

# USING CIRCLE TIME TO PROMOTE SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Using circle time to promote more learning is not necessarily the primary purpose; rather, circle time should promote a sense of community, and help children learn to know and enjoy each other, and to practice the social and emotional skills they need to succeed.

Learn more at [www.pakeys.org/iecmh](http://www.pakeys.org/iecmh)



## How to Foster Social-Emotional Learning During Circle Time

- Create a sense of belonging for everyone.
- Listen attentively.
- Make all children feel safe, included, and respected.
- Pay more attention to the interests and need of the children than to your own need for circle time to happen a certain way.
- Celebrate success.
- Encourage everyone to participate but also allow children to pass.
- Be enthusiastic and keep it lively.
- Have strategies for how you will respond to negative behavior.



## Preventing Problem Behavior

- Whenever possible, set up circle time away from other distractions (an open door, prep for another activity, etc.).
- Have two circle times to accommodate different developmental levels; adjust length of circle times to age of child (no more than 5-10 minutes for two-year-olds, or 10-15 minutes for three and older).
- Include hands-on and physical activities.
- Organize activities in a sequence so children know what to expect and what comes next.
- Give choices about where to sit; set boundaries for each child such as carpet squares.
- Use a circle mini schedule to help children know when their favorite activities will happen.
- Give opportunities for children to be successful, and praise them when they participate appropriately.
- Provide fidget toys .
- Allow children to opt out and do something else if they lose interest before circle time ends.
- Be prepared to do something else if an activity isn't working or children are losing interest.

bright

bright start. bright kids. bright future.