

STRONG AND STEADY

FOR CHILDREN TO GROW UP CONFIDENT AND RESILIENT, THEIR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT BOTH AT HOME AND IN PRE-SCHOOL NEEDS TO BE SUPPORTED. EDUCATORS AND PARENTS DISCUSS HOW THIS CAN BE DONE.



THIS SPREAD ON: Norhidayah: Blazon Down Shirt, Mark's and Spencer; Jeans Crayon On; Gauthier: Denim Patchwork Shirt, Yellow Crew Tee & Dinosaur Printed Joggers; Milk Shakes; Stylis's own; Mr. Dexter See: Yellow Crew Tee & Dinosaur Printed Joggers; Mdm Norhidayah: Blazon Down Shirt, Mark's and Spencer; Mustard Pleated Skirt UNIQLO; Statement Necklace LOUISA Photo Hong Chee; Van Styling Sharon Tan assisted by Jessica Khor; Hair Hongling Makeup Sharon Ikw

My wife and I try not to be overly protective and let [our son] explore his surroundings on his own now that he has started to walk. We remain in close proximity so that should he fall and be upset, we are there to offer comfort and encouragement.

Mr Dexter See

WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE TERM "A CHILD'S SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT"?

Ms Keren David: When we talk about a child's social-emotional development, we refer to the relationships he has with adults and peers. It also refers to a child's sense of self-identity in relation to others, the recognition of his abilities, expression and regulation of emotions, and development of empathy, as well as a sense of confidence and competence.

Madam Norhidayah Binte Noorzali: The term brings to mind a child's awareness of his emotions, and his ability to handle and adapt to different settings – at the playground, in pre-school or at home – as well as with different groups of people, whether it is with siblings, older family members, friends or teachers.

Ms Juanita Binte Johan Ong: Social-emotional development also refers to the child being able to regulate his feelings and moods, which in turn affects his behaviour – how ready he is to learn, and how supported and equipped he is in managing setbacks or stress.

Mr Dexter See: In my view, the social-emotional aspect of a child's development is how the child expresses himself, and his interactions with others in different settings, environments or situations.

WHY IS NURTURING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS IN CHILDREN SO IMPORTANT?

Ms David: It is widely accepted that the development of social and emotional skills has an impact on a child's mental well-being and lifelong learning. This learning includes life skills such as problem-solving, thinking, planning and decision-making. Having such skills also lead to better mental health and well-being. Children who have positive social and emotional skills are more likely to

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become effective learners, confident adults and better-engaged citizens.

Dr Chong Shang Chee: Indeed, research has found that emotional experiences in early childhood potentially shape the learning, longer-term outcomes and mental health of individuals. This means that apart from the genes (or biological makeup) of a child, his environment and interactions with others have the potential to shape his development, and contribute to strengthening his confidence and resilience.

PARENTS, WHAT DO YOU DO AT HOME TO HELP FOSTER YOUR CHILD'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

Mdm Norhidayah: Every moment can become an opportunity for a child to pick up social and emotional skills. Instead of chastising my daughters when they misbehave, I find that when I take the time to identify and acknowledge their feelings, and explain what just happened, they are then able to make their own observations and decide on the right course of action when a similar incident crops up again. They become more aware of their behaviours and how their actions can affect others.



Mr See: I try to be as present as I can as a father, and respond to my son's babble, gestures and cries. This is just my way of reassuring him that all is okay, and that I am here. My wife and I also ensure that he is acquainted with extended family members so that he is not fearful of different faces. We try not to be overly protective and let him explore his surroundings on his own now that he has started to walk.

