



# Assessing the Social-Emotional Well-Being of Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

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## Research Support



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## Today's Focus

- Overview: Social-emotional development of children who are deaf or hard of hearing in elementary school
- The link between social-emotional development and academic achievement
- Assessment of social-emotional well-being: formal and informal approaches
- Some thoughts about intervention

## Why Are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children at Risk?

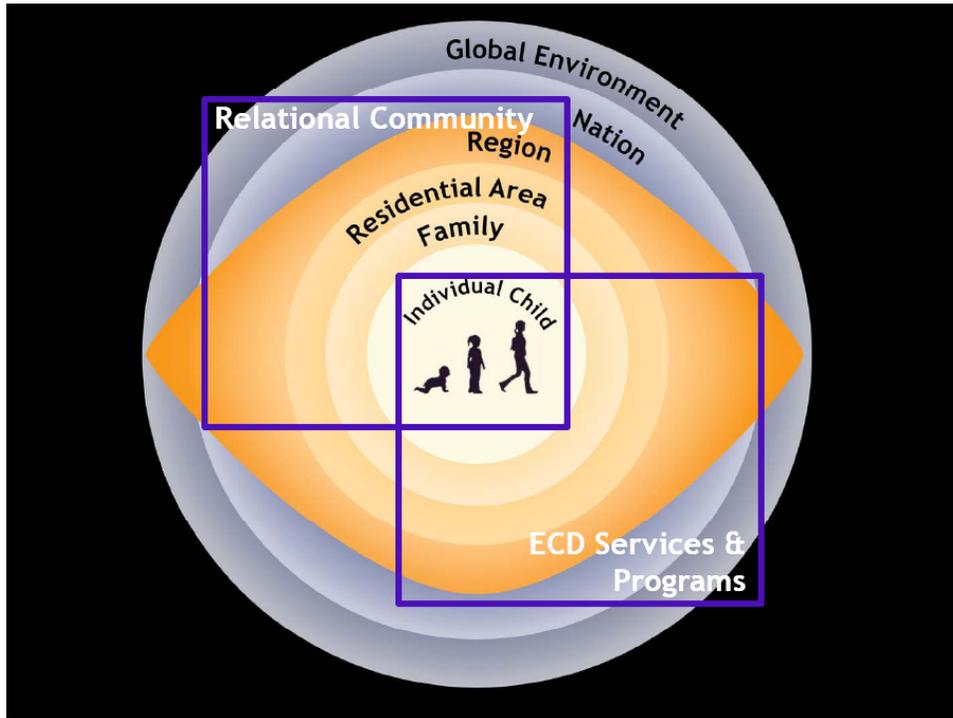
- **Most DHH children born to hearing parents**
- **Impact on effective and positive communication**
- **Challenges to building social networks across home, school, and community**

## Social Experiences of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children: What Do We Know?

- Preference for preschool playmates with the same hearing status (Antia, 1982; Brunberg, 2005)
- Mixed findings:
  - often do not establish close relationships with hearing peers (Stinson & Foster, 2000)
  - for most students, socialization did not seem to be problematic (Antia & Reed, 2010)
- Retrospective studies: **consistent reports of social isolation, rejection, and loneliness (Antia, Stinson, & Gaustad, 2002; Israelite, Ower, & Goldstein, 2002)**

What factors contribute to children's socioemotional development?





## An Ecological Framework

- Factors that influence socioemotional development include:
  - Various ecological settings in which a child interacts
    - Family
    - Peer group
    - School
    - Community or neighbourhood
  - Linkages between these systems (e.g., school-family communication; parent-professional partnerships)
  - The broader societal and political influences on each of these settings

Bronfenbrenner (1979); Weissberg, Caplan, & Sivo (1989)

## Importance of *social connections* within each of these ecological settings

For example, in school settings...

- “*Feeling connected:*” Concrete emotional links between students and the people in their schools (other children, teachers, staff)
- Students who feel connected to school – to teachers, to other students, to the school itself – do better academically.



## Socioemotional Competence

- Good receptive and expressive communication skills
- The capacity to think independently
- Capacity for self-direction and self-control
- Understanding the feelings, motivations, and needs of self and others
- The ability to tolerate frustration
- Flexibility in appropriately adapting to the needs of each particular situation
- Ability to rely on and be relied on by others
- Understanding and appreciating an individual’s own culture and values and those of others
- Using skilled behaviours to maintain healthy relations with others and to achieve socially approved goals

Greenberg & Kusche (1993)

“Competencies that are generally accepted as defining healthy social-emotional development are also applicable to helping individuals realize their academic and vocational potential”



(Feuerstein, 1980; Goleman, 1995)

## Social-Emotional Skills and Academic Outcomes: Is there a relationship?

- Association between behaviour problems in young children and various social-emotional skill deficits (Bierman & Welsh, 1997)
- These deficits increase risk of difficulties at school entry, negative peer relationships, and issues in academic achievement
- Importance of parents' and professionals' own understanding of critical socioemotional skills that they can model and teach (Calderon & Greenberg, 2000).

## Which style of teaching connects with students to influence learning?

- Attention to one's own agenda
- Not tuning into students
- Emotionally distant
- Uninvolved
- Angry more often
- More often punitive methods to restoring order
- Cold or controlling

- Tuned in to the child
- Responsive to child's needs, moods, interests, capabilities, letting them lead interactions
- Upbeat classroom climate
- Warmth and positive regard toward students
- Good classroom management, with clear but flexible expectations and routines

Academic outcomes differed depending on whether or not the children were at-risk or already doing well...

Hamre & Pianta (2005)

## What are implications of lacking these skills?

- **Behavioural problems**
  - Parent reports of children as aggressive, disobedient, and easily frustrated (Marschark, 1993).
- **Peer rejection**
- **Risk for academic underachievement**

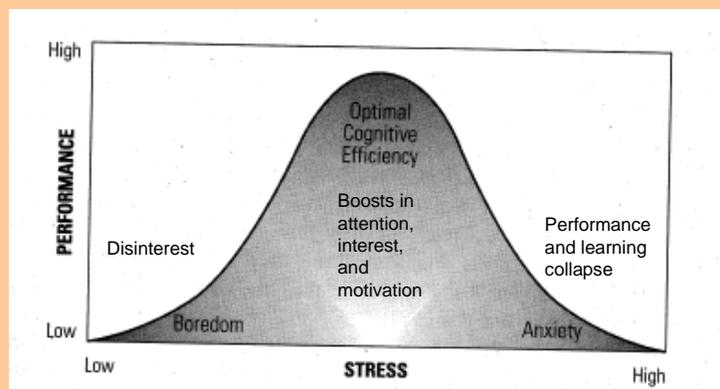
## Links between social acceptance and academic performance

### Peer relationships:

- Strong observed predictive relations between social acceptance by peers in childhood and later academic performance
- Peer rejection assessed as early as kindergarten and stable across 2 years was associated with deficits in
  - *first-grade work habits and*
  - *second-grade academic achievement and work habits.*

O'Neil et al. (1997)

## Social rejection as a potential source of *stress*. Stress affects other areas of functioning, including academic achievement



Goleman (2006)

## *Chronic or Transient Rejection: Does it make a difference?*

- Poorer social adjustment outcomes and increased risk for early academic difficulties for children “chronically rejected” as opposed to “transiently rejected”

*Stable social acceptance appears to buffer children from early academic difficulty.*

O'Neil et al. (1997)

## Promoting socioemotional competence

- Building social networks
- Social networks as invaluable resources for coping with stress:
  - Emotional support; coping options
  - Information
  - Advice;
  - Feelings of solidarity; sense of connection and belonging
  - Actual physical or financial assistance

Calderon & Greenberg (2000)



*“No single main effect (the ecology alone, personal characteristics of the participants, or the nature of the intervention itself) will determine the outcomes.”*



Calderon & Greenberg (2000)



## Assessment of Social and Emotional Adjustment

## Assessment of Social-Emotional Adjustment

- **Formal Assessment tools**

- Standardized measures
  - ✦ Teacher ratings
  - ✦ Parent ratings

- **Informal approaches**

- Observations
- Interviews
- Informal conversations

## Formal Assessment Tools

Commonly used with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

- **Behaviour Assessment System for Children (BASC)**
  - Level C testing --Diagnostic
- **Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL)**
- **Meadow-Kendall Social-Emotional Assessment Inventories**

## Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL)

- Used to assess behavioural, emotional, and social functioning in children ages 1 ½ to 5 years (school-aged version: 6 to 18 years)
- Completed by parents or others who see children in home like settings.
- The checklist consists of a number of statements about the child's behaviour, e.g. *Acts too young for his/her age*.
- 3-Point [Likert scale](#): 0 = Not True, 1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True, 2 = Very True or Often True.
- The preschool checklist contains 100 questions (school-aged: 120 items)

(Achenbach & Rescorla, 2000)

## CBCL

Similar questions are grouped into a number of internalizing and externalizing problems

### 7 Problems Scales:

- **Emotionally Reactive**  
“explosive and unpredictable behaviour”
- **Anxious/Depressed**  
“Too fearful or anxious”
- **Somatic Complaints**  
“Headaches (without medical cause)”

## CBCL



- **Withdrawn**

“Too shy or timid”

- **Sleep Problems**

“Sleeps little”

- **Attention Problems**

“daydreams or gets lost in his/her thoughts”

- **Aggressive Behaviour**

“destroys property belonging to others”

## Meadow-Kendall Social-Emotional Assessment Inventories



Inventory consists of statements about social and emotional functioning

- Designed to be completed teachers and other educational personnel in close contact with the Deaf student
- Preschool inventory (36 to 83 months)
- Consists of 49 items
- Four subscales

- **Sociable, communicative behaviours**

“Forms warm, close attachments to (friendships with) peers”

(Research Institute Kendal Demonstration Elementary School, Gallaudet University, 1983)

## Meadow-Kendall Social-Emotional Assessment Inventories

- **Impulsive, dominating behaviours**

“Overly aggressive. Behaviours may include fighting, scratching, biting.”

- **Developmental lags**

“Has age appropriate attention span.”

- **Anxious, compulsive behaviours**

“Basically an anxious child. Nervous, worries about many things.”

## Meadow-Kendall Social-Emotional Assessment Inventories

- School-aged inventories (7 to 21 years)
- Consists of 59 items
- T=Very True, t=true, f=false, F=Very False, ?=can't rate
- Three subscales
  - **Social adjustment**  
“Kind and considerate.”
  - **Self image**  
“Takes pride in physical appearance/personal attractiveness: feels at least moderately pretty or handsome.”

## Meadow-Kendall Social-Emotional Assessment Inventories

- **Emotional adjustment**

“Demonstrates negative attitudes toward sign language (refuses to sign, pretends not to understand other signing.)”

## Informal Approaches

- **Observation (Video clip)**

**Example of observation items**

- Does the child reach a compromise as a result of shared discussion with a friend?
- child tells friend about an experience or asks friend about his/her experiences. E.g., What did you do over the weekend?

- **Interviews**

- **Informal Conversations**

## Informal Approaches

(Important to collect information about the child in multiple settings and from multiple informants)

- Teacher/school personnel
- Parents

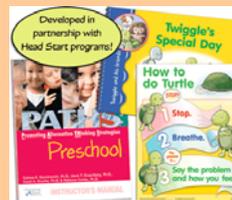
## Interventions for Social and Emotional Development

## Overview

- PATHS
- Safe Spaces
- FRIENDS
- Mind UP

## PATHS/Preschool PATHS

- Areas Targeted: Emotional awareness, self-control, interpersonal problem solving, peer relationships
- Preschool PATHS: Adaptation of the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies curriculum (PATHS) – universal, teacher-taught SEL curriculum designed to improve children's social competence and reduce problem behaviours.
- Based on the ABCD (Affective-Behavioural-Cognitive-Dynamic) model of development (Greenberg & Kusché, 1993; Greenberg, Kusché, & Speltz, 1991).
- Age Group: Preschool/K-6
- Components:
  - 30-45 lessons, main areas:
    - ✦ ID feelings
    - ✦ Relaxation through deep breathing
    - ✦ Perspective taking
    - ✦ Study skills



(Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group, 1999/Greenberg & Kusche, 1998)

## PATHS/Preschool PATHS Evidence-Based and Proven Effectiveness!

Domitrovich, Cortes, & Greenberg  
The Journal of Primary Prevention, 2007

- ❖ Randomized clinical trial with a wait-list control group – 246 preschool children in Head Start.
- ❖ Child assessments and teacher and parent reports of child behaviour assessments.
- ❖ Students exposed to the **PATHS Preschool** program scored significantly higher on standardized tests of emotional and social competence than students not exposed to the program

### Improving Young Children's Social and Emotional Competence: A Randomized Trial of the Preschool "PATHS" Curriculum

Celene E. Domitrovich,<sup>1,3</sup> Rebecca C. Cortes,<sup>2</sup> and Mark T. Greenberg,<sup>1</sup>  
*Published online: 30 January 2007*

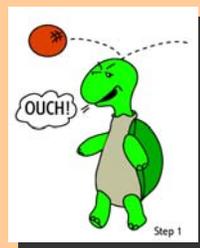
*This paper reports the results from a randomized clinical trial evaluating an adaptation of the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies curriculum (PATHS) for preschool-age children in Head Start. PATHS is a universal, teacher-taught social-emotional curriculum that is designed to improve children's social competence and reduce problem behavior. Twenty classrooms in two Pennsylvania communities participated in the study. Teachers in the 10 intervention classrooms implemented weekly lessons and extension activities across a 9-month period. Child assessments and teacher and parent reports of child behavior assessments were collected at the beginning and end of the school year. Analysis of covariance was used to control for baseline differences between the groups and pretest scores on each of the outcome measures. The results suggest that after exposure to PATHS, intervention children had higher emotion knowledge skills and were rated by parents and teachers as more socially competent compared to peers. Further, teachers rated intervention children as less socially withdrawn at the end of the school year compared to controls.*

*Editors' Strategic Implications: Findings from this and other randomized clinical trials confirm that the Preschool PATHS program is clearly a promising practice for improving children's social and emotional competence. Head Start and school programs will find these multi-informant data to be of interest as they consider a curriculum to help prepare children for school entry.*

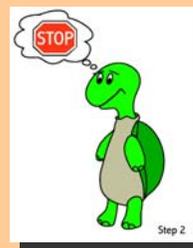
**KEY WORDS:** preschool-age children; head start; prevention; social-emotional competence.

## Turtle Technique

*Recognize that you feel angry.*



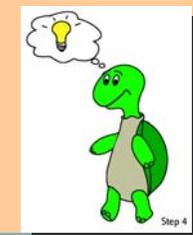
*"Think" Stop.*



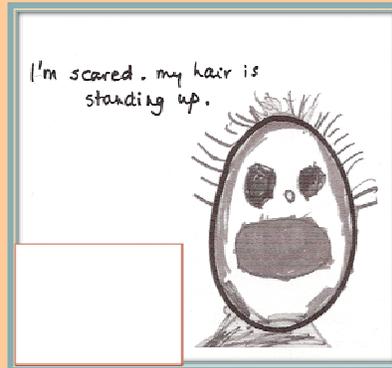
*Go into shell. Take 3 deep breathes. And think calm, coping thoughts.*



*Come out of shell when calm and think of a solution.*



## The “Safe Spaces” Program



## What is the “Safe Spaces” Program?

- ❖ *Universal primary preventive social emotional competence promotion program for preschool aged children.*
- ❖ *Focuses on fostering preschool-aged children's emotional and social competence, and decreasing young children's aggressive and bullying behaviours .*
- ❖ *Modules: Safe / not safe; Friendly / not friendly; Fair / not fair; Emotions; Problem Solving*
- ❖ *Four major concepts known as the Safe Spaces Rules: (1)My body, (2) my feelings, (2)my work, and (4)my thoughts, ideas, and words are safe*



## What is “Safe Spaces” Program?

(Cont'd)



- ❖ Fills a critical gap in the social/emotional programs available for preschoolers.
- ❖ Concepts are taught via stories, puppet play, photographs, art activities, and encourages open discussion of interpersonal issues with young children (Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre, 2003).
- ❖ Ecological Focus: Creation of a positive social milieu in the centre where all children, staff, & families feel valued and a sense of belonging.
- ❖ Piloted in one centre in Vancouver in 2001; currently being implemented widely across BC.

## Friends Program



- ❖ Helps children and teenagers cope with feelings of fear, worry, and depression by building resilience and self-esteem and teaching cognitive and emotional skills in a simple, well-structured format.
- ❖ Acknowledged by the **World Health Organization** for its 10 years of comprehensive evaluation and practice. It has proved effective **for up to 6 years after initial exposure**.
- ❖ In 2004, the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development committed to a province-wide implementation of the FRIENDS program as a risk reduction strategy for anxiety. Delivered in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, this initiative enables school professionals to deliver FRIENDS as a classroom-based universal prevention program or as an early intervention to children who may be at higher risk for anxiety disorders.

# FUN Friends Program



- ❖ **FUN FRIENDS** is the latest program developed by Dr. Paula Barrett for the treatment and prevention of childhood anxiety in 4-7 year olds.
- ❖ **FUN FRIENDS** is a play-based program that teaches children essential resilience skills including: How to relax and self soothe, How to regulate emotions, How to understand emotions in yourself and other people, How to be kind and empathic, Social and emotional skills, How to make friends and share, How to be brave and try new things, How to build a strong sense of self and self esteem, How to deal with conflict, Positive coping strategies, How to change negative "red thoughts" into positive "green thoughts".
- ❖ The Acronym for FUN FRIENDS used in manuals and activity books: **F**eelings (Talk about your feelings and care about other people's feelings), **R**elax (Do "milkshake" breathing, have some quiet time), **I** can try! (We can all try our best), **E**ncourage (Step plans to Happy Home), **N**urture (Quality time together doing fun activities), **D**on't forget to be brave! (Practice skills everyday with friends and family); **S**tay happy

# The MindUP Program

## MindUP™ Curriculum

Updated August 2009



A product of THE HAWN FOUNDATION

## The MindUP Program



*The MindUp program was created to help children understand the ways their minds work, and how their thoughts and feelings affect their behavior.*

## The MindUP Program

**Initiated by the Hawn Foundation to foster:**

- Children's mindful focused awareness
- Psychological well-being
- Social and emotional learning (SEL)

**The program is guided by:**

- Latest research in neuroscience
- Research on mindfulness-based interventions
- Research on happiness and human potential in the field of positive psychology
- Research on social and emotional learning

# The MindUP Program

## **NEUROSCIENCE**



Questions?