



# Strategies for Promoting Positive Social and Emotional Development in Infants and Toddlers

## About the Texas Infant-Toddler Specialist Network

Through a partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission, the Children's Learning Institute (CLI), created the Texas ITSN to improve specialists' and teachers' practices and increase availability and quality of infant and toddler care. The Texas ITSN offers professional development opportunities and collaborative experiences covering a wide range of topics specific to supporting infant and toddler development.

## About your Presenters

Elise Cohen and Terri Bledsoe work as Internal Specialists and Teacher Mentors for the Children's Learning Institute which is housed at the UT Health Science Center in Houston and provide training and support to both teachers and child development specialists on behalf of the Texas ITSN. Contact information: [Elise.A.Cohen@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Elise.A.Cohen@uth.tmc.edu), [Terri.Bledsoe@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Terri.Bledsoe@uth.tmc.edu)

## Learning Objectives (or goals)

After this training, participants will be able to

- Explain how social-emotional skills develop in infants and toddlers
- Describe and demonstrate teaching strategies that support social and emotional development
- Identify the steps for how to join the Texas ITSN Teacher Program

## Social Emotional Development

The process where children start to understand \_\_\_\_\_, what they are \_\_\_\_\_, and what to expect when \_\_\_\_\_.

| <br>First year | <br>12-18 months | <br>18-24 months | <br>Age two | <br>Age three |
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## Teaching Strategy: Label Feelings

Teachers can help infants and toddlers \_\_\_\_\_ their feelings by labeling them.

Why label feelings?

- builds children's emotional vocabulary
- helps children identify what is going on with their bodies (my belly hurts when I'm anxious; I shake when I am scared)
- helps them make connections between feelings and events (you are scared because of the thunder)

Write down at least 5 synonyms for each of the basic feelings.

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Things to remember about labeling feelings:

- Point out any emotion including simple ones.
- Many behaviors (both negative and positive) can be tied back to a feeling.
- Use group activities, visual aids and songs or rhymes to capture young children's attention and explain feelings.

## Teaching Strategy: Support Turn-Taking

Teachers can support young children's ability to take turns through

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and giving specific \_\_\_\_\_.

|  |   |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Modeling</b> Turn-Taking<br/>Infants can learn how to take turns with their teacher by passing an object back and forth as the teacher says, "My turn. Your turn."</li> </ul>                                  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Explaining</b> Turn-Taking<br/>Toddlers learn how to take turns when the teacher explains <i>what</i> is going to happen, <i>why</i> it is going to happen, and what will happen <i>afterwards</i>.</li> </ul> |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Praising</b> Turn-Taking<br/>When teachers provide children with specific praise and describe positive actions when they do take turns, it helps them focus on positive behavior.</li> </ul>                   |  |

What are some common routines during your day when you could encourage turn-taking?

Tips for successfully supporting turn-taking:

- Music and songs are a great way to prompt and remind children to take turns.
- Plan structured opportunities that prompt turn taking are necessary for children to develop sharing skills.
- Playing outside is a great time to take turns.

### Teaching Strategy: Offer Opportunities for Making Choices

Making choices helps children feel \_\_\_\_\_ in themselves and gives

them important opportunities to become aware of their own \_\_\_\_\_

and practice \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

For Infants: Offer simple choices such as between 2 objects.



For Toddlers: Offer more complex choices such as when to do something or what to do first.

**Practice Scenario:** Abby doesn't want to come inside. What is a choice you can give her that could help her make a positive transition inside?

Remember:

- After you offer two choices, wait patiently for the child to choose one.
- Mealtimes are a perfect time to offer choices (which food they like better, what they will eat first)

## Learning More about Social & Emotional Development

The information in our training today comes from the five-part **Connect with Me** course which is available on CLIEngage to those who have an account.

The Connect with Me course is part of a 6-course online series called “Play with Me” which is research-based and includes courses about each of the early childhood learning domains.



Visit [www.cliengage.org](http://www.cliengage.org) to sign up for your free public account! Once there, scroll down to the purple banner tab called **Online Learning and Professional Development** and click on **Full Course Catalog**. Search for the **CIRCLE Infant and Toddler Teacher Training: “Play with Me” (SI)** course and click **VIEW COURSES**. Enroll in and complete each course part to receive a certificate for that training. \*\*If you are interested in participating in the ITSN Teacher Program, please take the steps below to apply **before** signing up for a new CLI Engage account. You will need an account with special access to be able to participate in the program.\*\*

## Information about the Texas ITSN Teacher Program

To receive access to even more free resources on CLI Engage we encourage you to sign up for the ITSN Teacher Program. Teachers in the program receive:

- Access to online courses and webinars on CLI Engage to earn professional development hours
- Opportunities to collaborate with other teachers in live online Professional Learning Community (PLC) trainings
- Opportunities to earn participation-based incentives, such as a tablet, priority registration to 2-day Foundations Training, classroom kit, and/or stipend

Ready to join? Talk to your program director and get them on board too, as they will need to take the first steps to get your program registered!

Visit [www.TexasITSN.org](http://www.TexasITSN.org) and click on **Teacher Program** in the teachers menu to learn more.