they are shamed or punished for their feelings, they will continue struggling.

Teachers and Child Care Providers understand that the Social-Emotional piece in the children’s lives is very important, but they need to understand that intentional experiences need to be planned to prepare the children with important skills for the future, to give them opportunities that will help them feel respected, secure, important, included and accepted.



The Book “How to Raise Emotionally Healthy Children” by Dr. Gerald Newmark provides powerful and practical concepts with tools that enable parents, teachers and child care providers to interact with each other in emotionally healthy ways and in the process, children will learn to interact with each other in the same way.

Failure to support our children’s emotional health at home and in schools is jeopardizing the children’s future and our nation. This topic is mentioned in this book and it is called “the missing agenda” and the antidote is “The Children’s Project”, a non-profit organization that provides training and orientation to schools and organizations.

As a professional in Psychology, working as a Family Child Care Specialist in the Early Head Start Program for the last three years and having worked in early childhood settings during twenty five years as a teacher and a program director, I am absolutely convinced that helping children grow socially and emotionally healthy takes lots of caring, dedication, patience, energy, and consistency. We must partner with families and help them encourage their children’s social and emotional well-being. I also emphasize that the Early Childhood staff needs to be on ongoing professional development to provide the quality care that all children and families deserve and to support the families with tools and resources to raise their children socially and emotionally healthy as a foundation for their success in their school, work and in the community.

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## Resources

1. Book “How to Raise Emotionally Healthy Children” by Gerald Newmark.  
<http://www.emotionallyhealthychildren.org>
2. Wingspan - Strengthening children’s skills for Life  
[www.wingspanworks.com](http://www.wingspanworks.com)
3. Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning  
<http://csefell.vanderbilt.edu/>
4. National Toll-Free Numbers & Web sites to Seek Help  
Mental Health (Community Mental Health Center)  
National Mental Health Information Center  
(800) 789-2647 (voice) (866) 889-2647 (TDD)  
[www.mentalhealth.sahsa.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.sahsa.gov)
5. Parenting Education [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/parenting.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/parenting.html)  
[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/parenting.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/parenting.html) (Spanish)
6. National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education  
<http://dx.doi.org/>