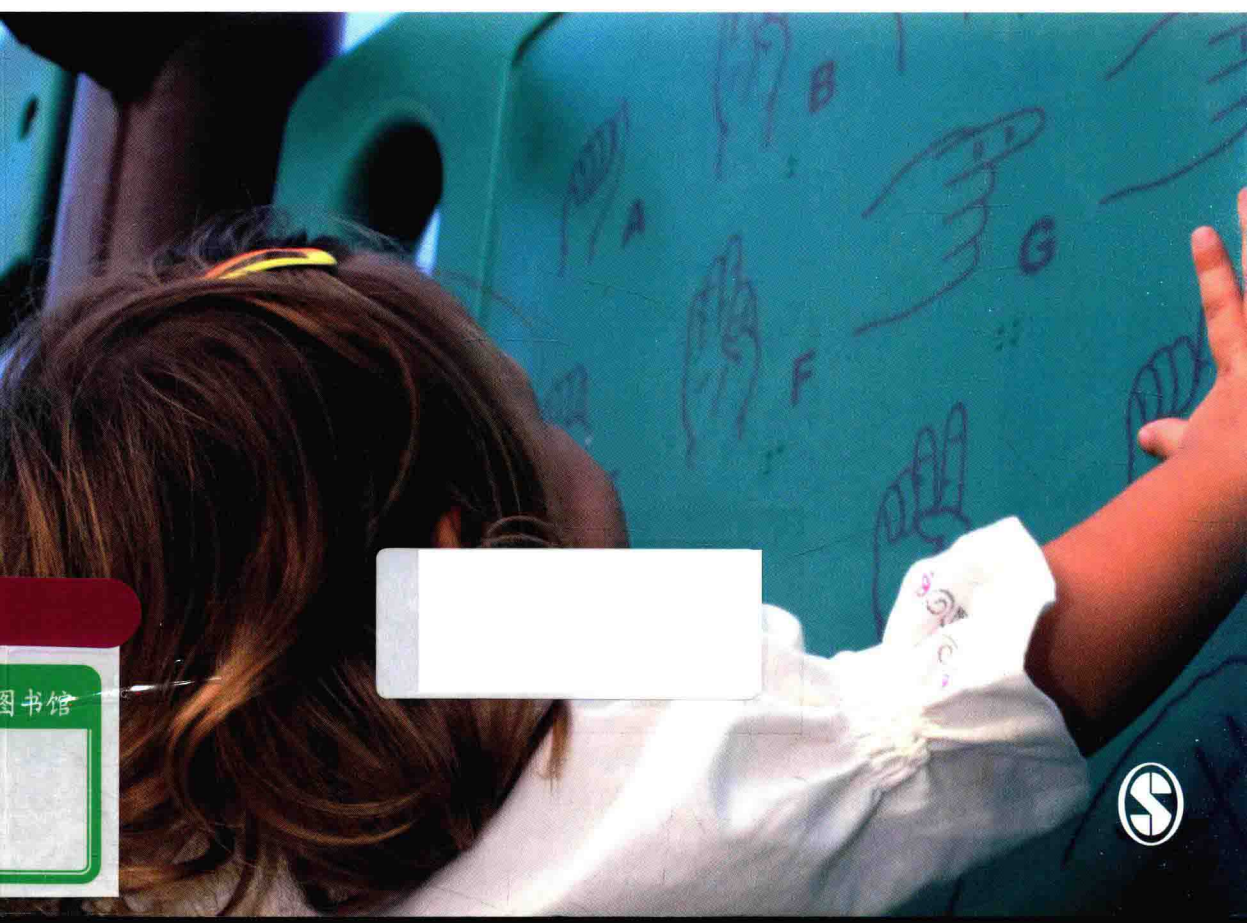


Marion Dowling

# Young Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development

4th Edition



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Young Children's  
Personal, Social  
and Emotional  
Development

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Cover design: Wendy Scott  
Typeset by: C&M Digitals (P) Ltd, Chennai, India  
Printed and bound in Great Britain by Ashford  
Colour Press Ltd



© Marion Dowling 2000, 2005, 2010, 2014

First edition published 2000. Reprinted 2003, 2004  
Second edition published 2005. Reprinted 2007 (twice), 2008, 2009  
Third edition published 2010. Reprinted 2011, 2013  
This fourth edition published 2014

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**Library of Congress Control Number: 2014930445**

**British Library Cataloguing in Publication data**

A catalogue record for this book is available from  
the British Library

ISBN 978-1-4462-8588-6  
ISBN 978-1-4462-8589-3 (pbk)

# Young Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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*This book is dedicated to my parents, Ron and Kath,  
who gave me a wonderful childhood*

# About the Author

Marion Dowling has been involved in the pre-school playgroup movement, has taught in London, and was also headteacher of a state nursery school. She was an educational adviser in two local authorities, a member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate, and has been involved in a number of government working parties on early years. She now works as a trainer and consultant in the UK and overseas.

Marion is an experienced author and is a vice president of Early Education, a national charity.



# Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to this new edition and thanks are due to Marianne Lagrange and Rachael Plant at Sage for their help and encouragement.

Thank you so much to the following people who gave permission to reproduce images in this book:

The directors of Siren Films and parents of the children photographed  
Tachbrook Nursery School and the parents of Leonore for the photo of the 'Mud Girl'

Daniel Dowling and Tiffany Gordon for images of Ruby and Flora

All of the following photographs are taken from films produced by Siren Films – [sirenfilms.co.uk](http://sirenfilms.co.uk)

**Loving attachment from** *Communication Film – birth to three (forthcoming)*

**Dexter enjoys a challenge and surprise from** *The Power of Physical Play – the development of self regulation*

**Dexter and Rae good friends share experiences from** *The Power of Physical Play – the development of self regulation*

**Girls in deep discussion from** *Play and Learning at School – five years old*

**Ava views her first full day at nursery with trepidation from** *Life at Two – attachments, key people and shaping the brain*

**Shared thinking about a dice game from** *Play and Learning at School – five years old*

**Peek a boo from** *The Wonder Year – first year development and shaping the brain*

Once again, most of the case studies arise from my observations of young children over a number of years; some of these children are now young adults. In all cases their names have been changed, apart from when they have asked to keep them. Every effort has been made to obtain any copyright permissions and I apologise if, inadvertently, any sources are unacknowledged.

Finally, the book would not have been completed without Barry who has, as always, given me constructive criticism, time and constant support to write.



# Foreword by Lilian Katz

For the fourth time in a row, Marion Dowling has provided us with an updated, comprehensive and practical approach to the most important aspects of the development of young children. In the 15 years since the first edition was published the accumulated research and professional experience has strengthened the case that Dowling clearly makes: that we have to get things right in the early years.

Each chapter summarizes the recent research related to the complexities of young children's personal, social and emotional development, and Dowling makes a convincing case for the importance of getting it right from the start. In addition, each chapter addresses the implications of recent changes in policies and national regulations and their implications for the organization and implementation of day-to-day practices in supporting young children's development.

As in the previous editions of this comprehensive coverage of the basics of human development, this book includes a rich set of case studies that address the large range of issues faced by all whose lives involve them in the care and development of young children. Those who work with young children in a variety of settings will easily find the cases clear, meaningful and useful. Each case is followed by practical suggestions about how to address the problems portrayed. In addition, Dowling encourages those who teach and care for young children to take time to engage periodically in self-examination to help them strengthen their own effectiveness.

Based on my own extensive experience of interacting with early childhood practitioners working in a wide range of facilities and conditions around the world, I am confident that Marion Dowling makes clear a wide range of effective practices that can be helpful to all of us.

Lilian G. Katz, PhD

Professor Emerita & Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting,  
University of Illinois

# National References for Each Chapter

Chapter	EYFS Statutory Framework	EYFS Non-Statutory Guidance Development Matters	Teachers' Standards (Early Years)
1	Overarching principle p. 3, V1; p. 5, 1.6; p. 6, 1.9, 1.10; p. 7, 1.11; p. 8, 1.13; p. 10, 2.1; p. 18, 3.27–3.30	A unique child p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE self-confidence and self-awareness pp. 10/11	1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 8.3, 8.5
2	Overarching principle p. 3, V1; p. 5, 1.6; p. 6, 1.9, 1.10; p. 7, 1.11; p. 8, 1.13; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2	Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE self-confidence and self-awareness pp. 10/11	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3, 8.5
3	p. 7, 1.11; p. 8, 1.13; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2	Positive relationships p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE making relationships pp. 8/9	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3, 8.5
4	p. 6, 1.8; p. 7, 1.11; p. 8, 1.13; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2	Positive relationships p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE making relationships pp. 8/9, Communication and language pp.15–21, Physical development pp. 22–27	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3, 8.5
5	p. 6, 1.10; p. 8, 1.13; p. 9, 1.13; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2	Positive relationships p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE self-confidence and self-awareness pp. 10/11, Communication and language pp. 15–21, Physical development pp. 22–27, Literacy pp. 28–31, Mathematics pp. 32–36, Understanding the world pp. 37–42, Expressive arts and design pp. 43–46	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 7.2, 8.3, 8.5

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Chapter	EYFS Statutory Framework	EYFS Non-Statutory Guidance Development Matters	Teachers' Standards (Early Years)
6	p. 6, 1.10; p. 8, 1.13; p. 9, 1.13; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2	Positive relationships p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE self-confidence and self-awareness pp. 10/11, Communication and language pp. 15–21, Physical development pp. 22–27, Literacy pp. 28–31, Mathematics pp. 32–36, Understanding the world pp. 37–42, Expressive arts and design pp. 43–46	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3, 8.5
7	p. 5, 1.6; p. 6, 1.8; p. 7, 1.11; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2; p. 18, 3.26	Positive relationships p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE managing feelings and behaviour pp. 12–14, Communication and language pp. 15–21, Understanding the world pp. 37–38, Expressive arts and design: being imaginative pp. 45–46	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3, 8.5
8	p. 6, 1.8; p. 7, 1.11; pp. 7–8, 1.13	Positive relationships p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviour pp. 8–14, Communication and language: speaking pp. 19–21, Expressive arts and design: being imaginative pp. 45/46	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 7.3, 8.3, 8.5

Chapter	EYFS Statutory Framework	EYFS Non-Statutory Guidance Development Matters	Teachers' Standards (Early Years)
9	p. 6, 1.9; p. 7, 1.11, 3.26; p. 8–9, 1.13; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2	Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE making relationships pp. 8/9, Self-confidence and self-awareness pp. 10/11, Managing feelings and behaviour pp. 12–14	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 8.3, 8.5
10	p. 3, V1; p. 5, 1.6, 1.9; p. 6, 1.10; p. 7, 1.11; p. 8–9, 1.13; p. 10, 2.1–2.5	Enabling environments p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, Self-confidence and self-awareness pp. 10/11, Supporting each child's learning and development p.3	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3, 8.5
11	p. 6, 1.9, 1.10; p. 7, 1.11; p. 8, 1.13; p.10–11, 2.1–7	Positive relationships, Enabling environments p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE making relationships, pp. 8/9, Managing feelings and behaviour pp. 12–14	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3, 8.5
12	p. 6, 1.7, 1.9, 1.10; p. 7, 1.11, 1.12; p. 8, 1.13; p. 10, 2.1, 2.5; p. 23, 3.50–1	Positive relationships p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, PSE making relationships pp. 8/9, Managing feelings and behaviour pp. 12–14, Physical development pp. 22/23	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 7.1, 8.3, 8.5
13	p. 6, 1.9, 1.10; p. 8; p. 9; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2	A unique child p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, Making relationships pp. 8–9, Managing feelings and behaviour pp. 12–14, Expressive arts and design pp. 43–46	1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3, 8.5

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Chapter	EYFS Statutory Framework	EYFS Non-Statutory Guidance Development Matters	Teachers' Standards (Early Years)
14	p. 6–7, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11; p. 8; p. 9; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2	Positive relationships p. 2, Characteristics of effective learning p. 4, pp. 6/7, Self-confidence and self-awareness pp. 10/11, Communication and language (speaking) pp. 19–21, Understanding the world pp. 37–42, Expressive arts and design pp. 4–46	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8.3, 8.5
15	p. 2, I, III; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5; p. 24, 3.60; p. 26, 3.72, 3.73, 3.74	A unique child p. 2, Making relationships pp. 8–9, Communication and language (speaking) p. 19, Physical development (health and welfare) pp. 25–27, Understanding the world (The world) p. 40	2.7, 5.2, 6.2, 6.3, 8.2, 8.3, 8.5
16	p. 2, III; p. 10, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5; p. 13–14, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7; p. 24, 3.60		2.7, 5.3, 5.6, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.2, 8.5, 8.6

### Important Note

#### Development Matters

The status of 'Development Matters' as non-statutory guidance has not changed and has not been replaced by the DFE's new 'Outcomes' document. This is simply an extract from 'Development Matters' and unlike the full document does not inform on issues of child development.



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# Introduction

Since I wrote the last edition of this book the UK government has changed and there have been far-reaching innovations which affect provision for young children, their families and the workforce. In contrast to the substantial investment in early years experienced at the start of this century, the last five years have been a time of upheaval defined by breathless change and increasingly severe budget constraints.

## A Climate of Austerity

The global financial crisis resulted in many developed countries experiencing a liquidity gap, with high unemployment, unsustainable debt and low growth (1). One outcome is the cut in funding to local authority children's services. By 2014–2015 the budget for local children's services will have fallen by more than a third since 2010, and further cuts are forecast for the following year (2). The coalition government has removed ring fencing for children's services and given responsibility to local authorities to decide where to make cuts. Councils are expected to provide more for families at a time when their financial resources have been drastically decreased.

## Impact on Services

A review of eight local authorities with responsibilities for children's services showed that between 2011–2012 the cuts made in early years services included childcare services, early years consultancy, and advisory support for the voluntary, private and independent sector and Children's Centres (3).

These cuts have come when there is an increased need and demand for services. A census carried out recently by the charity 4Children revealed that for the first time over one million families are now using their local children's centre, including 320,000 disadvantaged parents. Despite this, the charity predicts that around 60 centres could close by the end of 2014 due to severe financial pressures. At the same time 31% of the 501 centres participating in the census expected to reduce their services due to diminished budgets (4).

As local authorities give priority for resources to the most disadvantaged families there are not the funds available to work with less vulnerable groups and prevent their needs increasing. Reducing preventative work can prove to be a false economy in the long term.

## National Policy Initiatives

### The framework

The format of the revised statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) reflects today's economic climate. It is a brief document which simply spells out the legal requirements to support children's learning and development and safeguarding and welfare in all early years' provision; in order for practitioners to understand and meet these mandatory requirements however, they need to draw on other practice guidance, some of which I have referenced in this book.

Despite its brevity, the framework continues to be based on the themes and principles established in the previous framework and affirms the significance of children's personal, social and emotional development:

- as one of the prime areas of learning (recognising that it is central to all other areas of learning);
- in the characteristics of effective learning which emphasise how children learn rather than what they learn. References are made throughout this book to the three characteristics (playing and exploring; active learning; and creating and thinking critically) (5).

The section on Safeguarding and Welfare, which makes up half of the framework, rightly emphasises safeguarding and child protection with a view to protecting young children from harm. Following the serious case review relating to the Little Ted's Nursery and Vanessa George, the framework now requires safeguarding policies and procedures to cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in a setting. Staff are also required to be trained to identify and respond to signs of possible abuse and neglect which may be observed physically or from the adult's or child's behaviour (6). These necessarily stringent requirements highlight the serious responsibilities for practitioners having daily contact with young children.

## Work with Families

The importance of close links with parents continues to be recognised. In 2011 the government set out its vision for services that should be available for families, stating that they are the most important influence on their young children (7). This ambitious and comprehensive document confronts us at a time when it is difficult to see how some of the services promised can be delivered. For example, the well-intentioned undertaking to recruit an additional 4,200 health visitors by 2015 has been greeted with some scepticism given the current shortage (8). However, the sensible insistence for various agencies to work closely together makes the best use of the resources still available.

Although it has long been recognised that young families benefit from professionals working together to offer a unified service, practice has been patchy. Some recent serious case reviews reveal that children have suffered when information has not been passed on to fellow professionals (9, 10). Acknowledging these weaknesses, a task group was commissioned by the government to disseminate good practice, identify the barriers to sharing information, and recommend how these barriers might be overcome. Authentic case studies demonstrate ways to achieve the sharing of information and useful fact sheets summarise key points (11). These recent documents have real potential to improve practice.

## Ensuring a Quality Workforce

For some years the emphasis has been to recruit and maintain sufficient early years practitioners to work with very large numbers of babies and young children across the sector. The early emphasis on provision was more on 'never mind the quality, feel the width'. Poor pay and conditions of service still exist for the majority of practitioners. Too often private providers of childcare working on tight budgets and to required staffing ratios continue to employ the cheapest staff possible. Some (but by no means all) are young and inexperienced and sometimes lack interest in pursuing a career with young children. Many of these young adults do not have the appropriate skills, nor do they model appropriate attitudes, behaviour and language to impressionable young children. Moreover, fatigue and poor wages mean that hard-working and aspirational staff feel unsupported and undervalued; in these circumstances they have too little to offer children. It is not enough to rely on staff doing this work because of the intrinsic rewards of the job. High-level recruitment and retention of the best people are also dependent on those individuals being paid a realistic salary and working reasonable hours. Furthermore, a confusing mishmash of qualifications has meant that the routes to development and promotion have been unclear within the sector.