

## PROMOTING SOCIAL SKILLS IN THE TIME OF SOCIAL DISTANCING

### WHY YOU SHOULD CONTINUE TO PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL SKILLS IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Social-emotional development is especially important during early childhood. Promoting social skills in young children can help prevent challenging behavior and support the development of relationships with adults and peers. Both of these factors have been linked to academic success beyond childhood and into young adulthood. Children need multiple opportunities to practice social skills across activities and peers.

#### INSTEAD OF

#### TRY

Taking greetings out of the morning routine

Teaching and incorporating socially distant greetings

Removing whole group activities from your daily routine

Having group activities outside or breaking into smaller groups

Having a limited number of toys available in the classroom

Putting out multiple sets of the same toys so children can play together without sharing materials

Discouraging cooperative games among children

Provide new choices of cooperative games outdoors\* where children can safely work together

Using "No, Don't, Stop" language when children are not following new guidelines

Explain to children why the new rules are important to keep themselves and others safe. Tell them what they can do instead and practice these behaviors.

See next page for recommended guidelines for social distancing and additional resources

# FALL BACK INTO SCHOOL

## RESOURCES AND GUIDELINES FOR SAFETY IN EARLY LEARNING CENTERS

### SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES

- Keep children 3-6 feet apart when possible
  - Especially during naptime, meal time, and group activities (ex: circle time)
- Arrange centers to have more space in them and limit number of children in each center
- Keep children in small groups or pods. Avoid mixing across classrooms



### SUPPORTING ADULT AND CHILD WELLBEING

- Increase focus on talking about children's emotions
- Establish routines in the home/classroom
- Incorporate safety procedures into behavior expectations
- Engage in consistent self-care
- Seek out mental health support if desired

### COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Center for Disease Control (CDC)

American Academy of Pediatrics

Headstart

Tennessee Department of Education

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