

# Social and emotional learning

Early childhood learning trajectories



## 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:

- <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 Early Childhood Learning
Trajectories: User Guide provides further
information and demonstrates how the
Learning Outcomes can be mapped
to domains.

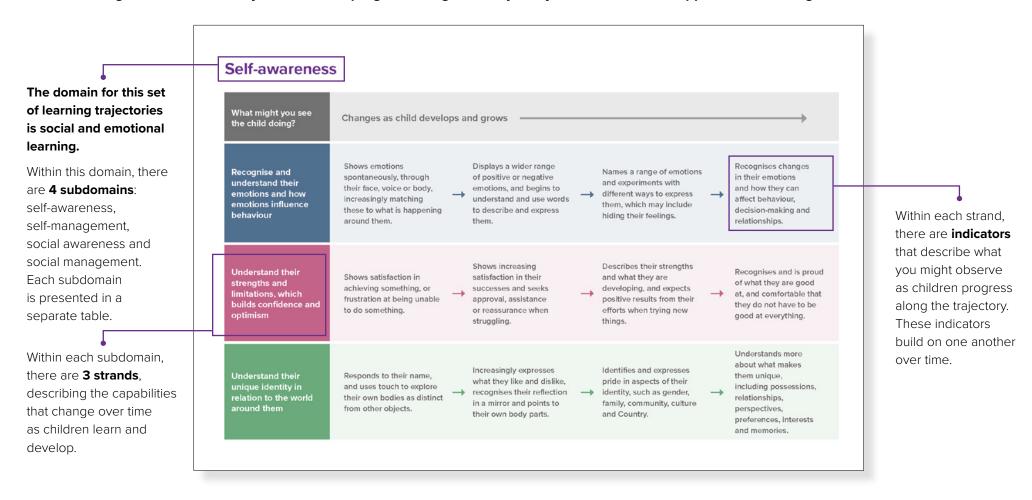
### **National Quality Standard**

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? Displays a wider range Shows emotions Recognises changes Recognise and Names a range of emotions of positive or negative in their emotions spontaneously, through 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 increasingly matching understand and use words affect behaviour, emotions influence them, which may include these to what is happening to describe and express decision-making behaviour hiding their feelings. around them. them. and relationships. Shows increasing Describes their strengths Recognises and is proud Understand their Shows satisfaction in satisfaction in their and what they are strengths and of what they are good achieving something, or successes and seeks developing, and expects limitations, which at, and comfortable that frustration at being unable approval, assistance positive results from their builds confidence they do not have to be to do something. efforts when trying new or reassurance when and 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, family, community, culture in a mirror and points to around them from other objects. perspectives, their own body parts. and Country. preferences, interests and memories.

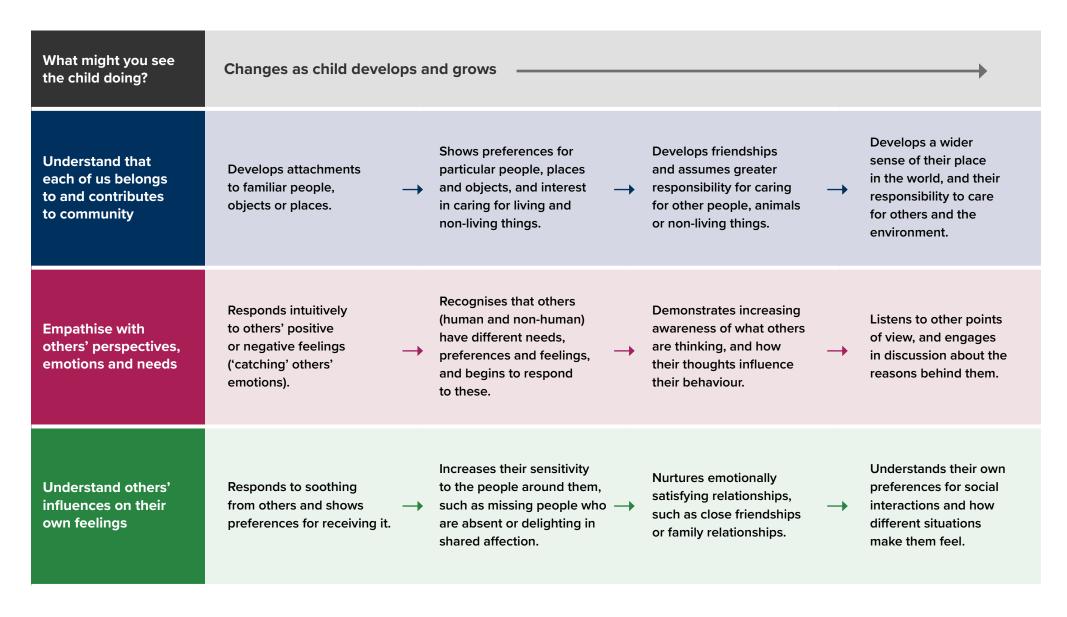
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## **Self-management**

What might you see Changes as child develops and grows the child doing? Manage the Uses the expression of Uses a wide range of **Deliberately chooses** expression of their Uses facial expressions and emotion to elicit responses verbal and non-verbal ways to express feelings based gestures they associate expressions to communicate themselves based on on situations with positive interactions. positive), with gradual emotions in increasingly the situation or context. and 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 appearing calmer or comforting experiences based on the emotions their emotional (for 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 Expresses 'big' emotions Cope with and recover Uses deliberate strategies situations, and elicits upset when they are more often and gradually from emotionally help from others to to manage emotions in distracted or refocused becomes better at challenging situations difficult situations. cope with emotionally on something new. calming down. challenging situations successfully.

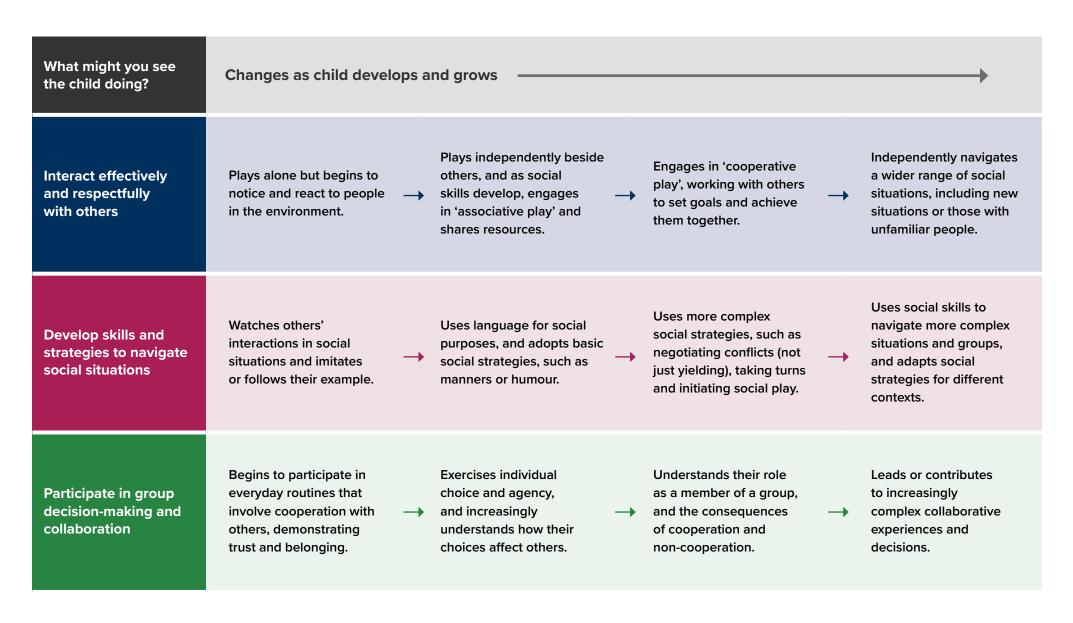
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### Social awareness



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## **Social management**



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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 these 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.

# Further reading

For more information on our learning trajectories research

- Early Childhood Learning Trajectories: User Guide
- Early Childhood Learning Trajectories: The Evidence Base

## More information

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

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