Infant-Toddler Caregiver Reflection Tool

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This is a tool for caregivers of infants and toddlers to use when thinking about how to promote their child's social and emotional development. It provides information on the use of caregiver practices to support healthy social and emotional development in infants and toddlers. It can be used in the following ways:

▶ Joint-planning decisions between early interventionists practitioners and caregivers to identify potential social emotional goals.

▶ Create awareness and inform caregivers on practices they can use, or already use, to support their child's social and emotional development.

Responsive Communication	I do this	I don't do this	This is something I want to know more about	This is something I want to learn to do
I frequently talk to my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I wait and watch my child before joining in play.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I join in my child's play by following their ideas and matching their focus of interest or attention.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I comment on my child's interests, activities or actions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I imitate my child's sounds, words, and actions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I add more words or actions when my child initiates communication or interaction.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I patiently respond in some way to my child's initiations.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I listen and respond on topic to my child's verbal and non-verbal communication.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I pause during back and forth interactions to allow my child to take a turn.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use positive comments with my child that describe what they did well in their attempt to communicate (e.g., "You asked for more. Here comes another tickle.").	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use a variety of strategies (e.g., gestures, visuals, use of my family's preferred language) to help my child communicate.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Responsive Communication Notes: _____

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Responsive Interactions

Responsive Interactions	I do this	I don't do this	This is something I want to know more about	This is something I want to learn to do
I use a calm, positive, and supportive tone with my child (including when child is in distress).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I position myself at my child's level during interactions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I smile, use eye contact, or gentle physical touch to connect with my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I show physical affection to my child (e.g., hugs, sitting in lap, holding) to connect with my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I enjoy my time playing or participating in activities with my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respond quickly when my child is experiencing distress or is upset.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Caregiver Warmth and Responsivity Notes: _____

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Supporting Positive Social Interactions with Others

Supporting Positive Social Interactions with Others	I do this	I don't do this	This is something I want to know more about	This is something I want to learn to do
I remain close when my child Interacts with peers, siblings, or new adults.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I encourage my child to initiate and respond during interactions with others.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I model social skills for my child (e.g., greetings, using words or gestures, taking turns, gentle touches).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I help my child to work cooperatively with others (e.g., help a peer clean up toys).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I comment to help my child understand others' intentions (e.g., "Neely is coming over to say hi").	☐	☐	☐	☐
I offer comfort to my child when they have experienced a negative interaction with a peer or sibling (e.g., other child takes a toy or hits).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use positive comments with my child that describe what they did well after engaging in a positive interaction with others (e.g., "You said Hi to Marilyn and now she wants to share her toy with you.").	☐	☐	☐	☐

Supporting Positive Social Interactions with Others Notes: _____

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Encouraging Child's Active Engagement during Activities, Routines and Transitions

	I do this	I don't do this	This is something I want to know more about	This is something I want to learn to do
Overall, I have predictable parts of the day in place for my child	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use multiple ways to help my child become interested and engage in activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use materials and activities that are appropriate for my child's development and understanding.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use a variety of ways to help my child engage in multiple back and forth exchanges with myself and others (e.g., peekaboo, singing songs, fingerplays, facial expressions, imitation).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I provide positive attention (e.g., facial expressions, positive comments, hi fives) when my child engages with materials, or in different activities and routines.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I provide my toddler with opportunities to make choices throughout the day.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am responsive to my child's individual needs that may occur during planned routines and activities (e.g., diaper change, child loses interest, needs a nap).	☐	☐	☐	☐
When my child has signaled they have lost interest in an activity, I support them by signing or saying "all done" before moving with them to the new activity.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use additional supports to help my child as needed during transitions (e.g., I am going to pick you up, use a timer, use object picture cards).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I balance providing support and offering opportunities for my child to engage on their own during routines and activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use words to narrate or use picture cards to signal what is happening before to and during a routine or activity.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Encouraging Child's Active Engagement during Activities, Routines and Transitions Notes: _____

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Teaching Emotions

Teaching Emotions	I do this	I don't do this	This is something I want to know more about	This is something I want to learn to do
I use words to talk about feelings throughout the day.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I label my child's feelings (e.g., happy, excited, disappointed, scared).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I try to show empathy and understanding of my child's feelings.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I make attempts to match my energy and emotion to my child's during interactions (e.g., when my child smiles at me, I smile back; if they are calm, I am calm).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I label my own emotions in front of my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I show my toddler how to breathe to calm down.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have strategies I use to calm myself when I need to.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I pretend to have a problem and encourage my toddler to help me solve it (e.g., forgetting a utensil, forgetting where a toy goes during cleanup).	☐	☐	☐	☐
When my child is experiencing anger, sadness, excitement or frustration, I help them identify the feeling, and help them to calm.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Promoting Emotional Literacy Notes: _____

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Communicating Developmentally Appropriate Expectations

Communicating Developmentally Appropriate Expectations	I do this	I don't do this	This is something I want to know more about	This is something I want to learn to do
The expectations I have for my child are appropriate for their age and development.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use positive language to let my child know what to do during the day (e.g., "Use gentle hands with the cat."; "Use your spoon.").	☐	☐	☐	☐
I show my child what to do during specific moments of the day (e.g., putting a cup in the sink, washing hands).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use positive comments or attention when my toddler is behaving appropriately related to the expectations.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use simple words and phrases to explain what could happen if my toddler engages in a specific behavior (e.g., "If you stand on the chair, you could fall and get hurt.").	☐	☐	☐	☐

Communicating Developmentally Appropriate Expectations Notes: _____

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Responding to Child's Distress and Challenging Behavior

Responding to Child's Distress and Challenging Behavior	I do this	I don't do this	This is something I want to know more about	This is something I want to learn to do
I remain calm and supportive when my child is experiencing distress or engaging in challenging behavior.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I provide a lot of positive attention when my toddler behaves appropriately.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I provide positive attention after my toddler has calmed down and is behaving appropriately.	☐	☐	☐	☐
When appropriate, I help my angry or upset toddler identify what caused them to feel upset, and how they might calm down.	☐	☐	☐	☐
When my toddler engages In behavior that is challenging, I try to redirect their attention to something new or ignore the challenging behavior.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I plan strategies in advance to support my child's success (e.g., removal of item that typically links to the behavior, bringing extra snacks on a community outing).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I provide responses that naturally link to the challenging behavior (e.g., child throws a toy, adult removes toy).	☐	☐	☐	☐
I provide my toddler opportunities to practice new and age appropriate skills in place of challenging behavior.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Responding to Child's Distress and Challenging Behavior Notes: _____

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Sources

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