

# IELG Standards - Social and Emotional Development

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
0-9 months	Attachment Relationships	Children begin to build trust, initiate interaction, and seek proximity with one (or a few) primary caregiver(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Establishes, maintains, and disengages eye contact</li> <li>•Responds to caregiver(s) by smiling and cooing</li> <li>•Seeks comfort from a familiar caregiver</li> <li>•Imitates familiar adults' gestures and sounds</li> <li>•Demonstrates preference for familiar adults</li> <li>•Exhibits separation anxiety , e.g., does not want to be held by another person when being held by primary caregiver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide prompt, responsive, and sensitive care to the child's needs</li> <li>• Hold, cuddle, smile, and interact with the child</li> <li>• Follow the child's cues; allow the child to socially disengage when ready</li> <li>• Provide a loving and nurturing environment with trustworthy adults, and assign a primary caregiver to consistently take care of the child's needs</li> </ul>
7-18 months	Attachment Relationships	Children trust in, engage with, and seek reassurance from their primary caregiver(s). Children can confidently explore their environment when in close physical proximity to an attachment figure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Distinguishes between primary caregivers and others</li> <li>•Attempts to change the situation when separation anxiety occurs, e.g., follows caregiver(s) when he or she leaves the room</li> <li>•Uses social referencing with caregiver(s) when in uncertain situations, e.g., will glance at caregiver's face for cues on how to respond to an unfamiliar person or new situation</li> <li>•Uses key adults as a "secure base" when exploring the environment</li> <li>•Exhibits stranger anxiety and concern in presence of an unknown person or a new situation</li> <li>•Seeks comfort from caregiver(s) and/or a familiar object, e.g., blanket, stuffed animal</li> <li>•Initiates and maintains interactions with caregiver(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk and sing to the child often; use opportunities such as diaper changes and feeding time</li> <li>• Comfort and reassure the child as needed</li> <li>• Follow the child's lead and read the child's cues when engaged in interactions</li> <li>• When separating from a child, gesture and say good-bye, reassuring the child that you will be returning; in childcare settings, comfort and reassure the child once the primary caregiver has left</li> <li>• When reuniting with a child after separation has occurred, allow the child the necessary time to reconnect</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
16-24 months	Attachment Relationships	Children begin to use nonverbal and verbal communication to connect and reconnect with their attachment figure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Shows an emotional connection with familiar adults other than the primary caregiver</li> <li>•Uses imitation and pretend play to make sense of relationships, e.g., uses a toy to “brush” hair, or feeds and rocks a doll</li> <li>•Plays physically farther away from primary caregiver with increasing confidence; moves closer as needed</li> <li>•Seeks physical closeness when distressed</li> <li>•Actively seeks emotional responses from caregiver(s) by waving, hugging, and crying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comfort and acknowledge the child’s feelings of distress; provide words for the emotions the toddler is exhibiting</li> <li>• Set appropriate and consistent limits; ensure to take realistic expectations into account</li> <li>• Provide ample opportunities for play and interaction with nurturing adults</li> <li>• Be physically and emotionally available for the child, especially after reuniting after a separation has occurred</li> <li>• Respond to the child’s attempts to seek out a response, e.g., blow a kiss back after the child blows a kiss</li> <li>• Model appropriate behaviors, e.g., how to emotionally react in situations, how to speak to peers</li> </ul>
21-36 months	Attachment Relationships	Children demonstrate a desire for their attachment figure to share in their feelings, responses, and experiences. Behaviors that demonstrate a need for physical proximity with the primary caregiver decrease, while in certain instances of distress, some children seek to be close to their attachment figure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Uses glances and words to stay connected, without having to be physically near or touching the caregiver</li> <li>•Initiates activities that are meaningful in the relationship, e.g., brings over a favorite book to be read together</li> <li>•Communicates thoughts, feelings, and plans to familiar adults</li> <li>•Seeks adult assistance with challenges</li> <li>•Separates with assistance from attachment figure with minimal anxiety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show empathy and acknowledge how the child is feeling</li> <li>• Genuinely praise the child as he or she shares accomplishments</li> <li>• Respond with interest as the child engages in conversation</li> <li>• Recognize and respond to the child’s verbal and nonverbal communications</li> <li>• Prepare the child for separation by telling him or her good-bye and that you will return</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
0-9 months	Emotional Expression	Children begin to express a wide range of feelings through verbal and nonverbal communication, and begin to develop emotional expression with the assistance of their caregiver(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Uses facial expressions and sounds to get needs met, e.g., cries, smiles, gazes, coos</li> <li>•Expresses emotions through sounds and gestures, e.g., squeals, laughs, claps</li> <li>•Demonstrates discomfort, stress, or unhappiness through body language and sounds, e.g., arches back, moves head, cries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond and comfort the child in order to meet needs; act as a co-regulator for the child, e.g., feed the child when hungry, rock the child when tired</li> <li>• Describe the emotion the child is expressing, e.g., “I can see you are so excited about reaching that toy!”</li> <li>• Model facial expressions to match emotions, e.g., widen eyes and open mouth to express surprise</li> </ul>
7-18 months	Emotional Expression	Children begin to express some emotions with intention , and with the help of their caregiver(s) children can increase their range of emotional expression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Expresses wants with intentionality, e.g., pushes an unwanted object out of the way, reaches for a familiar adult when wanting to be carried</li> <li>•Expresses fear by crying or turning toward caregiver(s) for comfort</li> <li>•Shows anger and frustration, e.g., cries when a toy is taken away</li> <li>•Recognizes and expresses emotion toward a familiar person, e.g., shows emotion by hugging a sibling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to child’s display of fear or distress; reassure and comfort the child</li> <li>• Model emotional expression for the child by making facial expressions and using words to name the emotion</li> <li>• Reciprocate actions and gestures the child initiates, e.g., wave hello, blow kisses, give hugs</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
16-24 months	Emotional Expression	Children continue to experience a wide range of emotions (e.g., affection, frustration, fear, anger, sadness). At this point in development, children will express and act on impulses, but begin to learn skills from their caregiver(s) on how to control their emotional expression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates anger and frustration through a wide range of physical, vocal, and facial expressions, e.g., temper tantrums</li> <li>• Expresses pride, e.g., smiles, claps, or says, “I did it” after completing a task</li> <li>• Attempts to use a word to describe feelings to a familiar adult</li> <li>• Expresses wonder and delight while exploring the environment and engaging others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use words to describe the emotion; this helps the child associate the feeling with the name</li> <li>• Pay close attention to the cues the child is expressing</li> <li>• Model appropriate ways to express different feelings</li> <li>• Acknowledge and validate the emotions the child is feeling, e.g., “I can see you are so excited by the way you are jumping up and down.”</li> </ul>
21-36 months	Emotional Expression	Children begin to convey and express emotions through the use of nonverbal and verbal communication. Children also begin to apply learned strategies from their caregiver(s) to better regulate these emotions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempts to use words to describe feelings and names emotions</li> <li>• Acts out different emotions while engaged in pretend play, e.g., cries when pretending to be sad, jumps up and down for excitement</li> <li>• Begins to express complex emotions such as pride, embarrassment, shame, and guilt</li> <li>• Engages in play to express emotion, e.g., draws a picture for a caregiver because he or she misses them, hides a “monster” in a box due to a fear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss feelings with the child; reassure him or her that it is okay to feel different emotions</li> <li>• Recognize that the child may need some assistance in expressing feelings</li> <li>• Allow other channels in which children can express their emotions, e.g., art, dance, imaginary play</li> <li>• Respect cultural differences when it comes to expressing emotions; never discount what the child is sharing and expressing</li> <li>• Ensure to continue reading the child’s cues even as the child begins to use words to describe feelings</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
0-9 months	Relationship with Adults	Children develop the ability to signal for caregivers. By the end of this age period, children begin to engage in playful communication with familiar adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses signals to communicate needs, e.g., crying, body language, and facial expressions</li> <li>• Attempts to engage both unfamiliar and familiar adults</li> <li>• Engages in social interactions with adults through smiles, coos, and eye contact</li> <li>• Demonstrates preference for familiar adults, e.g., reaches hands out to signal for caregiver(s)</li> <li>• Cautious of unfamiliar adults</li> <li>• Begins to engage in simple, back-and-forth interactions with a familiar adult, e.g., plays “peek-a-boo,” babbles in response to an adult speaking and repeats this interaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide prompt, responsive, and sensitive care to the child’s needs</li> <li>• Provide a loving and nurturing environment with trustworthy adults, and assign a primary caregiver to consistently take care of the child’s needs</li> <li>• Engage with the child through everyday, loving interactions</li> <li>• Comfort the child when upset, frightened, or overwhelmed, e.g., gentle hugs or using a soothing voice</li> <li>• Follow the child’s lead when interacting and playing</li> </ul>
7-18 months	Relationship with Adults	Children use familiar adults for guidance and reassurance. Children also initiate and engage in back-and-forth interactions with familiar adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looks for caregiver’s response in uncertain situations</li> <li>• Engages with adults during play, e.g., bangs on a toy drum and repeats action after an adult completes the same action</li> <li>• Uses key adults as a “secure base” when exploring the environment</li> <li>• Uses “social referencing” when encountering new experiences, e.g., glances at a caregiver’s face for cues on how to respond to an unfamiliar person or unknown object</li> <li>• Draws a familiar adult into an interaction, e.g., hands a book or toy to engage in together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the child’s lead in play; respond genuinely while interacting</li> <li>• Respond to the child consistently; this helps build trust</li> <li>• Offer support through reassuring behaviors such as smiles, hugs, and cuddles</li> <li>• Provide dedicated periods of time to play and engage with the child with limited interruptions</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
16-24 months	Relationship with Adults	Children actively seek out familiar adults and begin to show an interest in adult tasks and roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds emotional connections with other familiar adults, in addition to primary caregiver(s)</li> <li>• Seeks adult assistance with challenges but may refuse help and say “no”</li> <li>• Responds to guidance, e.g., places the shape into the shape sorter after caregiver demonstrates how to</li> <li>• Imitates a familiar adult’s actions, e.g., waves hands around while pretending to talk on the phone after seeing caregiver make those same actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comfort child and acknowledge her or his feelings of distress; provide words for emotions the child is exhibiting</li> <li>• Set appropriate and consistent limits; ensure to take realistic expectations into account</li> <li>• Provide choices for the child, e.g., “Would you like the blue cup or the yellow cup?”</li> <li>• Establish everyday routines and rituals</li> <li>• Allow ample time for pretend play</li> </ul>
21-36 months	Relationship with Adults	Children interact with adults to communicate ideas, share feelings, and solve problems. Children also actively explore adult roles and tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imitates adult roles and activities through pretend play, e.g., goes grocery shopping, or prepares a meal</li> <li>• Initiates activities that are meaningful in the relationship, e.g., brings over a favorite book to be read together</li> <li>• Communicates thoughts, feelings, questions, and plans to both familiar and unfamiliar adults</li> <li>• Demonstrates desire to control or make decisions independent from adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play and spend quality time with the child on a daily basis</li> <li>• Respond with interest as the child engages in conversation</li> <li>• Provide materials with which the child can play, e.g., toy kitchen, phone, baby doll</li> <li>• Provide choices for the child to help him or her feel more in control, e.g., “You may have milk or juice.”</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
0-9 months	Self-Concept	Children begin to recognize themselves as individuals, separate from others. At first, young infants are not aware that they are separate beings. However, between six and nine months of age, the realization that they are separate people emerges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Demonstrates interest in faces and voices of others</li> <li>•Explores his or her own hands and feet</li> <li>•Recognizes own name, e.g., looks up, or turns head toward a person who is saying his/her name</li> <li>•Recognizes and prefers familiar adults and siblings, e.g., leans toward caregiver when being held by someone else</li> <li>•Initiates interactions with others, e.g., imitates actions, plays peek-a-boo</li> <li>•Begins to display the beginning of joint attention, e.g., points to objects and people</li> <li>•Demonstrates separation anxiety, e.g., cries when caregiver leaves the room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cuddle, nurture, and respond thoughtfully to the child's signals</li> <li>• Use the child's name during interactions</li> <li>• Provide mirrors for the child to look at self</li> <li>• Read books together that reflect the child's culture</li> <li>• Acknowledge the child's efforts to initiate and engage, e.g., look toward where the child is pointing and name what he or she is pointing at</li> </ul>
7-18 months	Self-Concept	Children begin to have a greater awareness of their own characteristics and begin to express themselves with their own thoughts and feelings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Shows awareness of significant people by calling them by name, e.g., "papa"</li> <li>•Engages in joint attention with familiar others, e.g., shares in looking and engaging with objects and people</li> <li>•Responds with vocalizations or gestures when hears name</li> <li>•Demonstrates interest in looking in mirror</li> <li>•Uses gestures and some words to express feelings, e.g., "no"</li> <li>•Uses social referencing to guide actions and begins to test limits</li> <li>•Points to and identifies body parts on him or herself, e.g., points to eyes when asked, "Where are your eyes?"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use names when referring to significant people in the child's life</li> <li>• Use affective attunement to match the feelings of the child, e.g., use facial expressions and body language to express the same emotions the child is vocalizing</li> <li>• Allow child to express wants and desires; provide choices in order to allow him or her some control</li> <li>• Provide limits and boundaries for the child</li> <li>• Use songs and finger plays that help the child identify the names of different body parts</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
16-24 months	Self-Concept	Children become aware of themselves as distinct from others both physically and emotionally. During this period, children often struggle with the balance of being independent and needing nurturing from their caregiver(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates awareness of self, e.g., touches own nose in the mirror</li> <li>• Able to express his or her name</li> <li>• Refers to self with gestures and language</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding and use of concepts through words such as “mine,” “me,” and “you”</li> <li>• Points to self in images and other types of media</li> <li>• Frequently tests limits</li> <li>• Asks for help from familiar adults but may begin to attempt to complete tasks autonomously</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide words to the emotion the child is expressing; validate his or her feelings</li> <li>• Provide nurturing care, especially when the child is seeking comfort</li> <li>• Engage in conversations with the child often; provide opportunities for child to talk about him- or herself in a meaningful context</li> <li>• Set boundaries with the child and provide the child with choices throughout the day.</li> <li>• Use redirection, e.g., hand an object to a child who is about to start crying because another child has an object he or she wants</li> </ul>
21-36 months	Self-Concept	Children begin to identify and discuss their connections to other people and things. Children can also identify their feelings and interests and communicate them to others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Names people in his/her family and shares stories about them</li> <li>• Asks for help from familiar adults but pushes away and refuses help</li> <li>• Incorporates roles of family members in play</li> <li>• Begins to show an interest in describing physical characteristics, e.g., “I have blue eyes”</li> <li>• Demonstrates preferences, e.g., “I want the green cup”</li> <li>• Communicates feelings, e.g., may say “I’m sad,” or stomps feet when mad</li> <li>• Begins to understand concept of possession, e.g., “yours,” “hers,” “his”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen and respond with interest as the child shares meaningful information about his/her life</li> <li>• Ask the child about his/her day, friends, and favorite things</li> <li>• Acknowledge the child’s efforts in sharing stories, thoughts, and questions, e.g., comment and answer promptly and genuinely</li> <li>• Be aware and respectful of cultural differences in regard to independence</li> <li>• Encourage the child to bring in a picture of his or her family; keep it in a place where the child can access it</li> </ul>



Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
0-9 months	Relationship with Peers	Children begin to interact with their environment and people around them; an interest in other young children emerges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Demonstrates effort to interact and engage, e.g., uses eye contact, coos, smiles</li> <li>•Observes other children in the environment</li> <li>•Shows interest in both familiar and unfamiliar peers</li> <li>•Cries when hearing another child cry</li> <li>•Reaches out to touch another child</li> <li>•Attempts to imitate actions, e.g., bangs a toy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond positively to the child’s coos and vocalizations with both verbal and facial expressions</li> <li>• Hold, cuddle, smile, and interact with the child</li> <li>• Imitate the child’s sounds and actions in a positive manner</li> <li>• Read and play with the child often; if possible, use books that reflect the home culture</li> <li>• Engage with the child in exploration and play; follow the child’s lead</li> </ul>
7-18 months	Relationship with Peers	Children will begin to observe and imitate other children’s behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Shows interest in another child by moving closer, e.g., rolls, crawls, or walks toward the child</li> <li>•Imitates actions of another child, e.g., rolling a car</li> <li>•Engages in a simple, reciprocal game such as “pat-a-cake”</li> <li>•Begins to engage in parallel play, in closer proximity to other children but no interaction is attempted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for the child to play and interact with other children</li> <li>• Model positive interaction while playing and spending time with the child</li> <li>• Provide activities that can be done in a group setting, such as singing, movement activities, or reading a story</li> <li>• Provide a variety of toys for children to explore and play with</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
16-24 months	Relationship with Peers	As play and communication matures, children begin to seek out interactions with peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Gestures in order to communicate a desire to play near a peer</li> <li>•Demonstrates enthusiasm around other children</li> <li>•Expresses frustration when another child takes something away from him or her, e.g., a toy</li> <li>•Begins to engage in simple reciprocal interactions, e.g., rolls a ball back and forth</li> <li>•Demonstrates a preference for parallel play, e.g., plays next to other children with similar toys with little or no interaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize and respond thoughtfully to the child’s verbal and nonverbal communication</li> <li>• Create a special time when two or three children read a book with a caregiver</li> <li>• Acknowledge sharing and thoughtful behaviors, e.g., a child who pats another child who is upset, or when a child hands over a toy to another child</li> <li>• Provide more than one of the same toy for the child and his or her peers to play with</li> <li>• Use distraction and redirection to help limit conflicts among children</li> </ul>
21-36 months	Relationship with Peers	Children engage and maintain interactions with their peers, through the use of developing social and play skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Demonstrates a preference toward select peers</li> <li>•Becomes frustrated with peers, e.g., yells “no” if a peer tries to interfere in something he or she is engaged in</li> <li>•Participates in sharing, when prompted</li> <li>•Communicates with other children in different settings, e.g., talks to a peer during snack time, or hands a peer a book</li> <li>•Begins to engage in more complex play with two or three children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create small groups, each with a caregiver, to share some quality time with particular children</li> <li>• Provide toys that can be played with by two or more children at a time</li> <li>• Provide activities that encourage sharing, while limiting the risk for frustration, e.g., for art projects, make more than enough art materials available for the children participating</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
0-9 months	Empathy	Children begin to build awareness of others' feelings by observing and reacting to sounds that others make. Toward the end of this age period, infants understand that they are individuals and separate from their caregiver(s) , a crucial milestone in interpreting the feelings of others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Watches and observes adults and other children</li> <li>•Cries when hearing another infant cry</li> <li>•Responds to interactions from caregiver(s), e.g., smiles when caregiver smiles, looks toward a caregiver when he or she shakes a rattle</li> <li>•Shows signs of separation anxiety, e.g., protests when a caregiver leaves the room</li> <li>•Begins to share in simple emotions by reading facial and gestural cues, e.g., repeats activities that make others laugh</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide emotional caring and consistency; respond quickly and thoughtfully to the child's sounds and cries</li> <li>• Describe what the child may be feeling with words; label the child's sounds and coos</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for the child to see different facial expressions: baby board books with pictures of other infants, or the use of a mirror during play</li> <li>• Use more than one manner to express and share in feelings with the child, e.g., body movement, words, facial expressions, and voice inflection</li> </ul>
7-18 months	Empathy	Children have more experience with a wide range of emotions, as they begin to recognize and respond to different facial and emotional expressions. Children also begin to demonstrate the understanding of how behavior brings out reactions and emotions from others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Smiles with intention to draw out a smile from a familiar other</li> <li>•Uses social referencing with caregiver(s) when in uncertain situations, e.g., glances at a caregiver's face for cues on how to respond to an unfamiliar person or new situation</li> <li>•Reacts to a child who is upset by observing or moving physically closer to the child</li> <li>•Shares in both positive and negative emotions with caregiver(s), e.g., shares in wonders, amazement, delight, and disappointment</li> <li>•Begins to have a greater awareness of own emotions, e.g., says or gestures "no" to refuse, squeals and continues to laugh when happy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to the child's attempts to seek emotional responses; try to use facial expressions to match the child's tone of voice, sounds, and body language</li> <li>• Model empathetic behavior and control own emotions, e.g., avoid over-control and power struggles; instead, use redirection</li> <li>• Name emotions and recognize behaviors that the child is exhibiting, e.g., saying, "I can see you are mad by the way you are stomping your feet!"</li> <li>• Respond thoughtfully and genuinely to the child's attempts to socially engage and interact</li> </ul>

Age	Sub-domain	Age Descriptor	Indicators for children	Strategies for interaction
16-24 months	Empathy	Children begin to notice different emotions that other children are expressing and may begin to respond to these emotions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imitates comforting behaviors from caregiver(s), e.g., pats or hugs a child when upset</li> <li>• Recognizes some of his or her own emotions, e.g., grabs a comfort object when sad</li> <li>• Demonstrates awareness of different emotions and feelings during play, e.g., rocks a baby doll and whispers “shhh”</li> <li>• Shares in and communicates simple emotions of others, e.g., “mama sad”, “papa happy”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide words for feelings as often as possible throughout the day</li> <li>• Recognize and respect individual and cultural emotional responses, e.g., a child who does not want to be hugged when upset</li> <li>• Help the child recognize certain emotions by describing and naming what the child is feeling</li> <li>• Help the child to develop an understanding of feelings of others by using pictures, posters, books, and mirrors</li> <li>• Allow plenty of time for pretend play and interact with the child while modeling empathy</li> </ul>
21-36 months	Empathy	Children begin to exhibit an understanding that other people have feelings different from their own.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates how other children may be feeling and why, e.g., states that a peer is sad because his or her toy was taken away</li> <li>• Responds to a child in distress in an attempted manner to make that child feel better, e.g., gives a crying child a hug, uses soothing words, or uses distraction</li> <li>• Shares in and shows an emotional response for peers’ feelings, e.g., may show concern for a child who is hurt, or smile for a child who is happy and jumping up and down</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model thoughtful and sensitive practices when listening and responding to the child’s description of his or her feelings</li> <li>• Continue to name and discuss feelings, e.g., state why the child may be feeling certain emotions</li> <li>• Genuinely praise the child when he or she responds in a sensitive manner to another child</li> <li>• Gently guide the children’s play to encourage empathy, e.g., “Michael is hungry, too. He needs some pretend snack on his plate.”</li> </ul>