



# Pyramid Model Quarterly Newsletter

A framework for promoting the social emotional development of young children

Volume 2, Issue 5

February 2019

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As we patiently wait for Spring to arrive, we might notice behavioral challenges and restlessness in the classroom. Encouraging positive socialization among children can help decrease in-class disruptions and negative interactions and increase the opportunity for children to practice and sustain their social skills!

## Positive Interactions

Social interaction plays an important role in the development of many skills during early childhood, including academic skills. Social skill levels vary among children- some find interaction with others fun and easy, while others may struggle with positive communication. Children sometimes need guidance building social skills and forming positive relationships with their peers. Encouraging healthy and positive communication important! Read on for some ideas on how you can promote social skills through classroom activities and books!

## Prompting and Acknowledging

Some children may need extra support and guidance in order to develop the social skills needed to form healthy relationships and communicate in a positive way. Two ways that you can encourage positive interactions among children are prompting and acknowledging.



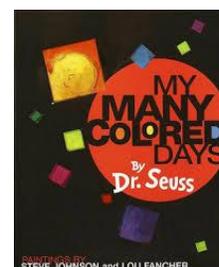
Prompting can be as simple as saying, "Lucy, ask Jordan if he wants to play with you." or, "Nick, who are you going to sit with at lunch?" Cues that suggest positive interaction with peers make it easier for children who have difficulties socializing. Acknowledgment is a great way to use positive feedback to enforce these healthy interactions. Providing positive, specific feedback increases the chance that they will continue to seek out interactions and maintain these skills.

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# Random Acts of Kindness

Looking for other ways to increase positive interactions in your classroom? Random Acts of Kindness (RAK) is a great resource for early childhood educators and professionals! Random Acts of Kindness provides [free](#) lesson plans and activities that focus on teaching social and emotional skills to children of all ages. The lessons vary from teaching manners, appropriate ways to express emotions, listening skills, how to show kindness, and much more. Below are some examples of activities you can download from RAK!

## Playing Fair

Divide students into uneven groups (one group of 3, one group of 6, one group of 9, etc.) and give each group a ball. Students toss the ball to each other, and every student must catch the ball at least once. The first group to complete passing the ball around wins. After the game, have a discussion with the students about what they thought was fair or unfair about the game, and go over what fairness and unfairness mean. This activity teaches respect, consideration, and teamwork!

## What Do You Hear?

Have your students put their heads down or cover their eyes and listen to identify different sounds you make for them (pencil tapping, stapler stapling, etc.) and have them raise their hand and guess what it is. Have them make noises for their peers to guess, and then discuss how difficult/easy it was to identify the sounds. This teaches respect and listening skills!

For complete lesson plans on these activities and more visit RAK's website [here!](#)



## Read Across America Day/ Dr. Seuss's Birthday

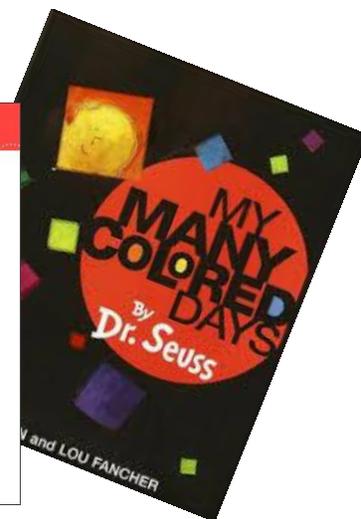
March 2<sup>nd</sup> is Dr. Seuss's birthday and Read Across America Day! To celebrate and incorporate activities that promote social and emotional development, read "My Many Colored Days" with your students! This colorful and easy-to-read book focuses on a boy and the various emotions he feels, conceptualized with different colors.

Book Nooks are free resource of the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) that provides educators and parents with fun activities to do with children after reading a particular book. Book Nook activities encourage social and emotional skill development. Read more about Book Nooks [here](#).

Here are a couple of Book Nook activities to do with your students after reading "My Many Colored Days"!

-Draw or print out the boy from the book in different colors and have students randomly pick the boy out of a hat or bag and have them describe the emotion the boy felt when he was that particular color.

-Make puppets out of printed animal cut outs and let your students retell the story with them! Print outs and other Book Nook activities can be found [here!](#)



# Brain Breaks for Cold and Rainy Days

February has given us some nasty weather, which prevents children from being able to participate in physical activities outdoors during their breaks. Being cooped up inside all day without some sort of movement break can affect their performance in class. Incorporate Brain Breaks into your class routine during these cold and rainy days to help relieve any built-up energy that your students may have! Brain breaks are quick and easy, allowing your kids to have a bit of fun in between lessons and increase their ability to focus. Here are a few brain breaks to try with your students this month!



## Find it Fast!

Select an object in the room and tell your students a distinct characteristic about it (its color, material, shape, etc.). The goal is for the students to identify the object and stand by it as quickly as possible.

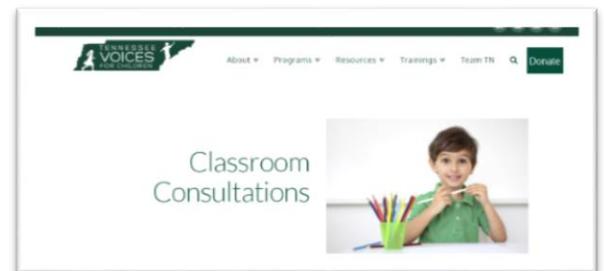
## 5-4-3-2-1

Have your students stand up and repeat a sequence of movements of your choosing. For example, you could say, "Do five jumping jacks, four toe touches, three star jumps, walk two laps around the classroom, and do one sit up."

## Dance Party!

This is an easy one! Turn on a fun, upbeat song and let your students show off their best and craziest moves. If you want to mix it up, pause the song randomly throughout the dance and have children freeze where they are! Playing freeze dance also promotes impulse control in young children.

Do you need some more specific support around challenging behavior? Our Classroom Consultation program can help! The Classroom Consultant works with the teacher and offers strategies and resources to increase teacher practices around the areas identified. This service is offered at **no cost** to teachers at child serving centers, preschools, elementary schools, and Head Starts across Tennessee. To request a classroom consultation, check out our [website](#) or contact our staff below.



Tennessee Voices for Children Early Childhood Program appreciates the work that you do and wants to provide you with ongoing support.

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