



What if I have concerns about my infant or toddler's social-emotional development?

- Speak with your child's pediatrician or primary healthcare provider
- Contact Baby Watch or your local early intervention program to request a FREE evaluation for services

Resources

For more information about social-emotional development in infants and toddlers, please contact:

babywatch.utah.gov

(800) 961-4226



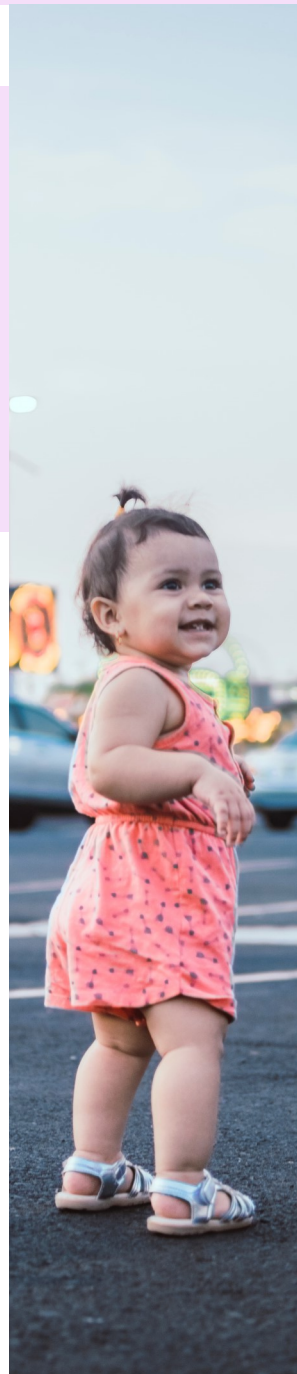
What is Social-Emotional Development?

Sometimes called early childhood mental health or infant mental health, social-emotional development refers to a child's capacity to:

- Experience, manage, and express the full range of positive and negative emotions
- Develop close, satisfying relationships with other children and adults
- Actively explore their environment and learn

What social-emotional skills do...	
BABIES Need to Learn?	TODDLERS Need to Learn?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Building relationships with familiar adults ◆ Responding to unfamiliar adults cautiously ◆ Seeking to find comfort in new situations ◆ Expressing feelings and emotions through facial expressions, sounds, or gestures ◆ Showing interest in and awareness of other children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Responding to and interacting with other children ◆ Recognizing and responding to other children's feelings ◆ Beginning to show concern for others ◆ Using words and behaviors to express feelings ◆ Managing their own behavior and showing self-regulation ◆ Understanding simple routines, rules, or limits

[Utah Early Learning Guidelines Birth to Age Three](#)



What can parents and caregivers do to support the healthy social-emotional development of infants and toddlers?

DURING BABY'S FIRST YEAR:

- Cuddle and touch your baby gently.
- Respond to your baby's coos and cries.
- Hold your baby while you feed them.
- Be predictable and consistent.
- Describe feelings using words like happy, mad, and sad.

AROUND AGE 1:

- Set fair and consistent limits, and enforce those limits by saying no in a calm but firm voice.
- Develop and maintain consistent routines.
- Encourage curiosity.

AROUND AGE 2:

- Be calm and comforting after outbursts.
- Be consistent about what your toddler is and is not allowed to do.
- Teach your toddler words to describe feelings.
- Encourage and praise your child.

AROUND AGE 3:

- Help your child include others in playing, sharing, and taking turns.
- Encourage your child to develop trust in other adult caregivers.
- Support appropriate expression of feelings.

Adapted from [Help Me Grow Minnesota](#)

"I'm convinced that when we help our children find healthy ways of dealing with their feelings—ways that don't hurt them or anyone else—we're helping to make our world a safer, better place."

Fred Rogers