Emotional and Social Delays

Importance of Emotional and Social skills

A famous psychologist Dr. Daniel Jay Goleman discussed the importance of emotional and social skills for kids. He emphasized that educators have to understand children's emotional and social characters and then help them prepare appropriate strategies for them to develop their skills.

Fig.1 Interview of Social and Emotional Learning
Interview video is available in Youtube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDscSube93c

If parents find their children have problems interacting with them or others, they need to pay attention to it because their children would have emotional and social delays.

Possible causes of Emotional and Social Delays:

- Neglect
- Ineffective parenting
- Weak attachment
- Autism
- Asperger's syndrome
- Childhood disintegrative disorder
- Retts syndrome

where the latter four causes are called pervasive developmental disorder (PDD), which leads to communication problems ranging from mild to severe.

Type of Treatment:

Treatment for TDD could be:

- Medication to help with behavioral problems
- Special types of behavioral therapy

Therapeutic parenting skills may be helpful to promote healthy attachment as well as social and emotional skills in the children.

Signs of Social or Emotional Delays:

It is convenient to consult information of children's social and emotional development at different ages. For example, for children aged 1 to 2, behavior and developmental progress will be listed online. Fig 2 is what parents could learn from Family Health Service in The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.
However, if parents observe any loss of skills children already learned, they are suggested to contact a doctor as soon as possible. Different ages have different features so we have to analyze them separately.

Table 1. Loss of skills under age 3 to 5

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<th>Age</th>
<th>Loss of skill</th>
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| 3   | • Show little interest in other children  
    | • Has extreme trouble separating from parents or caregivers  
    | • Has poor eye contact |
| 4   | • Clings or cries whenever parents leave  
    | • Ignores other children  
    | • No response to people outside of the family  
    | • Lashes out when angry or upset  
    | • Resists dressing, sleeping, or using the toilet |
| 5   | • Fearful, timid, sad, or aggressive much of the time, or not show a wide range of emotions  
    | • Unable to separate from parents without difficulty  
    | • Show little interest in fantasy play or playing with peers |

Source: http://www.webmd.com

Recent researches and models

1. Eric Emerson and Stewart Einfeld analyzed data from UK's Millennium Cohort Study (n=11,389) and the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (n=4,606) and found lesser extent of rates of emotional and behavioral difficulties among children in Australia than in UK. They proposed that exposure to adverse socio-economic circumstances would have effect on children’s developmental delay in social and emotional behavior.

2. Sandra H.Jee et.al investigated emotional and social delays in children in foster cares. They used systematic screening tools such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional (ASQ-SE) increased the detection rate for social-emotional problems among young children in foster care. The rate is higher than that using provider surveillance and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). A specific social-emotional screen tool will detect children with psychosocial concerns that is unable to be detected with a broader developmental screening tool.
3. Rahil D. Briggs, PsyD et.al screened 3,169 children with scores to compare the effect of intervention on ASQ:SE scores. Children at risk for social-emotional problems could get promotion through colocation of a psychologist upon the ability to effectively address young children's social-emotional development within their medical home.

Citation

- Rahil D. Briggs, PsyD,a,b Erin M. Stettler, MPH,a Rahil D. Briggs, PsyD, Erin M. Stettler, MPH, Ellen Johnson Silver, PhD, Rebecca D. A. Schrag, PhD, Meghna Nayak, MD, Susan Chinitz, PsyD, and Andrew D., Racine, MD, PhD. Social-Emotional Screening for Infants and Toddlers in Primary Care Ellen Johnson Silver, PhD,a,b Rebecca D. A. Schrag, PhD,a,b , Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics:(2012;) 1-10 Meghna Nayak, MD,b Susan Chinitz, PsyD,a and Andrew D. (online access: http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/129/2/e377.full.html)Racine, MD, PhDb