

Social and Emotional Foundations for Learning

**Strong Families
Strong Children**



PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK



Funded by the Missouri Department of Social Services, Children's Division,
Early Childhood and Prevention Services Section.

2019



Strong Families, Strong Children

Social and emotional skills set a foundation for success in life. Child care educators are a resource for children and families in developing and refining these skills over time. One of the most effective ways to support social and emotional development in by using a strengths-based approach and the Five Protective Factors. This session will focus on supporting strong families as they raise resilient children.

Learning Objectives:

1. Define the benefits of strong family relationships.
2. Identify the 5 Protective Factors
3. Define each Protective Factor

The training will meet the requirements of the Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals (Kansas and Missouri) and the Child Development

As-

CDA	3. Supporting children’s social and emotional development	
Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals (Kansas and	II. Learning Environment and Curriculum	
	4. Promoting Social and Emotional Development	
	Level 1:	b. Models appropriate social interactions
		c. Recognizes that change, separation, stress and transition affect social and emotional development and behavior.

Agenda

Building Emotional Well-being and Social Competence in Children

Welcome.....	10 minutes
Shared Agreements	
Review Objectives	
The Big Question	
5 Protective Factors.....	40 minutes
Why they were created	
What are they and how are they used?	
Resilience	
Social Connections	
Concrete Support in Times of Need	
Break.....	10 minutes
<i>Show Me Child Care Resources</i>	
5 Protective Factors continued.....	50 minutes
Concrete Support in times of Need	
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development	
Social and Emotional Competence of Children	
<i>Wrap Up</i>	10 minutes
The Big Question	
Review Objectives	
Action Steps	
Exit Assessment	
Session Satisfaction Surveys	
MOPD Systems Key Functions	
CDA Scholarship Project	
T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI Scholarship	
Online On Demand Training—MO Workshop Calendar	
<i>Show Me Child Care Resources</i>	

the **BIG** **QUESTION**

How do we support families in raising strong children?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What can you do as a child care educator to strengthen families ?

List strategies you can use to support children's growth through strong families:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Supporting families and children builds on the strengths they already have. Families thrive through resilience, create strong social connections, experience concrete support in times of need, and understand child social and emotional development. Child care educators are a tremendous influence on the success of families in raising strong, resilient children.

Write two ideas you would like implement when you return to your classroom.

#1—Idea to implement:

Strategies to use for success:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

#2—Idea to implement:

Strategies to use for success:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

5 Protective Factors



Resiliency....

the ability to bounce back, be flexible and draw on one's inner strength when faced with challenges.



Building Blocks of Resilience

- Resilience is not about how many bad experiences or challenges we are faced with. It is about how we respond to those challenges.
- Coping strategies will vary among people. Breathing, journaling, talking, physical activity, laughing are ways some people use to cope. It can be helpful to create a personal list based on the positive ways you use to cope.
- Hope is looking forward. When faced with challenges, it is important to recognize them for what they are, acknowledge the emotions surrounding the challenges and begin to think of possible solutions.
- When faced with a crisis or challenge, people may feel they lack the resources or support to overcome the problem. It is important for individuals to be knowledgeable about resources prior to challenges. While they may not use all of them, they will know how to locate or connect with the resource as needed.
- We are going to be faced with many challenges throughout our lives. It is important to understand how to make choices when faced with trials. So, how do you know if the choice made is a good one? What is a good choice? Making a good choice is moving toward hope and forward in a healthy direction.

When working with families, consider what block might help them most. Finding resources in that area is a great place to start in building resilience.

Ten Ways to Build Resilience

1. **Make connections.**

Good relationships with close family members, friends or others are important. Accepting help and support from those who care about you and will listen to you strengthens resilience. Some people find that being active in civic groups, faith-based organizations or other local groups provides social support and can help with reclaiming hope. Assisting others in their time of need can also benefit the helper.

2. **Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.**

You cannot change the fact that highly stressful events happen, but you can change how you interpret and respond to these events. Try looking beyond the present to how future circumstances may be a little better. Note any subtle ways in which you might already feel somewhat better as you deal with and work through difficult situations.

3. **Accept that change is a part of living.**

Certain goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances that you can alter.

4. **Move toward your goals.**

Develop realistic goals. Do something regularly -- even if it seems like a small accomplishment -- that enables you to move toward your goals. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable, ask yourself, "What's one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?"

5. **Take decisive actions.**

Act on adverse situations as much as you can. Take decisive actions, rather than detaching completely from problems and stresses and wishing they would just go away.

6. **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.**

People often learn something about themselves and may find that they have grown in some respect as a result of their struggle with loss. Many people who have experienced tragedies and hardship have reported better relationships, a greater sense of strength even while feeling vulnerable, an increased sense of self-worth, a more developed spirituality, and a heightened appreciation for life.

7. **Nurture a positive view of yourself.**

Reframe your negative thoughts and focus on the positive. Positive self-talk builds confidence. Developing confidence in your ability to solve problems and trusting your instincts helps build resilience.



Ten Ways to Build Resilience

8. Keep things in perspective.

Even when facing very painful events, try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Avoid blowing the event out of proportion.

9. Maintain a hopeful outlook.

An optimistic outlook enables you to expect that good things will happen in your life. Try visualizing what you want, rather than worrying about what you fear.

10. Take care of yourself.

Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly. Taking care of you helps to keep your mind and body primed to deal with situations that require resilience.

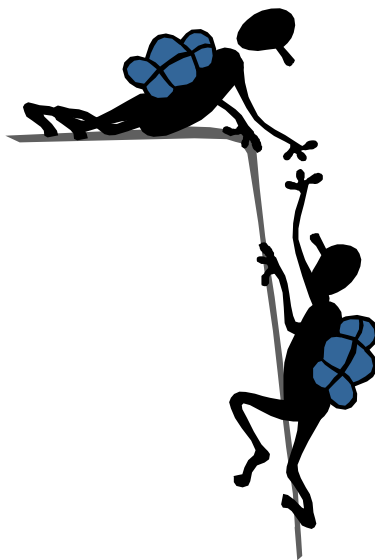
Additional ways to strengthen resilience:

Write about your deepest thoughts and feelings related to trauma or other stressful life events. Meditation and spiritual practices help some people build connections and restore hope. Music and art are often ways to express deep emotions in a safe manner. The key is to identify ways that are likely to work well for you as part of your own personal strategy for fostering resilience.

The 10 Ways to Build Resilience, American Psychological Association.

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx#>

**Remember, while not always easy, *building resilience is critical*
for coping with life's challenges.**



Activity: I Have/I Am/I Can

In small groups, discuss the three areas: I have, I am and I can. Record your answers.

I have statements are the characteristics you have to help you when you go through a challenge.

I am statements are related to the feelings, beliefs, and strengths you exhibit when you are faced with a challenge.

I can statements are the tools and skills that you demonstrate when faced with a challenge.

Social Connections...

- ◆ help families build support systems in the community.
 - ◆ enable families to develop and reinforce social expectations about behavior.
 - ◆ provide emotional support.
-
- Positive social connections teach non-violent alternatives to stressors and help reduce child abuse and neglect.
 - Everyone benefits from a strong network of extended family, friends, neighbors, and others who provide healthy relationships, support and problem solving.
 - Being new to a community or a first-time parent makes a support network even more important.
 - Helping families build friendships and other positive connections can reduce isolation which is a consistent risk factor for negative outcomes like child abuse and neglect, domestic violence and depression.
 - When families belong to social networks, it helps develop a sense of community, helps solves problems, and provides enjoyment and companionship.

What can child care professionals do to support Social Connections?

- ◆ Create a welcoming environment for families to mingle and talk
- ◆ Host family events like potluck dinners
- ◆ Partner new families with current families
- ◆ Create special activities for fathers, grandparents and other extended family members

Everyone hears what you say.

Friends listen to what you say.

Best friends listen to what you don't say.

Unknown Author



Center for Study of Social Policy www.cssp.org

Social Networks

Social networks are the people you choose as your supports in times of pleasure or need. We all need social connections to be mentally and physically healthy. A lack of social supports within a family can lead to despair and increases the chances of child abuse or neglect.

Write down five supports you have in your personal social network.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Just as it is essential for you to have a social network, *it is critical for families to have these too.* You cannot be the social connection for all your families.

To encourage social connections among the families you serve, you can direct them to link up with:

- Extended family members
- A group of parents with children around the same age who get together for family activities
- Friends (for adults and children alike)
- Social groups such as people from church, sports teams or service organizations to which families belong
- Neighbors
- Someone who can pick the children up from school when a parent has an emergency



Concrete Support in Times of Need...

- ❑ help families meet the basic needs (shelter, food, clothing, health care).
- ❑ connect families to support networks when experiencing a crisis such as unemployment, illness, death, domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental illness.
- ❑ provide emotional support.

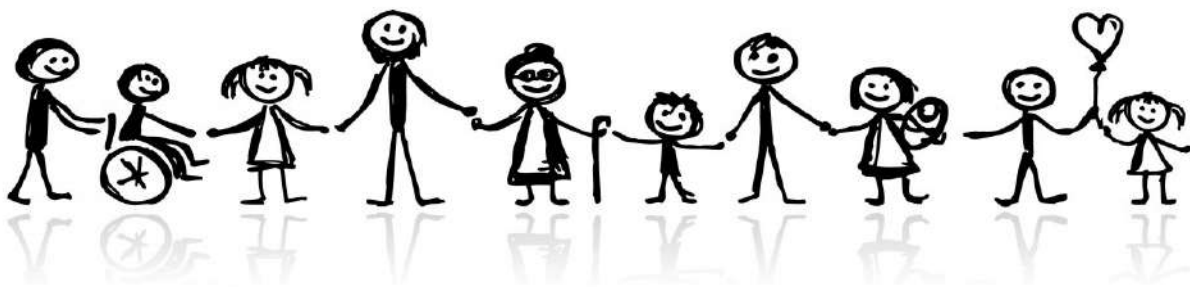
What can those who work with children and their families do to support in times of need?

- Offer on-site food pantries and clothing closets
- Provide a specific name to a person at a service agency
- Provide transportation to support services or funds for the travel
- Be a supportive ear for the family throughout the crisis
- Link families to job services, job training, transportation, and other means of economic security
- Provide immediate assistance and support in the event of eviction or other emergency
- Have a resource list of community supports and contact numbers for families
- Hold special fund drives to gather materials for families in crisis

Organizations and professions that work with families, such as child care programs, are an important way for families in need to connect with local services and resources.

Supporting families in times of need can greatly reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect that can result from the stress of crisis situations.

It's not whether you get knocked down; it's whether you get up.



Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families™, a Protective Factors Framework

Concrete Support in Times of Need...

The most effective way to support families in times of need is to link them to services and opportunities to minimize their challenges.

Resources to strengthen families:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| job training | health care |
| food pantry services | financial counseling |
| educational opportunities | housing or rental assistance |
| utility assistance | foreclosure prevention |
| back to school assistance | emergency assistance |
| respite care | screening and services for children with special needs |

- By focusing on the family's strengths and offering supports to accomplish this, you can change lives.
- To prevent child abuse or neglect when families are in need, you must observe and respond to early warning signs of abuse and neglect.
- A child's well-being is reflected by the well-being of their family. If family members are experiencing stress, the children have a higher possibility of feeling stress or anxiety too.

Possible warning signs that a family is in crisis:

- Frequent absences
- Missing payments
- Consistently late pick-ups
- Children come in the same clothes each week
- Children arrive dirty, soiled or hungry consistently
- Children are excessively sleepy
- Family members or children are irritated or cranky
- Evidence of cuts, burns or bruises which are not typical for development
- Children fail to receive necessary medical and dental (untreated cavities, oral infections and pain) attention
- Missing wellness health visits and services such as well-baby check-ups, screenings and immunizations



You cannot make people change. Your role is to offer families supports and to protect all children. Remember, when in doubt, check it out!

Linking Families to Concrete Support in Times of Need

Knowing what resources are available in our community, and updating the information regularly, is critical to being prepared for when families need help.

When creating a community resources file, consider:

- What services exist in our community and where are they located?
- Do you have the correct phone number and an updated contact name?
- Do they need to ask for a certain person?
- Can they accomplish everything by phone or do they need to visit a specific location?
- Can they access assistance online? What is the web site?
- Do they need any documentation to access the service?
- What agencies meet specific needs such as housing, food, paying bills?
- Is there a limit to the number of times they can get the help?



Cultural Connection

Be aware of the cultural standards of those you serve. Culture is not limited to ethnic or racial categories. It also applies to age, gender, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation.

Remember that some families may feel uncomfortable asking for help based on traditions of independence and a strong sense of pride that makes it even more difficult to request the help of others outside the family.

We can do this in several ways:

1. Start by asking questions and listening for cues from family members about the types of support that would feel comfortable for them.
2. See if you can connect the family with organizations that work specifically with their cultural community.
3. Talk to family members about their experience with others and help them understand approaches that are different between their culture and the one they now live in.
4. Make sure that the staff and program environment in which you work reflect the culture of the community.
5. Provide services that are universal – open to everyone – not designated solely for families that have problems.

(National Alliance of Children's Trust & Prevention Funds, 2012)

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development...

- ❑ helps families understand their child.
- ❑ reduces child abuse and neglect through increased understanding.
- ❑ Gives parents a better understanding of what to expect as their child grows.

Families know their child best but many times family members may not be aware of typical developmental milestones. In reaction, an adult may interpret the child's behavior negatively and respond with negative or harsh discipline techniques.

Families need dependable and truthful information to help them learn how to care for their child. Accurate and reliable information supports families in their roles as parent.

What can child care programs do to support knowledge of parenting and child development?

- ◆ Offer materials about parenting through a lending library.
- ◆ Provide family education classes and support groups.
- ◆ Provide ways and times to meet with staff, other families and community resources and local agencies.
- ◆ Use drop off and pick up times as a way to check in on the daily health of the child (physical health, sleep patterns, eating and general nutrition, environmental issues).
- ◆ Provide "guided observations" to help parents understand and observe child development. This models typical development and how to react to every day events. This is especially helpful for parents who are concerned or frustrated with their children's behavior.
- ◆ Offer parent education on alternative discipline methods focusing on positive guidance with written materials on developmentally appropriate discipline techniques.
- ◆ Offer specific support and parenting information for families with children with special needs. Families may need specific support to help them deal with their feelings of guilt, anger, denial, and other related emotions. Help to find information and community resources for families
- ◆ Set up optional home visits from staff to support families through observation and education at home. (Check with your insurance provider beforehand to cover your liability. Only send well trained staff into family homes.)



Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development...

Characteristics of child care programs with strong parenting support:

- ◇ Program has low staff turnover – this offers the possibility for long-term relationships between families and staff
- ◇ Intentionally connect families to support services in the community
- ◇ Create adult support groups for families with similar experiences whose children are close in age (can be formal meetings or linking the families together)
- ◇ Enlist other families that have overcome adversity to act as supports and mentors to other parents who have questions and need guidance
- ◇ Keep staff informed through ongoing professional development
- ◇ Offer opportunities for social connections that develop trust between families and staff
- ◇ Exemplify respect for individual and cultural differences in staff, families and children
- ◇ Consistently focus on families' strengths - focusing on consistent decision making over time rather than quick fixes and recognizing that the quality of social relationships is critical for learning to occur
- ◇ Use daily logs and weekly newsletters or posts on social media to keep families informed and offer techniques and tips to families on a variety of topics

NOTES:



Tools for Child Guidance during Difficult Behavior

Increasing family knowledge of parenting and child development should **focus on positive behavior support and the strengths of the child**. All children have times of negative behavior. Here are some ways to deal with such times.

Redirection

Many times a child can get caught up in a situation and begin to act out. It is important to learn how to remove the child from the situation and help them redirect their thought pattern. This can be done by shifting the child's attention to an alternative activity or object. If you have to say "no" to something, a way to redirect is to offer something else that the child can do.

For example, "Your brother is playing with that right now. Let's color this page together instead."

Offer choices

Children learn problem-solving skills when they are able to make choices. Offer a limited number of choices, usually two so as not to confuse or overwhelm the child. When providing choices to children, make sure they are given in non-threatening ways. Make the choices realistic, immediate and within the ability level of the child too.

For example, "We need to clean up now. You can pick up the toys in the living room or the bedroom. You choose."

Make it a game

Children love to play. When tasks are made into games, it becomes a source of fun instead of a chore.

For example, at bed time, have a race to see who can brush their teeth the fastest or who can get changed into pajamas first.

Validate

It is important to validate the child's feelings. When you label emotions, you are also giving meaning to their feelings. Know that the younger the child, the less words they understand. Make your comments about as many words as the child is years old.

For example, "I see you are angry because you want the toy. It is a really neat toy."

Respectfully tell and show children how to act

Children need examples of how to act. It is important for family members to focus on what the child can and should do, rather than criticizing him/her for what they should not do.

For example, "Touch the kitty softly." rather than "Do not hit the kitty!"

Tools for Child Guidance during Difficult Behavior

Offer solutions

Most children have a difficult time projecting into the future. It is important for parents to offer clear solutions. When you have to say “no” give an explanation why and offer something that will be a “yes.” As children grow, they can often share in finding solutions to their problems.

For example, “I cannot let you play outside because we have to leave for school soon and your clothes will get dirty. When you get home today, we can change into play clothes and go outside.”

Give them the words

Many times children do not have the ability to express themselves or their feelings effectively. This often leads to acting out, crying or hitting. Help them know what to say. Knowing how to express one’s feelings and needs can make situations feel more in a child’s control.

For example, your child does not want to leave grandma’s house and begins to cry. Tell your child, “Say, ‘Good bye Grandma. I love you. Thank you for letting me play at your house. I will come back and visit soon. We will call you when we get home to say good night.’”

Set expectations beforehand

Make sure the child knows what is expected of him/her before a situation arises. By setting the expectations ahead of time, the child is less surprised by the expectations. When a child agrees to the expectations ahead of time, the parent can remind them of their promise if a situation arises and affirm how proud they are of the child for keeping their agreement.

For example, “We are going into the store. We will get a special box of cereal for home. We will not get any other treats today. Do you agree?” Ask the child to repeat the treat they will get – special cereal.

Be positive

Positive reinforcement is our most powerful tool to boost our child’s self-esteem and to encourage age-appropriate behavior. When adults focus on what the child does right, they let the child know they are capable and important. A good rule of thumb is that for every negative comment, a parent can note five positives about the child.

For example, “I know you had a hard time today in the store sticking to our agreement. I appreciate that you tried to remember not to complain and that you checked with me about treats instead of whining. Thank you.”

(Aguirre, 2007; American Psychological Association, 2006; Bonanno, 2004)

Social and Emotional Competence of Children...

is the ability of young children to interact positively with others, self-regulate their behavior and effectively communicate their feelings in a positive way.

- Social and emotional competence starts at birth by establishing trust and bonding through attachments to adults.
- Even small acts of kindness, a hug, smile or loving words, make a big difference to children. We all need to know and feel that we are loved and valued by those around us, especially our family members.
- Children with consistent, stable and caring adult relationships often have better academic success, healthier behaviors, more positive peer interactions, and an increased ability to cope with stress later in life.
- Neglectful or abusive parenting or care can affect a child's brain leading to changes in body chemistry, a reduction in the growth hormones essential for development and impair organ development.

Why is attachment to caring adults important for young children?

- Relationships that produce attachment for children are rooted in trust and security. Without trust, a child will be doubtful of personal security, meeting basic needs and can develop a sense of mistrust. Overtime, chronic childhood mistrust can lead to limited self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Children develop emotional attachments to those who care for them. Secure attachments are developed from adult care that is sensitive, consistently responsive, comforting, and appropriate and generally results in an attachment that is stable and enduring.



- It is within the security of this relationship that a child feels safe and confident and able to explore the world with curiosity and enthusiasm. Attachment is important for healthy development throughout life.

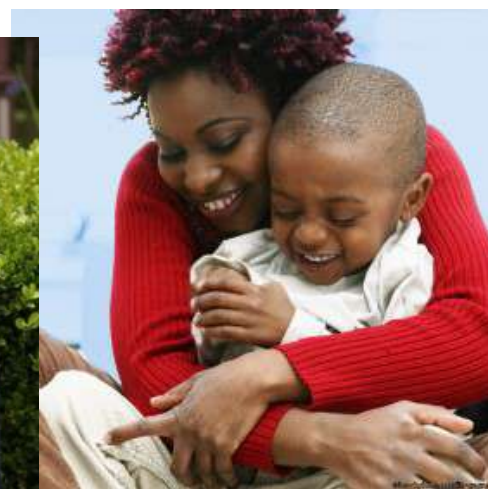
Center for Study of Social Policy www.cssp.org (2007)

Social and Emotional Competence...

What can child care professionals do to help infants and toddlers form healthy attachments?

- ✦ Care for infants in a small adult-to-child ratio – no more than 3 or 4 infants to one adult
- ✦ Provide continuity of care with one or two primary adults caring for the infant when outside the home.
- ✦ Stay at eye level with infants and toddlers
- ✦ Follow the child's lead when wanting to be held or play independently
- ✦ Create a calm, safe environment where an infant can explore, interact and enjoy new experiences
- ✦ Get to know the infant or toddler's likes and dislikes
- ✦ Learn the facial expressions, vocalizations and other methods of communication used by each child.

(Zero to Three, 2008)



What can child care professionals do to support social and emotional competence in preschool aged (age 3-5) children?

- ✦ Teach friendship skills such as sharing, cooperation and taking turns through modeling
- ✦ Provide children with choices when possible
- ✦ Use a calm voice and simple directions
- ✦ Redirect when possible
- ✦ Teach children to use their words to voice their feelings –happy and frustrated
- ✦ Listen to children and encourage them to listen to others
- ✦ Use visual cues when providing verbal direction
- ✦ Provide positive guidance educational trainings (such as Becoming a Love and Logic Parent®, Magic 1,2,3 and Conscious Discipline) for staff and families
- ✦ Focus on the strengths of the children and their family

Social and Emotional Competence...

Professionals often define healthy social and emotional development in children as *early childhood mental health* which includes the child's ability to:

- Form and sustain positive relationships
- Experience, manage and express emotions
- Explore and engage with the environment



Children with well-developed social and emotional skills are better able to:

- Express their ideas and feelings
- Display empathy towards others (the ability to understand and share the feelings of another)
- Manage their feelings of frustration and disappointment more easily
- Feel self-confident
- More easily make and develop friendships
- Succeed in school

Social and emotional development provides the foundation for how children feel about themselves and how they interact with their world. This development begins the day a child is born and continues to develop throughout their lifespan.

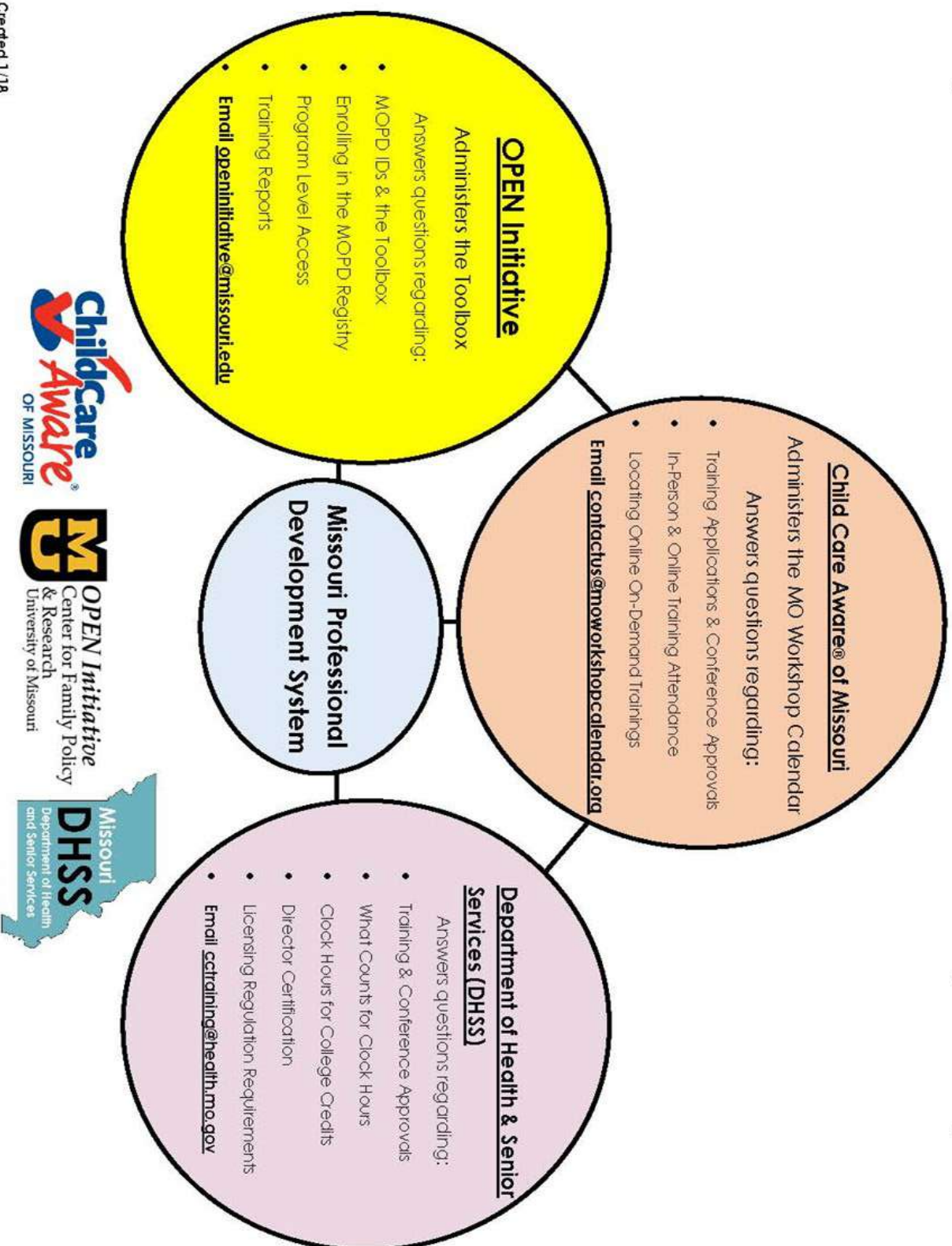
It is important to understand the progression of social and emotional development. From birth we begin to form relationships that become the foundation for a child's sense of identity and self-esteem.

NOTES and IDEAS:



Resources

Key Functions of the Missouri Professional Development System



Credited 1/18

SHOW ME CHILD CARE RESOURCES



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Family Child Care Toolkit

Questions?

Dori Martin, Resource Specialist

Child Care Aware® of Missouri

dori@mo.childcareaware.org

or 314-535-1458 x611

Resources

T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI Scholarship

Want to continue your education?



- Support college credits towards early childhood AA/AAS or BA/BS
- Statewide scholarship available to directors, teachers and assistants in **licensed** child care programs
- Partnership between the scholarship recipient, sponsoring employer and T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI with each paying a portion of tuition and books
- Applications accepted year round
- Visit our website www.teach-missouri.org to learn more and access an application



1-866-892-3228

mo.childcareaware.org

- Our referral service uses a database containing Missouri child care programs.
- Families are able to access the database and search for programs near them or contact a resource specialist to assist them in their search.
- All information in the database is self-reported by programs.
- We encourage families to ask questions about the child care programs in order to find a program that best suits the needs of their children.
- Update your Program Information Form (PIF) at least



CDA SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT



GET YOUR CDA CREDENTIAL!

Get Paid \$380 | No Assessment Fee | Advance Your Career



Do you work in a licensed or license-exempt child care program?



Do you work in a child care program that accepts DSS subsidy?



Do you work a minimum of 20 hours per week?



Have you worked in the same child care program for at least 3 months?

If you answered **YES** to these questions, enroll in the CDA Scholarship Project at www.cdасcholarshipmo.org. Space is limited.

Don't delay...sign up **TODAY!**