

FACTFILE: GCSE HOME ECONOMICS: Child Development



Emotional Development

Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of ways to promote positive emotional well-being.
- Analyse how life events affect emotional development and discuss how to manage this impact.

Emotional Development

Emotions are feelings such as fear, excitement, affection, happiness, worry, sadness, anger, contentment, pride, jealousy, shyness, frustration, distress and disgust. Young children show all these emotions and many more.

Emotional development is the development of a child's ability to recognise and control feelings. It is influenced by the child's inborn temperament environment and state of health.

Children vary considerably in the strength of their emotions. For example, some children are naturally very excitable, others less so. Some children are very shy; others are rarely shy. Some are great worriers; others seem almost carefree.

For positive emotional development, a child needs:

- The love and affection of their parents, carers, family, teachers and friends.
- A feeling of being wanted and having a place in the family, school and community – a feeling of belonging.
- The opportunities to feel a sense of achievement and satisfaction in their own

work. They should be given jobs of work and things to do, at school and at home, and be praised for the results. They need encouragement if they fail, not ridicule; a child who is constantly criticised will give up trying.

- The opportunity to be independent and to make their own decisions, with the chance/encouragement to try again if they do not succeed the first time. They must learn how to take the lead as well as how to follow; and how to share with others.



- To feel secure in their relationships with others to be given social approval for good behaviour, and disapproval for antisocial behaviour.
- To be given confidence in themselves and to be made aware of their own good qualities. They should learn how to value themselves as a person.
- To be treated as an individual – not just as part of a family or a group, but as a person with their own identity.

Environmental Factors Effect Emotional Development



1. Opportunities to socialise with other children help emotional development.
2. Learning to talk means a child can express its emotions in words.
3. Good bonding with parents helps emotional development.
4. Disabilities like Down's syndrome make emotional development slower.
5. Children need unconditional love - loved no matter what.
6. Security is important. They find change stressful, so family life needs to be stable.
7. Children need to bond well with parents.
8. Children need discipline to guide their behaviour. They need to learn the boundaries between what 'acceptable behaviour' is and what isn't.

Children Need to be Allowed To Be Independent

Parents/carers need to provide opportunities for independence and decision making:

1. Children need to do things for themselves. Doing everything for them won't help them develop.
2. They need to succeed most of the time – parents/carers need to guide them towards achievable goals.
3. Parents/carers need to let the child fail occasionally, so they get used to not being perfect at everything.
4. Laughing at a child when mistakes are made is discouraging. Parents/carers should be positive and supportive.

Bonding

Being held close to another person gives a baby feelings of comfort and security and creates bonds of affection. These feelings are strengthened by;

- Skin-to-skin contact – as happens when the baby breast feeds;
- Eye-to-eye contact – when the baby gazes into his mother's eyes;
- Familiar smells – a baby learns to recognise the smell of his mother's breast within a few days of birth;
- Familiar sounds – a baby soon learns to recognise the voice of their mother and responds more readily to it than to other voices.

The baby's first emotional bond will be with their mother or person who looks after them most of the time. The more the baby is cuddled and loved, the stronger the bond is likely to be.



Positive Emotional Well-Being

Factors affecting self-esteem

A child's self-esteem may be affected by any of the following factors and the way in which the child is encouraged to cope with them by parents and other adults who care for him.

- Poverty or wealth;
- Being of an ethnic minority;
- Being discriminated against because of race, gender or religion; and
- Disabilities, e.g. or being HIV positive.

Encouraging self-esteem

Self esteem develops more strongly in children who are:

- Praised for what they can do, not criticised for what they cannot do.
- Encouraged to develop new skills.
- Given choice – perhaps about the clothes they wear or toys they prefer to play with.
- Encouraged to discuss their feelings and express their ideas.

- Given minimum assistance, so allowing them to maintain control over their activity.






Children learn about themselves and develop a self-image based mainly on the way in which adults treat them, talk with them and react to them. It is therefore very important that carers encourage children to grow up feeling loved, valued and respected.

All of these factors work together to help children develop a positive self image which, in itself, will influence their behaviour, feeling and attitude towards others.

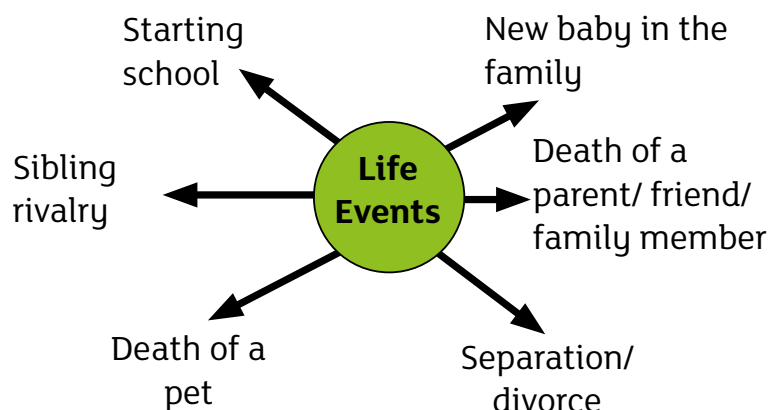
Children will often model themselves both consciously and unconsciously, on the adults around them, and copy what they say and do so parents and carers need to be very careful what messages they give to children through their own behaviour.

Activity

Identify the ways parents and carers could promote positive emotional well-being.




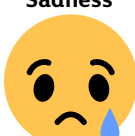
Ways to promote emotional well-being		
Praise and encourage children when they do something well and succeed and also when they try!	Have realistic expectations of children, remembering their age and stage of development	Give lots of love and affection so that children know they are valued and loved 
Give children opportunities to be independent, to make mistakes and fail without criticism		Try to provide a wide variety of toys and games, especially those which encourage imaginative role play and feelings
Try to make sure children are brought up in positive atmosphere laugh with them but not at them 	Make sure children have lots of opportunities to socialise with other children and make friends 	Avoid attitudes, behaviour and experiences which promote stereotyping 

Life Events and Emotional Development



Life events can massively impact on a child’s emotional development. The table identifies possible emotions and strategies parents or carers could use to cope and help the child regulate their emotions.

Any life changing event may also cause regressive behaviours like thumb sucking or bed wetting and need to be dealt with sensitively.

Emotion	Cause	Ideas for coping
Jealousy 	Often occurs if there is a new baby because they feel insecure and not loved. It is one of the hardest emotions to control-even for adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give children love, attention and cuddles • Be patient • Try to respect how they are feeling • If old enough, talk about feelings
Fear 	Children often develop irrational fears for no apparent reason so it’s often hard for adults to understand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to show that you understand the fear and accept that it is real • Give lots of love • Reassure them • Avoid ‘scary’ stories or TV programmes
Anger 	This is one of the most common emotions and can be caused by lots of situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes best to try to ‘ignore’ • Try to stay calm • With a young child try to distract with a toy or activity • Talk firmly but gently to the child about how they are feeling and why • Give time and space to ‘cool down’
Sadness 	This can also happen for no apparent reason – it may be because something hasn’t worked, or maybe because a game has been lost, not won or because a pet has died.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give plenty of love and attention • Help them to talk about what has caused the sadness • Try to distract with an interesting activity

Activity

In groups choose one possible life changing event from the diagram above and state how this could impact on the child’s emotions.

Identify the strategies a parent or carer could use to help the child cope emotionally.

Share your answers with the rest of the class.

