



Section C: Key Components of a DSP



A program of

SickKids®

Five Domains

- **Communication:** How I understand you and talk to others
- **Gross Motor:** How I move my body
- **Fine Motor:** How I use my hands
- **Problem Solving:** How I explore and figure things out
- **Social Emotional:** How I show feelings and act around others

Sections of the Developmental Support Plan

- **Cover Page** (Child's name, picture, age, date DSP was created)
- **Why Our Relationship Matters** (benefits)

Each Domain has the following sections:

- **What I Can Already Do** (child's strengths)
- **My Next Goal** (developmental goal)
- **How You Can Help Me Reach My Goal** (strategies)
- **Why This Is Important** (benefits)

Hand in Hand

Growing Together Every Day

Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion
IEMHP

A program of
SickKids

This Developmental Support Plan is full of activities created to help your child reach his/her developmental goals. These are activities you can do with your child during everyday routines such as:

- Meal time
- Story time
- Play time
- Tidy up time
- Walking and playing outside
- Quiet time



Remember you are your child's favourite toy!

This plan was developed for Emma

Age (Months): 8 months



On (date): February 17, 2021

Why Our Relationship Matters

Hand in Hand Growing Together Every Day

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL MILESTONES

Why our relationship matters...

0-3 mths (2 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I am new to this world and everything around me is strange and unfamiliar, except you. I have been listening to your voice as I have been growing and know that you will be taking good care of me as I grow even more. You will start to learn my cues and what I need, as my senses develop and I start to understand them. I need you to be near me so that I can see your face, hear your voice, feel your skin and smell your familiar scent. When you are nearby when I need you, and you consistently try to read my cues and meet my needs that helps me learn that I can trust you to help me understand the world around me, and that it is not so scary a place.



3-8 mths (6 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I am beginning to understand who the important people in my life are. You are a very important part of my development. When you consistently respond to my needs I learn that I can trust you to be there for me. You know when I need to be fed, changed or just held. Just like how you read my cues, I am learning to read your facial expressions and your tone of voice, but I also notice when you seem angry which can sometimes scare me. When you make eye-contact with me, and get down to my level it helps me interact with you. You play with me when I am happy, and you hold me when I am sad, this lets me know that you care about me which creates our bond. This special bond helps me grow.

9-14 mths (12 mth ASQ:SE-2)

I am curious about my world and like to explore the world around me, but I still need you near for when I am unsure. I like my new toys, but you are still my favourite, so when you aren't around I notice. Let me know when you are leaving, so I can prepare myself. I'm starting to mimic the sounds you make when you speak. When we have a conversation, I learn more words and will soon use them myself. I am learning to move around to explore my environment. I am becoming my own person with different likes and dislikes, and show my emotions as I feel them. I am beginning to become independent but still need you around to help me grow.



Relationships Drive Development

Why Our Relationship Matters:

I am beginning to understand who the important people in my life are. You are a very important part of my development. When you consistently respond to my needs I learn that I can trust you to be there for me. You know when I need to be fed, changed or just held. Just like how you read my cues, I am learning to read your facial expressions and your tone of voice, but I also notice when you seem angry which can sometimes scare me. When you make eye-contact with me, and get down to my level it helps me interact with you. You play with me when I am happy, and you hold me when I am sad, this lets me know that you care about me which creates our bond. This special bond helps me grow.



HiH: Social-Emotional Domain

 How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others 		
What I can already do	My next goal	How you can help me reach my goal
		1.
		2.
		3.
Why this is important:		

What I Can Already Do: See My Strengths

- For some, seeing their child's strengths is blocked out by all the challenges
- Within the plan, you need to acknowledge the child's strengths (skills that have been achieved/mastered) and review these with the parent/caregiver
- You need to build on strengths and if you don't write them down, frankly, you too may forget or be overwhelmed by what may not be happening for the child



How To Identify Strengths

How do we integrate a strength-based approach into this process?

Ask yourself these key questions:

- What is the child able to do now related to this domain?
- How can I build on what they can do to support the goal that we are setting?
- Is the goal too big – can I break it up?
- Are there strengths in other domains that I need to acknowledge here and integrate into my strategies?

What I Can Already Do

 How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others 		
What I can already do	My next goal	How you can help me reach my goal
I look at you when you talk to me		1.
		2.
		3.
Why this is important:		

My Next Goal: Setting Developmental Goals

- Goals focus on a child's skill or behavior
- Goals reflect a child's ability or skill level not a chronological milestone
- Goals should be challenging but tangible
- Keep goals simple – one sentence – but very specific and no technical language
- Avoid language such as “He will continue to....”, or “She will be able to...”
- Use positive language

Choose the Goal

The screenshot shows a digital document viewer interface. At the top, there is a toolbar with icons for save, star, share, print, search, and navigation. Below the toolbar is a 'Bookmarks' sidebar on the left, listing various documents. The main content area displays the title 'Developmental Support Strategies SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others' with an icon of two people. The document is organized into sections: 'ENCOURAGING ATTACHMENT', 'ESTABLISHING AND STRENGTHENING A BOND', and 'SELF-REGULATION'. Each section includes an 'Overall Objective' in an orange box and a 'Goal' with a page number.

Developmental Support Strategies
SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:
How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

Contents

ENCOURAGING ATTACHMENT

Overall Objective:
"I know that I can count on you to respond quickly and consistently when I am upset or in distress."

Attachment
Goal: When I am in distress (e.g. sad, angry, frustrated, upset, sick) I will cue my caregiver to help me calm down by crying or using facial expressions and gestures..... 150

ESTABLISHING AND STRENGTHENING A BOND

Overall Objective:
"Our relationship matters, and when we spend one-on-one time we are working on the connection that we share."

Creating an Emotional Bond
Goal: I will establish an emotional bond with my primary caregiver 152

Strengthening the Bond
Goal: I will use one on one time to strengthen my bond with my primary caregiver..... 154

Engaging in Serve and Return Interactions
Goal: I will strengthen the connections in my brain through serve and return interactions with my primary caregiver(s) 155

SELF-REGULATION

Overall Objective
"As I am developing my emotions I will need your support to learn how to regulate them, along with my attention and behaviour. This includes my knowledge of what is safe or unsafe, how I can hold my attention, and be able to calm myself when I get upset."



Regulation of Emotions
Goal: I will learn to recognize what I am feeling and communicate my different emotions. 158

Attention Regulation
Goal: I will stay with one activity for an extended period of time/ I will play with just one thing at a time..... 160

Bookmarks

- DSP Manual - Table of Contents
- Why our relationship matters...
- Social Emotional Milestones Overviews
- Supporting Social and Emotional Development
- Using the Developmental Support Plan Strategies Database
- Communication Strategies - Table of Contents
- Gross Motor Strategies - Table of Contents
- Fine Motor Strategies - Table of Contents
- Problem Solving Strategies - Table of Contents
- Social Emotional Strategies - Contents**
- Sample DSP - Baby
- Sample DSP - Toddler

My Next Goal

 How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others 		
What I can already do	My next goal	How you can help me reach my goal
I look at you when you talk to me	When I am in distress (e.g. sad, angry, frustrated, upset, sick) I will cue my caregiver to help me calm down by crying or using facial expressions and gestures.	1.
		2.
		3.
Why this is important:		

My Next Goal: Setting Developmental Goals

- Goals are not strategies
- Goals are about a child not about a parent/caregiver

Example:

Mom will read to Emma 3 times a day

VS

Emma will point to pictures in a familiar book

How You Can Help Me Reach My Goal: Developing Strategies

Guiding Principles:

- Strategies have to be relationship-based
- Strategies have to be simple – not a complicated recipe
- Strategies have to be integrated into everyday routines as much as possible
- Strategies are about action – what can the parent do to support the successful achievement of the goal?
- Strategies have to reflect the family's culture
- Strategies should not include jargon – this is not about you showing off your knowledge
- Strategies have to be realistic – what is the point of a complicated strategy if they won't do it?
- You must always provide at **minimum 3 strategies** with the hope that one will be a fit

Select Three Strategies

Bookmarks X

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- 🔖 DSP Manual - Table of Contents
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- 🔖 **Social Emotional Strategies - Contents**
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Developmental Support Strategies

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL: 



How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

ENCOURAGING ATTACHMENT

Overall Objective:
"I know that I can count on you to respond quickly and consistently when I am upset or in distress."

Attachment	
Goal: When I am in distress (e.g. sad, angry, frustrated, upset, sick) I will cue my caregiver to help me calm down by crying or using facial expressions and gestures.	
All Ages	If I am in another room and am distressed, call out to me to let me know you are coming! I know your voice and it will comfort me to know that you hear me and are on your way.
0-6 months	When I cry, pick me up promptly and comfort me.
0-12 months	Whether my distress is due to a physical or emotional issue, promptly respond with comfort. This will help me learn that you are emotionally available to me. This is when I start to form a model for what healthy relationships should look like.
0-12 months	Help me find ways to soothe myself, either through use of a comfort toy, my thumb, music or a soft blanket, so when you can't come right away I will search for these things to help me to soothe myself.
0-12 months	Respond to every cry with a soothing voice or touch. Pick me up when I cry so I learn that I can count on you to meet my needs when I'm in distress.
0-12 months	Ensure that I am with a consistent caregiver(s) throughout the day so I always know where to turn when I am in distress.
0-12 months	Observe my patterns and the events or time of day when I am most likely to get distressed. Ensure that you are there to help me during these times.
0-12 months	Hearing your voice regularly helps me feel safe and feel that I am in a familiar space.
0-12 months	As I explore different setting or environments, stay close to me so that you are physically and emotionally available to be my secure base from which to explore.
0-12 months	If I get distressed in an unfamiliar environment, comfort me right away. Knowing you are near me in a new space will help me feel more confident about exploring.
0-12 months	It is not easy to figure out what I need or want when I have no words to communicate with you. Interpreting my cues and responding appropriately signals to me that you understand me and are taking my cues seriously. This shows me how much you love me.
0-12 months	Sometimes I just need to be reassured that you are here for me. If I fuss or cry respond to me and let me know that you are around when I need you.
0-18 months	Hold and cuddle me when I am upset. I need to be comforted when I am feeling sad, mad, frustrated, and especially when I am crying. This simple act will tell me that you are here for

How You Can Help Me Reach My Goals

 How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others 		
What I can already do	My next goal	How you can help me reach my goal
I look at you when you talk to me	When I am in distress (e.g. sad, angry, frustrated, upset, sick) I will cue my caregiver to help me calm down by crying or using facial expressions and gestures.	1. If I am in another room and am distressed, call out to me to let me know you are coming! I know your voice and it will comfort me to know that you hear me and are on your way.
		2. Help me find ways to soothe myself, either through use of a comfort toy, my thumb, music or a soft blanket, so when you can't come right away I will search for these things to help me to soothe myself.
		3. Observe my patterns and the events or time of day when I am most likely to get distressed. Ensure that you are there to help me during these times.
Why this is important:		

Why This is Important

- Each group of strategies speak to specific benefits
- You will find these at the end of each set of strategies in the manual
- These benefits outline the importance and the rationale for why the strategies that have been chosen are helpful in this area of development
- There are several listed, and the practitioner can choose any and all combinations of the benefits listed

Choose the Why This is Important Benefits

Bookmarks X

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Developmental Support Strategies

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:





How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others

	me and help me learn to trust you. Our relationship is being built on trust and that I can rely on you to meet my many needs.
0-18 months	When I am crying it could be because I am feeling lonely, overwhelmed, scared or sick. Comfort me and acknowledge that you understand how I am feeling. Singing a favourite song or talking calmly will help to settle me.
0-48 months	Be warm, responsive, and affectionate with all children. I will learn from observing your interactions with others.
0-48 months	Try and keep my routines predictable. Even as my routines change over these early years, keeping them as consistent as possible will give me a sense of safety and security.
18-60 months	Talk to me about my daily routine. If we are doing something different, give me lots of advance notice so I can prepare myself. I like knowing what's coming next, so talking to me about what my day is going to be like, and giving me some input in my routine helps build our relationship and my trust in you.

Why this is important... BE SURE TO ADD SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE CHILD/CAREGIVER

- Forming a secure attachment with you is something we need to work on in the first year of my life.
- Responding to my cries or distress promptly help me learn how to calm down and eventually, how to soothe myself.
- Attachment is a relationship that develops between me and my primary caregiver(s). As you consistently, predictably and lovingly meet my needs, I learn that I can count on you to be there for me. This is how our trusting relationship is built.
- Comforting me when I am upset communicates to me that I can depend on you. When I am upset or sad, pick me up and comfort me. My cries are my way of letting you know that I need something from you. Being able to count on you to take care of my needs is a big part of our relationship.
- I need you in different ways at different times. You are my playmate, my nurturer, my protector in all the ways that you take care of me. I know that I can trust you to make good decisions about what is best for me and it makes me feel loved and respected!
- Letting me know that you are still close when you are out of my sight helps me feel secure.

Enter the Why This is Important

 How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others 		
What I can already do	My next goal	How you can help me reach my goal
I look at you when you talk to me	When I am in distress (e.g. sad, angry, frustrated, upset, sick) I will cue my caregiver to help me calm down by crying or using facial expressions and gestures.	1. If I am in another room and am distressed, call out to me to let me know you are coming! I know your voice and it will comfort me to know that you hear me and are on your way.
		2. Help me find ways to soothe myself, either through use of a comfort toy, my thumb, music or a soft blanket, so when you can't come right away I will search for these things to help me to soothe myself.
		3. Observe my patterns and the events or time of day when I am most likely to get distressed. Ensure that you are there to help me during these times.
<p>Why this is important:</p> <p>Responding to my cries or distress promptly help me learn how to calm down and eventually, how to soothe myself. Comforting me when I am upset communicates to me that I can depend on you. When I am upset or sad, pick me up and comfort me. My cries are my way of letting you know that I need something from you. Being able to count on you to take care of my needs is a big part of our relationship.</p>		

A Completed DSP Must Include...

- "Why Our Relationship Matters" chosen from the resource manual
- **Each domain must include the following in order to be complete:**
 - 1 "What I Can Already Do"
 - Skills that the child has mastered e.g. "I can..." that must come from your observations, parent/caregiver discussions, or the ASQs
 - 1 "Developmental Goal" chosen from the resource manual
 - 3 "How You Can Help Me Reach My Goal" strategies listed under the corresponding Developmental Goal
 - 1 or more "Why This Is Important" benefits of the strategies chosen

Customization

- DSPs are meant to be tailored to the needs of the child and the family
- We strongly encourage that the DSP be adjusted to reflect the values, beliefs and routines of the child and their family

Example:



Sing “row, row, row, your boat,” to me **VS** Sing “twinkle, twinkle, little star,” to me.

Give me my favourite toy to help calm me down when I am upset

VS

Give me my Sophie the Giraffe toy to help calm me down when I begin to cry

Customizing the DSP

 How I Show Feelings and Act Around Others 		
What I can already do	My next goal	How you can help me reach my goal
I look at you when you talk to me	When I am in distress (e.g. sad, angry, frustrated, upset, sick) I will cue my caregiver to help me calm down by crying or using facial expressions and gestures.	1. If I am in another room and am distressed, call out to me to let me know you are coming! I know your voice and it will comfort me to know that you hear me and are on your way.
		2. Help me find ways to soothe myself. Leave with me with things that bring me comfort like Sophie the Giraffe, Snoopy (stuffed dog) and my green soft blankie, so when you can't come right away I will search for these things to help me to soothe myself.
		3. Observe my patterns and the events or time of day when I am most likely to get distressed. Ensure that you are there to help me during these times.
<p>Why this is important:</p> <p>Responding to my cries or distress promptly help me learn how to calm down and eventually, how to soothe myself. Comforting me when I am upset communicates to me that I can depend on you. When I am upset or sad, pick me up and comfort me. My cries are my way of letting you know that I need something from you. Being able to count on you to take care of my needs is a big part of our relationship.</p>		



Sharing the Plan

- The Developmental Support Plan is a shared document
- With consent from the family, the DSP **should be shared with all professionals working with the child** – physician, childcare, social workers, therapists etc.
- When you initially share the plan, with consent, be open to suggestions – each professional brings a valuable lens to understanding the child and may have some sage advice or suggestions
- With consent from the family, the DSP should also be shared with other caregivers, so that all of the adults in the child's life are incorporating these strategies in their everyday interactions with that child

Wait times need to be turned into an opportunity

- Developmental Support Plans can provide families with strategies that may not be obvious
- The DSP is **not a substitute** for intensive services – get them on the wait lists!!
- Doing **something** is better than doing nothing
- While the focus is on the child's development the subtext is all about parent interaction with their child

Hand in Hand: Video Demonstration



A program of



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