

# PLC/Book Study Guide for Create an Emotion-Rich Classroom

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This guide is designed as a professional learning development resource and can be used to facilitate a book study or as a learning experience for a professional learning community (PLC). We recommend that the principal and/or facilitator read the entire guide and the book before beginning the study. Each meeting's notes are divided up into three sections: "Before the Meeting," "Sharing Back," and "Activity Ideas."

"Before the Meeting" refers to the reading, reflecting, and brainstorming that should be done prior to the PLC discussion about the chapter.

"Sharing Back" refers to sharing your thoughts and reflections that were part of the pre-learning Before the Meeting work.

"Activity Ideas" refers to structured conversations to guide PLC work on the chapter. You'll notice these ideas fall into three categories:

- Planning refers to working in small groups to make instructional decisions about implementing the chapter's concepts in the classroom.

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- Practice refers to an activity where you are role-playing or otherwise practicing a concept or idea before bringing it into your classroom.
  - Preparation refers to making materials or other supports needed for implementation.

Many of these activities can be done in small groups or with partners; you might choose to work in classroom teams for planning and preparation pieces to support collaborative teaming around instructional decisions. While not every chapter explicitly notes data review, consider bringing collected data to review as a team to guide instruction.

Before you dismiss participants for each session, look ahead to the next session and review and clarify what must be done before the next meeting. Reach agreements if suggested tasks are going to be adjusted or modified.



# Foreword and Introduction

## Before the Meeting

- Read the foreword and introduction.
- Complete the Social and Emotional Skill Reflection Checklist on pages 8 and 9.

## Sharing Back

- As you filled out the Social and Emotional Skill Reflection Checklist, which social and emotional skills did you note are the most comfortable for you? Which are the least comfortable for you?
- Reflect on how your comfort levels relate to how you teach and encourage these skills in your work.
- In the foreword, Dr. Hemmeter mentions engaging with families in meaningful ways. In what ways have you engaged with families? What methods have worked in the past? What other ideas do you have for engaging families in learning about social emotional development?

## Activity Ideas

*Planning:* To support your ongoing journey toward creating and maintaining an emotion-rich classroom, it can be really helpful to reflect on where you've been. Work together to brainstorm what you have already put in place to support children's emotions. In what ways have you created a caring classroom community? What emotions have you spoken about or what tools have you used to discuss emotions? In the foreword, Dr. Hemmeter references finding people who will support you in this work. Identify who these people are and add them to your list of ways you have already begun this work.

*Preparation:* Take time at the end of the meeting to set up a system for how you'll keep notes, plans, and other ideas related to *Create an Emotion-Rich Classroom*. Consider setting up a binder, decorating a notebook, or organizing an electronic folder to house resources related to your book study.

# CHAPTER 1:

## Six Beliefs About Emotions in Early Childhood

### Before the Meeting

- Read chapter 1.
- Complete the Emotion Mindsets Worksheet on page 31.

### Sharing Back

- What did you notice from your answers on the Emotion Mindsets Worksheet?
- What are some strategies that you feel will help you shift your mindset and move through the emotions you find more challenging?
- Review the six beliefs presented on pages 11 and 12. Which resonate with you the most? Which ones challenge your beliefs?

### Activity Ideas

*Planning:* Review pages 28–29 to identify who will serve as a support for you if children disclose traumatic situations. What do you need to do in response to this information? Who do you need to contact? Who will help support you and the child? Identify policies, procedures, and personnel so that you have this information ready should you need it.

*Practice:* Use figure 1.2 (“Examples of Reframing Challenging Behaviors into Skills to Teach” on page 26) to identify some behavioral challenges you see in your work. Walk through reframing each challenging behavior to identify the missing skill that could be taught. Share your examples with a partner, and brainstorm what strategies you might use to teach those missing skills.

# CHAPTER 2:

# Planning for an Emotion-Rich Classroom

## Before the Meeting

- Read chapter 2.
- Revisit the “Roadblocks to Setting Up an Emotion-Rich Classroom” section (starting on page 52). First, take a look around your classroom, office, or workspace. What messages do you see about emotions? What emotions are not portrayed at all in your space?
- Review the “Reframing How We Talk About Emotions” section on starting on page 53 and in figure 2.8 (page 54). Which phrases might you need to reframe to adjust your language to be more supportive of a wider range of emotions?

## Sharing Back

- What were potential roadblocks for you in creating an emotion-rich classroom?
- What possible changes or reframing did you brainstorm to work through these roadblocks?
- Looking at the section on bias (pages 55–56), what do you want to be particularly mindful of? Who can be a support to you as you work to address issues of implicit bias?

## Activity Ideas

*Planning:* To become familiar with the DAPPER framework, work through DAPPER with a simple social skill. (Here are some possible ideas: saying “excuse me” when you wish for someone to move, giving a gentle high-five, or signing “help” to request assistance.) In small groups, walk through the DAPPER Planning Sheet (page 58) to make a simple teaching plan for the new skill. Note which parts feel natural to you and which components might feel less familiar. Identify group members or other colleagues who can be a support for you in areas that are less familiar, and note how you might support others in areas that are more comfortable for you.

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*Practice:* To become familiar with the ICARE framework, role-play how you could use ICARE for common scenarios. (Sample scenarios: a child takes a toy from another child, two children both want the same seat at the lunch table, or one child tells another, “You can’t come to my birthday party.”) Choose one child from your scenario to focus on, walking through the ICARE steps to help them. Note which parts feel natural to you and which components might feel less familiar. Consider jotting down ideas for handling the less familiar components and keep these notes available to access in the moment if you need a reminder of how to walk through the step in a real-life situation.

# CHAPTER 3:

# Building an Emotion Vocabulary

## Before the Meeting

- Read chapter 3.
- Review the “Choosing Emotions to Teach” section, starting on page 66, and think about considerations for selecting words. Write down a list of emotion words you want to teach.
- Review the Building a Habit of Positive Descriptive Feedback sheet from page 90, and jot down your ideas and answers.

## Sharing Back

- Reflect on your work on the Building a Habit of Positive Descriptive Feedback sheet. What did you learn about yourself?
- What supports or reminders can you put in place to hold yourself accountable for creating an emotion-rich classroom?
- What ways of sharing social and emotional information with families intrigued you? Share how you plan to start communicating with families about your emotion instruction.

## Activity Ideas

*Preparation:* Work in small groups with colleagues who have chosen to teach one of the same emotion words as you. Choose a word and walk through Susan Neuman’s steps on page 69 and in figure 3.1 (page 70) for teaching that particular word.

*Planning:* Using the emotion word you plan to teach, brainstorm three ideas for embedding that vocabulary throughout your day through planned opportunities. Knowing what helps you build habits, plan strategies that will support you in following through with these ideas. What materials or assistance do you need?



# CHAPTER 4:

## Recognizing and Labeling Emotions in Self

### Before the Meeting

- Read chapter 4.
- Fill out the Recording Sheet to Identify How Emotions Show Up for You (page 115).
- Revisit your data sheets from chapter 3 to prepare to share with the group.

### Sharing Back

- What did you learn from recognizing emotions in your own body? Reflect on any new learnings or surprises.
- How did the process of reflection on physical sensations feel for you?
- Share some of your data from chapter 3 on children's understanding of emotion words. What did you learn from your data?

### Activity Ideas

*Planning:* Work with your classroom team or other teachers to decide how you want to implement an emotion check-in. Where will you put the check-in chart or structure? When in your day will children be intentionally encouraged to check in? How will you remember to check in too?

*Preparation:* Read through the “Planning How to Animate Body Clues” section on page 97 to consider how you might modify or present the Body Clues Map. Sketch out the changes you might make to best use this visual with your class. What will you need to get it ready to support your learners?

# CHAPTER 5:

## Understanding Causes of Emotions

### Before the Meeting

- Read chapter 5.
- Jot down common causes of emotions that you notice in your classroom.
- Gather notes and data from your teaching of emotion vocabulary and recognizing emotions in the body (from chapters 3 and 4). Note a couple of celebrations to share with your PLC.

### Sharing Back

- What growth have you seen in the children’s emotional understanding? What have you done to facilitate that growth?
- Work to identify strategies, activities, responses, and mindsets that you have brought to your class to encourage the learning that children—and you—are doing about emotions. What kinds of activities have been engaging? What visual supports are children excited to use? Are there additional ideas you are eager to try?
- Revisit “Planning to Understand Emotions Throughout the Day” on pages 130–131 and review the list of activities that lend themselves to cause and effect discussions. Share ideas for classroom activities or materials that might be useful in learning about causes of emotions.

### Activity Ideas

*Practice:* With a small group, make a list of common causes of your own emotions during the school day. Now shift your language around these causes and emotions from “shaming and blaming to reframing” using figure 5.3 (page 136). Keep the phrases you come up with so you can use them to model talking about the causes of emotions during your upcoming instruction.

*Preparation:* What common causes of emotions do you see in your classroom? Work with a partner or small group to figure out if those causes relate to one of the pages in the Emotion Causes Flip-Book. If you have some that do not fit those categories, consider what visuals you might need to add to make sure that the causes visuals align with children’s daily experiences.

# CHAPTER 6: Practicing Regulation Strategies

## Before the Meeting

- Read chapter 6.
- Review the list of ways to calm down on page 144 and note which statements are true for you. Also, note what does *not* help you calm down.
- Fill out the Regulation Strategies Planning Sheet on page 164.
- Revisit your data from chapter 5 to prepare to share with the group.

## Sharing Back

- What regulation strategies have you already taught or offered to your class? Think of two others that piqued your interest for trying next.
- What ideas do you have for offering active calming strategies to your class?
- Share your takeaways from your data on children's understanding of the causes of emotions. What did you learn from your data?

## Activity Ideas

*Planning:* Work together in pairs to fill out DAPPER forms for regulation strategies you plan on trying. Have each set of partners make a plan for a different strategy, and then have each pair share with the whole group. Collect and copy these DAPPER plans to create a mini-library of plans for different regulation strategies that everyone can pull from.

*Preparation:* Individualizing calm-down strategies is one way to engage children in regulating. Take some time to brainstorm new ways to breathe or other calm-down materials to offer children based on what you know about their unique personalities and needs.

# CHAPTER 7:

## Accessing the Regulation Station

### Before the Meeting

- Read chapter 7.
- Review the “Planned Opportunities” section starting on page 172, which mentions how you introduce, teach, and set up systems for other centers. Jot down notes about how you teach children to use a center like an art area or block area. What do you teach them about those areas? What visual supports do you use?

### Sharing Back

- Share strategies you’ve used to teach other centers in your classrooms. How can you use these strategies to teach the Regulation Station?
- Describe your thinking around how many children will be able to access the Regulation Station at one time. How will children know your expectations for this space?
- How have you shared regulation strategies with families thus far? What feedback or input have you received from them?

### Activity Ideas

*Planning:* Work in small groups to complete the Regulation Station Planning Considerations sheet on pages 187–188. Be intentional in thinking about the regulation strategies you have taught as part of chapter 6’s work. What materials, support, or planning will allow you to include these strategies in both your classroom Regulation Station and a portable Regulation Station?

*Preparation:* If possible, take a look at your classroom space or make a map of your space. Identify what shifts in furniture or activity areas will need to happen so you can create a Regulation Station that is an adequate size for coregulation. If you do not have your own classroom space, consider and brainstorm where communal Regulation Stations might go. For example, you might create an outdoor Regulation Station or set one up in the lobby of the building for when children come into school upset.

# CHAPTER 8:

# Responding to Others’ Emotions and Concluding Thoughts

## Before the Meeting

- Read chapter 8.
- Identify at least two different emotions you’d like to teach children responses for and what possible responses might be. For instance, you might want them to learn to celebrate when peers are proud or comfort them when they are sad.
- Read the “Concluding Thoughts” section.
- Refer back to the Social and Emotional Skill Reflection Checklist on page 8. Reflect on what shifts you have personally experienced as you’ve focused on this work with intention.

## Sharing Back

- What did you notice when you revisited the Social and Emotional Skill Reflection Checklist? How have your comfort levels shifted over time?
- Are there areas that are still uncomfortable to you? What might you do to increase your comfort going forward?
- Looking at the six beliefs listed in the conclusion, which one has most shaped your professional growth this year? This might be a belief you already had that you leaned into, or a belief that challenged you.

## Activity Ideas

*Planning:* Identify what visual supports you would like to use in your classroom to teach children to respond to the emotions of others. Pair up with a partner to plan materials you will need for your How Can I Help You Feel Better? Card or for your Feel-Better Basket. Make a list of materials and how you will source them.

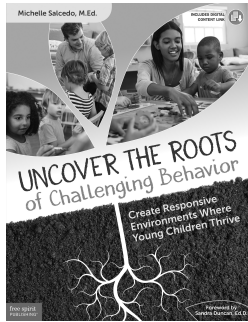
*Practice:* Review the steps of demonstrating and describing on page 193. Practice the steps with a partner as a role-play. Jot down notes about what you’d like to remember when doing this modeling for your class.

# About the Author

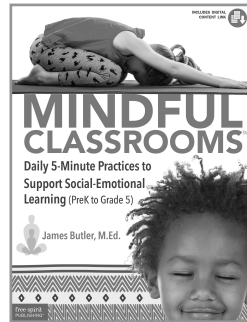
**Lindsay N. Giroux, M.Ed.**, specializes in coaching preschool teachers on implementing the Pyramid Model to promote social and emotional development and prevent challenging behavior. She is a contributing author of *Connect4Learning®: The PreK curriculum* and the ChooseFi Pre-Kindergarten financial literacy curriculum. Her professional interests include teacher training, social skill instruction, and inclusion of preschoolers with special needs. Lindsay received a B.A. from Wellesley College and an M.Ed. in Early Childhood Special Education from Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. She is currently the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (SEFEL) Coordinator for the Wake County Public School District and a North Carolina Preschool Pyramid Expert Coach. She resides in Raleigh, North Carolina, with her husband and son.



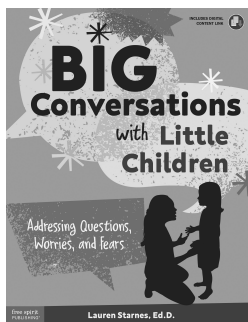
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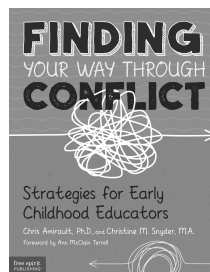
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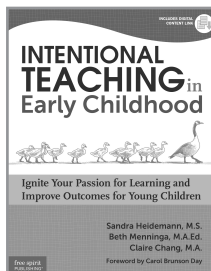
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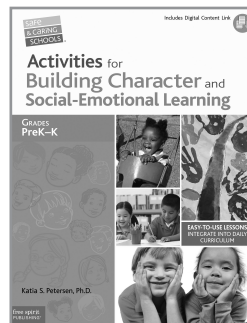
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