Unit–4

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1   OBJECTIVES

After reading the unit the students will be able to:
1.   Define social development
2.   Describe the meaning, nature and importance of social development
3.   Explain various social development theories
4.   Describe the characteristics of learners at preschool, kindergarten and elementary level
5.   Describe various learning activities which can be provided at preschool, kindergarten and elementary level

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4.2   OVERVIEW

In this unit you will learn about social development and various theories related to it. You will also learn the characteristics of learners from preschool to elementary level and variety of classroom activities, which can be held by the teacher to promote social skills among the learners.

This is important to note that social development is closely associated with emotional development and these two aspects of development are frequently termed as socio-emotional development. It means that both of the developments occur simultaneously.
In present unit we will discuss the social development and the next unit will provide a review of emotional development.

4.3   CONCEPT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Social development is an important aspect of child development. It is the ability to form positive and pleasing relationships with others (Cohen and others 2005).Social development includes learning the values, knowledge and skills that enable children to relate to others effectively and to contribute in positive ways to family, school and the community. This kind of learning is delivered on to children by three means: directly by parents and teachers; indirectly through social relationships within the family or with friends, and through children's participation in the culture around them. Through their relationships with others and their developing awareness of social norms, values and expectations, children construct a sense of identity (who they are). As children develop socially, they not only learn how to react appropriately in variety of situations but also play role in shaping their relationships.

The development of the social and emotional health of a child is important for the development of his appropriate (right) behavior, understanding of life and shift to

adulthood. Social emotional development helps shape a child into what he will become later in life by teaching proper reactions to emotional matters. Social skills are all about a child's ability to cooperate and play with others, paying attention to adults and teachers, and making reasonable transitions from activity to activity. Emotional development is the process of learning how to understand and control emotions.

Before we move further, stop for a while and think:

> What is my definition of social development?

4.3.1 Social Development: Why is it important?
Human beings are naturally social. Developing skills in this domain increases child's capacity to be successful at school and in social life. Development in social skills enhances mental health, success at work, and the ability to be useful citizen.

Social skills include various abilities such as communication, problem-solving, decision making, self-management, and peer relations. These skills enable an individual to build and maintain positive social relationships with others. Extreme social behaviors interfere with learning, teaching, and the classroom's organization. Social competence is related to peer acceptance, teacher acceptance, present success, and future (post school) success.
If a child does not display appropriate social skills, other children don't like him and will not make friends with him. Sometimes children work hard to display the new and better behaviors they've been told to show, but are still excluded by others, perhaps due to past reputation or maybe because others don't like the newly learned behaviors which don't seem "natural." At other times, students may still fail because they have difficulty monitoring and controlling their behavior when unexpected reactions occur. Teacher can help students how to cope with such social problems and develop adjustment ability in the circle.

The social contexts in which children live have important influences on their development. According to Bronfenbrenner, three of the contexts in which children spend much of their time are families, peers, and schools.

Dear students please reflect:

> How your contexts have influenced your social development? Describe

4.4   THEORIES RELATED TO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

There are various theorists who have given an insight into social development. In the following section you will have a brief introduction of the theories related to the socio-emotional aspect of child development.

Attachment theory by John Bowlby (1907-1990)
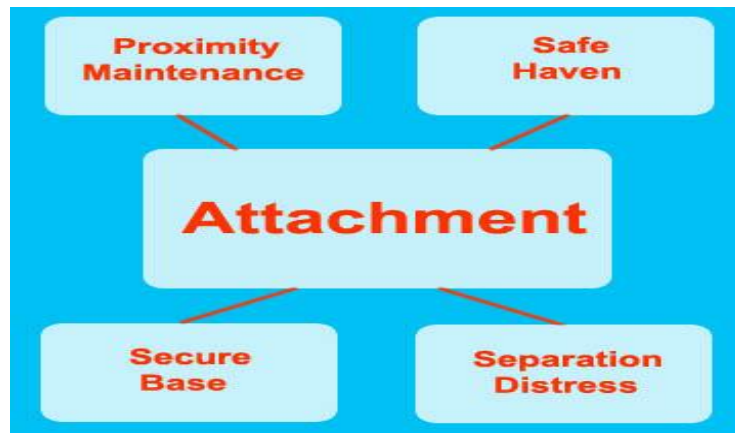
Source: http://quotesgram.com/john-bowlby-quotes/
Characteristics of Attachment

Edward John Mostyn Bowlby was a British psychologist, psychiatrist, and psychoanalyst, renowned for his interest in child development and for his innovative work in attachment theory.
 According to Bowlby's Attachment Theory, attachment is a psychological bond between humans. It lasts for a long period of time. To Bowlby, because of attachment a baby remains connected to his mother. An infant's attachment to a caregiver works as the basis for all future social development (Gilovich, Keltner & Nisbett, 2006).

Mary Ainsworth (1913-1999)
Mary Dinsmore Salter Ainsworth was an American child development psychologist. She is known for her work on emotional attachment of infants to their caregiver. She worked with John Bowlby in development of Attachment Theory.

Ainsworth found four different categories of attachment: securely attached, avoidant-insecurely attached, anxious-ambivalently attached and disorganized-disoriented attached. According to Ainsworth, the attachment patterns which are developed in infancy and toddlerhood remains fairly established throughout the lifetime. So it is important for parents and teachers to focus on the attachment aspect in order to help child to develop positive social relations in future.

Source: Google image

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Erik Erikson (1902 - 1994)

Erikson provided another important theory related to social development. His psychosocial theory of personality development has eight stages starting from infancy to old age. Erikson emphasized the relationship between the social and emotional domains. He highlighted the importance of interpersonal relationships which play an important role in an individual's life in resolving a series of conflicts. In infancy, the conflict is Trust versus Mistrust. Erikson hypothesized that an infant will develop trust through interaction with a warm, accessible, and responsive caregiver or the infant will develop mistrust through interaction with a negative or unresponsive and unavailable caregiver. Consequently, it is this development of trust in infancy that helps an individual to succeed in the next stage of toddlerhood called Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt. If he has the base of trust in a caregiver developed in the first stage, the child is more likely to develop a sense of his independence and control over his own behavior and environment. The next two stages, the development of Initiative versus Guilt and Industry versus. Inferiority are particularly critical for teachers. Early childhood is often the age when children first begin their participation in formal education. Children must learn to integrate their interest in personal exploration and the use of their imaginations with working with others involved in the same task. For elementary aged children, the task of integrating personal interests and needs with those of others becomes even more complex. They must learn to follow rules and "get things right". Moreover, they have to learn to understand the perspective of others and work with others in group projects. Deficiencies at any of these stages may lead to inability of children to take action on their own and/or developing a sense of inferiority, unproductiveness, and feelings of incompetence in regards to their peers and their social roles and abilities.

Early Social & Moral Development

Erikson's Stage Theory in its Final Version			
Age	Conflict	Resolution or "Virtue"	Culmination in old age
Infancy (0-1 year)	Basic trust vs. mistrust	Hope	Appreciation of interdependence and relatedness
Early childhood (1-3 years)	Autonomy vs. shame	Will	Acceptance of the cycle of life, from integration to disintegration
Play age (3-6 years)	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose	Humor; empathy; resilience
School age (6-12 years)	Industry vs. inferiority	Competence	Humility; acceptance of the course of one's life and unfulfilled hopes
Adolescence (12-19 years)	Identity vs. Confusion	Fidelity	Sense of complexity of life; merging of sensory, logical and aesthetic perception
Early adulthood (20-25 years)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Love	Sense of the complexity of relationships; value of tenderness and loving freely
Adulthood (26-64 years)	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care	Caritas, caring for others, and agape, empathy and concern
Old age (65-death)	Integrity vs. Despair	Wisdom	Existential identity; a sense of integrity strong enough to withstand physical disintegration

Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky (1896 - 1934)

Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky was born in Western Russia (Belorussia) in 1896. He is a well-known theorist in the areas of social development and education. He claimed that cognitive functions are linked to the external (or social) world. Adults and more competent peers guide a child into the social world. Vygotsky explained that children learn in a systematic and logical way as a result of dialogue and interaction with a

skilled helper within a zone of proximal development (ZPD). It has two boundaries. The lower boundary of the ZPD is activities the learner can do independently without the help of a

Source: Google image

teacher or guide. Similarly, the upper limit of the ZPD is those learning outcomes that the learner could not achieve at this time even with the assistance of a competent teacher or mentor.

Scaffolding is another concept for guiding learning presented by Vygotsky. Scaffolding is the process by which the teacher continuously changes the level of support given to the learner as the learning needs change. A teacher who is engaged in scaffolding has to be involved at every step of instruction. Teacher gradually decreases the support provided to the child while learning a skill. As he observes that the child can perform the skill independently, he stops assisting the child. Both of these concepts are important in describing how a child becomes socially competent.

Source: Google image

Albert Bandura (1925)

Albert Bandura was born on December 4, 1925 in the province of Alberta, Canada. He has done a great deal of work on social learning and is famous for his "Social Learning Theory" (renamed as "Social Cognitive Theory"). According to Bandura, development of social competence depends on three kinds of factors: (1) Behaviors children and adults observe within their home or society (2) mental factors such as a student's own expectations of success, and (3) social factors such as
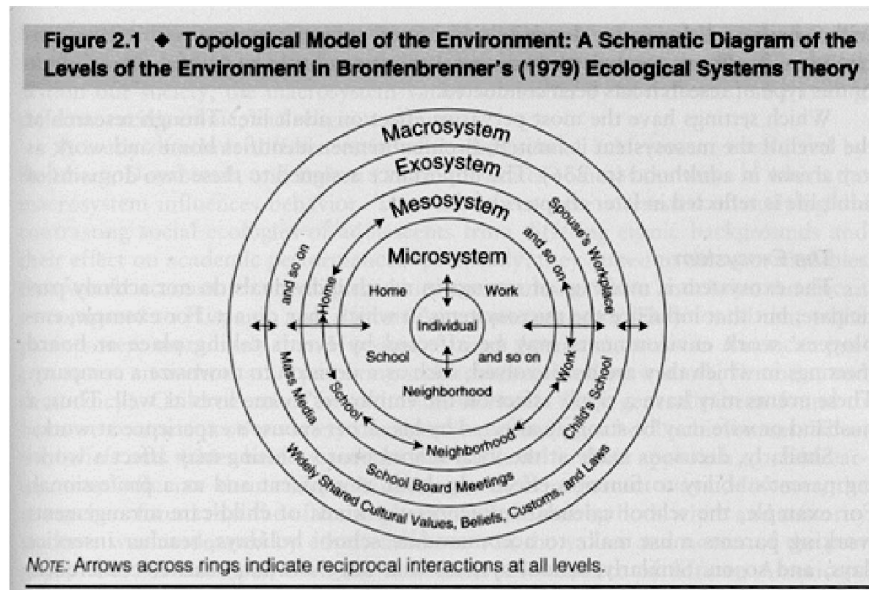

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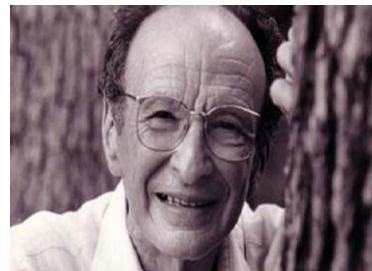
classroom and school climate. Bandura's reciprocal determinism model indicated that these three factors are mutually related. Each factor affects others equally and changes in one factor will result in changes in the others. In the classroom, for example, a child's beliefs about himself and his competence (self-efficacy) can affect social behavior which, in turn, will have an impact on the classroom environment. At the same time, changes in the classroom that lead to a change in competence will have an impact on self-efficacy.

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005)

A Russian American psychologist, Urie Bronfenbrenner was born on April 29, 1917. He is well-known for his Ecological System Theory which presented view about the impact of the environment on human development.

BRENFONBRENNER'S (1979) ENVIRONMENTAL ECOLOGICAL THEORY

Figure 2.1 ♦ Topological Model of the Environment: A Schematic Diagram of the Levels of the Environment in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory

NOTE: Arrows across rings indicate reciprocal interactions at all levels.

Source: https://blogg.hioa.no/rmmalambo/2012/03/21/a-holistic-approach/

Ecological theory stated that people develop within a series of environmental systems. At the base is Micro-system, which includes home, family, neighborhood and school where the individual spends a large part of his time. According to Bronfenbrenner, the school and the classroom represent an important micro-system of social development for children. Meso-system functions as interconnections between the micro-systems. Exo-system involves links between a social setting in which the individual does not have an active role and the individual's immediate context. For example, a child's experience at home may be influenced by the parents' experiences at work. Macro-system describes the culture in which individuals live. Cultural contexts include developing and industrialized countries, socioeconomic status, poverty, and ethnicity. Chrono-system is the deriving of environmental events and changes over the life course, as well as socio-historical conditions.

Bronfenbrenner's work advocates the importance of communication and partnership between the family and school in a child's social development.

4.5 MAIN POINTS

Dear student in this section you have been introduced to various theories of social development. We can summarize:

Social development of child depends upon many factors; attachment to mother or caregiver, development of healthy interpersonal relationships, interaction between child and some competent adult, observation and internalization of social behaviors and various ecological systems surrounding the child.

A teacher must have the knowledge of all such factors which affect the socio emotional development of a child.

After reading the topic, think and reflect:

> What is your observation of social development at various stages of life?

4.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNERS AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE SOCIAL SKILL

This section will deal with description of salient features of learners at various stages and the classroom activities a teacher can use to develop social skills at particular level.
Learners possess certain characteristics at a particular stage of social development. It is important for a teacher to have knowledge of learners' characteristics in order to deal effectively with them. Teacher can facilitate the students to adjust in their social circle by teaching them social skills essential to build positive relationships.

First of all we will discuss what social skills are.

4.6.1 What Are Social Skills?

Social skills are ways of dealing with others that create healthy and positive interactions. Children who have social skills can communicate clearly, calmly, and respectfully. They show consideration for the feelings and interests of their peers. They take responsibility for their actions, are able to control themselves, and are able to assert themselves when needed. Children learn social skills through experiences with peers, examples and instructions from their parents, and time with adults.

It is important for children to use social skills because they are the route to creating and developing relationships. They are needed for enriching social experiences, and they lessen the chance for negative interactions. Being the building blocks for friendships, social skills give children the chance to learn from their peers and learn how to be considerate with

those they meet in the future. By having a positive impact on life experiences, social skills also give children a sense of confidence and mastery over their environment.

The following section presents features of social development possessed by the learners at different levels.

4.6.2 Social Characteristics of children at various stages of development

A young child's social life evolves in relatively predictable ways. The social network grows from an intimate relationship with parents or other guardians to include other family members, nonrelated adults and peers, social interaction extends from home to neighborhood and from nursery school to formal school.

Becoming familiar with the way children grow and develop and the basic characteristics of children of different ages permit a teacher to better understand and plan for their growth. In the following section social characteristics and hallmarks of children from preschool to elementary are summarized.

4.6.3   Social characteristics of Preschool children

At this age, kids do not have the ability to understand other people's emotions or perceptions. They are in their own world and the world is seen only through their eyes alone. They are egocentric; however, the adults in their lives still have a major influence on them. They are beginning to show their independence and capabilities. At this age, they are also eager to meet and play with new kids but may not know how to approach them due to shyness or fear of rejection. There are preschoolers who prefer to play on their own, which is why parents and teachers need to encourage them to make an effort to play in a group with other kids of their age.

Social characteristics of preschoolers can be summarized as:
- Becoming more social
- Moving from parallel play to associative play. Does joint activities
- Helpful mainly because of interest in matching words to actions
- Beginning of independence
- By four growing sense of initiative and self-reliance
- Becoming aware of basic gender identity
- Imaginary play mates not uncommon

Factors effecting social development at preschool level

Research findings indicate that there are various factors, which contribute towards socio-emotional development during the preschool years. These factors are discussed in the following section:

i.   *Peer relationships*

During the preschool years, peers (other children who are a child's equal) begin to play an important role in children's social and cognitive development. Children's relationship with other peers differs in several ways from their interactions with adults. Peer play

allows children to interact with other individuals whose level of development is similar to their own. When peers have dispute among themselves, they must make a concessions and must cooperate in resolving them if the play is to continue; in a peer dispute no one can claim to have ultimate authority. Peer conflicts also let children see that others have thoughts, feelings and viewpoints that are different from their own. Conflicts also heighten children's sensitivity to the effects of their behavior on others. In this way peer relationships help young children to overcome the geocentricism that Piaget described as being characteristic of preoperational thinking.

ii.   *Pro-social behavior*
Pro-social behaviors are voluntary actions towards others such as caring, sharing, comforting and cooperation. Research on the roots of pro-social behavior has contributed to our knowledge of children's moral as well as social development. Several factors seem to be associated with the development of pro-social behaviors (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989). These include the following:

- Parental disciplinary techniques that stress the consequences of the child's behavior for others and that are applied within a warm, responsive parent-child relationship. (Hoffman, 1993)
- Contact with adults who indicate they expect concern for others, who let children know that aggressive solutions to problems are unacceptable, and who provide acceptable alternatives. (Konig, 1995)
- Contact with adults who attribute positive characteristic to children when they do well (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994)

iii.   *Play*
Most of a preschooler's interaction with peers occurs during play. However, the degree to which play involves other children increases over the preschool years. In a classic study of preschoolers, Mildred Parten (1932) identified four categories of play that reflect increasing levels of social interaction and sophistication. **Solitary play** is play that occurs alone, often with toys, and is independent of what other children are doing. **Parallel Play involves** children engaged in the same activity side by side but with very little interaction or mutual influence. **Associative Play** is much like parallel play but with increased levels of interaction in than form of sharing, turn taking, and general interest in what others are doing. **Cooperative play** occurs when children join together to achieve a common goal, such as building a large castle with each child building a part of the structure. Children engage in more complex form of plays as they grow older, advancing from simple forms of play to complex pretend play in which children cooperate in planning and carrying out activities.

Play is most important for children because it exercises their linguistic, cognitive, and social skills and contributes to their general personality development .Children use their minds when playing, because they are thinking and acting as if they were another person. When they make such a transformation they are taking a step toward abstract thinking in that they are freeing their thoughts from a focus on concrete objects. Play is also associated with creativity; especially the ability to be less literal and more flexible in

one's thinking. Play has an important role in Vygotsky's theories of development because it allows children to freely explore ways of thinking and acting that are above their current level of functioning. Vygotsky wrote, 'in play a child is always above his average age, above his daily behavior; in play it is as though he were a head taller than his self".

Preschoolers' play appears to be influenced by a variety of factors. For instance, preschoolers' interactions with peers are related to how they interact with their parents. Three year old who have a warmed nurturing relationships with parents are more likely to engage in social pretend play and resolve conflicts with peers than are children with less secure relationships with their parents. Children also play better with familiar peers and same sex peers. Providing age appropriate toys and play activities can also support the development of play and peer interaction skills.

Summary:

Dear students, in this section we have discussed the types and importance of play in social development of children. We can summarize:

- Play is important for healthy development of children.
- Solitary play is play that occurs alone, often with toys, and is independent of what other children are doing.
- Parallel Play involves children engaged in the same activity side by side but with very little interaction or mutual influence.
- Associative Play is much like parallel play but with increased levels of interaction in the form of sharing, turn taking, and general interest in what others are doing.
- Cooperative play occurs when children join together to achieve a common goal.
- Provision of age appropriate play activities and toys helps in development of social skills.

Activity for students:

> Watch children in your surrounding while play and record your observations to find out various types of play children engage in.

Following section presents some of the activities you can use in classroom to develop social skills among students at different level.

Activities to develop social skills among pre schoolers

Children who display perplexing behaviors have not yet learned to react appropriately in certain situations. It is our job as parents and teachers to be aware of the skills each child needs in order to get to the next level of social development.

Children need to be taught to negotiate compromise and cooperate with each other. Conflict resolution is a great helper for teaching social skills to young children who are constantly experiencing social problems during play.

There are many preschool socialization activities that teachers can use in their classroom that develop and promote friendships in young children. Some ideas to use are listed below:

- **Games**
Choose games that require children to work in pairs or small groups.
- **"Row, Row, Row Your Boat":** Sit children facing each other with legs crossed and holding hands. Have them rock back and forth as they sing. Allow children to select a partner, or select children to work together to promote new friendships. Let the children that struggle with friendships to choose first.
- Promote positive physical interactions: Have the children draw with their finger on the back of a peer as they say this poem "Draw a snake upon your back, put two eyes and paint it black, which finger did I use last?" The other child then guesses which finger was correct. The "artist" should tap with different fingers during the last sentence in additional plays to make the game more challenging.

Name Song
Using this "Name Song" helps classmates learn everyone's names in a fun way. Use any tune you wish:

"I know what my name is, I wonder if you know, My name is …."(Point to a child who calls out their name), Then all sing, "hello, hello, hello, hello, hello, hello, hello." Have the children wave to the child who has said their name.

Books
Many children's books feature different friendships and relationships. Point these differences out to children as you read.

Developing friendships can be a difficult task especially for a child with a silent and more reserved personality. Do not drive children if they are not ready. Help them to develop social skills needed to begin friendships and assist the friendships in developing over time. Teachers make wonderful role models and children learn from example. Make a point of speaking positively about all the children and share with them the positive qualities that they individually bring to friendships.

Activity for students:

> Prepare a list of activities you can use in classrooms a preschool teacher, for social development of children

Tools for Promoting Social Learning

The High Scope approach gives adults the tools they need to help children develop strong and positive relationships with adults and peers. Teachers learn how to create a positive climate in the classroom as a foundation for social learning. The social skills children develop in High Scope programs contribute to their readiness for school and their ability to meet a variety of challenges throughout their lives.

i. *Nurturing Social Environment*

Creating a warm and nurturing environment in preschool not only helps children form trusting relationships with others but also promotes learning in all areas. Surrounded by a positive and supportive classroom climate, children are likely to become engaged and motivated learners. Within this environment, activities and interactions are planned around the key developmental indicators (KDIs) in social Learning to Resolve Conflicts.

Helping children manage frustrations and resolve social conflicts is an area of social learning that is often particularly important to teachers. Teachers find that High Scope's six-step conflict resolution process is especially useful.

ii. *Conflict Resolution Steps*

- Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions. Place yourself between the children, on their level; use a calm voice and gentle touch; remain neutral rather than take sides.
- Acknowledge children's feelings. Say something simple such as "You look really upset;" let children know you need to hold any object in question.
- Gather information. Ask "What's the problem?" Do not ask "why" questions as young children focus on that what the problem is rather than understanding the reasons behind it.
- Restate the problem: "So the problem is..." Use and extend the children's vocabulary, substituting neutral words for hurtful or judgmental ones (such as "stupid") if needed.
- Ask for solutions and choose one together. Ask "What can we do to solve this problem?" Encourage children to think of a solution but offer options if the children are unable to at first.
- Be prepared to give follow-up support. Acknowledge children's accomplishments, e.g., "You solved the problem!" Stay nearby in case anyone is not happy with the solution and the process needs repeating.
- Adults respect children's ideas for solving problems, even if the options they offer don't seem fair to adults. What's important is that children agree on the solution and see themselves as competent problem-solvers.
  (http://www.highscope.org)

4.6.4 Social characteristics of learners at kindergarten/ early primary (five and six year olds)

These included:
i.   Very social; visit friends on one's own.
ii.   Very self sufficient
iii.   Persists longer at task. Can plan and carry out activities and return to project next day
iv.   Plays with two or three friends often just a short time only and then switches play group
v.   Beginning to conform. Is very helpful
vi.   By six becoming very assertive. Often bossy, dominating a situation and ready with advice.
vii.   Needs to be first; has difficulty losing
viii.   Possessive and boastful
ix.   Craves affection. Often has a love/hate relationship with parents
x.   Gender roles becoming more refined. Has tendency to gender type.
xi.   Becomes clothes-conscious

i.   Activities to promote social development at kindergarten/ early primary
Social play–particularly pretend social play--functions as a safe testing ground in which children can learn appropriate social behaviors (Pellegrini et al 2007).

Pretend social play also involves "mind reading" skills--the capacity to decode each other's intentions and anticipate each other's actions (Spinka et al 2001; Pellegrini and Bjorkland 2004).

But kids need more than free time and pretense to master social skills. They also need guidance about *which* social behaviors to emulate. The following activities can be helpful for developing social skills at kindergarten:

The name game
Researchers Sandra Sandy and Kathleen Cochran note that young children need to learn the importance of getting someone's attention *before* you speak. They've invented this little game for teaching social skills: Have kids sit in a circle and give one kid a ball. Then ask him to name another child in the circle and roll the ball to that child. The recipient then takes his turn—naming a child and rolling the ball--and so on.

Follow the leader
Ask the children to line up behind a leader and follow him over a hurdle path. Children must stay in line, and take turns as they pass through each section of the course.

Activity for students:

> Search for some more classroom activities to enhance social skills among children.

4.6.5 Social characteristics of learners at late kindergarten/ primary level (seven and eight year olds)

Learners at late kindergarten/ primary level possess the following characteristics:
i.   Beginning to prefer own gender; has less boy/girl interaction
ii.   Peer groups begin to form
iii.   Security in gender identification
iv.   Self-absorption
v.   Begins to play and work independently
vi.   Can be argumentative
vii.   Seven still not a good loser and often a tattletale
viii. By eight play games better and intent to winning
ix.   Conscientious; can take responsibility for routine chores
x.   Less selfish
xi.   Able to share. Wants to please
xii.   Still enjoys and engages in fantasy plays

i.   *Activities at primary level to develop social skills*

As a teacher you can use the following activities in classroom to develop social skills among students:

Asking Questions

Learning Objective: To understand the importance of asking questions during a conversation Skill: Social communication.

Tell the group: Asking questions is the best way to get as much information about a subject as possible. When you ask questions you show that you are interested in other people and you keep the talk going. You will also learn things from people's answers that will make you a better friend. For practice, have the children turn to the person on their right. One of the two people secretly focuses on something in the room (e.g., the clock) and gives a clue, such as, "I'm thinking of something on the wall." The other person asks questions (e.g., "What color is it?" or "Which wall is it on?") until she guesses the object.

ii.   *Sharing*

Learning Objective: To teach children to understand the value of sharing with others
Skill: Empathy, social interaction.

Ask the group to think and give their ideas about sharing. Write down all of their ideas on the board.

Tell the children:

 Learning to share is difficult for many children, because it means to lose something. But it also means being generous and thinking about the needs of others. When you share, you feel good because you are being nice to someone else. When someone shares with you, you feel good because they are being kind to you.

Present the following examples to the group, one at a time. After each, ask the children whether it would be easy or difficult for them to share in the situation. Encourage them to talk about what they would do, and why.

- The whole group is reading a book, and there are no enough copies for everyone.
- There is only one brownie left on the plate.
- Three people are sitting on a sofa, and the fourth person has nowhere to sit.

Ask the group to think of other examples when sharing is necessary

Dear students
In this section you learnt about the characteristics of learners at primary level. You also learnt some classroom activities to develop social skills like sharing, asking questions and caring for other's needs.

Activity for students:

> What are other social skills a child at primary level may need to learn?

4.6.6 Social characteristics of learners at elementary level
- At this level students may exhibit the following characteristics:
- The elementary children want to expand social relationships beyond the home environment.
- Peers become extremely important to elementary aged children; they are constantly building relationships.
- They naturally form groups; they want to be with their friends. Their constant talking is really evidence of this focus on building relationships.
- These children want to be like their friends, and to be accepted by the group is extremely important.
- There is a cooperative, joint focus as opposed to a competitive one. This too is a sign that children are learning to build community.
- Elementary children are looking for people to admire. They may be inspired by older children, a family member or their teachers.

i. *Social skills at elementary level*
Teachers play an important role at every level of schooling, including elementary schools (Mashburn & others, 2008; Pianta & others, 2008). In a series of studies from infancy through third grade, positive teacher-child relationships were linked to a number of positive child outcomes (Howes & Ritchie, 2002). Children who have warm, positive relationships with their teachers have a more positive attitude toward school, are more enthusiastic about learning, and achieve more in school (Thompson & Goodman, 2009).

Group skills are particularly important in a classroom setting. Studies suggest that children's behavior in the classroom is as important to their school success as their intellectual ability is. Studies tell us that children typically do better in groups that consist of peers who share common characteristics. Helping children identify their interests (such as computers, the environment, community service, animals, etc.) is the first step in guiding them toward joining a group of children who are more like them.

ii.   Classroom activities to develop Social skills

Following section will present classroom activities which can be used by a teacher to develop social skills among children at elementary level.

Active listening

The most important social skill needed at all levels is listening.

Active listeners show speakers that they are paying attention. They do this through body language (offering appropriate eye contact, turning the body in the direction of the speaker, remaining quiet) and verbal feedback (restating, in their own words, what the speaker is trying to communicate).

One popular method of teaching active listening assigns people to one of three roles: A speaker, a listener, and an observer. The speaker is instructed to talk for a few minutes about something important to him. The listener attends quietly, providing cues to the speaker that she is paying attention. When the speaker is finished talking, the listener also repeats back, in her own words, the speaker's points.

The observer's job is to evaluate the speaker and listener. Did the speaker stay on topic? How did the listener indicate that she was paying attention?

After the observer shares his observations with the others, the players change roles and try again.

The blindfolded walk

To play this game, create path with hurdles. Then assign players to one of two roles. Blinded players will wear blindfolds. Leaders will take blinded players by the hand and attempt to lead them through the course. Talking is encouraged, and, when they are finished, players should reverse their roles.

Joining a group

Learning Objective: To help children find ways to reach others who have similar interests; to increase group inclusion.

Skill: Making Friends: Ask the children to think of ways to find groups they might like to join. Suggest that they focus on their individual interests. Brainstorm ideas and write them on the blackboard or a large sheet of paper.

Tell them: Throughout their lives, people participate in many different kinds of social groups: scout troops, sports teams and many more. A class is also a kind of group. Your classmates are part of your group experience every day at school. A child's life is filled with different kinds of groups.

Distribute Activity Sheet: Children can write the answers or raise their hands and answer the questions aloud. Use their responses as the basis for a discussion about the different aspects of joining a group.

Joining a Group   **ACTIVITY SHEET**
Name   Date

Ahamd is a new student at school. He is sitting near a group of children who are planning some activities for the weekend. He wants to be included but doesn't know what to do.

What could Ahmad do to become part of the group?

Do you think Ahmad should speak first or wait until someone in the group speaks to him?

What could Ahmad say to start a conversation? Should the group invite Ahmad to join them? Why or why not?

Tell about a time when you had a difficulty in connecting with people in a group. How did you feel? What did you do?

Dear students we have presented some of the activities you can use in classroom for promotion of some important social skills such as sharing, taking initiatives, empathy, asking questions etc. you should think and try to device some more activities for the promotion of social skills.

Activity for students:

> Design at least one activity for promotion of a particular social skill at each level from preschool to elementary.

4.7   EXERCISE

1.   Why social development is an important aspect of child development? Elaborate with reasons.

2.   What are social skills? Why learning various social skill is important?

3.   Extend your reading of various theories of social development and prepare a summary n your own words.

4.   Prepare a glossary of the terms related to social development.

5.   Which of the social development Strategies will be the most difficult for you to implement in classroom and why?

6.   Which of the theorists discussed in this section best reflects your beliefs on how children socially develop and why?

4.8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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