



ZERO TO THREE
Early connections last a lifetime

Magic of Everyday Moments: From Feelings to Friendships

The bond between a parent and child builds the child's ability to form relationships with others, express emotions, and face difficult challenges. Young children recognize the type of care they receive from adults beginning at birth. They feel secure and protected when the adults in their lives show them that they care and demonstrate affection. Young children can explore the world, develop empathy, and understand the difference between right and wrong with the self-confidence that originates from nurturing early relationships. Consider the following strategies for developing a strong bond with your child:

Show your child that you care:

- Comfort your child when she is upset.
- Sing and talk to your child while he is in your arms.
- When old enough, encourage your child to help out with easy chores at home.
- Be firm and convey appropriate ways to express strong feelings such as throwing a foam ball, ripping paper, or stomping feet.

Observe your baby:

- Take note of what your child likes and dislikes. Provide experiences focused on what she likes.
- Identify what helps to soothe your child.
- Does your child look back when walking away from you to make sure you are there? When you walk away, tell your child where you are going and when he can expect you to return.
- Identify your child's favorite book by observing her reactions when you read to her.



Establish a routine:

- A sleep-time routine may start with dinner, followed by reading a book, then singing a bedtime song, and finally settling in to go to sleep.
- Talk your child through a routine. You can say, "We are going to eat, then put on your jacket and go to the park."
- If the routine changes, let your child know.

Help your child develop self-confidence:

- Allow your child to express feelings.
- Allow your child to resolve conflicts independently with your support. Don't resolve your child's problems. For example, help your child think of ways to get the ball out from under the chair.
- Provide your child with opportunities to play with other children and learn how to share and take turns.

A nurturing early relationship between you and your child sets the stage for your child's ability to form positive relationships. The security and care you can provide help your child develop self-confidence and empathy. Share your ideas, questions, and feelings about early relationships and the Magic of Everyday Moments video, *From Feelings to Friendships: Nurturing Healthy Social-Emotional Development in the Early Years* with another parent or person you trust with these discussion starters:

- What does your child communicate to you during the day? How does your child communicate his needs with you? How do you know?
- How do you respond to your child's cries? How do you feel when your child cries? How do you soothe your child?
- What are some of your daily routines? What do you do with your child when you wake up? What do you do with your child at bedtime?
- How do you support your child when she is frustrated or feeling strong emotions? What do you do to help her express emotions appropriately?
- What do you do to help your child develop empathy?
- How do you support your child's relationships with other adults and children?



Additional Resources:

- Your Baby's Development: Birth to 3 Months, 3 to 6 Months, 6 to 9 Months, 9 to 12 Months, 12 to 15 Months, 15 to 18 Months, 18 to 24 Months, 24 to 30 Months, 30 to 36 Months
www.zerotothree.org/resources/30-from-feelings-to-friendships-nurturing-healthy-social-emotional-development-in-the-early-years
- News You Can Use: Foundations of School Readiness: Social and Emotional Development
eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/docs/nycu-social-emotional-development.pdf