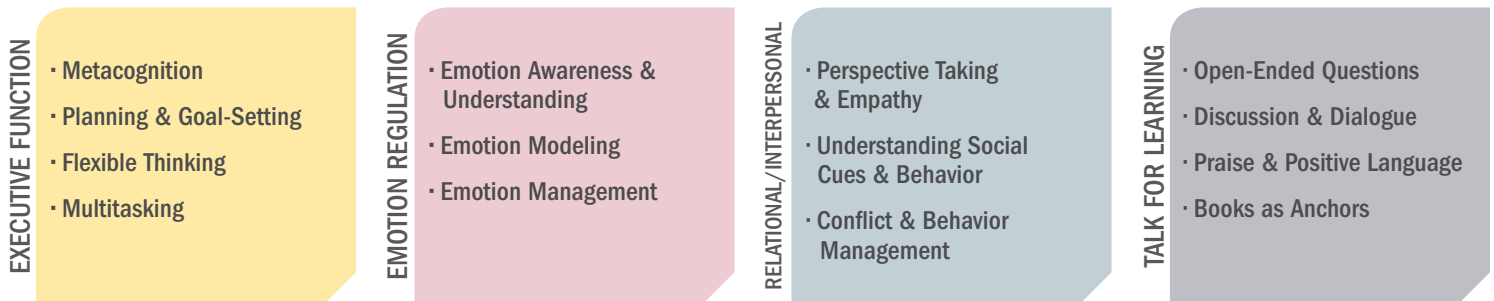


Promoting Cornerstone Educator Competencies

ISSUE: The early educator is the cornerstone of the learning environment. While leading engaging activities to build knowledge and language, she must scaffold social-emotional learning, manage challenging behaviors, and respond to unpredictability.

In this brief, we highlight four areas of competency that educators need to master in order to promote high-quality early learning environments.



Case Example

Miss Kris' preschool class is studying a unit about things that grow. Kris has just finished setting up containers of seeds, soil, and water for today's science activity station. "Finish cleaning up and walk to the rug. It is time for morning meeting," Kris announces. She watches as Jayden walks boisterously toward the rug, his hand knocking the big container of soil to the floor. The other children step through the dirt screaming, "Miss Kris, Jayden made a mess!" Kris' head begins to pound; her body starts to feel tense; her heart beats a little faster. She is aware of feeling helpless. She takes a deep breath and lets it out slowly. As she begins to calm down, Kris says, "Some soil spilled in the science area. If you have dirt on your shoes, come over here and I will help you clean it off. Otherwise please head to the rug." Brushing the dirt off shoes, she says, "Sometimes accidents happen. I know Jayden didn't mean to knock the soil over, he was just excited to get to our morning meeting." Jayden looks to the floor. Kris gives Jayden's shoulder a gentle squeeze. "Jayden, thank you for helping me clean up the dirt." Later, in the morning meeting, she says, "Sometimes it's hard when we make mistakes, especially if anyone sees us. When I make a mistake, I sometimes feel embarrassed. How do you feel when you make a mistake? Would anyone like to share?"

