News From Your School Psychologist

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Let's Talk About Social Skills

What Are Social Skills?

Social skills are the skills we use everyday to interact and communicate with others. They include verbal and non-verbal communication, such as speech, gesture, facial expression and body language. A person has strong social skills if they have the knowledge of how to behave in social situations and understand both written and implied rules when communicating with others.

What Are Social Skills Important?

Social skills are vital in enabling an individual to have and maintain positive interactions with others. Many of these skills are crucial in making and sustaining friendships. Social interactions do not always run smoothly and an individual needs to be able to implement appropriate strategies, such as conflict resolution when difficulties in interactions arise.

Building Blocks to Develop Social Skills

- Attention and Concentration
- Receptive (understanding) language
- Expressive (using) language
- Play Skills
- Pre-Language Skills
- Self-Regulation
- Executive Functioning
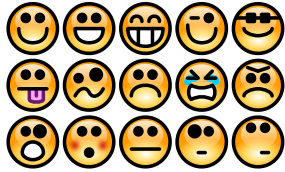- Planning and Sequencing

Social Skills

How to Improve Social Skills

PLAY
Play with your child to help develop joint attention, turn–taking, shared interests, cooperation and appropriate play with toys.

EMOTIONS
Help the child to understand and display their own emotions and to recognize these emotions in other people.

EMPATHY
Help the child to understand and recognize how other people are feeling in particular situations.

SOCIAL STORIES
These are stories which are used to teach children specific social skills that they may find difficult to understand or are confusing. The goal of the story is to increase the child's understanding by describing in detail a specific situation and suggesting an appropriate social response.
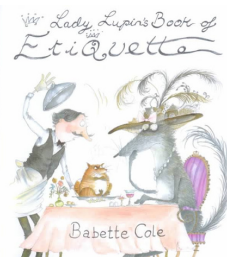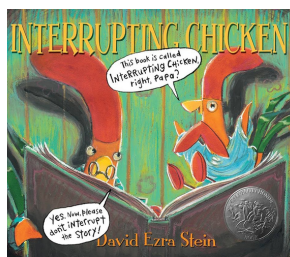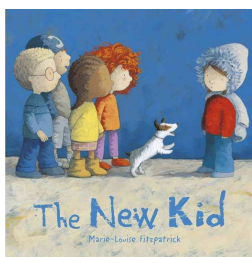
SOCIAL SKILLS GROUP
These are groups run with the express purpose of mastering social interaction with others.

Read Together at Home: Books on Developing Social Skills

The New Kid

Interrupting Chicken — David Ezra Stein

Lady Lupin's Book of Etiquette — Babette Cole

50 Social Skills for Kids

1. Taking turns
2. Praising others
3. Celebrating successes
4. Helping others
5. Respecting personal space
6. Sharing materials
7. Asking for help
8. Being a good sport & a good loser
9. Asking permission
10. Giving criticism
11. Using appropriate voice tone & volume
12. Making an apology
13. Participating
14. Waiting until speaker is done before speaking
15. Being a good friend
16. Staying on task
17. Being kind
18. Using names
19. Encouraging others
20. Waiting patiently
21. Communicating clearly
22. Accepting differences
23. Listening actively
24. Conflict resolution
25. Following directions
26. Paraphrasing
27. Staying with the team or group
28. Complimenting others
29. Disagreeing politely & respectfully
30. Taking risks
31. Accepting criticism
32. Accepting no for an answer
33. Recognizing the difference between expected & unexpected behaviors
34. Resisting peer pressure
35. Sharing ideas
36. Making eye contact
37. Respecting the opinion of others
38. Compromising
39. Negotiating
40. Cooperating with others & working together
41. Using good manners
42. Thinking before speaking
43. Learning to forgive
44. Problem solving
45. Being a flexible thinker
46. Recognizing body language & nonverbal cues
47. Recognizing feelings of oneself
48. Recognizing feelings of others
49. Taking someone else's perspective
50. Understanding that my actions impact others

Get Involved!

Research shows that parental or family engagement in a child's education can improve their test scores, attendance, social skills, relationships, behavior and how a child feels about school.

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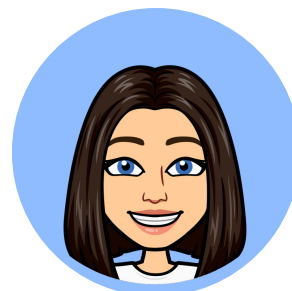
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