EMOTION EXPRESSION

Construct Progression

DOMAIN: SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CLAIM: Students communicate about and use strategies to regulate responses to their own emotions.

Domain: Social-Emotional Development
Construct: Emotion Expression

Background Information
Children express and manage a range of emotions in their daily lives. For the purpose of this progression, there is no right or wrong emotion that children can express. When we refer to *emotions,* we are referencing an internal experience—not necessarily an observable phenomenon. It is the <u>expression</u> of an emotion through words, gestures, and/or behaviors that helps an observer understand the emotion or emotions that a child may be experiencing. Thus, when "behavior" is mentioned, it is inferred that emotion is the underpinning of the behavior. Children learn about emotions and related social skills through a variety of mechanisms. In some schools and/or classes, instruction in emotion is intentional and explicit, either through a specific program or an approach that has prescribed teaching practices and strategies (e.g., morning meetings, positive language, classroom organization); in others, emotion learning happens more implicitly as part of children's growing internalization of school and classroom norms and management. The terminology used to reference emotion education will differ depending on the approach, but common terms include *social-emotional learning* and *character education.* Promotion of social-emotional development does not necessarily need to occur within a given framework, and it is often embedded in other instructional activities. For example, children learn about emotions through adult and peer modeling of appropriate behavior, through dialogue about emotions and how to solve social-emotional problems, by encouraging and guiding through perspective-taking, and by offering alternative ways in which a child can think or act in a situation. There are many more ways in which teachers can teach and children can learn about emotions.

Rationale
Expression of emotion is a means of communicating with others, including facilitating, maintaining, and concluding social interactions (Denham, 1998). Children who are able to express their emotions, particularly in appropriate, positive ways, often have better relationships with children in their classroom, are more engaged with peers, and have better social skills—all of which are important competencies for success in school (Arsenio, Cooperman, & Lover, 2000; Denham, 1998; Denham, Bouril, & Belouad, 1994; Denham, McKinley, Couchoud, & Holt, 1990; Fine, Izard, Mostow, Trentacosta, & Ackerman, 2003; Mostow, Izard, Fine, & Trentacosta, 2002). This progression addresses how and when children express emotions, with a movement from expressing emotions in a more reactive manner, to more purposeful expression of emotions.

Domain: Social-Emotional Development
Construct: Emotion Expression

Emotion Expression			
Understanding	**Skills**	**Performance Descriptors**	**Example**
Children understand that they have a choice in how they express their emotions and that their choices have external effects for themselves and others. Children understand that pro-social behavior produces positive interactions with others.	A. Acts, talks, or reacts to an experience or stimulus without demonstrating awareness of the reactions of others around them.	When observed acting, talking or reacting to an experience or stimulus, the child appears to be unaware of the reactions of others (i.e., adults or peers). • Acting, talking, or reacting to an experience or a stimulus can be presented in several different ways including hitting, crying, turning away, shutting down, shouting, yelling in excitement, dancing, jumping up and down • A child who appears to be unaware will not in any way acknowledge the reactions of others (e.g., through visual, verbal, and/or motor responses).	*When Ricky is asked to participate in a kickball game, he strikes out and is told that his turn is done. Ricky then begins crying for another chance and refusing to go the end of the line. While crying about not getting another chance, other students were stating in frustration that Ricky was holding up the game. Ricky continued standing there crying, unaware of the reactions of the other students, until the teacher came over to intercede.* *Josie is working in the block area making a tower. The tower collapses and Josie begins crying, hitting her fist against the floor, and throwing blocks. One block almost hits another child who yells, "You almost hit me!" Josie gets up and stomps away from the blocks, with no apparent awareness of the other child.*
	B. Shows awareness that his or her own actions, words, and reactions to an experience or stimulus has an impact on others.	When observed acting, talking or reacting to an experience or stimulus, the child shows awareness that his/her own actions, words, and reactions to the experience or stimulus has impact on others. • Acting, talking, or reacting to an experience or a stimulus can be presented in several different ways including hitting, crying, turning away, shutting down, shouting, yelling in excitement, dancing, jumping up and down. • A child who shows awareness will acknowledge the reactions of others (e.g., pause and look at the other child, respond verbally, turn away, move toward).	*Harper wants the toy truck that another child is playing with. Harper takes the truck from the other child's hands and says, "I want this!" When the other child begins to cry Harper looks at the teacher and says, "He can have it back later."* *When prompted to line-up for lunch, Leilani cuts in line. Miguel frowns and says in an upset tone, "Hey!" to Leilani. In response to the visual and auditory cues from the other student, Leilani goes to her appropriate place in line.* *Ramon is asked to partner with Maggie during station activities. Ramon starts working on the activity without interacting with Maggie. Maggie says, "We're supposed to be working together and taking turns." Ramon looks up at Maggie and says, "I want to work by myself." Ramon then continues to work independently.*

Domain: Social-Emotional Development
Construct: Emotion Expression

Emotion Expression			
Understanding	**Skills**	**Performance Descriptors**	**Example**
	C. Makes choices to express emotions in ways that get their needs met.	When observed, the child makes choices to express emotions in ways that get his/her needs met. • Choices would be observed through the expression of emotion demonstrated by the child. • The expression of emotion must be functional (e.g., the child is trying to get a need met). • Expression of emotions are demonstrated through visual, verbal, and/or motor responses.	*Several children have set up a hospital in the dramatic play area. Ronnie tries to give a pretend shot in the arm to one of the children. When the other child refuses the shot, Ronnie gets frustrated. Ronnie grabs the child's arm and gives him a shot anyway, saying, "Don't be such a baby, you're ruining my game."* *Devin is partnered with Reina during station activities. Reina starts working on the activity without interacting with Devin. Devin says, "We're supposed to be working together and taking turns." Reina looks up at Devin and says in her home language, "I want to work by myself." Reina then continues to work independently. When Devin begins crying and says, "We're supposed to be working together and taking turns," Reina passes the materials to Devin.*
	D. Begins to express emotions in ways that support building relationships.	When observed, the child begins to express emotions in ways that support building relationships. A child who is beginning to express emotion in ways that support building relationships: • Will occasionally consider social needs over own personal needs. • Will occasionally use prosocial behaviors (e.g., cooperating, sharing, helping others, enlisting help from others) • May use pro-social behaviors consistently in very few specific contexts; however, does not generalize the use of pro-social behaviors to new contexts. Expression of emotions that support building relationships may include making positive facial expressions (e.g., smiling) and/or body movements	*During a student-selected activity, Sean and Issac begin to construct objects of their own design with blocks. Noting that there was only one, Sean grabs the large platform piece. Issac says, "Hey, I was going to use that!?? Sean ignores Issac's objection; Issac begins to cry. In contrast to how he responded during prior similar situations, this time Sean reconsiders and hands over the platform piece saying, "I'll use it next time."* *The class is celebrating the first week of school and the teacher left the cupcakes on the back table. As the class prepares to start the celebration, Yolanda can't wait and runs to the table to get her cupcake. Another student says to Yolanda, "We need to wait until the teacher says it's time." In contrast to how she responded during prior similar situations, Yolanda decides to comply and returns the cupcake to the table. She then joins the group in waiting for the teacher's cues.*

Domain: Social-Emotional Development
Construct: Emotion Expression

Understanding	Skills	Performance Descriptors	Example
Emotion Expression			
		(e.g., shaking head "yes"), using a positive tone of voice, or using collaborative verbal statements (e.g., "You can use the crayon when I'm done.")	
	E. Generally expresses emotions in ways that support building relationships.	When observed, the child generally expresses emotions in ways that support building relationships. • A child who expresses emotion in ways that support building relationships will generally consider social needs over own personal needs. • A child who expresses emotion in ways that support building relationships will generally use prosocial behaviors (e.g., sharing, helping others, enlisting help from others). • A child who expresses emotion in ways that support building relationships will use prosocial behaviors consistently across contexts. • Expression of emotions that support building relationships may include making positive facial expressions (e.g., smiling) and/or body movements (e.g., shaking head "yes"), using a positive tone of voice, or using collaborative verbal statements (e.g., "You can use the crayon when I'm done.")	*When Sally's classmate pushed past her in the cafeteria line causing her tray to crash to the floor, Sally's eyes welled with tears. After her classmate apologized, Sally responded, "Accidents happen and I should forgive you."* *The class is viewing a film clip of playful baby animals. In one segment a kitten jumps and flips after being frightened. The class reacts briefly with laughter, but Josh's laughter is louder and longer, and seems forced making it difficult to hear the following segment. As Josh reads the disturbed expressions on the faces of his classmates, he quickly settles down to watch the next segment.* *The class has read the script for a short play, and now each student will take a role in preparation for a skit. Lucinda wants the lead role but the teacher selects another student. Although Lucinda is briefly visibly disappointed (e.g., she frowns and sighs), she quickly recovers and embraces the role she's been assigned.*

Domain: Social-Emotional Development
Construct: Emotion Expression

Emotion Expression			
Understanding	**Skills**	**Performance Descriptors**	**Example**
Children understand that reflecting on how they express their emotions and the connection of self-regulation to their actions helps them regulate their emotions and actions; and that how they express their emotions affects others, their relationships with others, and the social environment (i.e., classroom norms).	F. Reflects about emotions and the consequences of actions with support from the teacher.	When observed, the child reflects about emotions and the consequences of actions with support from the teacher. The child begins to demonstrate reflection by: • Responding to supports provided by either an adult or peer. • Incorporating feedback into self-regulation strategies (may need to determine by conferencing with the child). • Making verbal statements related to the reflection process (e.g., talking about their emotions or the emotions of others, consequences of their actions, connections to the classroom norms, or their decision-making process). • Displaying compassion and/or empathy. A child who can reflect on emotions and the consequences of actions with support from the teacher can consistently use prosocial behaviors across contexts and can also justify, modify, and plan for changes in behavior.	*Daveed is concerned when another child cries after losing a game. He pats his friend on the back but says, "I don't think I'd be so sad." The teacher reminds Daveed about a time that he lost a game and felt sad. Daveed then offers to play another game in order to help his friend feel better.* *When the teacher announces that Miguel will be this week's class helper, Angela becomes visibly anxious and says in her home language, "It's not fair! He got to be line leader last week!" Angela's teacher reminds her that she did not sign up to be helper during the previous week. Angela continues to remain upset, so the teacher asks, "Is there anything you could do to help you remember to sign up this week?" Angela thinks for a minute, before saying in her home language, "I'm going to have my mom remind me on Friday to sign up."* *When the teacher asks Emiko what she plans to choose for center time, Emiko exclaims, "blocks!" The teacher reminds Emiko how last time she played in the blocks center, she kept all the blocks for herself and wouldn't share with her friends. The teacher asks Emiko how she felt about that, and Emiko says, "I was sad that I didn't have anyone to play with". The teacher asks Emiko what she might do differently this time, and Emiko thinks for a minute before saying, "I'm not going to keep all the blocks for myself. I'm going to share them with my friends so that they want to play with me."*

Domain: Social-Emotional Development
Construct: Emotion Expression

Emotion Expression			
Understanding	**Skills**	**Performance Descriptors**	**Example**
	G. Independently reflects about emotions and the consequences of actions.	When observed, the child independently reflects about emotions and the consequences of actions. The child demonstrates reflection by: • Anticipating the effects of how they choose to express their emotions* • Changing their behavior in response to feedback from a previous event* • Incorporating feedback from an adult or peer into self-regulation strategies* • Making verbal statements related to the reflection process (e.g., talking about their emotions or the emotions of others, the consequences of their actions, connections they have made to the classroom norms, or their decision-making process). • Displaying compassion and/or empathy, including providing supports to other students * May need to determine by conferencing with the child during the observation.	*Lucinda enters the classroom with tears in her eyes. She has left her lunchbox in the car for the second time this week. After sitting quietly in her chair for a few minutes, Lucinda says to her teacher, "Mr. Baker, could you please call my home and tell them I left my lunchbox in our car? I think that from now on I will put my lunchbox in my backpack so I won't accidentally leave it in the car anymore."* *Alexa accidentally breaks a Popsicle stick on her artwork after being told by the teacher to stop "playing around" with her friends. She sighs and sits down. The teacher overhears Alexa tell another child, "I got too excited and now I broke my art. I'm going to sit down so I don't break it anymore".* *The teacher notices that Sean, who usually loudly talks about how he is winning during a competitive classroom game, appears to be refraining from acting on this impulse during today's game. When a comment is made Sean is quiet today and says, "Last time we played this game, I hurt Jeremy's feelings when I kept saying that he was losing the game. I felt bad about that so I'm not going to yell out when we play this game anymore."*

Domain: Social-Emotional Development
Construct: Emotion Expression

Resources

Aksan, N., & Kochanska, G. (2005). Conscience in childhood: old questions, new answers. Developmental psychology, 41(3), 506.Bowman, B. & Moore, E. (Eds.). (2006). *School readiness and social-emotional development: Perspectives on cultural diversity.* Washington, DC: National Black Child Development Institute, Inc.

Center for Early Care and Education Research—Dual Language Learners (CECER-DLL; 2011). Research brief #7. Social- emotional development in dual language learners: A critical review of the research. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, Author.

Egger, H. (2011). Preschool temper tantrums: What they mean and when to worry, Presentation Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota. May 12, 2011.

Epstein, A.S. (2009). *Me, you, us: Social-emotional learning in preschool.* Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press.

Evans, G.W. & Kim, P. (2012). Childhood poverty, chronic stress, self-regulation and coping. *Child Development Perspectives, 7*(1), 43-48.

Falk, B. (Ed.). (2012). *Defending childhood: Keeping the promise of early education.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Galinsky, E. (2010). *Mind in the making*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, Publishers.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: NY: Bantam Books.

Graziano, P.A., Calkins, S.D., & Keane, S.P. (2011). Sustained attention development during the toddlerhood to preschool period: Associations with toddlers' emotion regulation strategies and maternal behavior. *Infant and Child Development, 20*, 389-408.

Landy, S. (2002). *Pathways to competence: Encouraging healthy social and emotional development in young children*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

Li-Grining, C.P. (2012). The role of cultural factors in the development of Latino preschoolers' self-regulation. *Child Development Perspectives, 6*(3), 210-217.

Luchtel, M., Hughes, K., Luze, G., Richardson-Bruna, K., & Peterson, C. (2010). A comparison of teacher-rated classroom conduct, social skills, and teacher–child relationship quality between preschool English learners and preschool English speakers. *NHSA Dialog: A Research-to-Practice Journal for the Early Childhood Field*, *13*(2), 92-111, doi: 10.1080/15240751003737877

McClelland, M.M. & Cameron, C.E. (2011). Self-regulation in early childhood: Improving conceptual clarity and developing ecologically valid measures. *Child Development Perspectives,6*(2), 136-142.

Domain: Social-Emotional Development
Construct: Emotion Expression

Raver, C.C., Garner, P.W. & Smith-Donald, R. (2007). The roles of emotion regulation and emotion knowledge for children's academic readiness: Are the links causal? In R. Pianta, M.J. Cox and K.L. Snow (Eds.) *School readiness and the transition to kindergarten in the era of accountability*, pp. 121-148. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

Riley, D., San Juan, R.R., Klinkner, J., & Ramminger, A. (2008). *Social and emotional development: Connecting science and practice in early childhood settings.* St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

Shiner, R., Buss, K., McClowry S., Putnam, S. Saudino, K. & Zentner, M. (2012). What Is temperament now? Assessing progress in temperament research on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Goldsmith et al. *Child Development Perspectives,* 6 (4), 436-444.

Ursache, A., Blair, C. & Raver, C.C. (2011). The promotion of self-regulation as a means of enhancing school readiness and early achievement in children at risk for school failure. *Child Development Perspectives,* 6 (2), 122-128.

Valiente, C., Swanson, J., & Eisenberg, N. (2011). Linking students' emotions and academic achievement: When and why emotions matter. *Child Development Perspectives,*6(2), 129-135.

Zhou, Q., Chen, S. H., & Main, A. (2011). Commonalities and differences in the research on children's effortful control and executive function: A call for an integrated model of self-regulation. *Child Development Perspectives, 6*(2), 112-121.