

Social and emotional learning

Early childhood learning trajectory



What is social and emotional learning?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) involves skills such as children distinguishing their own needs from those of others, learning to effectively identify and manage emotions, and building and maintaining positive relationships with others. Social and emotional learning includes 4 main components, listed below.

- <u>Self-awareness:</u> the child's emerging awareness of their uniqueness in relation to others, and of their own individual emotions, perspectives and capabilities.
- <u>Self-management:</u> ability to manage emotions and their triggers, regulate responses and behaviour, and cope in increasingly challenging situations.
- <u>Social awareness:</u> ability to understand others' feelings, preferences and perspectives, and to care for other people, animals and non-living things.
- <u>Social management:</u> ability to interact effectively and respectfully with others, using a range of social strategies to collaborate and build positive relationships.

Early Years Learning Framework

AERO's early childhood learning trajectories align with the Principles, Practices and Outcomes of the

Early Years Learning Framework V2.0.

The learning trajectories <u>user guide</u> provides further information and demonstrates how the Learning Outcomes can be mapped to domains.

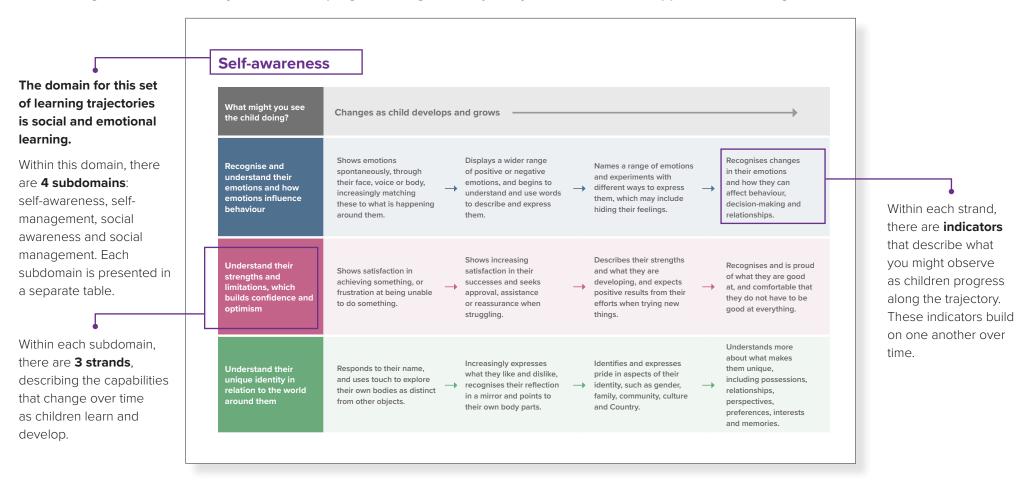
National Quality Standard

Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children

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How to use the early childhood learning trajectories

These learning trajectories will help you observe children's progress in social and emotional learning, and plan the next steps in their learning and development. They will give you language and ideas for documenting children's learning and development, and for your conversations with families and colleagues about children's progress. The trajectory is not a checklist. You are encouraged to use your professional knowledge and judgement in determining how each child may demonstrate progress along each trajectory, and how best to support their learning.



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Self-awareness

What might you see Changes as child develops and grows the child doing? Shows emotions Displays a wider range Recognises changes **Recognise and** Names a range of emotions spontaneously, through of positive or negative in their emotions understand their and experiments with their face, voice or body, emotions, and begins to and how they can emotions and how different ways to express understand and use words increasingly matching affect behaviour, emotions influence them, which may include these to what is happening to describe and express decision-making and behaviour hiding their feelings. relationships. around them. them. Describes their strengths Shows increasing **Understand their** Recognises and is proud Shows satisfaction in satisfaction in their and what they are strengths and of what they are good developing, and expects achieving something, or successes and seeks limitations, which at, and comfortable that frustration at being unable approval, assistance positive results from their builds confidence and they do not have to be to do something. or reassurance when efforts when trying new optimism good at everything. struggling. things. Understands more about what makes Increasingly expresses Identifies and expresses **Understand their** Responds to their name, them unique, what they like and dislike, pride in aspects of their unique identity in and uses touch to explore including possessions, recognises their reflection identity, such as gender, relation to the world their own bodies as distinct relationships, in a mirror and points to family, community, culture around them from other objects. perspectives, their own body parts. and Country. preferences, interests and memories.

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Self-management

What might you see Changes as child develops and grows the child doing? Uses a wide range of Manage the Uses the expression of **Deliberately chooses** verbal and non-verbal expression of their Uses facial expressions and emotion to elicit responses expressions to ways to express feelings based from others (not necessarily gestures they associate communicate emotions themselves based on on situations and with positive interactions. positive), with gradual in increasingly the situation or context. relationships increases in self-control. appropriate ways. Transfers emotional Chooses (or avoids) Moderates their reactions **Understand emotional** management strategies Seeks soothing or interactions or experiences to emotional triggers, triggers and regulate across contexts (for comforting experiences based on the emotions appearing calmer or their emotional example, breathing and begins to self-soothe. and other reactions braver in a wider range slowly or talking to responses they may cause. of situations. a trusted person). Anticipates and plans ahead for difficult Recovers from being upset Expresses 'big' emotions Cope with and recover Uses deliberate strategies situations, and elicits when they are distracted more often and gradually from emotionally to manage emotions in help from others to or refocused on becomes better at challenging situations cope with emotionally difficult situations. something new. calming down. challenging situations successfully.

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Social awareness

What might you see Changes as child develops and grows the child doing? Develops a wider **Develops friendships** Shows preferences for Understand that sense of their place Develops attachments particular people, places and assumes greater each of us belongs in the world, and their to familiar people, and objects, and interest responsibility for caring to and contributes to responsibility to care objects or places. in caring for living and for other people, animals community for others and non-living things. or non-living things. the environment. Recognises that others Responds intuitively **Demonstrates increasing** Listens to other points (human and non-human) **Empathise with** to others' positive or awareness of what others of view, and engages have different needs, others' perspectives, negative feelings are thinking, and how preferences and feelings, in discussion about the emotions and needs ('catching' others' their thoughts influence and begins to respond reasons behind them. their behaviour. emotions). to these. Increases their sensitivity Understands their own **Nurtures emotionally** Understand others' Responds to soothing to the people around them, preferences for social satisfying relationships, influences on their from others and shows such as missing people who interactions and how such as close friendships own feelings different situations preferences for receiving it. are absent or delighting in or family relationships. shared affection. make them feel.

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Social management

What might you see Changes as child develops and grows the child doing? Plays independently beside Independently navigates Engages in 'cooperative Interact effectively Plays alone but begins to others, and, as social a wider range of social play', working with others and respectfully with notice and react to people skills develop, engages situations, including new to set goals and achieve others in the environment. in 'associative play' and situations or those with them together. shares resources. unfamiliar people. Uses social skills to Uses more complex Uses language for social Watches others' navigate more complex **Develop skills and** social strategies, such as interactions in social purposes, and adopts basic situations and groups, strategies to navigate negotiating conflicts (not situations and imitates or social strategies, such as and adapts social social situations just yielding), taking turns follow their example. manners or humour. strategies for different and initiating social play. contexts. Begins to participate **Exercises individual** Understands their role Leads or contributes in everyday routines that Participate in group choice and agency, as a member of a group, to increasingly - and increasingly decision-making and complex collaborative involve cooperation with and the consequences collaboration understands how their experiences and others, demonstrating of cooperation and decisions. trust and belonging. choices affect others. non-cooperation.

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Creating opportunities to support children's social and emotional learning and development

Self-awareness

- Notice children's emotional responses during the day (such as at drop-off) and help them discover experiences they might enjoy.
- Respond to children's emotional cues, interests and achievements, and model language, actions and expressions.
- Encourage children to explore their own identity and feelings, and take on different identities (such as in imaginary and role play).

Self-management

- Notice and discuss children's feelings throughout the day, helping them recognise and express both positive and negative emotions.
- Anticipate situations which may challenge children to manage their emotions, and gently encourage them to regulate their own feelings.
- Model and discuss the impact children's emotions can have on others, including by responding visibly to infants' emotional cues.

Social awareness

- Create a sense of community connection by encouraging children to be aware of people, Country, and physical and natural environments.
- Encourage children to give and receive emotional support, and actively foster a positive emotional climate in rooms or groups.
- Encourage children to experience different social situations (such as large and small groups or 'alone time') to explore their social preferences.

Social management

- Help children notice the social skills they are learning, such as listening, turn-taking, decisionmaking, negotiation and collaboration.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for individual, paired and small-group experiences, rolemodelling the above skills.
- Encourage children to interact with you and facilitate their interactions with other children. Remember to do things 'with' rather than 'to' children.

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About this resource

Our early childhood learning trajectories are designed for teachers and educators working in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services with children in the years before school. They can support ongoing professional learning, for individuals, and entire ECEC services and teams.

The early childhood learning trajectories describe how children learn and develop in these key domains:

- Executive functions
- Social and emotional learning
- Mathematical thinking
- Language and communication
- Physical development.

While each learning trajectory describes children's progress in a single domain, they are designed to be used in interconnected ways. A single experience may support progress in multiple domains at the same time. Progress in one domain may depend on progress in another.



For more information on our learning trajectories research

- Early childhood learning trajectory user guide
- Early childhood learning trajectories: The evidence base

More information

The AERO website features further guidance, including practice guides, case studies for early childhood practice. Visit the Practice Hub at edresearch.edu.au for more information.





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