

## Strengthening Relationships and Encouraging Emotions

Social emotional activities help your child develop loving relationships, form friendships, build confidence, learn how to communicate emotions and understand the difference between right and wrong.

- From the time your child is born they start to build their self-esteem and confidence by how you respond to them. Encourage these characteristics by giving positive reinforcement and lots of love.
- Celebrate your child's accomplishments. Did your baby rollover for the first time? Smile, clap and tell them good job. Although your baby may not understand what you're saying they do realize that your feedback is positive which encourages them to continue to excel.
- Be nurturing. Remind your child that he or she is loved by hugging, rocking, holding or singing to them. Although it is sometimes difficult to be nurturing when your child is crying, fussy or colicky being nurturing during these times sends them the message that you love and care for them unconditionally.
- Reinforce good behavior with praise and address negative behavior by being consistent with your discipline.
  - Time-out followed by talking to your child regarding why their negative behavior is unacceptable is an effective and positive discipline strategy.
  - Encourage your child to play with children the same age to allow them to learn skills such as problem solving, sharing and turn taking. Supervise the play activities and assist them in making good decisions.

