



Caring Through Crisis



**SOCIAL EMOTIONAL
SAFETY DISASTER TOOLKIT
FOR TWO YEAR OLDS**

Caring Through Crisis

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INTRODUCTION

Creating a safe social-emotional learning (SEL) environment is foundational for fostering resilience, emotional intelligence, and effective learning in young children, especially within family childcare settings. In moments of stress, such as natural disasters or other emergencies, a safe SEL environment becomes even more critical. The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) has developed a toolkit aimed at equipping family childcare providers with the tools and resources needed to support SEL development and emergency preparedness. This toolkit empowers providers to establish a safe, nurturing environment where children and families feel protected and emotionally supported.



The Benefits of the NAFCC's SEL Safety Disaster Toolkit

Benefits of the NAFCC's SEL Safety Disaster Toolkit

NAFCC's toolkit is designed to support providers in embedding SEL practices into their daily routines, equipping them with strategies to foster both a sense of safety and emotional well-being. The toolkit offers guidance on implementing SEL frameworks, tools to enhance emergency preparedness, and resources to help children and families feel secure in the face of adversity. Here's how the toolkit benefits children and families:

- *Strengthened Resilience: By learning SEL strategies, providers can teach children how to manage stress and adapt to challenges, building resilience and emotional stability.*
- *Enhanced Communication: The toolkit encourages open communication between providers, children, and families, helping everyone to navigate stressful situations together.*
- *Support for Diverse Needs: The toolkit is designed with flexibility in mind, enabling providers to tailor SEL practices to meet the unique needs of each child, including those with diverse backgrounds or special needs.*



Why SEL is Essential in Family Childcare Settings?

Social-emotional learning forms the basis of all interactions, relationships, and learning experiences. SEL helps children develop the skills they need to understand and manage their emotions, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. In family childcare, where environments are more intimate and personalized, providers are uniquely positioned to model and support SEL practices. Creating a safe SEL environment allows children to feel valued, helping them to build resilience and cope with challenging circumstances.

Implementing SEL Frameworks in Family Childcare Classrooms

To create a safe SEL environment, family childcare providers can incorporate elements of these frameworks into their daily routines and classroom interactions. Here are some practical strategies:

- **Establish Consistent Routines:** Children feel secure when they know what to expect. Consistent routines not only build trust but also give children opportunities to practice SEL skills, like turn-taking and cooperation.
- **Teach and Model Emotion Regulation:** Incorporate activities that help children identify and express their feelings, such as “feeling check-ins” where children share how they’re feeling using visuals or words. This helps children build self-awareness and recognize emotions in others.

Why SEL is Essential in Family Childcare Settings?

- **Create a Safe, Calming Space:** Designate a small area in the classroom as a “calm corner” where children can go to self-regulate. Stock it with sensory tools, books about emotions, and comfort items. This space can serve as a retreat during stressful moments.
- **Practice Mindfulness Daily:** Engage children in short, daily mindfulness activities. Breathing exercises, guided imagery, or “mindful listening” sessions can help children build focus and reduce anxiety.
- **Encourage Family Engagement:** Involve families in SEL practices by sharing simple activities and language they can use at home. Hosting family workshops on SEL topics can reinforce a sense of community and continuity between home and childcare.

Key SEL Frameworks for Early Education

- Several established SEL frameworks can guide family childcare providers in creating a supportive environment. These frameworks offer structured approaches for fostering emotional and social skills in young children:
- **The CASEL Framework:** The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework is widely recognized in early childhood education for its five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Family providers can implement these competencies by creating routines that encourage children to identify their emotions, practice self-regulation, and collaborate with peers.

Why SEL is Essential in Family Childcare Settings?

- **Responsive Classroom:** This approach focuses on integrating SEL into everyday learning through routines, language, and interactions. Family childcare providers can use strategies from Responsive Classroom, such as morning meetings, positive reinforcement, and interactive modeling, to help children feel respected and connected.
- **Mindfulness-Based Approaches:** Mindfulness practices encourage children to focus on the present moment, which can help them manage stress and build emotional awareness. Simple mindfulness exercises like breathing activities, sensory explorations, and grounding techniques can be easily integrated into family childcare settings to create a calming atmosphere.

Conclusion

Creating a safe SEL environment within family childcare settings can profoundly impact children's emotional and social well-being. The NAFCC's SEL Safety Toolkit provides family childcare providers with the resources they need to support these critical skills, even in challenging circumstances. By using SEL frameworks like CASEL, the Pyramid Model, and Responsive Classroom, providers can implement strategies that help children feel safe, supported, and ready to learn. This approach doesn't only benefit the children; it strengthens the entire family community, fostering a resilient, connected, and prepared environment for everyone involved.

Resources:

Social Emotional Learning

Check out these Social Emotional Frameworks you can easily apply in your family childcare learning space. Provided is a short description of each framework, websites, and YouTube link.

The CASEL Framework

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework outlines five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies can be integrated into daily routines to help children identify their emotions, practice self-regulation, and collaborate with peers.

- Website: [What Is the CASEL Framework?](#)
- YouTube Video: [CASEL's SEL Framework](#)

The Pyramid Model

The Pyramid Model offers a tiered approach to support social-emotional development and address challenging behavior. It emphasizes nurturing relationships, supportive environments, targeted instruction, and individualized interventions. Implementing this model can help create calm, structured environments that promote emotional safety.

- Website: [Basics - National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#)
- YouTube Video: [Pyramid Model Overview](#)

Resources:

Social Emotional Learning

Responsive Classroom

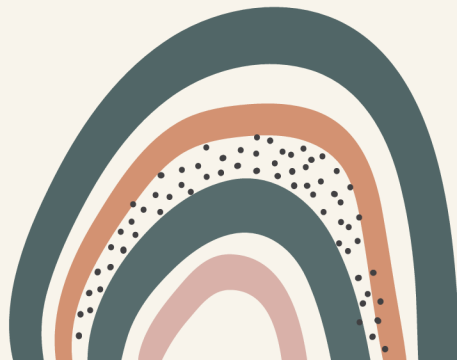
Responsive Classroom is an approach that integrates SEL into everyday learning through routines, language, and interactions. Strategies such as morning meetings, positive reinforcement, and interactive modeling can help children feel respected and connected.

- Website: [Responsive Classroom](#)
- YouTube Video: [Responsive Classroom Overview](#)

Mindfulness-Based Approaches

Mindfulness practices encourage children to focus on the present moment, helping them manage stress and build emotional awareness. Simple exercises like breathing activities, sensory explorations, and grounding techniques can be easily integrated into family childcare settings to create a calming atmosphere.

- Website: [Mindfulness in Early Childhood Education](#)
- YouTube Video: [Mindfulness for Kids](#)



Resources:

Social Emotional Learning

Responsive Classroom

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Reference

CASEL Framework

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (n.d.). What is the CASEL framework? Retrieved from <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/>

CASEL. (2018, October 23). CASEL's SEL framework [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikehX9o1Jbl>

Pyramid Model

National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations. (n.d.). Pyramid model overview: Basics.

Retrieved from <https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/overview/basics/>

National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations. (2017, October 20). Pyramid model overview

[Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Qb3DXY_7fU

Responsive Classroom

Responsive Classroom. (n.d.). Responsive classroom approach overview. Retrieved from

<https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/>

Responsive Classroom. (2016, March 8). Responsive classroom overview [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iXTtR7IfWU>

Mindfulness-Based Approaches

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). (2017, March). Mindfulness in early childhood education. Retrieved from

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2017/mindfulness>

Mindful Kids. (2016, June 23). Mindfulness for kids [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wf5K3pP2IUQ>

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ACTIVITIES FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

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THE IMPORTANCE OF FOSTERING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Two-year-olds are at a pivotal stage of development, where social-emotional learning (SEL) begins to take root. At this age, children are learning to identify their emotions, connect with others, and navigate their world with growing independence. Fostering SEL during this stage lays the foundation for emotional resilience, empathy, and positive relationships throughout life.

Why Social-Emotional Learning Matters in Early Childhood

One of the most important aspects of SEL for two-year-olds is helping them recognize and express their emotions. At this age, children experience a wide range of feelings but may not yet have the words to describe them. By teaching simple emotional vocabulary, such as "happy," "sad," or "angry," and modeling appropriate responses, caregivers can help children build emotional awareness and regulation skills.

Another critical component of SEL for two-year-olds is developing empathy and social skills. Through play and guided interactions, children begin to understand that others have feelings, too. Simple activities like sharing toys or comforting a friend can teach empathy and cooperation. Caregivers play a vital role in facilitating these moments and offering gentle encouragement when conflicts arise.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF FOSTERING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Creating a predictable, nurturing environment is essential for fostering SEL in two-year-olds. Consistent routines provide a sense of security, helping children feel safe and confident as they explore. A stable environment also allows children to focus on building their social-emotional skills without the stress of unpredictability.

Incorporating SEL into daily activities can be simple and impactful. Singing songs about feelings, reading books that explore emotions, and engaging in role-play with toys are excellent ways to teach SEL in an age-appropriate manner. These activities not only support social-emotional growth but also strengthen the bond between caregivers and children.

Fostering SEL in two-year-olds is an investment in their overall development and future success. By teaching them to recognize their emotions, build relationships, and navigate social situations, caregivers set the stage for a lifetime of positive interactions and emotional well-being. SEL is not just a framework—it's a gift that helps children thrive.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF FOSTERING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Building Healthy Relationships: Social-emotional learning teaches children to form healthy, positive relationships, beginning with primary caregivers and extending to family members, friends, and teachers. A strong sense of attachment helps young children feel secure, promoting a willingness to explore and engage with others.

Emotional Regulation: The ability to manage one's emotions is a key aspect of SEL. Even infants begin learning emotional regulation by observing the behavior of caregivers and by experiencing a calm, supportive environment. As toddlers begin expressing a wider range of emotions, SEL helps them learn self-regulation skills, which are crucial for navigating social situations and managing stress.

Enhanced Empathy and Compassion: When caregivers model empathy and understanding, even very young children start to develop these qualities themselves. By learning to recognize emotions in others, infants and toddlers can begin to build empathy, which lays the groundwork for compassionate behavior and ethical decision-making.

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ACTIVITIES FOR TWO YEAR OLDS



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FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Mini Music Parade (Rhythmic Play and Social Interaction)



- **Materials:** Small pots or containers, Wooden spoons or safe musical instruments (tambourine, maracas)

Instructions:

- Give each child a container and spoon, or a musical instrument if available.
- Lead a small “parade” around the room, encouraging children to make music, march, and stop/start with you.
- Benefits: Encourages rhythm, social interaction, listening skills, and gross motor coordination.

NAFCC Standards

- Developmental Learning Activities: Develops rhythm and listening skills.
- Relationships: Encourages social engagement and cooperative play.

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FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Sensory Bin Exploration (Hand - Eye Coordination and Sensory)



Materials:

Large plastic bin, rice/pasta/pom-poms, scoops, small containers, and plastic spoons.

Instructions:

- Fill the bag with water, a drop of food coloring, and the small items.
- Seal the bag tightly (use tape over the seal for extra security) and place it on the floor during tummy time.
- Encourage the baby to touch and push the bag, watching how the contents move.
- Benefits: Encourages sensory exploration, hand-eye coordination, and motor skills.

NAFCC Standards

- Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Encourages hands-on exploration and fine motor skill development.
- Health and Safety: Ensure non-toxic materials and supervise for choking hazards.

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FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Feelings Faces Matching (SEL and Hand - Eye Coordination)



- **Materials:** Printed or hand-drawn emotion faces (laminated if possible), Velcro or magnetic backing, and a matching board.

Instructions:

- Show children the different emotion faces and name each emotion (happy, sad, surprised, etc.).
- Place matching faces on the board and encourage children to match identical emotions or imitate the expressions.

NAFCC Standards

- Relationships: Supports social-emotional growth by helping children identify and express feelings.
- Curriculum: Incorporates SEL to encourage emotional awareness.

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FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Simple Sorting Games (Fine Motor Skills)



Materials:

- Materials: Large buttons, blocks, or toys in different colors or shapes, and sorting trays or containers.

Instructions:

- Place materials in a pile.
- Show children how to sort by color, size, or shape.
- Let them practice sorting with gentle guidance.

NAFCC Standards

- Curriculum: Promotes cognitive skills like classification and sorting.
- Learning Environment: Provides age-appropriate materials to encourage active learning.

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Nature Walk and Collection (Physical Development)



Materials:

- Small buckets or bags, magnifying glasses (optional).

Instructions:

- Take children on a short walk in a safe outdoor space.
- Encourage them to collect natural items like leaves, rocks, or flowers.
- Discuss the items they collect, focusing on color, texture, or shape.

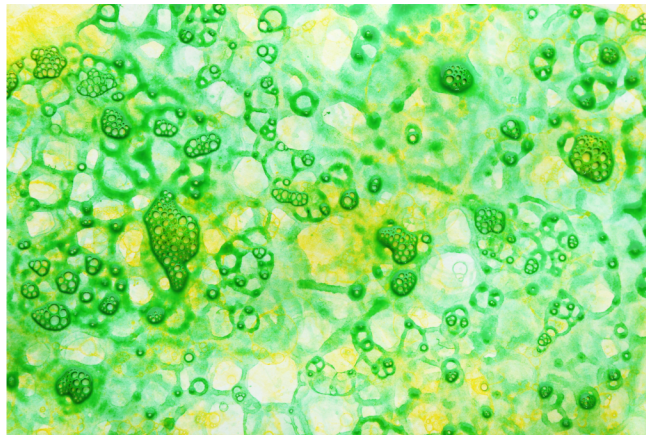
NAFCC Standards

- Environment: Supports outdoor exploration and physical development.
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Promotes curiosity and a connection to nature.

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FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

Bubble Painting (Fine Motor and Creativity)



Materials: Non-toxic paint, dish soap, water, plastic cups, straws, white paper.

Instructions:

- Mix paint, a few drops of dish soap, and water in a cup.
- Show children how to blow gently into the cup using a straw to create bubbles.
- Place a piece of paper over the bubbles to capture the design.
- Supervise closely to prevent children from inhaling or drinking the mixture.

NAFCC Standards

- Curriculum: Encourages creativity and fine motor skill development.
- Health and Safety: Use safe, non-toxic materials and provide close supervision.

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FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

"Move Like an Animal" Game (Gross Motor Skills)



Materials: None (optional pictures of animals to show).

Instructions:

- Call out an animal (e.g., bunny, turtle, cat) and demonstrate how it moves.
- Encourage children to mimic the movement.
- Add sounds or have them guess the animal you're imitating.

NAFCC Standards

- Curriculum: Enhances language skills and encourages imagination.
- Interactions: Supports positive communication and social interaction.



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SONGS FOR TWO YEAR OLDS



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SONGS FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

“Breathe, Think, Do” by Sesame Street

Focus: Teaching deep breathing and problem-solving.

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watchv=_mZbzDOpylA

“Sharing Song” by Raffi

Focus: Promotes sharing and turn-taking.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aa--Infw-GY>

Activity: Use the song during playtime to reinforce the concept of sharing.



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SONGS FOR INFANTS & TODDLER

“Calm Down Song” by Cocomelon

Focus: Helps children self-regulate emotions during moments of frustration or anxiety.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watchv=QkHQ0CYwjal>

Hokey Pokey” (Classic)

Focus: Builds body awareness and encourages fun interaction.

Activity: Add emotional cues like “Put your happy face in!”



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MINDFULNESS SNACKS FOR TWO YEAR OLDS



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MINDFUL SNACKS FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

FRUIT AND YOGURT PARFAIT



INGREDIENTS: UNSWEETENED YOGURT, DICED STRAWBERRIES OR BLUEBERRIES, AND UNSWEETENED WHOLE-GRAIN CEREAL.

HOW TO SERVE: LAYER THE YOGURT, FRUIT, AND CEREAL IN A SMALL CLEAR CUP.

MINDFULNESS TIP: TALK ABOUT THE COLORS AND TEXTURES, ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO TAKE SMALL BITES AND ENJOY EACH LAYER. DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF EATING HEALTHY.

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MINDFUL SNACKS FOR TWO YEAR OLDS

MINI VEGGIE ROLL-UPS



INGREDIENTS: WHOLE-GRAIN TORTILLA (SMALL SIZE)
CREAM CHEESE (OR HUMMUS FOR A DAIRY-FREE OPTION)
THINLY SHREDDED CARROTS, THINLY SLICED CUCUMBERS
THINLY SLICED BELL PEPPERS (RED, YELLOW, OR ORANGE FOR COLOR)

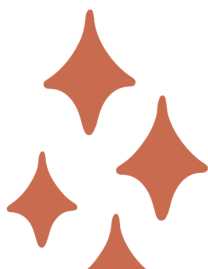
- HOW TO SERVE: SPREAD THE BASE: SPREAD A THIN LAYER OF CREAM CHEESE OR HUMMUS OVER THE ENTIRE TORTILLA.
- ADD VEGGIES: SPRINKLE SHREDDED CARROTS AND EVENLY LAYER THE CUCUMBERS AND BELL PEPPERS ON TOP.
- ROLL IT UP: ROLL THE TORTILLA TIGHTLY INTO A LOG. (OPTIONAL) SLICE INTO SMALL PINWHEELS THAT ARE EASY TO HOLD.
- SERVE AND EXPLORE: SERVE THE ROLL-UPS ON A PLATE. ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO TOUCH AND SMELL THE ROLL-UPS BEFORE TAKING A BITE.

MINDFULNESS TIP: ASK CHILDREN TO DESCRIBE THE COLORS THEY SEE IN THE ROLL-UP. ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE SMALL BITES AND LISTEN TO THE CRUNCH OF THE VEGGIES.



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RESOURCES



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THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN EARLY LEARNING FAMILY CHILDCARE SPACES



Creating a safe social-emotional learning (SEL) environment is foundational for fostering resilience, emotional intelligence, and effective learning in young children, especially within family childcare settings. In moments of stress, such as natural disasters or other emergencies, a safe SEL environment becomes even more critical.

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) has developed a toolkit aimed at equipping family childcare providers with the tools and resources needed to support SEL development and emergency preparedness. This toolkit empowers providers to establish a safe, nurturing environment where children and families feel protected and emotionally supported.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN EARLY LEARNING FAMILY CHILDCARE SPACES

The Role of Educators in Supporting SEL Frameworks

Family childcare providers play a pivotal role in implementing SEL frameworks, such as those developed by CASEL, the Pyramid Model, and other evidence-based approaches.

These frameworks provide practical strategies for teaching self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills. Educators are not just facilitators of learning; they are role models, guiding children to understand and express their emotions constructively.

By integrating SEL into daily routines, activities, and interactions, educators help children build a foundation of emotional intelligence that will serve them throughout their lives.

Benefits of Prioritizing SEL in Family Childcare

The benefits of prioritizing SEL in family childcare settings are profound and far-reaching:

1. **For Children:** SEL supports emotional regulation, boosts confidence, and enhances social skills. Children learn to manage stress, build relationships, and make thoughtful decisions—all of which are crucial for their academic and personal success.
2. **For Families:** Family childcare providers who emphasize SEL foster stronger partnerships with parents and caregivers. Families benefit from a supportive environment that values their involvement and equips them with tools to reinforce SEL at home.
3. **For Educators:** SEL frameworks create a positive and structured environment that helps educators manage challenges, build meaningful relationships, and feel a greater sense of fulfillment in their roles.
4. **For Communities:** SEL nurtures empathetic, socially responsible individuals who contribute positively to their communities, fostering a culture of kindness and inclusion.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN EARLY LEARNING FAMILY CHILDCARE SPACES

Creating and Sustaining Safe Spaces

To continue fostering SEL in family childcare spaces, educators must remain intentional and proactive in creating environments where children and families feel safe, respected, and valued.

Here are some strategies to sustain and strengthen SEL practices:

- **Model Emotional Awareness:** Children learn by observing the adults around them. Educators who demonstrate emotional regulation, empathy, and positive social interactions provide powerful examples for children to follow.
- **Embed SEL in Everyday Activities:** Incorporate SEL into daily routines, such as morning check-ins, storytime discussions about emotions, and cooperative play that teaches turn-taking and problem-solving.
- **Cultivate Inclusive Practices:** Celebrate diversity and create an environment where all children and families feel represented and respected. Use books, activities, and materials that reflect the varied cultures and experiences of the families in your care.
- **Engage Families in SEL:** Collaborate with families by sharing resources, hosting workshops, and providing updates on their child's social-emotional development. Strong family partnerships reinforce the SEL foundation built in the childcare space.
- **Prioritize Professional Development:** Continuous learning is essential for educators to stay updated on best practices in SEL. Attend workshops, join professional networks, and explore the latest research to deepen your understanding and effectiveness.

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Conclusion

Social-emotional learning is a cornerstone of high-quality family childcare, laying the foundation for healthy development, strong relationships, and lifelong success. By embracing SEL frameworks, family childcare providers create environment is where children and families feel empowered, supported, and connected.

The intentional integration of SEL practices ensures that family childcare spaces remain places of safety, growth, and joy. Together, we can cultivate the emotional well-being of children and families, shaping a brighter and more compassionate future for our communities.

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In times of disaster, accessing reliable support is crucial for family childcare providers and the families they serve. Below is a list of seven organizations offering disaster relief resources, including the

National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)

NAFCC provides resources and support to family childcare providers, including guidance on disaster preparedness and recovery.

Website: <https://www.nafcc.org/>

Email: info@nafcc.org

Phone: (202) 796-5700

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

FEMA offers assistance programs and resources for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

Website: <https://www.fema.gov/>

Disaster Assistance: <https://www.disasterassistance.gov/>

Phone: 1-800-621-3362

Email: Use the contact form on their website.

American Red Cross

Provides emergency assistance, disaster relief, and education within the United States.

Website: <https://www.redcross.org/>

Find Local Chapter: <https://www.redcross.org/find-your-local-chapter.html>

Phone: 1-800-733-2767

Email: Use the contact form on their website.



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Salvation Army USA

Offers disaster relief services, including food, shelter, and emotional support.

Website: <https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/>

Disaster Services: <https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/help-disaster-survivors/>

Phone: 1-800-725-2769

Email: *Use the contact form on their website.*

Save the Children

Focuses on children's needs during emergencies, providing relief and support to children and families.

Website: <https://www.savethechildren.org/>

Emergency Response: <https://www.savethechildren.org/us/what-we-do/emergency-response>

Phone: 1-800-728-3843

Email: supportercare@savechildren.org

Child Care Aware® of America

Provides resources and support for childcare providers, including disaster preparedness and recovery information.

Website: <https://www.childcareaware.org/>

Emergency Preparedness: <https://www.childcareaware.org/our-issues/crisis-and-disaster-resources/>

Phone: 1-800-424-2246

Email: info@childcareaware.org

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD)

A coalition of organizations that provide disaster-related services, including support for childcare providers.

Website: <https://www.nvoad.org/>

Phone: 1-703-778-5088