Teachers with emotionally intelligent classrooms use a variety of intentional practices to teach children social skills. These intentional practices can be used during naturally occurring opportunities as well as during structured activities. During naturally occurring opportunities, such as entering play or taking turns, teachers model and scaffold appropriate social skills. For structured activities, teachers intentionally plan for children to work and play together, giving them opportunities to learn and practice social skills.

(El 6.1 Conversational Ability; 20.1 Cooperative Play; 25.2 Role-Plays)

Teachers can positively recognize children who are using appropriate social skills.
Examples of positive descriptive comments are:
“Wow! You all worked together to clean up the block area!”
“Thanks, Mary, for helping Dawn with the stool.”
“Annabelle shared the sand toys with Josh when he asked nicely!”

Teachers must model social skills throughout the day.
Ways to model social skills include:
While waiting for access to the sink, the teacher comments, “I am waiting, because it is Marie’s turn.”.
“Miss Teresa, I see you are waiting patiently for your friend, Amanda, to give you the red crayon.”

Strategies to individualize instruction

- Modeling social skills for the individual child
- Role-playing scenarios with a child or small group
- Using puppets to model social situations
- Using scripted, social stories
- Using pictures and other visual supports (Hemmeter, Fox, & Snyder, 2014)

References: