

Lehi Cares Coalition



Social Development Strategy Mini Guide





Welcome to the Social Development Strategy Mini Guide!

The Lehi Cares Coalition hopes you find the examples, tips, and resources helpful as you navigate the path of the Social Development Strategy with the youth you interact with in your daily life.



The Social Development Strategy (SDS) is the science of bonding framed in a practical formula that any adult can apply.

Research behind the SDS shows that children learn patterns of behavior, whether prosocial or antisocial, from their social environment. Our responsibility as adults is to provide positive nurturing environments powered by the SDS so that kids won't seek out bonding in negative ways that will lead them down an unhealthy path.

Bonding is more than just time spent together. It's developed through three important processes—opportunities, skills and recognition. The resulting bonds then lead youth to be more likely to adopt the healthy beliefs you communicate to them and more receptive to clear standards that you communicate and model for them.

The Social Development Strategy (SDS)



Step 1: Opportunities



Adults can provide opportunities for kids by providing meaningful ways for them to be involved and interact with their family and the community.

Keep in mind that opportunities should be:

- Age appropriate
- Meaningful
- Matched to the young person's

individual characteristics and interests

- Challenging enough to be motivating, but not frustrating

Healthy Behaviors



Healthy Beliefs
and
Clear Standards



Bonding

Attachment
Commitment



Opportunities

Skills

Recognition



Step 2: Skills



Adults should teach kids the skills to be successful in the opportunity that they've provided them with.

Tips for Teaching Skills to Youth

- Be realistic about their capacity
Start small
- Build on successes
Explain why the skill is important
- Demonstrate each step
Do the skill with them the first time they try
- Coach the child while they practice by themselves
- Aim to get them comfortable using the skill on their own
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Step 3: Recognition



Adults should provide recognition to kids for their effort, improvement and achievement. When youth are recognized for their skillful involvements, it promotes strong bonds.

Tips for Providing Recognition to Youth

- Be specific
Be positive
- Give only one suggestion for improvement
Try to avoid focusing solely on achievement
- Bonds are created when kids are recognized for the process of developing skills, not just the final outcome
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After kids have bonded with adults, they're motivated to align their behavior with that adult's expectations.

When adults regularly and explicitly set clear standards around healthy behaviors for kids, healthy outcomes increase. Clear standards aren't about moral or beliefs - they're about what research tells us will lead to healthy outcomes for youth.

Areas where parents should communicate clear standards include:

- Underage alcohol use
- Marijuana use
- Prescription drug safety
- Use of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes
- Safe sex
- Suicide and mental health
- School commitment
- Violence
- Vandalism
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Guidelines for Providing Standards about Healthy Behaviors to Youth

Make them specific

Communicate them clearly and often

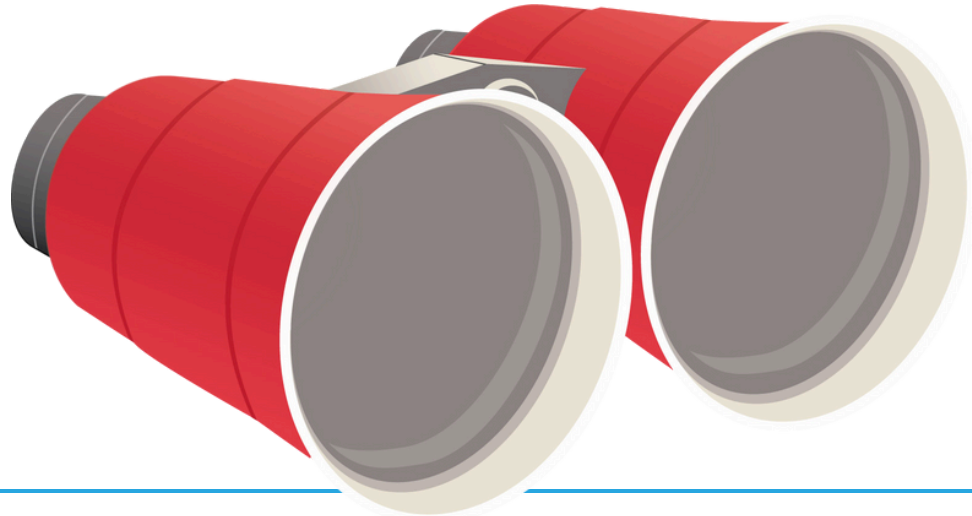
Teach the skills needed for youth to follow the standards

Monitor youth to make sure they're sticking to the standards

Provide consequences when course correction is needed

and rewards for when they demonstrate healthy behaviors

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Tips for setting clear standards:



Talk, don't lecture. Have two-way conversations, not a one-way lecture, early and often (as early as age 9)



Stick to the science. Explain the risks. (see resources on back cover for help)



Let them know you love them and want them to be safe and healthy



Tell them why you care about this topic



Walk in their shoes



Be clear



Stay calm



Use positivity



Be aware of your body language



Use active listening



Have the kids set the consequences



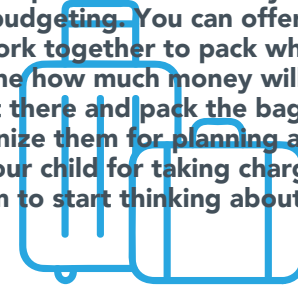
Consider having them sign a contract

Example 1

Opportunity: Let kids plan a vacation/staycation or weekend activity.

Skill: Planning and budgeting. You can offer choices or children can pick the activity. Work together to pack what is needed and with some discussion, determine how much money will be needed, plan the driving route to get there and pack the bag of supplies.

Recognition: Recognize them for planning a fun time together for the family. Thank your child for taking charge of the plans and share highlights. Ask them to start thinking about what to do next time.

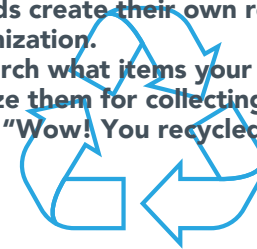


Example 2

Opportunity: Have kids create their own recycling program at home, school, or other organization.

Skill: Recycling. Research what items your city recycles and make a plan

Recognition: Recognize them for collecting items. "Good eye seeing we can recycle that!" "Wow! You recycled three things today."



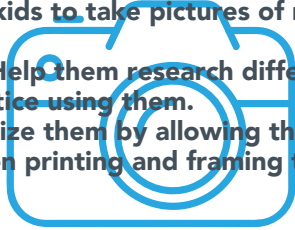


Example 3

Opportunity: Invite kids to take pictures of nature, friends, family, or pets.

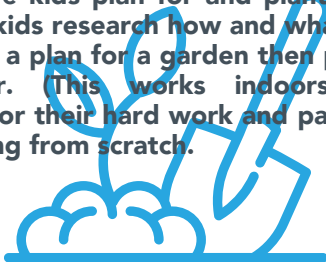
Skill: Photography. Help them research different photography techniques and practice using them.

Recognition: Recognize them by allowing the child to choose one or two favorites, then printing and framing them.



Example 4

Opportunity: Have kids plan for and plant a small garden. **Skill:** Gardening. Help kids research how and what to plant this time of year and develop a plan for a garden then plant and maintain the garden together. (This works indoors too!) **Recognition:** Recognize them for their hard work and patience in planning and growing something from scratch.



Example 5

Opportunity: Invite kids to help plan a meal and cook it. **Skill:** Meal planning and cooking. Teach them how to find recipes, check what ingredients you already have, and make a list for the store. Bonus points if they incorporate produce from the garden. Show them how to cook it afterwards. **Recognition:** Celebrate their hard work in developing a plan and creating a grocery list. Compliment the budding chef for a delicious meal.

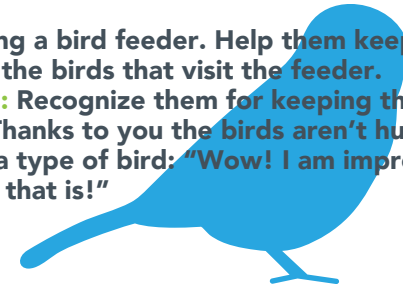


Example 6

Opportunity: Invite kids to feed the birds outside the window at home or school.

Skill: Creating a bird feeder. Help them keep it filled and then research and discuss the birds that visit the feeder.

Recognition: Recognize them for keeping the feeder filled. For example, "Thanks to you the birds aren't hungry!" Give recognition for identifying a type of bird: "Wow! I am impressed how you knew what kind of bird that is!"



Example 7

Opportunity: Let kids plan an after school party or sleepover with friends.

Skill: Party planning. Brainstorm and plan with them a list of people to invite, games to play, decorations, food, invitations, and a date to hold the party/sleepover.

Recognition: During and after the party recognize them for how organized and fun the party/sleepover turned out. "Your friends are lucky to have such a creative and fun friend! You did an amazing job!"



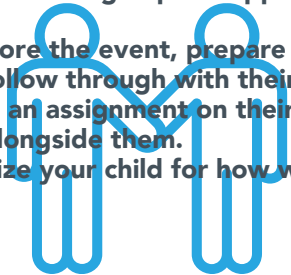
Example 8

Opportunity: Invite kids to sign up to support a city, school, or church event.

Skill: Work ethic. Before the event, prepare them to listen to instructions and to follow through with their assigned tasks. If they're uncomfortable doing an assignment on their own, assist them by doing the job right alongside them.

Recognition: Recognize your child for how well they are doing

their job.

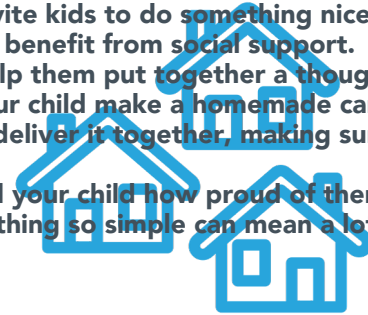


Example 9

Opportunity: Invite kids to do something nice for your neighbors or others who may benefit from social support.

Skill: Gifting. Help them put together a thoughtful treat or small gift and help your child make a homemade card or drawing for the neighbor. Then deliver it together, making sure to hand it off to them personally.

Recognition: Tell your child how proud of them you are. Explain to them how something so simple can mean a lot to another person.



Example 10

Opportunity: Invite kids to volunteer in the community.

Skill: Researching and volunteering. Explain that helping others, even people you don't know, is a good thing. Teach your child how to research and contact an organization to find out what kind of volunteer opportunities are available.

Recognition: Praise your child for taking the initiative to research organizations and give back to their community! Tell your child you're proud of them for helping others.



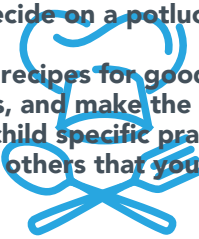


Example 11

Opportunity: Let kids decide on a potluck item to take to a party your family was invited to.

Skill: Cooking. Research recipes for good potluck food. Choose what to make, gather supplies, and make the dish together.

Recognition: Give your child specific praise as you're making the recipe. At the party, tell others that your child made the recipe and how good it is.



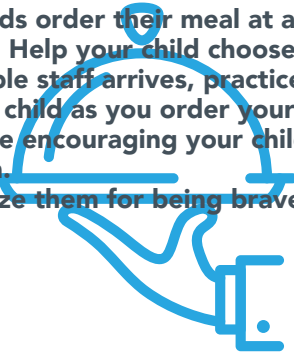
Example 12

Opportunity: Have kids order their meal at a restaurant.

Skill: Communication. Help your child choose what they would like to eat. Before the table staff arrives, practice the order with your child. Model for your child as you order your meal. Aid as needed with their order, while encouraging your child to do as much as possible on their own.

Recognition: Recognize them for being brave and communicating

clearly.

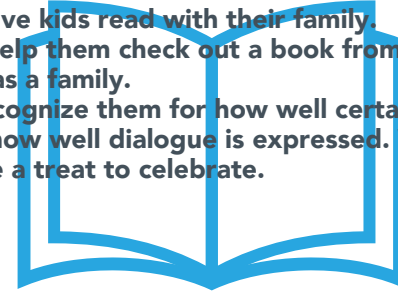


Example 13

Opportunity: Have kids read with their family.

Skill: Reading. Help them check out a book from the library. Read aloud together as a family.

Recognition: Recognize them for how well certain words are pronounced or how well dialogue is expressed. When a book is completed, have a treat to celebrate.

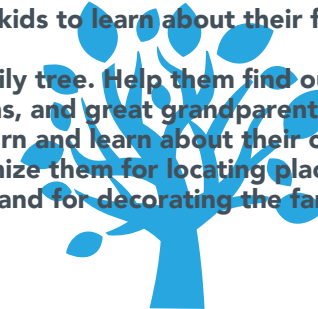


Example 14

Opportunity: Invite kids to learn about their family and ancestral background.

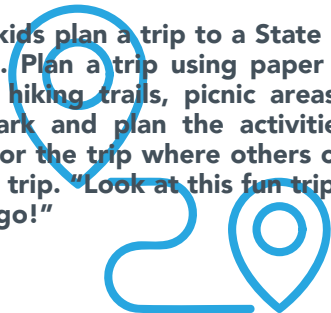
Skill: Creating a family tree. Help them find out names of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and great grandparents. Use a map to find the places they were born and learn about their cultural heritage.

Recognition: Recognize them for locating places on a map, for talking to family members, and for decorating the family tree.



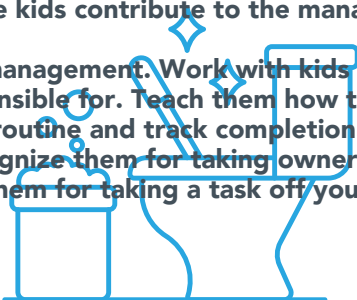
Example 15

Opportunity: Let kids plan a trip to a State or National Park. **Skill:** Vacation planning. Plan a trip using paper or online maps. Have the child look at hiking trails, picnic areas, and other activities offered at the park and plan the activities. **Recognition:** After posting the plan for the trip where others can see it, then discuss a time to take the trip. "Look at this fun trip Scotty planned! Let's find the time and go!"



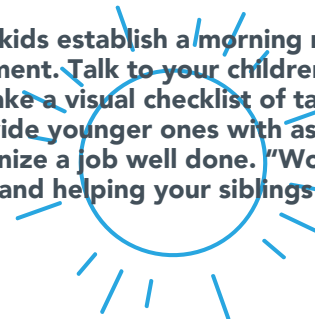
Example 16

Opportunity: Have kids contribute to the management of the household. **Skill:** Household management. Work with kids to select a chore that they will be responsible for. Teach them how to create reminders, build it into their routine and track completion. **Recognition:** Recognize them for taking ownership of their living space and thank them for taking a task off your plate.



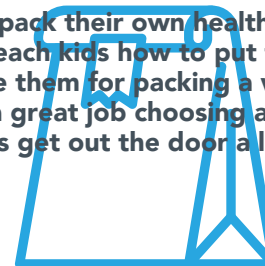
Example 17

Opportunity: Have kids establish a morning routine. **Skill:** Time management. Talk to your children about the benefits of repetitive tasks. Make a visual checklist of tasks for accountability. Older kids can provide younger ones with assistance. **Recognition:** Recognize a job well done. "Wow! Thank you for getting all your tasks done and helping your siblings do the same!"



Example 18

Opportunity: Let kids pack their own healthy lunch. **Skill:** Meal planning. Teach kids how to put together a balanced meal. **Recognition:** Celebrate them for packing a well-balanced meal. "Way to go! You did a great job choosing and packing your own healthy lunch! It also helped us get out the door a little quicker this morning."



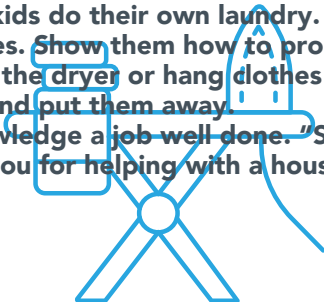


Example 19

Opportunity: Have kids do their own laundry.

Skill: Cleaning clothes. Show them how to properly use the machine and soaps, then use the dryer or hang clothes to dry. Teach them how to fold the clothes and put them away.

Recognition: Acknowledge a job well done. "Smell how fresh these clothes are! Thank you for helping with a household task!"

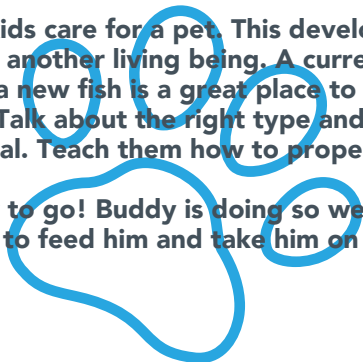


Example 20

Opportunity: Let kids care for a pet. This develops a bond and responsibility over another living being. A current family dog, a neighbor's cat, or a new fish is a great place to start.

Skill: Animal care. Talk about the right type and amount of food and water for the animal. Teach them how to properly take care of the animal's needs.

Recognition: "Way to go! Buddy is doing so well! You've worked so hard to remember to feed him and take him on walks. Keep up the good work!"

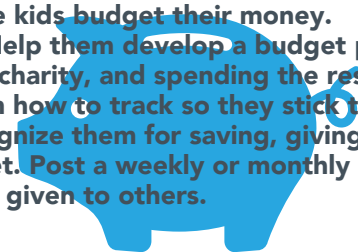


Example 21

Opportunity: Have kids budget their money.

Skill: Budgeting. Help them develop a budget plan that includes savings, giving to charity, and spending the rest on needs versus wants. Teach them how to track so they stick to their plan.

Recognition: Recognize them for saving, giving to others and staying within their budget. Post a weekly or monthly chart that shows how much is saved and given to others.

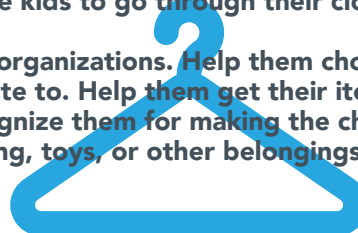


Example 22

Opportunity: Invite kids to go through their clothing and belongings to donate.

Skill: Researching organizations. Help them choose an organization to research and donate to. Help them get their items to the organization.

Recognition: Recognize them for making the choice to donate their gently used clothing, toys, or other belongings.

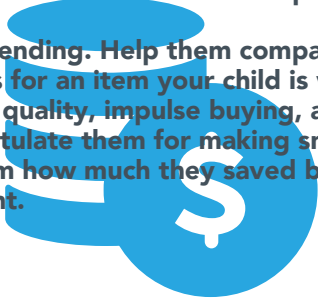


Example 23

Opportunity: Invite kids to learn about comparison shopping and purchase decisions.

Skill: Responsible spending. Help them compare prices from several different online sites for an item your child is wanting to purchase. Talk about differences in quality, impulse buying, and saving with coupons.

Recognition: Congratulate them for making smart shopping decisions. Show them how much they saved by waiting for a sale or looking for a discount.

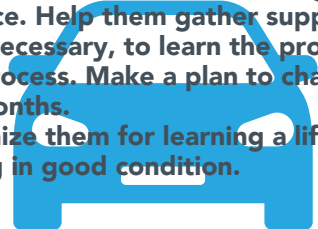


Example 24

Opportunity: Invite kids to learn how to change the oil on the car.

Skill: Car maintenance. Help them gather supplies needed. Watch YouTube videos, if necessary, to learn the process together. Walk them through the process. Make a plan to change the oil again together in a few months.

Recognition: Recognize them for learning a life skill and helping to keep the car running in good condition.

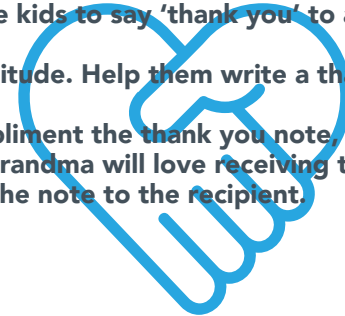


Example 25

Opportunity: Invite kids to say 'thank you' to adults that are important to them.

Skill: Showing gratitude. Help them write a thank you note. Decorate it with drawings.

Recognition: Compliment the thank you note, "That is such a thoughtful note. Grandma will love receiving this from you." Have the child deliver/mail the note to the recipient.



Lehi Cares Coalition

lehicares.org



Parents Empowered

parentsempowered.org



Gray Matters

graymattersutah.org



Know Your Script

knowyourscript.org



LiveOn Utah

liveonutah.org

