

Preschool PATHS
(Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)
(<http://www.channing-bete.com/prevention-programs/paths-preschool/>)

The research-based PATHS program is a “social-emotional learning” comprehensive program designed to compliment existing Head Start programming by helping children develop social and emotional skills that are precursors to social and learning behaviors.

PATHS curricula include structured lessons that teach children ways to “think” about emotions and responses to peers in social interactions. Lessons are taught during “Circle Time,” along with “extension activities” for teachers to embed at other times that give children opportunities to practice the targeted cooperation, communication, self-control, and social problem-solving skills. The conceptual model for PATHS places children’s *social* and *emotion* skills as the primary target of this intervention model.

Targeted social skills include:

- ✦ **Language and Communication Skills;**
- ✦ **Cooperative Play Skills; and**
- ✦ **Aggression Control and Social Problem-Solving Skills.**

Targeted emotion skills include:

- ✦ **Emotion Regulation** – the ability to adjust emotional responses in a way that is appropriate to the context;
- ✦ **Emotion Knowledge** – the ability to accurately identify and label a variety of emotions in one’s self and others; and
- ✦ **Emotional Expression** – the ability to effectively use emotions in relationships with others.

Through development of these skills, PATHS is intended to influence both *social behaviors* that foster positive peer and teacher relationships, and *learning behaviors*, which include the child’s cooperative participation in classroom activities and sustained involvement in tasks. In turn, changes in these behaviors contribute to children’s early academic skill development.

While a less central focus of PATHS, the program is secondarily designed to train teachers in “induction strategies” which include the use of emotion coaching, positive support, and social problem-solving dialoguing, designed to enhance children’s use of pro-social and self-regulation strategies in the context of classroom interactions and challenges. These strategies are likely to affect the emotional and learning environment of the classroom, as well as the relationship between the teacher and the child, which in turn help to support children’ social and learning behaviors.

Number of lessons: 44

Frequency of lessons: 1-2 times per week

