

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

By: Bright Tomorrows Staff, from: [www.ParentsKnowKidsGrow.org/strengthening families](http://www.ParentsKnowKidsGrow.org/strengthening_families)

Parents today have a lot on their plates. Juggling the demands of work, home, and other responsibilities leaves many parents feeling like they do not have nearly enough time with their children. But even small acts of kindness, protection and caring—a hug, a smile, or loving words—make a big difference to children. Research shows that just as children’s brains and bodies develop, so do their emotions and their ability to express themselves.

Parents may choose to communicate the importance of social and emotional competence in terms of the desired outcomes: “My children feel loved, believe they matter, and can get along with others.”

Parenting is a two-way street. As children grow and develop the ability to interact with the family and others in a positive manner, it is easier for parents to respond in the same way. When a child has problems or needs due to age, disability, or other factors, then the parent may need additional support. Parents can share resources to promote healthy social and emotional development with one another. Below are some websites for managing behaviors as well as fun activities for families. Some of these websites also include chat sessions.

- Center on the Social & Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu>
- www.challengingbehavior.org
- Department of Human Services sponsors www.parentsknowkidsgrow.org

For more information about child development and parenting tips go to:
www.childdevelopment.com.