

2024

12-MONTH CALENDAR

# Growing **STRONG**

**12 Months** of Tips & Activities for  
Enhancing Child Development

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# Inclusion

is the

# celebration

of

# diversity

put into

# action.



Quote from *Building Blocks for Teaching Young Children in Inclusive Settings, Fourth Edition* by Susan R. Sandall, Ariane N. Gauvreau, Gail E. Joseph, & Ilene S. Schwartz, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024

01

# JANUARY



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	New Year's Day 1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Activities adapted from *Building Blocks for Teaching Young Children in Inclusive Settings, Fourth Edition* by Susan R. Sandall, Ariane N. Gauvreau, Gail E. Joseph, & Ilene S. Schwartz, Brookes Publishing Co.

## 4 Tips for Structuring Inclusive Activities



- 1 Support participation.**  
Use a variety of ways to help children join activities and sustain participation. Provide lots of interesting materials to entice children to the activity.
- 2 Have high expectations.**  
With planning and a positive attitude, you can help all children participate and learn new skills. Plan interesting and appropriately challenging activities.
- 3 Be consistent.**  
Children can be successful and feel trusted and safe when adults provide consistent expectations and responses.
- 4 Give good, clear directions.**  
Try breaking down lengthy directions into shorter ones.





Sharing one's  
**feelings**  
 is essential  
 in building  
**emotional  
 intelligence**  
 in children.

Quote from *The Social-Emotional Learning Toolbox* by Kathy L. Perez, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024  
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 02

# FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	Lunar New Year 10
11	12	13	Valentine's Day 14	15	16	17
18	Presidents' Day 19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

## 3 Ideas for Teaching Kids About Emotions



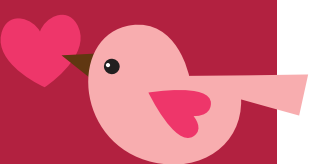
**Feelings ID.**  
 Generate a list of feelings (start with basics like *happy* or *sad* before more complex feelings, such as *excited* or *surprised*). Identify these feelings as good or not so good. Conduct a follow-up discussion where children can give an example.



**Read & Learn.**  
 Choose a book about feelings to share with children. Be sure to point out all the actions or ways in which the characters behave when they're acting on their feelings.



**Feeling Wheel Game.**  
 Create a spinning wheel that features different feeling faces. Give each child a chance to spin. Ask them to identify the feeling and talk about an incident that made them feel that emotion.



Activities adapted from **10 Activities for Teaching Young Children About Emotions** blog post (January 26, 2021), Brookes Blog ([blog.brookespublishing.com](http://blog.brookespublishing.com)).



By talking and interacting with their children, parents help them build the uniquely human gift of language.

Quote from *Developing Early Comprehension* by Andrea DeBruin-Parecki, Anne van Kleeck, & Sabra Gear, Brookes Publishing Co.

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03 MARCH

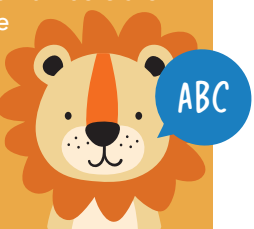
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Daylight Saving Time Begins 10	Ramadan Starts 11	12	13	14	15	16
St. Patrick's Day 17	18	First Day of Spring 19	20	21	22	23
24						
Easter 31	Holi 25	26	27	28	Good Friday 29	30

Activities adapted from *Talk to Me, Baby!, Second Edition* by Betty S. Bardige, Brookes Publishing Co.

4 Fun & Easy Language Boosters



- 1 Role Play.**  
Kids love taking on new and different roles—and it's the perfect opportunity to help them expand their language skills. As you engage in everyday activities, join them in pretending to be favorite characters from storybooks or TV shows.
- 2 Take a magic carpet ride.**  
Sit with a child on a rug or couch and pretend you're flying off on a magical adventure! Ask them to share their ideas on where you might visit, and begin a story about your adventure.
- 3 Eat—and talk about—foods from around the world.**  
Let children handle, smell, and taste diverse foods with different flavors and textures. Chat about the colors, tastes, and textures, as well as where the foods come from and how they are harvested or prepared.
- 4 Practice the ABC song, rhymes, and counting.**  
Songs about letters and numbers are fun and easy to practice during spare moments during the day, such as cleaning up or walking to the playground.



# EVERY CHILD

has the right to be

# FULLY ENGAGED

in their world, including the right to regular opportunities for **motor play** and **physical activity**.



Quote from *CHildren in Action: Motor Program for PreschoolerS (CHAMPPS)* by Paddy C. Favazza & Michaelene M. Ostrosky, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024

04

# APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	Ed Eid al-Fitr 10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	Passover Starts Earth Day 22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Activities adapted from **ASQ-3 Learning Activities** by Elizabeth Twombly and Ginger Fink and **ASQ:SE-2 Learning Activities & More** by Elizabeth Twombly, Leslie J. Munson, and Lois M. Pribble, Brookes Publishing Co.



## 3 At-Home SPRING ACTIVITIES to Boost Your CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT



### Have a teddy bear picnic.

Have your child bring their teddy bears or other favorite stuffed animals on the picnic. Pack a basket just for the bears with a blanket, napkins, pretend food, and plastic plates and tea cups.



### Build a rainy-day hideaway.

When April showers put the brakes on backyard play, ask if your children would like to build a special hideaway. Have the kids build a tent by draping old sheets or blankets over furniture. Once they make their tent, they can play in it, eat lunch inside it, or read books together with a flashlight.



### Set up a treasure hunt.

Hide "treasures" such as a favorite snack, a bag of crayons, or some stickers in places your child can reach. Draw a map that highlights each area where you want your child to search for treasures. Be sure to make the drawings on your map simple and clear, and celebrate when your child finds all the treasures.

Understanding the *feelings and needs* of others is a long learning process in young children's lives.



Quote from *Little Kids, Big Worries*, by Alice Sterling Honig, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024  
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05

MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
Orthodox Easter 5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Mother's Day 12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	Memorial Day 27	28	29	30	31	

## 5 Steps to Cultivating Empathy



### Watch and Listen

What is the other person saying, and what does their body language convey?



### Remember

When did you feel the same way?



### Imagine

How does the other person feel? How would you feel in that situation?



### Ask

Ask what the person is feeling.



### Show You Care

Let them know that you care through your words and actions.



# Children as young as 6 months are aware of *race* and *gender* differences and are beginning to form ideas about *diversity*.



Quote from *Coaching for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging in Early Childhood* by Anni K. Reinking & Laycee Thigpen, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024  
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06 **JUNE**



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	Flag Day 14	15
Father's Day 16	Eid al-Adha 17	18	Juneteenth 19	First Day of Summer 20	21	22
23						
30	24	25	26	27	28	29

## 4 Ways to Show Children That *Diversity* is a *Strength*

### 1 Teach children it's okay to ask questions.

Rather than stigmatizing questions, show children how to ask them sensitively and appropriately.

### 2 Have conversations about stereotypes and biases.

To support children's development of compassion and understanding, explicitly tackle stereotypes about looks, skin color, cultural beliefs, and gender.

### 3 Express positive interest in diverse cultures.

Show genuine enthusiasm when children share something about themselves or their culture. ("Wow, that is so interesting!", "I am really glad to learn about that.")

### 4 Set a good example.

Stay mindful that children look to you as a model. Seeing you respond to diversity in a supportive, empathetic way will teach them positive attitudes and strategies.





Learning is a  
lifelong way of  
being.

There is always  
something new  
to learn.

Quote from *The Project Approach for All Learners* by Sallee J. Beneke, Michaelene M. Ostrosky, & Lilian G. Katz, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024  
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07

JULY



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	Independence Day 4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Activities adapted from **14 Skill-Building Summer Activities To Do with Young Children** blog post (June 16, 2020), Brookes Blog (blog.brookespublishing.com).

### 3 Skill-Building Summer Activities To Do with Young Children



#### Bring the beach to your backyard or balcony.

Fill a small plastic pool with sand and bury seashells in the sand so that children can dig for them. Put on sunglasses and lay out on beach towels together (don't forget sunscreen!).



#### Make paper-plate sand pictures.

For fine-motor practice, have your child glue sand to the bottom of a paper plate (or paint it to look like sand). Then ask them to decorate the plate with items that might be found underwater, such as fish, sharks, and seaweed. (Use plastic animals, cut the photos out of magazines, or draw your own.)



#### Sharpen STEM skills with bubbles.

Make geometric bubble wands with pipe cleaners and straws. Creating the wands will help kids practice motor skills, and the outdoor bubble activity is a great opportunity to introduce different geometric shapes.





Reading & singing  
with children create  
sacred spaces  
for nurturance and  
connection.

Quote from *Sing & Sign for Young Children* by Anne Meeker Watson, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024  
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08 **AUGUST**



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**5** Strategies  
to Encourage  
Early Literacy Skills



**Help children make their own books.**

Homemade books are a great way to practice literacy skills and preserve memories of special events.



**Give favorite play areas a literacy infusion.**

Take note of where your kids like to play the most, and include literacy-related items and props.



**Point out signs and labels.**

Call the child's attention to words in print around the house, in the classroom, or on a drive.



**Play with rhymes.**

Play rhyming games of coming up with words that rhyme with a particular word. For example, for *cat*, try to come up with words such as *fat* and *sat*.



**Proudly display children's early writing attempts.**

When you value and celebrate children's efforts to write, they'll be more likely to try other writing activities.

Activities adapted from [12 Ways Parents and Teachers Can Encourage Early Literacy and Language Skills](#) blog post (April 28, 2020), Brookes Blog ([blog.brookespublishing.com](http://blog.brookespublishing.com)).



Children learn  
how to  
**respond**  
to others  
by experiencing  
how  
**adults**  
respond to  
them.

Quote from *Unpacking the Pyramid Model* by Mary Louise Hemmeter, Michaelene M. Ostrosky, & Lise K. Fox, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024  
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09 **SEPTEMBER**



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	Labor Day 2	3	4	5	6	7
Grandparents Day 8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
First Day of Autumn 22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Activities adapted from *Tackling the Tough Stuff* by Angela Tomlin & Stephan Viehweg, Brookes Publishing Co.

**5** Things Caregivers  
Can Do to Ease  
Young Children's Anxiety



- 1 Prepare children for events they might find scary.**  
Use books, TV programs when appropriate, or other indirect ways to get a child used to a feared object, person, or situation.
- 2 Encourage children's curiosity and play.**  
Specific, actively encouraging statements are more helpful for shy and anxious children than just warm statements.
- 3 Teach children to recognize and name feelings.**  
Children who have difficulty recognizing basic emotions may be more likely to incorrectly interpret another person's facial expression and emotion as negative, increasing their anxiety.
- 4 Provide increased structure.**  
More structure in the home environment (as well as child care and school) is likely to ease anxiety in any child.
- 5 Select age-appropriate activities.**  
Be sure that young children are engaged with activities that are appropriate for their developmental level and don't contain frightening imagery that can increase their anxiety.



IN EARLY CHILDHOOD,  
DEVELOPMENT IN EACH  
DOMAIN IS FOSTERED BY

**PLAY.**

Quote from *Early Social-Emotional Development* by Nicole M. Edwards, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024

10

**OCTOBER**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	First Day of Rosh Hashanah 3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	Yom Kippur 12
13	Indigenous Peoples' Day 14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	23	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	Halloween 31		

**4** **Activities to Boost Child Development this Fall**

- 1 Get outdoors every day you can.**

Choose activities that involve both gross motor skills (running, hopping, climbing, catching) and fine motor skills (grasping tools, digging, stacking).
- 2 Give kids their own day jobs.**

To boost their confidence and help strengthen their social and motor skills, select age-appropriate jobs—such as table-wiping for toddlers and preparing snack for older children.
- 3 Go someplace new together.**

To strengthen your child's communication skills, plan the outing together ahead of time and talk about the things you'll be seeing and doing together. On the way home, ask questions about what your child did and what their favorite parts were.
- 4 Enhance errands with simple skill-boosting games.**

At the store, have your child search for specific letters and numbers on signs and labels, or put pictures of things you'll be shopping for in an envelope and have your child pull out the images to remind you of what you need.

Activities adapted from *ASQ-3 Learning Activities* by Elizabeth Twombly and Ginger Fink and *ASQ:SE-2 Learning Activities & More* by Elizabeth Twombly, Leslie J. Munson, and Lois M. Pribble, Brookes Publishing Co.





IT IS *easy and natural*  
 TO INCLUDE FAMILIES IN  
*all aspects* RELATED TO THEIR  
 CHILD WHEN THEY  
 ARE *valued*  
 AND  
*appreciated.*

Quote from *Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children, Second Edition* by Glen Dunlap, Kelly Wilson, Phillip S. Strain, & Janice K. Lee, Brookes Publishing Co.

2024  
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 11 **NOVEMBER**



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					Diwali 1	2
Daylight Saving Time Ends 3	4	Election Day 5	6	7	8	9
10	Veterans Day 11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	Thanksgiving 28	29	30

**5 Tips for BUILDING A RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP with Parents**

- 
**Dedicate time to relationship building.**  
 The time you take for relationship building is never time wasted.
- 
**Share something about yourself (within professional boundaries).**  
 Relationship building in a professional context means that you are friendly with the caregiver but not entering into a friendship.
- 
**Be mindful of physical barriers and body positioning.**  
 Minimize distractions that create a barrier between you and the caregiver.
- 
**Be responsive, collaborative, and reliable.**  
 When problems arise, work together with the caregiver toward possible solutions.
- 
**Be respectful and compassionate.**  
 You are a support to the family, and it is your job (not theirs) to meet them where they are.

Activities adapted from **Pause and Reflect** by Dana Childress, Brookes Publishing Co.



# PLAY

offers a crucial activity for children's learning about their world and how to share that learning with others.

Quote from *Building Preverbal Communication & Engagement* by Lesley B. Olswang, Julie Feuerstein, & Gay Lloyd Pinder, Brookes Publishing Co.

## 2024 12 DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 First Day of Winter
22	23	24	25 Christmas	26 First Day of Hanukkah and Kwanzaa	27	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve				

Activities adapted from *ASQ-3 Learning Activities* by Elizabeth Twombly and Ginger Fink and *ASQ:SE-2 Learning Activities & More* by Elizabeth Twombly, Leslie J. Munson, and Lois M. Pribble, Brookes Publishing Co.

### 3 Fun Indoor Activities that BOOST Young Children's Development



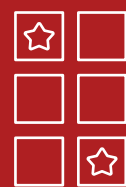
#### Twirl around.

Make long scarves out of fabric scraps, old dresses, or old shirts by tearing or cutting pieces. Use material that is lightweight. Show your child how to hold on to the edge of the scarf as they twirl, run, and jump around.



#### Playdough person.

Make a person with playdough or clay using sticks, buttons, toothpicks, beads, and other items. (Be careful with small items around young children.) Ask your child questions about their person: What is their name? What do they like and dislike?



#### Memory matching.

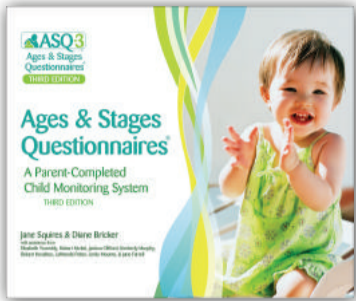
Make a simple concentration game with pairs of duplicate playing cards, or make your own cards out of duplicate pictures or magazine ads. Start with two or three pairs of cards. Turn them face down and mix them up. Let your child turn two cards over to see if they match. If they don't, turn the cards face down so they can try again.



# Trusted tools to support healthy child development



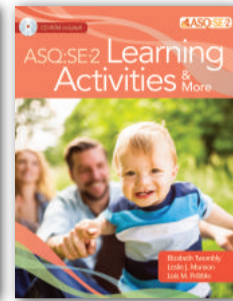
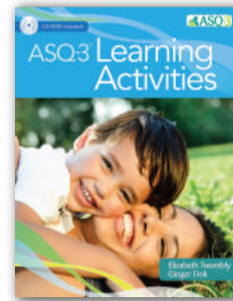
▶ Check milestones and catch potential delays early



Developmental screener



Social-emotional screener

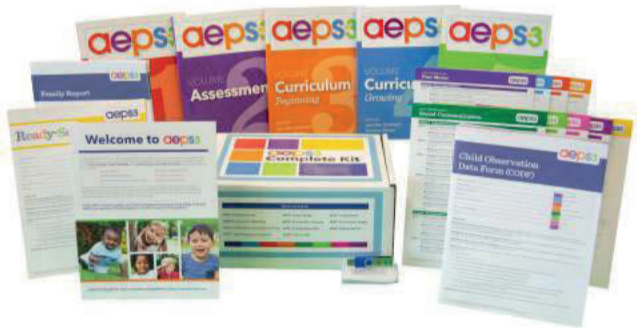


Engaging activities to share with parents

[www.agesandstages.com](http://www.agesandstages.com)



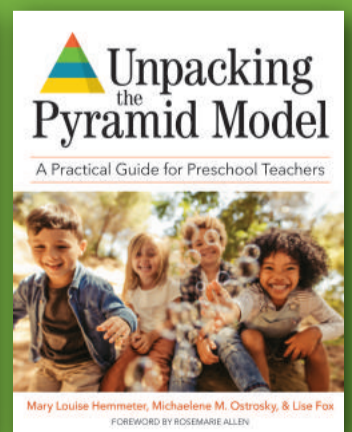
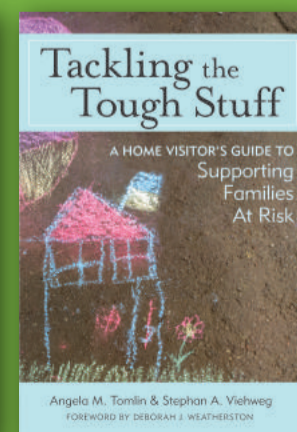
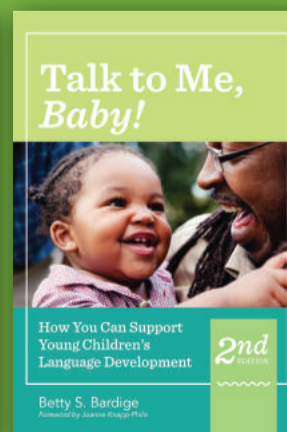
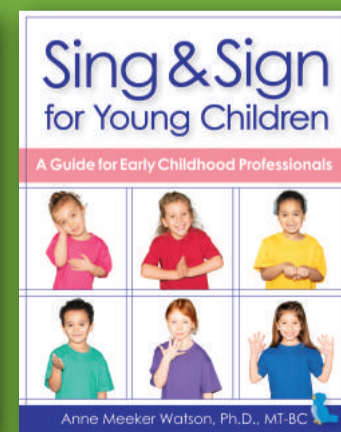
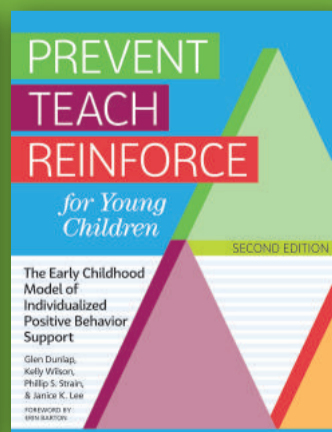
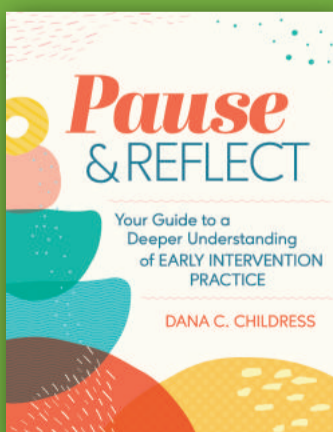
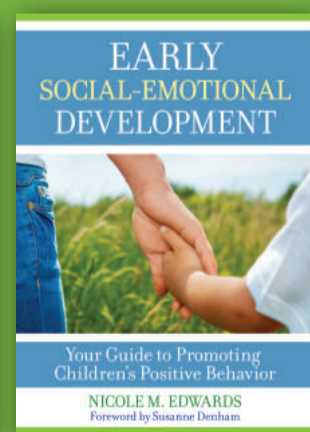
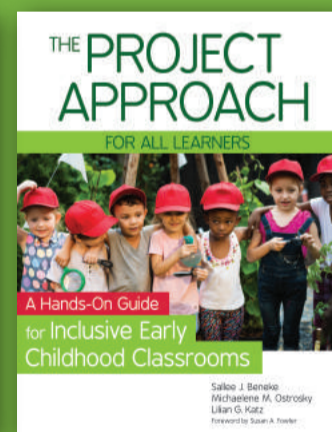
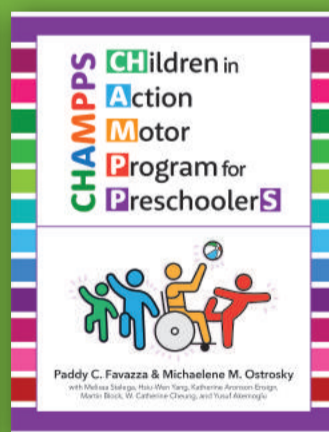
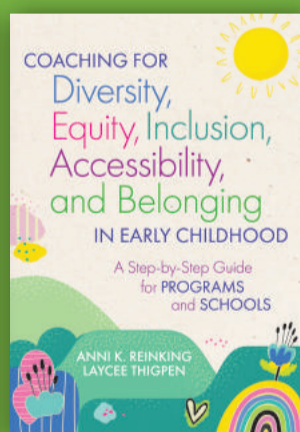
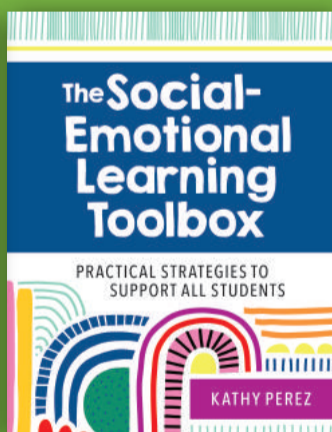
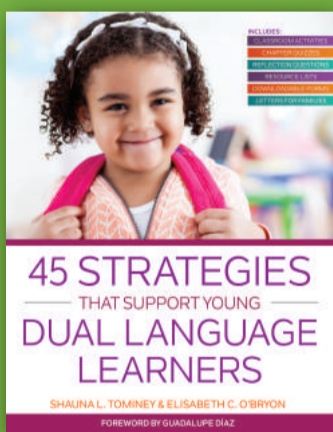
▶ Ensure real progress with this powerful assessment and curriculum system



Criterion-referenced test | Linked, three-tiered curriculum |  
Online management system

[www.aepsinteractive.com](http://www.aepsinteractive.com)

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