Ideas for Exhibits and Programming That Nurture Social and Emotional Skill Development


1. Exhibits in which kids guess the feelings of pictures/videos of children and adults that are demonstrating different emotions.

2. Exhibits in which children can put together part of faces to create different emotional states.

3. Exhibits in which children learn about the neuroscience of emotions (role of amygdala, hippocampus, frontal area, etc.)...this could run the gamut of emotions from uncomfortable emotions (anger, fear, sadness, etc.) as well as positive emotions (love, empathy, compassion). See Kahn Academy video series on emotion.

4. Activities that prompt kids to engage in problem solving with other kids.

5. Games (such as the card game UNO) in which the cards are emotions, rather than the typical game (we have already done this).

6. Board games that focus on social and emotional learning (Penn State have developed one for ages 5-7).

7. There are a variety of ways that virtual reality (or playacting) could be used. For example, putting children into different situations in which they have “dilemmas” such as entering a group of new kids, greeting a new child at a school, managing conflicts, etc.