Social & Emotional Development 101

Our Children are our future, and with the right tools, they can lead Maine into prosperity.

What is Social and Emotional Development?

Social emotional development refers to a child's ability to appropriately deal with their emotions and interact with other individuals. Brain research on young children tells us that the early years set the foundation for later cognitive, social and emotional development.

Why is it important?

A recent 20-year study from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation found a connection between a child's social and emotional skills in kindergarten and success later in life.

For every one-point increase on the 5-point scale in a child’s social competence score in kindergarten, he/she was:

- Twice as likely to attain a college degree in early adulthood;
- 54% more likely to earn a high school diploma;
- 46% more likely to have a full-time job at the age of 25.
In recent years, Maine and the U.S. has experienced increased reporting of challenging behaviors in very young children. These children often lack the social emotional skills that are required for them to adjust to group and classroom settings. We need to promote evidence-based practices to help teachers, providers, and parents help children gain the skills they need to be successful in school and life.