

Unit 3 – Social-Emotional Development

Getting Ready for the Unit and Connecting to Experience

Focus Statement

Students have an opportunity to understand the importance of the social-emotional domain by exploring the influence of a relationship in their own social-emotional development.

Getting Ready for the Unit

As you prepare to explore the social-emotional development (SED) domain in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* (PCF, V1), it will help to quickly scan the key topics in this domain. In doing this, you will get an idea of what your students can experience overall in this domain and decide how you can best use this instructional guide for your particular students. Social-emotional development (SED) is a developmental domain whose importance has been increasingly recognized in California's programs for young children. The instructional guide provides opportunities for students to gain an understanding of the rationale for this trend as well as an understanding of what social-emotional development looks like in young children and what adults can do to support that development.

This unit is not designed to provide experience in integrating the content of the social-emotional development domain in the PCF, V1 across other domains. The approach of this instructional guide is to provide opportunities for students to get to know the domains individually before thinking about how each domain actually plays out in an integrated fashion with other domains. Integration across developmental domains is an essential piece of addressing social-emotional development in group settings, but this integration is addressed in Unit 7 of this instructional guide. You might want to scan that unit to see if there are any key topics there that would be relevant and appropriate for your students and compatible with the particular course in which you are using this domain.

This unit supports exploration of the content of the social-emotional development domain in the PCF, V1. This domain parallels the social-emotional development domain in the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* (PLF, V1). It will be important to support students in their recognition of the parallels and distinctions relating to the foundations and curriculum framework. The foundations and the curriculum framework have the same structure of social-emotional development



strands and substrands; these are identical across the two documents. As professionals in the field, it will be important for students to understand that the social-emotional development foundations are the goal-like statements of what we hope to see in young children's development and learning and that the social-emotional development domain in the curriculum framework provides us with guidance on how to support and guide young children as they move forward in their social-emotional development and learning. This is addressed directly in this unit's Key Topic 1, but it would be wise to return to it from time to time.

There is an instructional guide that accompanies the PLF, V1, and it is available online at <http://www.wested.org/facultyinitiative/plf.html>. If students are not familiar with the foundations, you might find some activities in that instructional guide that could be used to introduce them to the SED foundations. In particular, "Exploring The Substrands of the Social-Emotional Development Domain" (Activity 4 in the SED domain of the PLF, V1 instructional guide) could be helpful to students in becoming familiar with the content of the SED strands and substrands, which are identical in the foundations and the curriculum framework.

Students can be introduced to the topic of social-emotional development by exploring its importance in their own development and learning. The "Motivator and Connection to Experience" that follows provides an opportunity to do that. This exercise is very similar to one used in the PLF, V1 instructional guide, which introduces students to the SED domain of the foundations. If you are exploring the foundations and curriculum framework in tandem, this exercise could serve to give students a personal connection to the content of the SED domain in both documents.

Motivator and Connection to Experience

Before You Start

This exercise asks students to remember a family member or teacher in their own lives who has had a strong positive emotional effect on them. There might be some students who find this difficult. To avoid the possible complexities of student relations with parents or the absence of parents, this motivator intentionally asks about adults other than parents. Sometimes students will first remember an adult or teacher who did not have a positive effect. It will be important to acknowledge this and, at the same time, focus on positive relations. This exercise might work well for students to do in pairs or groups of three or four.

Active Learning

Getting it started

First, ask students to think of a significant adult other than their parents who was influential in their childhood or adolescence and whom they knew really cared about them. This could be a



grandparent, aunt, uncle, sibling, or cousin.

Then ask them to respond to the following questions. These responses could be done by students in pairs or groups of three. Remind them that they do not have to label or name the person.



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- What do you remember that this person did or said that made you feel accepted?
- Were there certain things you knew you could count on this person to do for you or help you with?
- Can you remember a particular incident that made you know that you were totally accepted?

Keeping it going

Ask the students to take three minutes to write down a few key words that describe what made this relationship so positive. Some possibilities might be trust, forgiveness, and understanding.

These key words then can be shared with the whole group. It would be helpful to record them for the next part of the exercise.

Taking it further

Discuss how these attributes could be used as potential strategies for working with children.

For example, if students list words such as acceptance, humor, or patience, ask them to think about how these characteristics could be helpful in working with children.

Putting it together

Ask students if they can think of a teacher that they remember as supportive and caring.



Slide 3

- What did this teacher do or say that made you feel that way?
- What does this mean for your teaching and work with young children?