TASK: To determine effect of Learning Activities and Facilitation, the Student will respond to the Text.

TEXT: Social-Emotional Development: Infants and Toddlers

Emotional well-being during the early years has a powerful impact on social relationships. Children who are emotionally healthy are better able to establish and maintain positive relationships with adults as well as with peers. Social-emotional development is essential to a young child’s sense of well-being. Their first relationships help shape who they are, who they become, and their understanding of the world. The important people in young children’s lives help lay the foundation for a range of social-emotional skills such as:

- Self-regulation
- Empathy
- Turn-taking and sharing
- Positive relationships with adults and peers

Social-Emotional Milestones

Through early relationships and with nurturing, responsive interactions, infants and toddlers learn ways of being in relationships, how to get their needs and wants met, and how to identify and regulate emotions.
V. POST-TEST:
Because these skills develop together, this area of development is referred to as social-emotional development.

Below is a chart that highlights how infants and toddlers develop social-emotional skills at different ages. Keep in mind that individual differences exist when it comes to the precise age at which infants and toddlers meet these milestones. As highlighted in the Cognitive, Physical, and Communication courses, milestones are not checklists with which to judge children’s development. Rather, they provide a guide for when to expect certain skills or behaviors to emerge in young children so you are ready to meet their needs. Think of milestones as guidelines to help you understand and identify typical patterns of growth and development in infants and toddlers or to help you know when and what to look for as they develop. You can continue to use your knowledge of these milestones to help meet the needs of infants and toddlers in your care. Even though the skills highlighted in the chart develop in a predictable sequence over the first three years of life, each infant and toddler is unique. Your goal is to help all infants and toddlers grow and learn to their potential.

Select an Age-Track

6 Months 12 Months 18 Months 24 Months 36 Months
V. **POST-TEST:**

6 Months

- Knows familiar faces and begins to know if someone is a stranger
- Likes to play with others, especially parents
- Responds to other people's emotions and often seems happy
- Likes to look at self in mirror

It is helpful to remember that expectations about social-emotional milestones are driven by cultural values and preferences. Theorist Lev Vygotsky said that adults share their cultural values and beliefs with children through daily interactions. Ideas, beliefs and expectations about child development are just some of the ways cultures are unique. Becoming aware of and respecting these differences can help you better understand families' experiences that help shape the infants and toddlers in your care.

**Connection of Social-Emotional Development to Other Areas of Development**

With our evolving understanding of brain growth and young children's development, we continue to learn about the ways adult caregivers can be supportive and most effective in helping children develop and learn. This growing understanding also includes how adult caregivers can help children develop social-emotional skills. Through nurturing and trusting relationships, infants and toddlers learn about the world. Their brains mature through interactions, and they can learn that the world is safe as adults are responsive to young children's needs. They also learn how to form relationships, communicate, respond to challenges, and how
V. POST-TEST:

to recognize, experience, and regulate their emotions from relationships with caregivers. When infants and toddlers feel safe and alert, they are more likely to observe, explore, play, interact and experiment with people and objects. These experiences lead young children to learn and remember new things. This foundation for learning depends greatly on the quality of infants’ and toddlers’ early environments and relationships.

Understanding and supporting the Social-Emotional Development of Infants and Toddlers

Now that you have read the milestone chart, let’s revisit the definition of social-emotional development according to Zero to Three:

Within the context of one’s family, community and cultural background, social emotional health is the child’s developing capacity to form secure relationships, experience and regulate emotions and explore and learn.

Below, take a closer look at the components highlighted within this definition to identify additional ways to understand and support the social-emotional development of the infants and toddlers in your care.
V. POST-TEST:

Birth to 3 months:

- The first three months are a time all about helping an infant learn to feel safe, comfortable, secure, and curious about his or her world. "Your smile and gentle touch help me to feel safe and happy."

- When caregivers respond to an infant’s cues with comfort and care, infants develop trust. "Your soothing voice and touch help me to feel safe, secure, and loved."

- Infants use sounds, facial expressions, and body movements to tell caregivers what they need and how they are feeling. "I am learning how to tell you what I need. Sometimes I look away when I need a break. I yawn sometimes when I am feeling tired. Thank you for watching and getting to know me."

3 to 6 months:

- The infant is active, responsive, and increasingly in control of his or her body. "I stretch my arms toward you when I want you to pick me up and hold me gently."

- Infant offers smiles and communicates with a gaze and basic vocalizations. "I’m smiling to let you know I am ready to communicate."
V. POST-TEST:

- Sense of security and well-being are totally dependent upon relationships with important caregivers.

- Emphasis is on routine and exploration—showing caregivers what they like and dislike, and how they prefer to sleep, eat, and play. "I'm beginning to notice daily routines and the things we do together. When you turn the lights down, I know that it is time for sleep."

6 to 9 months:

- Moving and exploring is the goal – infants become eager explorers who are thrilled to discover that they can make things happen.

- Infants are learning to solve problems. "When a toy drops, I look to see where it went. I expect you will help me to get it back. I then try it again to see if I can make the same thing happen again."

- An infant is beginning to understand that people still exist even when they are out of sight. "I realize that my mommy is about to leave me. I will protest in hopes that she stays. Being separated from her is hard for me."

Template: VGA/sb – AY 2011-12
V. POST-TEST:

9 to 12 months:

- Infants are enjoying increased independence. "Please stay calm even when I demand to do things on my own. It's hard work for me to learn and figure out all of these new things and sometimes I get frustrated, but I want to keep trying."

- Infants can understand more than they can verbally communicate.

- Infants enjoy doing things over and over again. "Watch me practice and figure out how things work! Repetition is also helping me build my memory!"

- Infants take action with a goal in mind. "When I crawl away from you quickly, I am not trying to upset you. I am having fun and do not want my diaper changed right now. This is how I take control of my world and let you know how I am feeling. Please talk to me and give me time to transition from my activity, and let me know that when we're done, I can go back to what I was doing."

12 to 18 months:

- Infants and toddlers are watching others and imitate what they see. "I have been watching and am able to use things the way they are supposed to be used. Watch me talk on this toy telephone!"
V. POST-TEST:

- Infants and toddlers are using skills to explore and discover the boundaries of what they can do. "I may get frustrated when you try to feed me and I want to do it on my own."

- Infants and toddlers are beginning to understand feelings of self and others. "My feelings can be hard for me to handle. I may become frustrated and have tantrums. I need your help to calm down."

18 to 24 months:

- Toddlers work hard to be in control, explore the boundaries of their experiences, and engage in problem solving. "I am beginning to sort things. Notice how I put my train cars in one place and all of my other cars in another."

- They are increasingly aware of themselves as separate from others and are becoming more enthusiastic about playing with peers.

- They are starting to show negative behaviors (hitting, biting, kicking) in response to frustration. "I understand, 'No,' but cannot control my feelings and actions. Please be patient and help me when I get frustrated."
V. POST-TEST:

24 to 36 months:

- Toddlers are using language to express thoughts and feelings. "When you started to put the blocks away too soon, I yelled, 'That's not right!' I wanted to make a path for the cows before we put things away."

- Toddlers are using enhanced thinking skills to solve problems. "I am getting really good at playing pretend. I can act out my own stories and use a bottle to feed my teddy bear. Sometimes, I feel scared because I am not certain yet what is real and what is pretend."

- Toddlers take pride in their accomplishments, such as, pouring milk.

Supporting All Infants and Toddlers

Every child is born with her or his unique way of approaching the world. This is called temperament. Some young children, for example, are constantly on the move while others prefer to sit and watch the world around them. Some young children enjoy new experiences and meeting new people while others are slower to warm up in new situations. Rothbart (1989) defined temperament as the individual personality differences in infants and young children. As Murphy and Moon describe, "infants and young children vary greatly in their interest in different sensory areas, in the intensity of their attention to sensory stimuli, and in their
V. POST-TEST:

sensitivity to feelings of comfort and discomfort, familiarity and strangeness, and the emotional context in which sensory experiences occur.”

Infants are born with a unique temperament. There is no right or wrong, good or bad temperament. By understanding temperament, you can continue to use what you know about infants and toddlers to encourage their strengths and support their needs. In the Apply section you will review more information about temperament and consider what it means for your role as a responsive caregiver.

No matter how well you understand temperament and are attuned and responsive, there will be times that an infant or toddler in your care may not seem to be developing socially and emotionally. Some infants and toddlers may experience social or emotional difficulties. These difficulties may be related to inborn (nature) or environmental (nurture) influences. The caregiving strategies in this lesson apply and relate to all children; however, some children may require an additional level of support.

Each infant’s or toddler’s relationship experiences and pattern of growth is different. In your work, you observe and track each young child’s particular strengths and possible areas of need. Your screening and assessment process is part of your ongoing routine, and it helps you to recognize and celebrate infants’ and toddlers’ accomplishments. It also helps you to identify red flags—some aspect of the infant’s or toddler’s development that is outside the expected age range.
V. POST-TEST:

The following general strategies can help you care for infants and toddlers who are experiencing social and emotional difficulties. You can also talk with your supervisor, trainer or coach about additional community resources and specialists who support your program who may offer additional support.

- Observe and notice the infant’s or toddler’s cues and responses to environmental stimuli.
  Think about ways to limit noise level, for example, or visual stimuli.

- Observe and ask yourself if you notice increased frustration or irritability in the infant or toddler during particular routines or times of day.

- Think about ways to maintain physical closeness and offer gentle touch to help infants and toddlers maintain a sense of control.

Clearly, many aspects of early development are universal, such as reflexes and the capacity to respond to conditioning. However, there are also important individual differences among infants.

Source: Boyd, Denise, G. & Bee, Helen The developing Child 13th Edition (pp.91-92)

STUDENT RESPONSE: (Use Separate Pages)