



Human being is a social animal. Babies begin to form social relationships with people around soon after birth. However, it's a long journey to learn interactions, sharing and communication. Understanding our own emotions and expressing them in a socially accepted manner is also a long process.

The child continues to develop social and emotional skills as he/she progresses from infancy to the preschool years. The quality of early social experiences and the emotional support that a child gets have a strong influence on the Socio-emotional Development during preschool years.

Before looking at the pre-schooler's socio emotional development, let us recollect some interesting facts we learnt about socio-emotional development during infancy.

Emotional and social development go hand in hand to influence the behaviour and the interpersonal relationships of an individual.

A) The four basic components of emotions are

- Stimuli
- Feelings
- Physiological arousal
- Behaviour

Development of attachment to the primary caregiver is a bond that gives the infant a sense of security and pleasure. The infant displays stranger anxiety and separation anxiety in the absence of the caregiver.

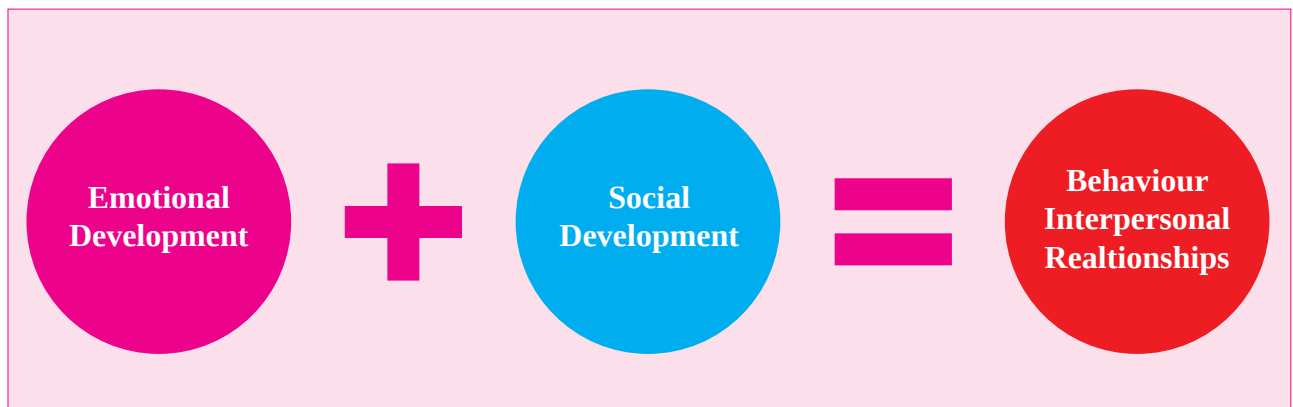
Can you list down four types of emotions that the infant displays?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

We know that socializing is the process by which we learn to interact with people around us, behave according to social expectations and develop social relationships.

B) The important milestones during infancy involve

- Social smile
- Social Referencing
- Cueing



Family and society play a crucial role in social development of the infants through interaction, shared activities and bonding.

C) Socio-Emotional Development from 3 to 6 years: Milestones

Socio-emotional development of pre-schoolers involves not only expressing emotions but becoming independent, taking turns, interacting with peers, controlling the emotions and formation of self-image as well.

The acquisition of different motor skills enables the pre-schooler to go out, play and explore. The significant development in cognitive and language area provides stepping stones to interact with people, understand self and others and express emotions in more socially approved ways.

Let's find out the milestones in different aspects of socio emotional development. The child develops understanding and skills in the following areas.

1. Self-awareness :

Getting aware about oneself is not an overnight process. In this journey pre-schoolers go through the following milestones.

- **Children start developing self-concept :** They start understanding who they are. It mainly consists of understanding their appearance, name, possessions.
- **Gender Identity :** They develop a clear sense of themselves as a boy or a girl.
- **They start developing an understanding of sex roles :** They start to understand the socially acceptable roles of the girls and boys.
- **They start showing more independence :** They start playing independently with toys. They can independently perform some self-care tasks like feeding, wearing shoes, putting on clothes.

Milestones are important aspects of Socio-emotional Development



Self concept- It is the mental picture of our appearance, qualities and abilities.

Activity :

Things I like about my appearance or looks are

1

2

The qualities I like in myself are

1

2

Things I like to do

1

2

2. Relationship with others

The pre-schooler develops relationship with people other than parents or the primary caregivers.

- Now they are interested in other children and start making new friends.
- Get better at sharing things or taking turns.
- They want to be like their friends.
- They seek comfort and approval, mainly from parents or caregivers.

3. Play

- Pre-schoolers start engaging in co-operative play. Pre-schoolers now enjoy playing with other children more than playing by themselves.
- They enjoy imaginative play with other children such as playing house or school.
- They can play games with simple rules.

Activity :

- Can you recollect the different games you played in your school days?
- Try writing as many games as you remember.
- Let's segregate them into indoor games and outdoor games.
- Which game did you like the most? Why?

4. Understanding and regulating emotions:

Pre-schoolers have intense emotions. They respond with equal intensity to a trivial event and a serious event. For example, A pre-schooler will cry with same intensity if she has a fall or she wants her mother to buy a balloon or her crayon breaks into two.

Children are capable of experiencing both positive and negative emotions. Children display their emotions frequently. Emotions can be detected by behaviour symptoms. Sometimes children may not show their emotional reactions directly, but they show them indirectly by restlessness, day dreaming, speech difficulties and nervous mannerisms such as nail-biting, thumb sucking or bed wetting.

Pre-schoolers emotional development is not limited to expressing basic emotions. Children can now experience a wide range of emotions including jealousy and empathy.

- They are better able to talk about their feelings.
- They express joy, affection openly.
- They can express fear or anxiety before an upcoming event, e.g. showing reluctance to go to the doctor
- They start showing new fears. Like fear of ghosts, darkness, dogs.
- They express more awareness of other people's feelings. The child will understand that her friend is crying because he is feeling sad.

Children who are emotionally healthy can have positive relationships with adults and peers.

D) Types of Emotions : (Causes, Expression, Handling)

The common emotions that the children experience can be both positive and negative. Positive emotions make us feel good whereas negative emotions can be difficult and sometimes painful.

Here are a few emotions that we experience Can you segregate them into positive and negative emotions? Can you think of more such emotions?

Regret, empathy, pride, sadness, shame, joy, hope, hatred

Positive Emotions	Negative Emotions
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.

Let us have a look at some of the positive emotions that pre-schoolers experience.

Positive Emotions :

1) Love and Affection :

It is an emotional reaction towards a person, an animal or a thing. It is related to the need of human beings to belong to someone and to be with others. This emotion contributes to the social and personal adjustment.

Sources	Expression	Enhancement
Children tend to be more affectionate to those whom they like and who are friendly in relation with them. They generally show affection towards mother, family members, teacher, pets, whenever warmth and consideration are shown.	It is expressed by hugging, kissing, smiling, wanting to be with the affectionate person.	Express your love and affection towards the child. Verbal expression of love is as important as physical expression. Try giving uninterrupted attention to the children.

2) Joy :

Joy is a pleasant emotion. In its milder form it is known as pleasure, delight or happiness.

It promotes wellbeing and makes it possible for a child to make good social and personal adjustment. This emotion also helps to relax, thereby making it possible for him to make better use of skilled movements. A happy child is also motivated and develops a favourable self-concept.

Sources	Expression	Enhancement
Activities in which their play mates are involved, free play Food they like Company of loved ones Rough and tumble play, attention and praise Success, Receiving gifts	laughter, smiling, clapping hands, jumping up and down, hugging a person/animal/object that has given them joy	Give loving attention to the children Show interest in their activities Give them a lot of opportunities for rough and tumble play and free play Give them developmentally appropriate tasks that they can finish. This will give them a sense of success Spend time with children Praise the children often

Negative Emotions

1) Fear :

Fear is a subjective response that goes with physical arousal when you are faced with something threatening. All fears of children generally come from their previous memories and experiences. Some come from direct experiences and some fears are acquired through imitation.

Causes	Expression	Handling
Darkness, loud noises, doctors, dentists, animals, water, movie or television characters, imaginary creatures.	Whimpering, crying or screaming The child clings to the care giver Displays withdrawal Tries to avoid the fearful situation, object or animal In case of excessive fears, the child may have nightmares, illness or show over aggressive behaviour.	Do not ridicule the child. Never force the child to face the scary situation or object. The adult should not exhibit fearful behaviour Reduce the exposure to frightening stories and on TV shows Do not use darkness or monsters as threats to the child. If the child is scared of darkness encourage the child to make a search with you in the room where he feels the monsters may be hiding.

2) Anger:

Anger is one of the very basic negative emotions and usually has a specific cause. All human beings experience anger but children have difficulty in expressing anger in a socially acceptable way. The predominant angry responses in preschool age are aggression and temper tantrums. Adults as parents as well as teachers often find it difficult to cope with.

Causes	Expression	Handling
Interference with the activity Noncompliance of wishes Frustration due to inability to perform a particular task If the adults are making comparisons between siblings/peers Physical punishment If the child is insulted, humiliated or neglected	Screaming, hitting, kicking throwing objects, sulking, throwing a tantrum, aggression	Try to understand the cause behind the anger in children. Is the child neglected? Is he pressurized too much to achieve something? Assure the child that getting angry is fine but at the same time let him firmly know that the aggressive behaviour is not socially acceptable. Encourage the child to verbalize his angry feelings. The angry feelings could be released through rigorous physical and motor activities. Provide ample opportunities for physical activities

		You should interfere and stop child's hostile behaviour immediately. Avoid comparing children with each other. Do not show favouritism. Do not insult the child or humiliate him/her. You should be good role model. Verbalize your angry feelings rather than using hostile behaviour like physically punishing the children or using hurting words. Give lot of love and attention to the child. Encourage him/her to talk about her angry feelings.
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Anger is not a synonym for aggression. Anger is an emotion and aggression is a behavioural response to anger.

Aggression is physical or verbal expression of anger which aims at hurting a person, animal or object. It involves hurting the person physically by hitting or insulting and destroying the objects.



Reflection / Darpan

Think of 10 things that make you angry...make a list. What are your responses when you are angry? Write them down.

3. Jealousy :

It is a response to actual, supposed or threatened loss of affection. It is a kind of fear related to the desire for keeping some possession.

The commonest cause of jealousy in preschool years is the arrival of a sibling. What causes jealousy in the children after the birth of the sibling?

- Till the second child is born the first one is the centre of attention at home. Once the baby comes, the centre of attention completely shifts to the baby. This makes the older one feel neglected.

- The relatives and neighbours show interest in the baby neglecting the older one.
- A baby takes up a lot of the mother's time and the older one gets very little time and attention from mother.
- All of a sudden the child is expected to behave like an elder brother/sister.
- People as well as family members start comparing the 'looks' of both the siblings.

Jealousy towards a sibling is called 'Sibling Rivalry'.

Causes	Expression	Handling
Arrival of a new sibling, unfavourable comparison and favouritism by adults.	Attention seeking behaviour like being fussy or cranky Display of nervous habits like thumb sucking, nail biting or bed wetting The direct responses to jealousy include physically harming the baby like hitting or punching. They may display verbal resentments. Children might say, "I don't like the baby" or "send the baby back to the hospital"	Prepare the child in advance for the arrival of a baby. Show him his own baby pictures and tell him how helpless a baby is and needs to be taken care of by an adult. Avoid comparisons or threatening. In spite of such preparation some jealousy is inevitable. Adults should accept it. Once the baby arrives take efforts to spend some time exclusively with the older one. Avoid comparison between the children. Including the child into baby care activities will make him/her feel responsible and wanted. Do not ridicule the child for infantile behaviour. Reassuring the child of your love verbally as well as physically is very important.

E) Socialization

Socialization is the process by which a child learns socially approved behaviour. Social behaviour is a learnt behaviour. A new-born does not know how to interact with people. He gradually learns what behaviour is accepted by people, through experience, observation and imitation.

Socializing agents

The important socializing agents are

- Family
- Peer group
- Community

Role of Family, School and Community in Socialization :

1. Family

The structure and type of family a child belongs to plays a significant role in the process of socialization of a child. The number of family members, their attitudes and interactions directly impact a growing child. The family dynamics of a nuclear family as opposed to a large extended family are bound to be potentially different from one another in terms of the experiences they share. Parental and family expectations also influence and play a significant role in shaping a child.

2. School Teachers and Peers

The school and teachers are the first influencing factors outside the home. A non threatening and easy going school environment is extremely important for a young child to develop a sense of security outside the comfort of his/her home. A warm, nurturing and pleasant environment at school can help a child gain confidence and develop a liking to school. Appreciation, encouragement and reinforcement from teachers can go a long way in developing a positive attitude to school.

3. Community

The community at large plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual during the early years of life. Social attitudes and behaviour patterns are also largely influenced by social interactions of adults ,peers and significant others in the community. Children learn social value, gain social skills and experiences as they interact with people in wider circles outside their home. Social approval and appreciation from adults and peers are also important in developing language and emotional balance.

F) Forms of Social Behaviour

1. Rivalry

This form of behaviour is typically characterised by a strong desire in a child to out do or do better than others. Rivalry is often expressed in the form of boasting or showing off in front of siblings or friends. By the age of four years children begin to become aware of their abilities and have some idea of being able to do better than their friends. Sibling rivalry is often a result of parental favouritism. When rivalry motivates a child to do better, it may be considered to be conducive to new learning. However, excessive rivalry often leads to poor socialization.

2. Quarrelling

Quarrelling is usually a result of an angry dispute or unprovoked attack by a child on another. At this stage of development, quarrelling

does not necessarily indicate a dislike for each other. Usually arguments are short lived and quickly resolved. Children can easily start all over again without harbouring ill feelings by being cheerful and friendly. Quarrelling may involve destroying or tearing a child's work, snatching away toys, crying, kicking or screaming. The nature of the activity engaged in heavily influences the frequency and intensity of quarreling.

3. Negativism

This form of behaviour is characterised by resistance to pressure from others to behave in a specific manner. The peak of 'negativism' is usually reached between the age of 3 and 6 years. Children quickly learn that 'resistance' is the best way to deal with excessive pressure. Failing to carry out requests, pretending not to hear, ignoring instructions regarding routine activities typically shows 'negativism'. Between the ages of 4 to 6 years, physical resistance begins to decline and verbalization increases. The child uses 'No' as an answer to any suggestions, questions or requests made.

4. Aggression

An actual or threatened act of hostility usually provoked by another person is termed as aggression. Aggression is usually expressed in physical or verbal terms by children towards those smaller or weaker than themselves. The peak is reached between the age of 4 and 5 years. Usually aggression is a result of frustration which predisposes a child to react to a person or object that is responsible for creating an 'obstacle'. Children who face parental rejection or are unable to express anger directly toward the offending person or object usually show aggressive behaviour. Lack of attention from a significant person, a need to protect oneself because of insecurity or jealousy may often result in aggressive behaviour. Emotional tensions resulting from stress can also be a cause of latent or hidden aggression.

5. Shyness

This denotes a form of fear that is marked by moving away from an unfamiliar thing or contact with unfamiliar people. Most children do feel shy when they perceive others to be stronger, larger or more powerful and are unsure about how they might react to him/her. Shyness leads to generalized timidity often causing a child to be afraid of trying out new things. Playing a leadership role is very difficult for a shy child because of his/her inability to communicate effectively and work well with others. Very shy children are likely to become unpopular because they are afraid to talk to others and may become self-bound.

6. Co-operation

Around the age of 4 years, children begin to learn how to play and work together with their peers. The more opportunities they have to collaborate and do things together, the better are the chances of making social contacts.

7. Temper tantrum

Violent outburst of anger in young children are usually directed against persons, objects or situations. These are more popularly known as temper tantrums. These may take on a physical response such as kicking, screaming, head banging, rolling on the floor, punching or hitting. Around the age of four years children begin to add language to their anger responses. Children are likely to throw tantrums when they lack opportunities for free play and expression of their emotions. Dominating parents, over expectations, constant pressure to perform are some of the other reasons responsible for tantrums. Children need time and space to regulate their emotions; just as they need help to express them in a socially acceptable manner. Giving in to temper tantrums can be detrimental to a child and teaches one to use this tool to get his/her way.

8. Altruism

Also known as prosocial behaviour, it refers to the ability to voluntarily act in a positive,

accepting and helpful manner and is associated with many factors of well being.

G) Discipline

The word discipline is derived from the Latin word 'disciplina' which means 'giving instructions'. While some believe that discipline helps channelize development and is therefore necessary, others believe that discipline is a process of training and learning that fosters growth and development in young children. You may notice that the two ways in which discipline has been described are in fact quite similar. Disciplining is also described as a process of channelizing or modifying socially unacceptable but outward observable behaviour, attitudes and development of 'conscience'. In other words, discipline is instrumental in helping children internalise socially accepted rules and norms to enable them to gain social approval, love and encouragement.

Importance of Discipline

It was formally believed that discipline was essential in order to control behaviour. However, the modern view holds that discipline is necessary to guide and enable an individual to find direction and develop a wholesome attitude towards oneself and others, in order to gain a certain level of confidence and satisfaction in day-to-day life.

Every culture and sub culture places specific demands on its members. What is considered acceptable by one culture, may not necessarily be so by another. Despite the fact that the socio-economic status and size of a family, number of children and parental attitudes influence the way in which discipline is handled, the functions of discipline remain more or less the same.

- Discipline brings forth social acceptance, appreciation and praise. This satisfies the child's need for love and security.
- Discipline inspires acceptable behaviour as children learn to differentiate between socially acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

- Children learn to avoid misbehaviour and are not likely to indulge in activities that are frowned upon by their parents. Thus, feelings of guilt can easily be avoided or significantly lessened.
- Discipline helps in the development of the conscience. In due course, by trial and error children internalise rules, learn self control and become less dependent on the need for external control.

Each child has a different set of needs. The hereditary makeup and the rate of maturation of a child differs from that of another child who is of the same age. What may seem to be developmentally suitable for one child may not work for another child. Older children may demand more explanation and reasoning instead of being told or ordered what to do. The need for discipline also varies according to the time of the day and the activity in which a child is engaged in. The frequency may vary from one age group to another. An example may help to clarify this point.

A child tries to jump from a dangerous height while playing. While a verbal inhibitor such as a firm 'no' may stop a child, another may need to be physically blocked or refrained from jumping down.

Similarly, reasoning may work with some and not with others. It may be necessary to implement discipline in connection with some routine activities such as eating, sleeping, studying or staying out late with friends. Older children may require more elaborate reasoning, explanations and tact. As children grow older communication between them and the parents and the understanding regarding social expectations gets qualitatively better.

H) Common Disciplining Techniques

There are three disciplining techniques most commonly used by parents. Let us try to understand how they work and what effects can be observed while applying them.

1. The Authoritarian Technique

When rules are too strict or they are enforced very rigidly they characterise authoritarian discipline. This technique includes harsh punishment for failure to live up to expected standards. Additionally, there is no trace of approval even when a child tries to meet expected standards. Authoritarian discipline indicates control, external force or corporal punishment. Parents who have been used to authoritarian methods and are rigid about their use do not usually attain success in changing them or totally abandoning them even when their children grow up.

Do you know?

Rewards and Bribes are not the same!

Many adults do not approve of rewarding a child for any achievement or socially acceptable behaviour because they view it as a 'bribe'. Are rewards and bribes one and the same? No, definitely not! Anything that is used as a bait or dangling carrot to bring forth desired behaviour is 'bribery'. A child is promised a reward or a material gift in return of an act—almost like a barter system. Bribes bring about change in behaviour but it is far too short lived. Soon a child starts to expect something in return for every acceptable behaviour that he exhibits. There is no scope for inner control or sanction to develop and there is no felt need for assuming responsibility of any kind. Rewards or special privileges are given 'after' an act or socially acceptable behaviour is observed. They reinforce and motivate children to repeat acceptable behaviour. Though this is true, material rewards need to be used sparingly as the child may not be maturationally ready to differentiate between a reward and a bribe.

How does a child react?

The authoritarian disciplining technique does not make any space for opportunities to learn to control one's own behaviour or make decisions. Most decisions are made for the child and his wishes are almost completely ignored. Children who experience being disciplined in this manner usually end up being very timid or extremely rebellious.

Some children may pretend to be good but may show strong underlying resentment. The over disciplined child is likely to perceive the world as hostile. Sensitive children may withdraw into their shell. They may express aggressiveness towards other children specially those who are unable to defend themselves. The result may well be maladjusted behaviour. There is a constant feeling of threat, unhappiness and fear. A child may become stubborn and develop a negative attitude in general.

2. The Democratic / Authoritative Technique

Parents who explain to their children or reason out and discuss things with them help their children to understand why they are expected to behave in a certain way.

They explain the pros and cons of a situation taking into consideration the child's point of view and his feelings regarding a particular issue. Harsh punishment or other punitive measures do not feature anywhere in this type of technique. Parents divert energy in carefully planning of their child's activities so that energy is directed towards socially acceptable avenues.

How does a child react?

A democratic attitude helps children internalise rules and understand their significance in terms of social expectations. When children do live up to parental standards and expectations they also receive approval

and praise. Children are more likely to make positive social and personal adjustment. They develop independence in thinking and a realistic and positive self-concept. They are usually spontaneous, outgoing and responsible.

The amount of freedom that they experience allows them to face obstacles without being intimidated by them. They are warm and friendly and develop co-operative relationships with peers and adults around them.

3. The Permissive Technique

It is quite common to find parents who have experienced very rigid or strict disciplining techniques themselves as children, prefer to use a more permissive approach in disciplining their own children. Permissive discipline to a certain extent is absence of discipline.

Some parents prefer to let their children find out things for themselves by trial and error. They give no guidance and exercise practically no control over what their children do. There are no limits and boundaries set for a child and he is allowed to make his own decisions and act in a manner that he considers appropriate.

Parents who are afraid of displeasing their children or are unsure of how their child might react to disciplining prefer not to interfere with any activity that their child engages in.

How does child react?

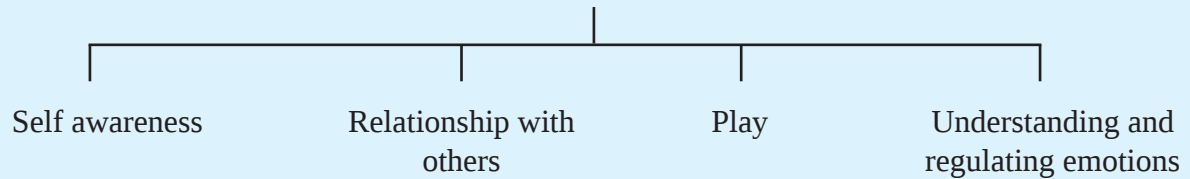
A child who is disciplined in this way is usually one who feels confused and insecure. As a result, he/she is likely to be anxious, aggressive or extremely fearful. There may be times when he feels a strong need to be guided and corrected for the mistakes he makes. A child who is unaware of limits and boundaries is also likely to feel directionless without being aware of it. Anxiety and feeling helpless is quite common. A child is also likely to feel that parents are genuinely not interested in what he/she does.

Revise the points

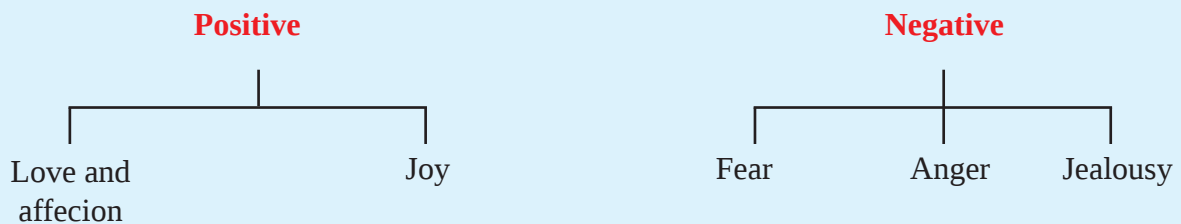
A)

- Emotional and social development go hand in hand.
- Four basic components of emotions are stimuli, feelings, physiological arousal, behaviour
- Social smile, social referencing, cueing are important milestones during infancy.

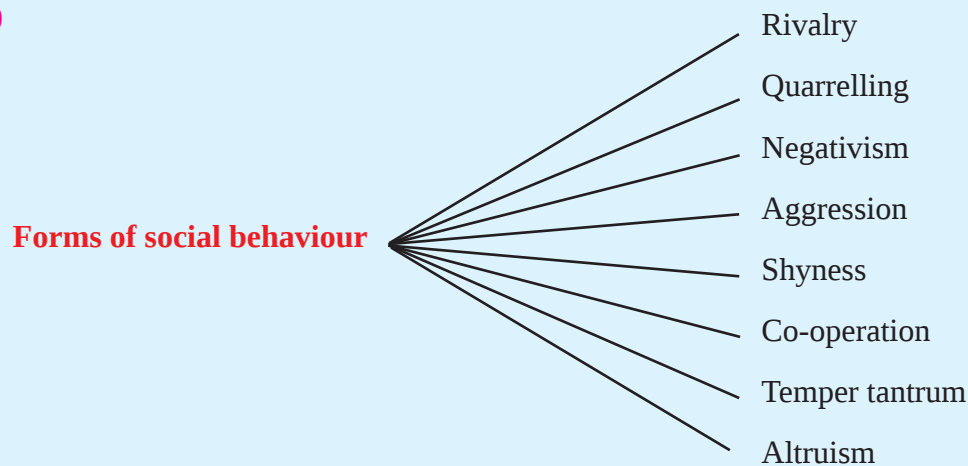
B) Aspects of social emotional development



C) Types of emotions



D)



E) Common disciplining techniques



Glossary

Favouritism : Giving unfair advantage or showing undue partiality

Gender identity : To associate one self as male/female/or any other.

Humiliate : Embarrass/Mortify

Stimulus : Something that causes activity.

Exercises

Q. 1. Select the appropriate word and fill in the blanks :

- Children engage in play during infancy.
a) *parallel* b) *cooperative*
c) *solitary*
- Preschool children express their emotions
a) *frequently* b) *occasionally*
c) *never*
- Children who are emotionally secure are able to establish relationships with others.
a) *negative* b) *positive*
c) *indifferent*
- Adults are able to express in a socially acceptable manner, where as preschoolers find it difficult to do.
a) *fear* b) *anger*
c) *jealousy*

Q. 2. State whether the following statements are true or false and give reasons for the same.

- Factors such as behaviour and interpersonal relationships are influenced by socio emotional development.
- Children often express their emotions indirectly.
- Preschool children always express their emotions in a socially acceptable manner.

- Bribes are excellent tools that can be used while disciplining children.
- A preschool child is always able to understand emotions expressed by others around him/her.

Q. 3. Explain the following terms.

- Socialization.
- Self concept.
- Socio emotional development.
- Temper tantrums.

Q. 4. Read the following paragraph carefully. Find out which discipline technique has been used and what are the possible effects on the child.

Situation 1 :

Ira's mother has decided which clothes are to be worn and has already selected a gift for her friend's birthday party. She has suggested the name of friends Ira should play with and how she should behave at the party.

Situation 2 :

At a classmate's birthday party Sahil was busy running around dropping things and spilling glasses. He grabbed the presents from the table and tried to tear them open while his mother simply watched without any reaction.

Situation 3 :

“What should I wear to my best friend’s party” asked Purva, “Choose a nice dress of your choice” said mother suggesting how she can think of a suitable gift to buy at the toy shop.

Q. 5. Explain the factors that trigger the following emotions in preschool children.

1. Jealousy
2. Fear
3. Anger
4. Aggression

Q. 6. Describe ways in which the following emotions may be enhanced.

1. Love and affection
2. Joy

Q. 7. Write short notes on the following:

1. Quarrelling
2. Shyness
3. Negativism

Q. 8. Explain the following with examples of your own.

1. Meaning and importance of discipline.
2. Factors contributing to the process of socialization.
3. Self awareness.
4. Understanding and regulating emotions.

Project / Self Study

Observe your family, neighbourhood and people around.

- **Make a list of the different roles played by men and women.**
- **Do you feel that there are specific roles that only men or women should play?**
- **Why do you think so?**

