

# Social-Emotional Growth in Mixed-Age Home Childcare



## Emotion Flashcards

**Create Together:** Provide materials like index cards and drawing tools for children to draw different facial expressions representing various emotions. This activity helps them recognize and label feelings.

## Mirror Game

**Pair Up:** Have children partner up and mimic each other's facial expressions. This fun activity enhances empathy and helps them understand others' emotions.

## Calm Down Jars

**Craft Time:** Create "calm down jars" using water bottles filled with water and glitter. When shaken, the swirling glitter can help children focus and regulate their emotions during moments of stress.

## Group Storytelling

**Collaborative Tales:** Encourage children to contribute to a group story, with each child adding a sentence. This activity promotes listening, cooperation, and understanding different perspectives.

## How can family adventures support social-emotional learning?

### Emotion Discussions

Encourage regular conversations about feelings, helping children articulate their emotions.

### Model Behavior

Demonstrate positive social interactions and coping strategies for children to emulate.

### Consistent Routines

Establish predictable daily routines to provide a sense of security and help children manage expectations.

### Family Activities

Engage in group activities that require teamwork, such as family games or collaborative projects, to strengthen social bonds.

## Emotion Charades

**Act It Out:** Write down various emotions on slips of paper and have children take turns acting them out while others guess. This game builds emotional awareness and expressive skills.

## Shared Responsibilities

**Team Tasks:** Assign mixed-age pairs or small groups to simple tasks like setting the table or organizing toys. Working together fosters cooperation and a sense of community.

## Breathing Exercises

**Belly Breaths:** Teach children simple deep-breathing techniques to help them calm down and manage their emotions effectively.

## Praise Positive Interactions

**Highlight Kindness:** Acknowledge and praise instances when children display empathy, sharing, or cooperation, reinforcing positive social behaviors.

## PEDALS TIP FOR EDUCATORS:

By implementing these strategies, caregivers and families can work together to create a supportive and nurturing environment that promotes the social-emotional development of children in a mixed-age home childcare setting. This collaborative approach ensures that children, regardless of age, receive consistent emotional guidance, positive role modeling, and opportunities for meaningful interactions. It strengthens the bonds between caregivers, family members, and children, creating a unified approach to helping children develop emotional regulation, empathy, communication, and social skills as they grow.