## Inventory of Practices for Promoting Children's Social Emotional Competence in School-Age Programs

Adapted with permission from the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/modules/module1/handout4.pdf

This inventory has been developed to support the professional development of staff members in before- and afterschool programs.

**Purpose of the Inventory:** *The Inventory of Practices for Promoting Social Emotional Competence* is designed to be used by individuals and/or teams to identify training needs and plan a course of action to address those needs related to four general areas: (a) building positive relationships, (b) creating supportive environments, (c) social emotional teaching strategies, and (d) individualized intensive interventions. The *Inventory* encourages individual selfreflection, opportunities for teaming between staff members, Training and Curriculum Specialists, supervisors, site directors, and other administrators, and promotes effective practices for direct service staff. There are two sections to this tool: the Inventory of Practices and the Action Plan.

**Use of the Inventory:** This tool is best utilized in a manner that encourages reflection and discussion. Each of the four general areas includes several *Skills and Indicators* reflective of practices that promote social emotional competence in young children. The Indicators are detailed phrases that enable the user to "dig a little deeper" in identifying and pinpointing skills that may or may not be present. A column entitled *Observations/Evidence* allows the user to write thoughts, suggestions, strengths, and needs concerning either the specific *Skills or Indicators.* Three levels of skill, *Consistently, Occasionally, and Seldom*, permit users to record their perceived skill level for each Indicator by checking the appropriate box. Users should be consistent in their appraisal of skills across the three levels, *Consistently, Occasionally, and Seldom* (i.e., across all children in the program, target child or specific groups of children, environment of all program areas, etc.). The final column allows the team to indicate whether or not an indicator should be a *Target for Training*. Following each section is a space for writing additional comments. The team or individual may wish to delineate specific training requests, professional development opportunities, or encouragement in the *Comments* box.

**Use of the Action Plan:** The *Action Plan* takes the users to the next step once they have determined what specific *Skills and Indicators* from the *Inventory* they want to target for training. In the first column of the *Action Plan*, users should check those Skills or Indicators they previously identified as targets for training. In the second column, teachers and support personnel (e.g., trainers, mentor coaches, administrators) should work together to identify what strategies they will each use to help the teaching team implement the new practices. The third column allows users to identify *Resources and Supports* that will be necessary to successfully complete the activities or strategies listed in the second column.

Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
1. Develops meaningful relationships with children and families	3	2	1	Y/N	
☐ Greets children on arrival; calls by name					
Verbally interacts with individual children during routines and activities					
Participates in children's play and recreation activities when appropriate (joins sports, works on model cars, builds structures, etc.)					
□ Shows respect, consideration, and warmth to all children					
Speaks calmly to children					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
Uses a variety of strategies for building relationships with children					
Interacts positively with children at times when children are not engaging in challenging behavior					
Uses a variety of strategies for building relationships with families					
Creates a space that children and families like to be (feels comfortable, welcome, safe)					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
2. Examines personal, family, and cultural views of child's challenging behavior	3	2	1	Y/N	
Considers personal beliefs regarding the acceptability and unacceptability of specific types of child behavior					
Considers personal beliefs regarding the causes of specific types of unacceptable child behavior					
Acknowledges contrasting or conflicting beliefs held by others regarding acceptable and unacceptable types of child behavior					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
3. Examines own attitudes toward challenging behavior	3	2	1	Y/N	
Understands the relationship between children's social emotional development and challenging behavior					
Understands that children's challenging behaviors are conveying some type of message					
Understands there are many things that can be done to prevent challenging behaviors					
Identifies what behaviors "push my buttons"					
Develops strategies for dealing with situations when children's behaviors "push my buttons"					
Works together with a team to problem solve around issues related to challenging behavior					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
Comments:					
4. Designs the physical environment	3	2	1	Y/N	
Arranges traffic patterns in program areas so there are no wide open spaces					
Removes obstacles that make it difficult for children with physical disabilities to move around the program					
Clearly defines boundaries in program areas					
Provides a variety of materials in all program areas					
Considers children's interests when deciding what to put in program areas					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	<b>Observations/ Evidence</b>
☐Makes changes and additions to program areas on a regular basis					
□Visually closes program areas when they are not an option for children to use					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
5. Ensures smooth transitions	3	2	1	Y/N	
Structures transitions so children do not have to spend excessive time waiting with nothing to do					
□Teaches children the expectations associated with transitions					
□Promote independence and autonomy in transitions					
Individualizes directions about transitions so that all children understand them					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
6. Designs activities to promote engagement	3	2	1	Y/N	
Uses knowledge of the children's interests to plan large group activities when appropriate					
Monitors children's behavior and modifies plans when children lose interest in large group activities					
□Plans and conducts fun small group activities					
Monitors children's behavior and modifies plans when children lose interest in small group activities					
Makes adaptations and modifications to ensure that all children can be involved in a meaningful way in any activity					
Uses a variety of ways to teach the expectations of specific activities so that all children understand them					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
7. Giving directions	3	2	1	Y/N	
Gains child's attention before giving directions					
□Minimizes the number of directions					
□Individualizes the way directions are given					
Gives clear directions					
Gives directions that are positive					
Gives children time to respond to directions					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
Gives children choices and options when appropriate					
Generation Follows through with positive acknowledgments of children's behavior					
Comments:					
8. Establishes and enforces clear rules, limits, and consequences for behavior	3	2	1	Y/N	
□Identifies appropriate program rules with children					
□Teaches rules in developmentally appropriate ways					
Provides opportunities for children to practice rules					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
□States rules positively and specifically (avoids words "no" and "don't" as much as possible)					
□Keeps rules to manageable number (3-6)					
Generation Frequently reinforces children for appropriate behavior					
□ Identifies consequences for both following and not following rules					
Makes sure all adults in program know rules and consequences					
Enforces rules and consequences consistently and fairly					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
9. Engages in ongoing monitoring and positive attention	3	2	1	Y/N	
Gives children time and attention when engaging in appropriate behavior					
Comments:					
10. Uses positive feedback and encouragement	3	2	1	Y/N	
□Uses positive feedback and encouragement contingent on					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
appropriate behavior					
Provides descriptive feedback and encouragement					
Conveys enthusiasm while giving positive feedback and encouragement					
□Uses positive feedback and encouragement contingent on child's efforts.					
Provides nonverbal cues of appreciation					
Recognizes that there are individual variations in what forms of acknowledgment are interpreted as positive by children					
□Involves other adults in acknowledging children					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
□Models positive feedback and encouragement frequently					
Comments:					
11. Interacts with children to develop their self-esteem	3	2	1	Y/N	
Demonstrates active listening with children					
Avoids judgmental statements					
□Responds to children's ideas					
□Recognizes children's efforts					
□Shows empathy and acceptance of children's feelings					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
Comments:					
12. Shows sensitivity to individual children's needs	3	2	1	Y/N	
□Respects and accommodates individual needs, personalities, and characteristics					
Adapts and adjusts accordingly (instructions, materials, etc.)					
Conveys acceptance of individual differences (culture, gender, sensory needs, language, abilities) through planning, material selection, and discussion of topics					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
13. Encourages autonomy	3	2	1	Y/N	
□Structures the program to encourage children to make choices					
Allows children time to respond and/or complete task independently before offering assistance					
Creates opportunities for decision making, problem solving, and working together					
□Teaches children strategies for self-regulating and/or self- monitoring behaviors					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
14. Uses effective environmental arrangements to encourage social interactions	3	2	1	Y/N	
Effectively selects, arranges, and utilizes materials that promote interactions (high interest, novel, culturally meaningful)					
□Effectively selects, arranges, and implements activities that promote interactions (high interest, novel, culturally meaningful)					
Develops interaction opportunities within program routines (i.e., homework helper, snack set-up, etc.)					
Comments:					
15. Uses prompting and reinforcement of interactions effectively	3	2	1	Y/N	
Provides sincere, enthusiastic feedback to promote and					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
maintain social interactions					
<ul> <li>Waits until interactions are finished before reinforcing; does not interrupt interactions</li> </ul>					
Encourages children to play together; offers ideas for play					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	<b>Observations/ Evidence</b>
16. Promotes identification and labeling of emotions in self and others	3	2	1	Y/N	
Uses validation, acknowledgment, mirroring back, labeling feelings, voice tones, or gestures to show an understanding of children's feelings					
Assists children in recognizing and understanding how a peer might be feeling by pointing out facial expressions, voice tone, body language, or words					
□Uses real-life situations to practice problem solving, beginning with defining the problem and emotions involved					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
17. Explores the nature of feelings and the appropriate ways they can be addressed	3	2	1	Y/N	
Teaches that all emotions are okay, but not all expressions are okay					
Labels own emotional states and provides an action statement (e.g., I am feeling frustrated so I am going to take a few breaths)					
Uses opportunities to comment on occasions when children state they are feeling upset or angry but are remaining calm					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
18. Models appropriate expressions and labeling of their own emotions and self-regulation	3	2	1	Y/N	
□Labels positive feelings					
Labels negative feelings paired with actions to regulate					
Comments:					
19. Creates a planned approach for problem solving	3	2	1	Y/N	
Systematically teaches the problem solving steps: What is my problem? What are some solutions? What would happen next? Try out the solution.					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
"Problematizes" situations to allow children opportunities to generate solutions					
□Takes time to support children through the problem solving process during heated moments					
□Comments on and reinforces children's problem solving efforts					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
20. Promotes children's emotional regulation that will enhance positive social interactions	3	2	1	Y/N	
Helps children recognize cues of emotional escalation					
Helps children identify appropriate choices					
Helps children try solutions until the situation is appropriately resolved					
Comments:					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
21. Teams with families to develop support plans for children who need individualized intervention around behavior	3	2	1	Y/N	
Participates in behavior support process					
Invites family to participate in behavior support process from the beginning					
Teams use functional assessment					
Teams develop and implement behavior support plans					
<ul> <li>Teaches skills that replace the challenging behavior (replacement skills)</li> </ul>					
Monitors changes in child challenging behavior and replacement skills					



Skills & Indicators	Consistently	Occasionally	Seldom	Target for Training?	Observations/ Evidence
Team meets periodically to review child progress, plan implementation, and to develop new support strategies					
Comments:					

## Action Plan for Promoting Social Emotional Competence

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
1. Develops meaningful relationships with children and families		
<ul> <li>Greets children on arrival; calls by name</li> <li>Verbally interacts with individual children during routines and activities</li> <li>Participates in children's play and recreation activities when appropriate (joins sports, works on model cars, builds structures, etc.)</li> <li>Shows respect, consideration, and warmth to all children</li> <li>Speaks calmly to children</li> <li>Uses a variety of strategies for building relationships with children at times when children are not engaging in challenging behavior</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>Uses a variety of strategies for building relationships with families</li> <li>Creates a space that children and families like to be (feels comfortable, welcome, safe)</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
2. Examines personal, family, and cultural views of child's challenging behavior		
<ul> <li>Considers personal beliefs regarding the acceptability and unacceptability of specific types of child behavior</li> <li>Considers personal beliefs regarding the causes of specific types of unacceptable child behavior</li> <li>Acknowledges contrasting or conflicting beliefs held by others regarding acceptable and unacceptable types of child behavior</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
3. Examines own attitudes toward challenging behavior		
<ul> <li>Understands the relationship between children's social emotional development and challenging behavior</li> <li>Understands that children's challenging behaviors are conveying some type of message</li> <li>Understands there are many things that can be done to prevent challenging behaviors</li> <li>Identifies what behaviors "push my buttons"</li> <li>Develops strategies for dealing with situations when children's behaviors "push my buttons"</li> <li>Works together with a team to problem solve around issues related to challenging behavior</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
4. Designs the physical environment		
<ul> <li>Arranges traffic patterns in program areas so there are no wide open spaces</li> <li>Removes obstacles that make it difficult for children with physical disabilities to move around the program</li> <li>Clearly defines boundaries in program areas</li> <li>Provides a variety of materials in all program areas</li> <li>Considers children's interests when deciding what to put in program areas</li> <li>Makes changes and additions to program areas on a regular basis</li> <li>Visually closes program areas when they are not an option for children to use</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
5. Ensures smooth transitions		
<ul> <li>Structures transitions so children do not have to spend excessive time waiting with nothing to do</li> <li>Teaches children the expectations associated with transitions</li> <li>Promote independence and autonomy in transitions</li> <li>Individualizes directions about transitions so that all children understand them</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
6. Designs activities to promote engagement		
<ul> <li>Uses knowledge of the children's interests to plan large group activities when appropriate</li> <li>Monitors children's behavior and modifies plans when children lose interest in large group activities</li> <li>Plans and conducts fun small group activities</li> <li>Monitors children's behavior and modifies plans when children lose interest in small group activities</li> <li>Makes adaptations and modifications to ensure that all children can be involved in a meaningful way in any activity</li> <li>Uses a variety of ways to teach the expectations of specific activities so that all children understand them</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
7. Giving directions		
<ul> <li>Gains child's attention before giving directions</li> <li>Minimizes the number of directions</li> <li>Individualizes the way directions are given</li> <li>Gives clear directions</li> <li>Gives directions that are positive</li> <li>Gives children time to respond to directions</li> <li>Gives children choices and options when appropriate</li> <li>Follows through with positive acknowledgments of children's behavior</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
8. Establishes and enforces clear rules, limits, and consequences for behavior		
<ul> <li>Identifies appropriate program rules with children</li> <li>Teaches rules in developmentally appropriate ways</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to practice rules</li> <li>States rules positively and specifically (avoids words "no" and "don't" as much as possible)</li> <li>Keeps rules to manageable number (3-6)</li> <li>Frequently reinforces children for appropriate behavior</li> <li>Identifies consequences for both following and not following rules</li> <li>Makes sure all adults in program know rules and consequences</li> <li>Enforces rules and consequences consistently and fairly</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
9. Engages in ongoing monitoring and positive attention		
Gives children time and attention when engaging in appropriate behavior		
10. Uses positive feedback and encouragement		
<ul> <li>Uses positive feedback and encouragement contingent on appropriate behavior</li> <li>Provides descriptive feedback and encouragement</li> <li>Conveys enthusiasm while giving positive feedback and encouragement</li> <li>Uses positive feedback and encouragement contingent on child's efforts.</li> <li>Provides nonverbal cues of appreciation</li> <li>Recognizes that there are individual variations in what forms of acknowledgment are interpreted as positive by children</li> <li>Involves other adults in acknowledging children</li> <li>Models positive feedback and encouragement frequently</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
11. Interacts with children to develop their self- esteem		
<ul> <li>Demonstrates active listening with children</li> <li>Avoids judgmental statements</li> <li>Responds to children's ideas</li> <li>Recognizes children's efforts</li> <li>Shows empathy and acceptance of children's feelings</li> </ul>		
12. Shows sensitivity to individual children's needs		
<ul> <li>Respects and accommodates individual needs, personalities, and characteristics</li> <li>Adapts and adjusts accordingly (instructions, materials, etc.)</li> <li>Conveys acceptance of individual differences (culture, gender, sensory needs, language, abilities) through planning, material selection, and discussion of topics</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
13. Encourages autonomy		
<ul> <li>Structures the program to encourage children to make choices</li> <li>Allows children time to respond and/or complete task independently before offering assistance</li> <li>Creates opportunities for decision making, problem solving, and working together</li> <li>Teaches children strategies for self-regulating and/or self-monitoring behaviors</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
14. Uses effective environmental arrangements to encourage social interactions		
<ul> <li>Effectively selects, arranges, and utilizes materials that promote interactions (high interest, novel, culturally meaningful)</li> <li>Effectively selects, arranges, and implements activities that promote interactions (high interest, novel, culturally meaningful)</li> <li>Develops interaction opportunities within program routines (i.e., homework helper, snack set-up, etc.)</li> </ul>		
15. Uses prompting and reinforcement of interactions effectively		
<ul> <li>Provides sincere, enthusiastic feedback to promote and maintain social interactions</li> <li>Waits until interactions are finished before reinforcing; does not interrupt interactions</li> <li>Encourages children to play together; offers ideas for play</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
16. Promotes identification and labeling of emotions in self and others		
<ul> <li>Uses validation, acknowledgment, mirroring back, labeling feelings, voice tones, or gestures to show an understanding of children's feelings</li> <li>Assists children in recognizing and understanding how a peer might be feeling by pointing out facial expressions, voice tone, body language, or words</li> <li>Uses real-life situations to practice problem solving, beginning with defining the problem and emotions involved</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
17. Explores the nature of feelings and the appropriate ways they can be addressed		
<ul> <li>Teaches that all emotions are okay, but not all expressions are okay</li> <li>Labels own emotional states and provides an action statement (e.g., I am feeling frustrated so I am going to take a few breaths)</li> <li>Uses opportunities to comment on occasions when children state they are feeling upset or angry but are remaining calm</li> </ul>		
18. Models appropriate expressions and labeling of their own emotions and self-regulation		
<ul> <li>Labels positive feelings</li> <li>Labels negative feelings paired with actions to regulate</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
19. Creates a planned approach for problem solving		
<ul> <li>Systematically teaches the problem solving steps: What is my problem? What are some solutions? What would happen next? Try out the solution.</li> <li>"Problematizes" situations to allow children opportunities to generate solutions</li> <li>Takes time to support children through the problem solving process during heated moments</li> <li>Comments on and reinforces children's problem solving efforts</li> </ul>		
20. Promotes children's emotional regulation that will enhance positive social interactions		
<ul> <li>Helps children recognize cues of emotional escalation</li> <li>Helps children identify appropriate choices</li> <li>Helps children try solutions until the situation is appropriately resolved</li> </ul>		

Skills & Indicators	Strategies I will use to implement new practices or support others in implementing new practices	Supports and resources needed to accomplish these activities
21. Teams with families to develop support plans for children who need individualized intervention around behavior		
<ul> <li>Participates in behavior support process</li> <li>Invites family to participate in behavior support process from the beginning</li> <li>Teams use functional assessment</li> <li>Teams develop and implement behavior support plans</li> <li>Teaches skills that replace the challenging behavior (replacement skills)</li> <li>Monitors changes in child challenging behavior and replacement skills</li> <li>Team meets periodically to review child progress, plan implementation, and to develop new support strategies</li> </ul>		