

**SOCIAL SKILLS:**  
***A FOUNDATION***  
***FOR LEARNING***

INDEPENDENT STUDY  
A THREE CREDIT CLASS  
SS401v/SS501v

**INSTRUCTOR:**

**DR. MICHAEL SEDLER**

**Email:mike@communicationplus.net**

**(509) 443-1605**

**THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE**

Please use the checklist/syllabus in the manual.

**PLEASE SEND ASSIGNMENTS ELECTRONICALLY (AS AN ATTACHMENT). It is best to send in no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time and I will send you back comments. Send them in numerical order (#1, #2, #3...). You may send work in Microsoft Word, in a Google Doc (but give permission for review), zip folder, a converted Pages file, etc.**

Thank you for signing up for my independent study classes. You may take up to six months to complete this course, and may obtain an additional 3 month extension. DO NOT send in any completed papers unless you have registered for the class! If working in a group, put all names on each paper, except the integration paper which must be individually authored. See \*\* at bottom of page.

The checklist in the manual is to help you plan your schedule to successfully complete this course. The last page of the manual includes a General Bibliography with phone numbers of publishing companies. If you prefer, you may choose an alternate book not on the suggested list.

On the following page, I have given you a brief biography/resume of my background. You will see that I have a Master's Degree in Social Work; my K-8 Teaching Certification and am a Licensed Social Worker with the State of Washington. My current primary role is as a consultant and trainer for schools, businesses and agencies. I also worked in education for 15 years as a Director of Special Education, a Behavior Intervention Specialist, School Social Worker, and Teacher.

I teach classes and seminars throughout the United States and in Canada. I am adjunct professor through two Universities in Washington. I am available for on-site training, classes, and in-services for agencies and schools. I anticipate this class will be enjoyable and full of learning. Please contact me if you would like me to be involved directly with your school or business.

Thank you once again, for signing up for it and I look forward to working with you over the next weeks/months. If you would like individual feedback on assignments, please indicate this when turning in your work.

Sincerely,

Michael Sedler  
(509) 443-1605  
E-mail: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)  
Website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)  
P.O. BOX 30310 - Spokane, WA. - 99223

\*\* For those working in groups (400/500 level only!)- be sure to go to The Heritage Institute website at [www.hoi.edu](http://www.hoi.edu) and click on the "group collaboration" icon.

1. Each group member must pick a book to read (you may all choose the same book).
2. Each group member must read the entire manual.
3. Final evaluation/integration paper must be individually authored.

Please share about my classes with others; it is my main form of advertising.

## **MICHAEL SEDLER**

(509) 443-1605 (w); (509) 939-6302 (c)

Email: mike@communicationplus.net or michael@michaelsedler.com

website: www.michaelsedler.com

### **Education**

B.A., Political Science

Master Degree, Social Work

Master Degree, Divinity

Doctorate Degree, Ministry

Teaching Certificate

### **Work Experience**

Consultant/Trainer/Counselor

Director of Special Education

Developmental Disabilities Administration, State of WA-behavior consultant

Supervisor, Educational Services

School Social Worker (K-12)

Behavior Intervention Specialist (K-12)

Classroom Teacher (elementary and middle school)

Assistant Pastor

### **Other Experiences**

State Correctional Facility for Juveniles, Counselor and Supervisor

Community Mental Health Therapist

State Trainer in Autism (State of Washington)

Adjunct Professor for several Universities

Student Teacher Supervisor

Consultant for schools, business, churches throughout United States

Provide weekend marriage retreats

Interview and Speech Coach/Trainer for Miss Arizona, 3<sup>rd</sup> runner-up Miss America 2012

### **Author**

***When to Speak Up and When To Shut Up.*** (Jan., 2006 Revell Books, \$5.99). Book from faith-based perspective.

Communication book discussing conflict, power struggles, listening strategies, asking questions.

**(Over 300,000 copies sold).**

***What To Do When Words Get Ugly*** (October, 2016. Revell Books, \$5.99)

(Edited/updated version of "Stop The Runaway Conversation.") Two new chapters in addition to edits. Book from faith-based perspective.

Importance of not listening to negative discussions and how they impact a person's attitude.

Books are available through all bookstores, at [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com), by calling 800 877 2665, or by checking with various online book companies. Revell Books is a division of Baker Publishing Group.

Both books are available in CD format as audio books.

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)

MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

Register for courses anytime. (6-month period for completion from the date you register). **Collaborate with fellow educators-only one set of assignments turned into instructor.** (Check out "Group Collaboration Guidelines" at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)). \*\*Clock hours available for partial course completion.

The following are **3 CREDIT CLASSES** (3 quarter credits = 2 semester credits)

**1. Increasing Motivation and Self-Esteem in Students** (SS401p/SS501p)

Strategies to help students feel confident and help educators find more successful approaches with them.

**2. Parents: Adversary or Ally--A Cooperative Approach** (SS401q/SS501q)

Specific ideas on connecting with parents and helping better communication between school and home.

**3. Social Skills: A Foundation For Learning** (SS401v/SS501v)

Activities and ideas to encourage students to improve their peer and social relations.

**4. Understanding & Connecting With Aggressive Students** (ED404d/ED504d)

Each person will increase their understanding of ways to de-escalate aggression and its' causes.

**3 CREDIT COST: \$280-400/500 level; \$195-clock hours (3 quarter = 2 semester)**

The following are **5 CREDIT CLASSES:** (5 quarter credits -3.3 semester credits)

**1. Bullying Behaviors: Enough is Enough** (ED437q/ED537q)

Identification and interventions to reduce bullying behaviors and victim mentality within schools and community.

**2. Counseling Skills For Educators** (ED409r/ED509r)

Helpful ideas on listening skills, asking questions, and communicating with students.

**3. Gang Attitudes And Actions** (SS406k/SS506k)

This class will help each person to identify gangs and intervention strategies for your community/school.

**4. High Maintenance Behaviors & Interactions** (SS409f/SS509f)

This course investigates the many aspects of high needs people, behaviors and effective interactions.

**5. Mental Health Issues and Students** (HE402n/HE502n)

Understand various disorders (oppositional defiant, obsessive compulsive, bi-polar) and interventions.

**6. Nurturing Compassion Within Our Schools** (ED434y/ED534y)

Ideas to help adults and children learn to be more sensitive, kind, and compassionate toward one another.

**7. Organizational Teaching Skills** (ED429w/ED529w)

Increase your own organizational and time management skills as well as helping students in these areas.

**8. School Violence** (SS406m/SS506m)

Each person will learn indicators and interventions for potential violent situations.

**9. Stress Reduction in Staff and Students** (HE401m/HE501m)

Strategies to reduce stress, become more effective in life, and teach these skills to students.

**10. Student, Classroom and Whole-School Discipline** (ED419g/ED519g)

Focus is on negative talk, gossip and rumors within schools. Behavioral strategies for each above area.

**11. Youth Suicide** (SS404u/SS504u)

Specific discussions on signs and interventions for suicide prevention.

**5- CREDIT COST: \$415-400/500 LEVEL; \$315-clock hours (5 quarter = 3.3 semester)**

**NEXT PAGE FOR MORE CLASSES AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

# ***INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES***

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)

MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

The following are **6 CREDIT CLASSES**: (6 quarter credits - 4 semester credits)

## **1. Autism: Questions and Answers (ED445y/ED545y)**

Understanding the general areas of autism, diagnosis, and overall strategies for interventions for children with special needs.

## **2. Establishing Rules and Boundaries (ED445x/ED545x)**

Ideas to assist educators in setting up a successful work environment for children (rules, procedures, teaching tools).

## **3. Inspirational Education (ED452f/ED552f)**

This course will re-charge the batteries and create a new excitement about teaching in each person.

## **4. The Impact Of Trauma and Loss in Students (ED464z/ED564z)**

Strategies to support children who have experienced traumatic situations in life.

## **5. Why Children Act Out (ED458t/ED558t)**

Recognize the underlying function of behaviors and interventions approaches.

**6- CREDIT COST**: \$495--400/500 LEVEL; \$380-clock hours (6 quarter = 4 semester)

**REGISTRATION**: Call The Heritage Institute--1 (800) 445-1305; 1 (360) 341-3020  
*Or register on line at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)*

**QUESTIONS**: Please call Michael Sedler at (509) 443-1605. Leave message when necessary.

**Email address**: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)    **Website**: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

\*\*For clock hours, only complete the first section of the course. Remember, clock hours may not transfer to other districts or states. You cannot go back and acquire credit once clock hours have been earned for a class.

**COURSE TITLE:** SOCIAL SKILLS: A Foundation For Learning  
(SS401V/SS501V)

**NO. OF CREDITS:** 3 QUARTER CREDITS  
[Semester Cr Equivalent: 2.0]

**CLOCK HRS: 30**  
**PDU's: 30**  
**CEU'S: 3.0 (30)**

**INSTRUCTOR:** MICHAEL SEDLER, D.Min., M.S.W.  
Box 30310  
Spokane, WA 99223  
(509) 443-1605  
EMAIL: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)

#### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

The assignment checklist will help you plan your schedule of work for this course. Check off items completed so that you can better monitor your progress. While you have six-months to complete your work, many will find a shorter time period convenient. **Please email no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time for comments. Do NOT send further work until you receive comments from the instructor. Grades will be submitted once all assignments and the integration paper have been sent to instructor.**

If involved in a group, all work should be sent through the Group Leader.

***For Washington Clock Hours, Oregon Professional Development Units, or Continuing Education Units, please complete the first 6 assignments.***

#### Assignment #1:

Read the manual and all materials supplied by the instructor.

#### Assignment #2:

Read a book from the bibliography or one of your choice. If taking this course in a group, each person should read a book. Only one person needs to write a summary.

Once you have read the book, respond to the following questions:

- What area of the book do you plan to implement in your teaching or life approach?
- Share one specific area of learning that was new to you.
- If you were going to share this book with another person, who would that be and why?

**(send a 2-3 page summary to instructor)**

#### Assignment #3:

Do social skills activity (Pete's Day or Sarah's birthday party) with a class. Write a 1-2 page synopsis. **(send to instructor)**

#### Assignment #4:

Choose two students. Develop a social skills program as outlined. Choose one specific skill for each.

- To maintain privacy, please do not refer to students in your paper by their actual name, but rather use an alias or designation such as "Student A"

#### Assignment #5:

Observe another classroom. If during a non school time, observe a social atmosphere like a park, athletic field, or playground. Make note of social skills deficits and strengths. Share with a fellow educator.

Write a one (1) page summary of your observations. **(send to instructor)**

#### Assignment #6:

Do "Discussion Guidelines" worksheet in class (p. 34). Develop own "guideline format". **(send to instructor)**

***This completes the assignments required for Washington Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or CEUs. Continue to the next section for additional assignments required for University Quarter Credit***

#### **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED for 400 or 500 LEVEL UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

In this section you will have an opportunity to apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you are not teaching in a classroom, please contact the instructor for course modifications. If you start or need to complete this course during the summer, please try to apply your ideas when possible with youth from your neighborhood, at a local public library or parks department facility, (they will often be glad to sponsor community-based learning), with students in another teacher's summer classroom in session, students from past years, or use one of your own children or a relative.

**Assignment #7: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

Implement the developed individual student program from #4.

**Assignment #8: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

Develop one "whole" classroom plan and implement. Make necessary modifications. See the sample in the manual (p. 33). **(send instructor a copy of program)**

**Assignment #9: You must choose either "A" or "B" (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

**Assignment #A: (SEND commentary to Instructor)**

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a 2 page commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback on your lesson.  
**(The following is encouraged but not required):**
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by also contributing your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library located at <http://www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library>

**OR**

**Assignment #B: (SEND lesson and summary to Instructor)**

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Write a 2 page summary concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.  
**(The following is encouraged but not required):**
- Please refer to the guidelines on our blog <http://www.hol.edu/blog> prior to writing your article.
- Please email a copy to [Rebecca Blankinship \(rebecca@hol.edu\)](mailto:rebecca@hol.edu) THI blog curator and media specialist.
- Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publishing on our website.
- Subject line to read: (Course Name, Blog)

**Send to instructor: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)**

**500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT**

**Assignment #10: (500 Level only)**

In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete **one (1)** of the following assignment options:

**Option A)** Interview one of the students used for skill building and obtain feedback: was the program helpful, were they involved enough in the process, what they learned, what needs to be changed, different format, etc. Write a 2-3 page summary. **(send to instructor)**

**OR**

**Option B)** Another assignment of your own design with prior approval of the instructor.

**400 & 500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT**

**Integration Paper (send to instructor)**

**Assignment #11: (Required for 400 and 500 Level Credit)**

Write a 2-3 page Integration Paper answering these specific questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

**Must be individually authored (name and course title) for those taking in a group.**

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

**Mike Sedler, M.S.W.**, brings over 30 year of educational experience as an administrator, social worker, behavior specialist and teacher to each of his classes. He provides consultation and seminars

throughout the United States and Canada for schools, agencies and businesses. He has a graduate degree in Social Work, a Doctoral degree in Ministry, a Counseling license, as well as his teaching certification. All of Mike's classes are practical and "field tested" in schools and classrooms. Educators have found success in implementing Mike's clear and concise approaches. All of his course material may be immediately implemented into a school or a home.

**NOTES:** You may work collaboratively and submit joint assignments on all but the Integration Paper portion (and other designated assignments) which must be individually authored and submitted. Alternatives to written assignments such as a video, audio tape, photo collage, etc. are permissible with prior approval of instructor. **If you do not receive a confirmation email back after sending your paperwork via email, please re-send or contact the instructor to confirm it has been received. It seems that occasionally things get lost in cyber- space. Thank you.**

**Full credit will be given to each student as long as all work is turned in. If something is missing, I will be in contact with you. Failure is not an option. 😊**

# SOCIAL SKILLS?

What are they?

Where do I start?

How do I teach them?

# DALE'S CONE OF EXPERIENCE

## APPLICATION OF A BASIC LEARNING PRINCIPLE

**An important learning principle, supported by extensive research, is that people learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Dale's "Cone of Experience" shown below, shows various learning activities grouped by levels of abstraction.**

<u>PEOPLE GENERALLY REMEMBER</u>		<u>LEVELS OF ABSTRACTION</u>
10% what they <u>read</u>	Read	
20% of what they <u>hear</u>	Hear Words	<u>TELL</u>
30% of what they <u>see</u>	Watch still pictures Watch a movie	
50% of what they <u>hear and see</u>	Watch an exhibit Watch a demonstration	<u>SHOW</u>
70% of what they <u>say or write</u>	Do a dramatic presentation Simulate a real experience	<u>DO</u>
90% of what they <u>say</u> as they <u>do a thing</u>	Do the real thing Practice	

Dale's cone graphically shows the value of Skills Training as a method helping the student to gain experience and knowledge that will have a lasting effect.

It is my contention that if we include humor as part of the presentation, the retention level is increased in each student. Remember, humor is not putting a child down or embarrassing them. It is finding a place to chuckle or laugh at a situation without making those around you feel picked on or singled out.





**SCORING:** Give yourself one point for each suggested response. Items 2 and 3 are true, the rest are false.

**A score of 7-10 points:** You are a good problem solver. You generally view situations clearly and seek out logical solutions.

**A score of 4-6 points:** Your problem solving skills are average. You need to brush up on the ability to look at all angles before coming to a final conclusion.

**A score of 0-3 points:** *You* need to grow in your skills. You may rely too much on intuition and assumptions instead of facts. Avoid jumping to conclusions.

**EXPLANATION:**

Researchers studied how we arrive at solutions and found that many people fall into traps and bad habits when it comes to problem solving. Many of us have strong tendencies to bury our heads in the sand when facing difficult situations. We see this when we feel disorganized and stressed out. Little gets accomplished and our frustrations mount.

This problem hampers us when dealing with human relation conflicts, problem solving strategies, or attacking a problem. Familiar examples are the child that avoids potential playmates because he/she feels rejected, the boss who assumes that sick days taken on Fridays or Mondays are the means for the employee to obtain a three day weekend (well, maybe this is a bad example. After all, it is true, right?), avoiding the messy desk because it is too overwhelming, not starting because we will "never finish." A mindset that prevents us from confronting our areas of difficulty prevents from conquering our fears and reaching a greater potential.

## **WHAT ARE SOCIAL SKILLS?**

### **THE SOCIALLY COMPETENT PERSON MUST:**

- **BE MOTIVATED TO PERFORM SOCIALLY APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS.**
- **BE ABLE TO PERCEIVE SOCIAL SITUATIONS ACCURATELY AND IDENTIFY WHICH SKILLS TO USE.**
- **BE ABLE TO DECODE AND CORRECTLY INTERPRET INFORMATION FROM OTHERS.**
- **PERFORM THE CORRECT VERBAL AND NONVERBAL RESPONSES THAT MAKE UP THE SKILL.**
- **BE SENSITIVE TO SOCIAL FEEDBACK.**
- **BE ABLE TO INTEGRATE THAT FEEDBACK APPROPRIATELY TO ENHANCE SOCIAL INTERACTION.**

By teaching social skills, we are not changing the core of the child, but giving them tools to participate smoothly with others. Most children with social skills deficits want to participate with peers but don't know how.

### **FOUR MAJOR AREAS OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

#### **1 . SELF CONTROL DEVELOPMENT**

- Uses thoughts to direct own behavior
- Develops beginning problem solving skills
- Manages impulses
- Develops awareness of own behavior

#### **2. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Understands others' perspectives
- Solves social problems
- Plays fair
- General understanding of group norms and standards

#### **3. ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Concentrates and stays on task
- Organizes school materials and tasks

#### **4. AFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT**

- Overcomes fears
- Regulates strong emotions of anger, frustration, anxiety

## **TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS-where to start?**

- 1. What do you want to teach?** It is helpful to decide upon a couple of skills that you want to teach. Focus on those areas.
- 2. Do you have a signal to gain attention?**  
This should be one used in all classes and one that translates to indoor and outdoor use.
- 3. Do you have a plan for practicing the skills?** Teaching this one time or at the beginning of the school year is not enough. It is said that it takes 21 days to develop a new habit. How important is it to you for the students to learn new skills?
- 4. Allow students the opportunity to teach the skills to others.** This is a great time for cross age mentoring or teaching within the classroom.
- 5. Develop monitors within the class.**  
Choose students to keep track of the utilization of the skill(s) in class. Offer rewards and incentives for the skill(s) being successfully presented.

## **STEPS TO FOLLOW IN TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS GROUPS** **SEND TO INSTRUCTOR (AT END OF NEXT PAGE)**

Essentially, we should teach new or replacement social skills like we teach academics; directly and actively. The steps are the same: Assess the level of the students, prepare the materials, introduce the material, model it, have them practice it, and provide feedback. Teaching is a matter of following the directions in the kit. If you're on your own in developing a curriculum and devising lessons, here are the specifics:

### **Pre-teaching**

- Select the students who need training in certain skills (via assessment)
- Identify powerful reinforcers that will motivate the students to attend to lessons and attempt new behaviors. (Examples: group and/or individual points, raffle tickets, progressively moving a paper dog along the wall toward a food bowl which earns a reward)
- Identify and specifically define the target behaviors to be taught. Decide which behaviors are needed. Define them precisely so that everyone agrees on what is to be accomplished ( ... what the student will be able to do/show after instruction) .
- Task analyze the target behavior(s) (if this listing of sequenced actions is not done for you by a packaged program).

### **Teaching social skills**

- Create groups of 3-5 youngsters with similar skill deficits. Small groups give students a chance to observe others, practice with peers, and receive feedback.
  - Remove obstacles to learning (examples: close class door, remove corrections officers)
  - Meet early in the day so that kids are attentive and have the whole day to practice what they learn in your lesson.
  - Introduce the program, its content, and why and how it will benefit them (examples: will help them to return to general education classes, help them obtain and keep a job, result in less trouble with teachers/parents, impress their boyfriend's/girlfriend's parents when they meet them, be able to convince the police to let them go when stopped). 😊
  - Set up the rules and regulations (Identify the behaviors you'll reward during lessons ... one person speaks at a time, pay attention, be positive ... all of which may need to be taught in the initial lessons)
  - Teach the easy-to-learn skills first to ensure student (and teacher) success and reinforcement.
- Use the traditional teaching model of:
- Tell them**
  - Show them**
  - Provide "Guided practice", meaning:**

**With the steps provided on a handout, have them**

**-discuss when the behavior could be used**

**-role play it (at least two different scenarios with right & wrong behaviors shown).**

**Provide feedback (with lots of encouragement and specific praise)**

**-from oneself**

**-from peers**

**-from the teacher**

**-Practice, practice, practice through homework assignments, review sessions, assignment to real life settings, and surprise "tests"** (example: Your student has been learning to handle interactions with authority figures ... Send the student on an errand and have an unknown teacher confront him/her, accusing the pupil of "forging" a hall pass. If the student performs poorly ... runs, is rude, etc ... the teacher says "This is a test. How did you do?")

Given that the behavior of group leaders is emulated by their followers, teach to the high status kids in your group first. Have them demonstrate the new behaviors and be seen being rewarded. Have your lower status kids demonstrate the behaviors after the leaders do so. Make sure the lessons are interesting and fun so that kids look forward to the lessons (For example, start the teaching of "following directions" by having them cook/make candy or do magic tricks. Then move to more school-based examples).

-Promote generalization to different settings/circumstances by:

-practicing in different settings and under various conditions

-prompting and coaching the student in naturally occurring situations throughout the day

-having the student submit self-report forms for each class period

-meeting with the student to discuss performance throughout the school/life.

-Monitor the behavior outside of the lessons. Keep track of the display of the behavior for IEP documentation, motivation of the student, etc. Have the student self-monitor/self-assess in order to build internal motivation/control.

-Adjust and enhance the skills as necessary.

-Recognize and reward its display in everyday school situations. When you see a good situation for a student to display a "new" behavior, prompt its use with cues and hints (as subtle as possible, but as strong as necessary).

## **SEND TO INSTRUCTOR**

Write a 1-2 page summary of one of the sections (pre-teaching, teaching, practice). Share your own perspective and thoughts.

## **Social Skills: Promoting Positive Behavior, Academic Success, and School Safety**

Good social skills are critical to successful functioning in life. These skills enable us to know what to say, how to make good choices, and how to behave in diverse situations. The extent to which children and adolescents possess good social skills can influence their academic performance, behavior, social and family relationships, and involvement in extracurricular activities. Social skills are also linked to the quality of the school environment and school safety.

While typically developing children pick up positive skills through their everyday interactions with adults and peers, it is important that educators and parents reinforce this casual learning with direct and indirect instruction. We must also recognize when and where children pick up behaviors that might be detrimental to their development or safety. In the past, schools have relied exclusively on families to teach children important interpersonal and conflict resolution skills. However, increased negative societal influences and demands on family life make it imperative that schools partner with parents to facilitate this social learning process. This is particularly true today given the critical role that social skills play in maintaining a positive school environment and reducing school violence.

### **Consequences of Good Social Skills**

With a full repertoire of social skills, students will have the ability to make social choices that will strengthen their interpersonal relationships and facilitate success in school. Some consequences of good social skills include:

- Positive and safe school environment.
- Child resiliency in the face of future crises or other stressful life events.
- Students who seek appropriate and safe avenues for aggression and frustration.
- Children who take personal responsibility for promoting school safety.

### **Consequences of Poor Social Skills**

Students with poor social skills have been shown to:

- Experience difficulties in interpersonal relationships with parents, teachers, and peers.
- Evoke highly negative responses from others that lead to high levels of peer rejection. Peer rejection has been linked on several occasions with school violence.
- Show signs of depression, aggression and anxiety.
- Demonstrate poor academic performance as an indirect consequence.
- Show a higher incidence of involvement in the criminal justice system as adults.

### **Impact on School Safety**

Given the demonstrated relationship between social skills and school safety, schools are increasingly seeking ways to help students develop positive social skills, both in school and in the community. Social skills related to school safety include:

- Anger management
- Recognizing/understanding others' point of view
- Social problem solving
- Peer negotiation
- Conflict management
- Peer resistance skills

- Active listening
- Effective communication
- Increased acceptance and tolerance of diverse groups

In isolation, social skills are not sufficient to ensure school safety; interventions should not be limited to student instruction and training. Change in the school culture should be facilitated by infusing social skills training into a comprehensive system of school safety and discipline policies, emphasizing relationship-building between students and faculty (teachers and administrators) and between schools and families, and providing effective behavior management and academic instruction.

## Defining Types of Social Skills

While there are hundreds of important social skills for students to learn, we can organize them into skill areas to make it easier to identify and determine appropriate interventions. For example, the "Stop and Think" program organizes skills into four areas:

1. **Survival skills** (e.g., listening, following directions, ignoring distractions, using nice or brave talk, rewarding yourself)
2. **Interpersonal skills** (e.g., sharing, asking for permission, joining an activity, waiting your turn)
3. **Problem-solving skills** (e.g., asking for help, apologizing, accepting consequences, deciding what to do)
4. **Conflict resolution skills** (e.g., dealing with teasing, losing, accusations, being left out, peer pressure)

## Identifying Social Skills Deficits

Prior to determining the best means to help a student develop better social skills, it is important to understand specifically what a student can and can't do. It is crucial to assess and classify the nature of a child's social skill deficits in order to devise and implement the most appropriate intervention.

Children may experience difficulty performing a skill:

- **Due to lack of knowledge** (acquisition deficits), e.g., the child does not know the skills or does not discriminate when a skill is appropriate. For example, a child grabs a pencil from a peer in class when she needs one because she does not know how to appropriately ask to borrow it.
- **Consistently despite knowledge** (performance deficits), e.g., the child knows how to perform the skills but fails to do so consistently or at an acceptable level of competence. For example, although the child understands that he should raise his hand to speak in class, and does so much of the time, he will sometimes blurt out a comment without raising his hand.
- **To a sufficient degree or level of strength** (fluency deficits), e.g., the child knows how to perform skill and is motivated to perform, but demonstrates inadequate performance due to lack of practice or adequate feedback. For example, a student has learned what to say and do when confronted with bullying behavior, but her responses are not yet strong enough to be successful.
- **Due to competing skill deficits or behaviors**, e.g., internal or external factors interfere with the child demonstrating a learned skill appropriately. For example, depression, anxiety, hyperactivity, or negative motivation can interfere with demonstration of appropriate conflict resolution skills, even though the skills have been taught and learned.

**SEND TO INSTRUCTOR: WHAT SKILLS DO YOUR STUDENTS NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL? HOW DO YOU TEACH THEM? (1-2 PAGES)**

## **STEPS TO FOLLOW IN TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS**

### **1. PRE-TEACHING**

- identify ways to reinforce the students for successful new behaviors
- select the skills that you want to teach
- task analyze the new skill

### **2. TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS**

- create groups to allow feedback from students
- teach the skill when the students are most available
- introduce what your goal is and what is the benefit
- set up guidelines and parameters for teaching the skill
- teach the skill slowly, practice, give feedback, and reinforcement

### **3. PROMOTE GENERALIZATION TO OTHER SETTINGS**

- monitor behavior in other settings
- recognize and reward attempts not just successful demonstration
- obtain feedback from others who have observed attempts

### **4. AVOID MOVING ON TO OTHER SKILLS TOO QUICKLY**

- develop a baseline for success before moving forward
- continue to practice former skills while teaching new skills

## IDEAS FOR TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS

1. Make a preventative prompt sign that reads "FORMAL" on the front and "INFORMAL" on the back. During "formal time" students raise hands and wait to be called upon to answer questions or engage in class activities. During "informal time", students call out answers and have discussions without raising hands.
2. Use of a short story, poem, or book to lead a discussion. Utilizing children's stories, Aesop's fables, or other types of "lesson stories" helps each student to focus on various skills.
3. Role play, "being interrupted" by another person. Get another adult to interrupt the class and pretend to be upset. Show several wrong ways to handle frustration. Then, go back and talk with the class about the situation and brainstorm appropriate strategies to handle this situation.
4. Ask the students to write (or draw a picture) of a situation where a person might apologize to another individual. What words might the person say when apologizing? Help script out appropriate words, practice apologies, recognize when a person needs to apologize, and allow for discussion on relationships.
5. Put posters in classroom with steps for successful modeling of various skills. For example: Listening to others.
  - a. Look at the person who is talking.
  - b. Wait until they are done talking.
  - c. Ask a question or make a positive comment about the topic.
6. Role-play the practiced skills. Allow the students to utilize skills in a "real setting." If they learned to walk quietly into a room, have them go into another classroom, walk in quietly and then walk out. Allow for success in the real world.
7. Sharing with others. Once skills are taught, have them teach the skill to another student or classroom. This is a great cross-age tutoring concept for the students.
8. Teach various anger de-escalation strategies-breathing, listening to music, muscle relaxation, drawing/writing, squeezing an object, positive self-talk, and physical movement.

## **Teaching Social Skills To Kids Who Don't Yet Have Them**

Some kids know (intellectually) what to do, but they've never (physically) done it before. It's difficult for all of us to all-of-the-sudden display a completely different behavior than we've been showing for years. Changing a habit is no easy task. To get an idea of what it's like, try this activity: (YES! .. **right now.**)

Cross your arms on your chest. Notice how one arm goes over the other with its hand tucked under its biceps (upper arm). At the same time, the hand of the lower arm has its hand resting on top of the biceps of the other limb. OK, now unfold your arms and switch their positions so that the one that was on the bottom is now on the top (and vice versa). Alright. It took you awhile, but you were able to do it. Feel a bit uncomfortable and odd? Now, uncross the arms and fold them again in the new way. Again. And again. In fact, for the rest of your life, do it this new way. Don't ever make a mistake or revert to the old way.

Think that'll be difficult? Now imagine what we are asking our socially unskilled kids to do. We're expecting them to immediately change a behavior that is indelibly etched into their brains, feels "comfortable", and has been "assigned" to them by others who have labeled them as the type of person who "does that thing". Kids who display the wrong behaviors as they interact with others will have a long and arduous path to travel as they work to change to "a better way". Thank goodness they have a patient and supportive teacher like you. You'll support them as they struggle to show the new behavior. You'll focus on progress rather than perfection, seeing evidence of the new rather than vestiges of the old.

### **Why Don't Our Kids Have Social Skills?**

Social skills are those communication, problem-solving, decision making, self-management, and peer relations abilities that allow one to initiate, build, and maintain positive social relationships with others. Deficits or excesses in social behavior interfere with learning, teaching, and the classroom's orchestration and climate. One's social competence is linked to peer acceptance, teacher acceptance, success of inclusion efforts with students with disabilities, and post school success.

Deficits in social skills can be viewed as mistakes in learning. Arnold Goldstein, a renowned expert in the teaching of social skills to students with behavior disorders and challenges believes that there are **four primary reasons** that explain why students are socially unskilled:

#### **(1) They don't know another way to (re)act other than their present pattern of behavior.**

Many of our youngsters never learned "appropriate behavior" for social settings (situations in which they must interact/cope with others). Perhaps they did not receive this guidance in the home (either because of lack of training by elders or another system of values & behaviors being taught). Perhaps they did have good role models in the home and neighborhood who promoted "appropriate" behavior, but didn't notice and emulate them as well as other kids. Just like some kids learn to read without formal instruction previous to school, some need the structured process of reading instruction).

**(2) They know (cognitively) other ways to behave, but haven't had enough practice to display them competently.** Many of my former students could tell me (after the fact) what they SHOULD have done. Those failures to display the behaviors that were being promoted in my self-contained classroom of students with behavior disorders pointed to the need to more and varied practice in their use.

**(3) They tried another way, but it didn't work for them the first time(s) they tried it, so they assume that it would never work.** They return to the previous action pattern. This explanation applied to Bob in a certain setting when he was a younger man. One night, a female friend of his joined him in a gathering spot for young singles (The "Philosophers Bar" ... it's motto: "I think. Therefore I drink"). She saw him using various "pick-up lines" to meet women. She told him that if he really wanted to make a positive impression on a woman, that he should "compliment something she's wearing", "make introductions", and "just be yourself". He tried this approach a few times and failed miserably. He quickly returned to the quirky comments that were so solidly embedded in his repertoire. He learned an important lesson that night ... Never be himself! No, No ... What I mean is that he needed to be persistent until he experienced success.

**(4) Tension and anxiety interfere with the ability to perform the practiced behavior well.** The more anxious we are about performing, the less most of us perform. True, highly trained athletes, musicians, or others may do well. However, most of us "choke" when the pressure is on us.

So ... Ask: Is it a skill deficit (the student cannot tell you the correct response for a social situation and the actions are not in the student's behavior repertoire) or a performance deficit (behavior is known, can be identified by the student when questioned, and has been practiced, but is displayed only during the role play situations)? A skill deficit usually responds to direct instruction of skills. A performance deficit usually requires a guarantee that demonstration of the new behavior will bring at least the same amount of benefits as the present (inappropriate) behavioral response.

Displaying poor social skills is likely to get one rejected by others (other kids don't like them and won't associate with them). Others of our kids work hard to show the new and better behaviors they've been told to show but are still rejected by others (perhaps due to past reputation or maybe because others don't like the awkward and unsure demonstration of the newly learned behaviors which don't appear "natural"). At other times, our pupils may still fail because they have difficulty monitoring and controlling their behavior when unexpected reactions occur. They misread social cues given off by others (examples: 1. Not noticing the rejection actions by others that non-verbally/verbally say "Get lost." 2. Viewing the positive social forays of others as being threatening). If rejected because of their behavior (past or present), they'll rarely (if ever) get the chance to display the "correct" behaviors under naturalistic circumstances and fail to incorporate them into their behavioral repertoire.

Others of our kids will not respond positively to social skills instruction because they don't see the skills as being necessary/useful (example: 1. assisting the teacher, 2. avoiding conflict with adults, 3. disagreeing in a non-confrontational manner). The behaviors they display now seem just fine to them. They obtain the attention, objects or power they seek.

### **A Note to Teachers of Students with Emotional & Behavioral Disorders (EBD)**

If you are a teacher of students with behavior disorders, are you teaching social skills to your students? Are you doing so in structured daily lessons? If not, why not? The defining characteristic of kids with EBD is their inability to build and sustain positive relationships. Kids with EBD are **3 times** more likely than general ED kids to be rejected because of their behavior. It's time to use more than point systems to "*manage*" the behavior of these pupils. We need more than "*The curriculum of control*". We must teach the skills we wish to see displayed by our behaviorally challenged students.

### **What Exactly Is Social Skills Training?**

If our kids don't have 'em, we've got to teach 'em. "Social skills training" is a general term for instruction conducted in (behavioral) areas that promotes more productive/positive interaction with others. We teach social skills to students who are (at present) socially unskilled in order to promote acceptance by teachers (and other adults) and peers. A social skills training program might include (among other things):

1. "Manners" & positive interaction with others
  - approaching others in social acceptable ways
  - how to asking for permission rather than acting impulsively
  - how to make and keep friends
  - sharing toys/materials
  
2. Appropriate classroom behavior
  - work habits/academic survival skills
  - listening
  - attending to task
  - following directions
  - seeking attention properly
  - accepting the consequences of one's behavior
  
3. Better ways to handle frustration/anger
  - counting to 10 before reacting
  - distracting oneself to a pleasurable task
  - learning an internal dialog to cool oneself down and reflect upon the best course of action
  
4. Acceptable ways to resolve conflict with others
  - using words instead of physical contact
  - seeking the assistance of the teacher or conflict resolution team

# **SOCIAL SKILLS**

## **Social Skills Games**

## **Sample Programs For Students**

## **Other Activities**

# How to Teach Social Skills to Students With Special Needs

By Ezmeralda Lee

Teaching social skills is often fun both for the teacher and the students. Simple things such as saying kind things, praising others, helping others and asking for help are what children are taught in the schools. These behavioral qualities are also known as people skills. With regular children, these skills are relatively easy to teach, as these are easy for the students to learn. What do you do, however, when the children have special needs? There are different ways to make children understand and learn social skills.

**1 Know that the first thing you will need is patience.** A teacher who works with children with special needs such as autism, ADD or the like needs to have oceans of patience because these children are almost always non-responsive in the initial stages. They do not react, they do not answer, they do not imitate easily. For this purpose, the teacher needs to work out a routine chart, which will span over a period of three to six weeks depending upon the response of the children. First, however you would need to prepare a list of social skills you need to teach the children.

**2 Look at the list of social skills you build up--**for example, praising, following directions, working in a team, helping others, asking for help, waiting with patience, communication, speaking in quiet tones--and then work out a set of gestures and verbal commands that represent each one of

these. Have the gestures be simple and very obvious. Slightly overemphasize it through mime and add to it verbal cues.

**3 Work out a stepped routine.** You could include a longer (more steps) routine depending upon the attention span of the children you are teaching. Usually it is the safest to use steps 1 through 4 because it is easy to dramatize these in such a way that it will stay in the children's minds easily.

**4 Have the mime introduced to the children** along with music, voice and participation of at least one more person besides yourself. This attracts and induces the children to attempt to imitate you. Encourage the children to do as you do by waiting for them every step. Repeat each step at least four times before going to the next step.

**5 Continue to do the routine day after day after day** until the children do it as a second nature. While teaching social skills to them, do not be happy that they are learning to do it mechanically. Use voice commands and dramatization to explain and translate the social skill you are teaching into the mind of the child.

# 101 WAYS TO PRAISE A CHILD

WOW \* WAY TO GO \* SUPER \* YOU'RE SPECIAL \* OUTSTANDING \* EXCELLENT  
\* GREAT \* GOOD \* NEAT \* WELL DONE \* REMARKABLE \* I KNEW YOU COULD  
DO IT \* I'M PROUD OF YOU \* FANTASTIC \* SUPER STAR \* NICE WORK \*  
LOOKING GOOD \* YOU'RE ON TOP OF IT \* BEAUTIFUL \* NOW YOU'RE FLYING  
\* YOU'RE CATCHING ON \* NOW YOU'VE GOT IT \* YOU'RE INCREDIBLE \*  
BRAVO \* YOU'RE FANTASTIC \* HURRAY FOR YOU \* YOU'RE ON TARGET \*  
YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY \* HOW NICE \* HOW SMART \* GOOD JOB \* THAT'S  
INCREDIBLE \* HOT DOG \* DYNAMITE \* YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL \* YOU'RE UNIQUE  
\* NOTHING CAN STOP YOU NOW \* GOOD FOR YOU \* I LIKE YOU \* YOU'RE A  
WINNER \* REMARKABLE JOB \* BEAUTIFUL WORK \* SPECTACULAR \* YOU'RE  
SPECTACULAR \* YOU'RE DARLING \* YOU'RE PRECIOUS \* GREAT DISCOVERY \*  
YOU'VE DISCOVERED THE SECRET \* YOU FIGURED IT OUT \* FANTASTIC JOB  
\* HIP, HIP HURRAY \* BINGO \* MAGNIFICENT \* MARVELOUS \* TERRIFIC \*  
YOU'RE IMPORTANT \* PHENOMENAL \* YOU'RE SENSATIONAL \* SUPER WORK \*  
CREATIVE JOB \* SUPER JOB \* FANTASTIC JOB \* EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE  
\* YOU'RE A REAL TROOPER \* YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE \* YOU ARE EXCITING \*  
YOU LEARNED IT RIGHT \* WHAT AN IMAGINATION \* WHAT A GOOD LISTENER  
\* YOU ARE FUN \* YOU'RE GROWING UP \* YOU TRIED HARD \* YOU CARE \*  
BEAUTIFUL SHARING \* OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE \* YOU'RE A GOOD FRIEND  
\* I TRUST YOU \* YOU'RE IMPORTANT \* YOU MEAN A LOT TO ME \* YOU MAKE  
ME HAPPY \* YOU BELONG \* YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND \* YOU MAKE ME LAUGH \*  
YOU BRIGHTEN MY DAY \* I RESPECT YOU \* YOU MEAN THE WORLD TO ME \*  
THAT'S CORRECT \* YOU'RE A JOY \* YOU'RE A TREASURE \* YOU'RE  
WONDERFUL \* YOU'RE PERFECT \* AWESOME \* A+ JOB \* YOU'RE A-OK \* MY  
BUDDY \* YOU MADE MY DAY \* THAT'S THE BEST \* A BIG HUG \* A BIG KISS  
\* SAY I LOVE YOU! \*

p.s. REMEMBER, A SMILE IS WORTH A 1000 WORDS!

**SEND TO INSTRUCTOR:**

**WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 4 OR 5 PHRASES YOU USE FOR STUDENTS?**

**How do your students respond?**

## SAMPLE OF POSSIBLE SOCIAL SKILL DEFICITS/STRENGTHS

(THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST)

### SOCIAL SKILLS DEFICITS

- TALKING WHEN OTHERS ARE TALKING
- TEASING ONE ANOTHER
- NOT HAVING MATERIALS READY
- DISORGANIZED MATERIALS
- OFF TASK BEHAVIOR
- EASILY DISTRACTED

### SOCIAL SKILLS STRENGTHS

- RAISING HAND TO ASK QUESTIONS
- STUDENTS HELPING STUDENTS
- KEEPING HANDS TO SELF
- STAYING IN SEAT
- SAYING "PLEASE" AND "THANK YOU"

### SUGGESTIONS:

It may be helpful for the students to clear off their desks before starting an assignment. Go over your rules regarding listening when others are talking (hopefully, this is a rule). Encourage students who are raising their hands and helping others.

The teacher could use "wait time" before moving on to the next point. In other words, when giving an instruction, wait until students are quiet. When changing a task, wait until desk is cleared off.

If giving suggestions to other teachers, be sure you are not attacking their management style or classroom procedures. Share with them in a way which may enhance their classroom and benefit the students.

The following steps will help middle school and high school students to understand more about problem solving.

## **TEN STEPS TO PROBLEM SOLVING**

- 1 . **KNOWING A PROBLEM IS A PROBLEM**- this may sound basic, but a person can't move toward change unless they realize (and identify) there is a problem.
- 2 . **PREVIEWING THE OUTCOME**- if the problem persists, what might happen?
3. **ASSESSING THE DIFFICULTY**-how difficult will it be to solve, change, or modify the situation?
- 4 . **MOBILIZING RESOURCES**- do other people need to be involved to help facilitate change?
5. **THINKING LOGICALLY**- attempt to set the emotions (anger, fear, frustration) aside and simply look at the problem, desired results, and possible resources for support.
- 6 . **CONSIDERING ALTERNATIVE**- make a list of alternatives. Avoid judging them as good or bad ... just make a large list of possible solutions.
- 7 . **SELF-MONITORING**- how will you stay focused on solving the problem? Do you need to be accountable to someone, share with a person, or meet with an adult?
- 8 . **DEALING WITH IMPASSES**- when a barrier occurs, then what? Who will you talk to, how will you handle it? It is important to plan this stage out as it is the major reason that people stop working toward their solution (discouragement and confusion).
9. **ARRIVING AT A SOLUTION**- pick a solution and go for it. Even if it doesn't work, you are no worse off than before.
10. **EVALUATION PROCESS**-how will you know if you are successful? What are the criteria for change and success?

(To be used in a classroom discussion on put-downs)

## PUT-DOWNS

1. WHAT IS A PUT-DOWN? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. WHY DO WE PUT PEOPLE DOWN? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. WHEN SOMEONE PUTS ME DOWN, IT MAKES ME FEEL:

MAD

NO ONE LIKES ME

HURT

ALONE

EMBARRASSED

DIFFERENT

SOMETHING IS WRONG  
WITH ME

CONFUSED

4. WHEN I AM PUT-DOWN, I WANT TO:

RUN AWAY

HIDE

CRY

HURT SOMEONE

FIGHT

HURT MYSELF

GET REVENGE

IGNORE IT

HIT SOMEONE

5. WHAT ARE SOME PUT-DOWNS I SAY TO MYSELF:

I'M DUMB

I'M CLUMSY

I'M UGLY

I HATE MYSELF

I'M A NERD

I'M FAT

I'M NO GOOD

I'M STUPID

I CAN'T DO IT

I BLEW IT

I'M A JERK

I'M WRONG

EVERYONE IS BETTER THAN ME

I CAN'T DO ANYTHING RIGHT

## **QUICK SOCIAL SKILLS STRATEGIES**

(Ideas from K - 12)

**Shaky Day:** Pick a consistent day of the week (Fridays are great) and the dismissal practice is to have each student shake 2 students hands and say something personal and nice. For instance, Kim shakes Ben's hand and says *'Thanks for helping me tidy my desk'* or *'I really liked the way you played dodgeball at gym.'*

I have also seen teachers use this method as each child leaves the classroom. The teacher shakes the student's hand and says something positive.

**Social Skill of the Week:** Pick a social skill and use it for the focus of the week. For instance, if your skills of the week is showing responsibility, the word responsibility goes on the board. The teacher introduces the words and talks about what it means to be responsible. Students brainstorm ideas of what it means to be responsible. Throughout the week, students are given opportunities to comment on responsible behavior as they see it. At the end of the day or for bell work, have students talk about what they've been doing or what they did that showed acting responsibility.

**Social Skill Weekly Goals:** Have students set social skill goals for the week. Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate and tell how they're sticking to their goals. Use this as the exit dismissal key each day. For instance, each child states how they met their goal that day "I cooperated today by working well with Sean on my book report".

**Negotiation Week:** Many students requiring additional help with social skills usually need support to negotiate properly. Teach the skill of negotiation by modeling and then reinforcing through some role play situation. Provide opportunities for conflict resolution. Works well if situations arise in class or at recess.

**Good Character Submission Box:** Keep a box with a slot in it. Ask students to put a slip in the box when they observe good character. For instance, "John tidied up the coat

room without being asked". Students that are reluctant writers will need to have their compliment scribed for them. Then the teacher reads the slips from the good character box at the end of the week. Teachers should also participate.

'Social' Circle Time: At circle time, have each child say something pleasant about the person next to them as they go around the circle. This can be themed based (cooperative, respectful, generous, positive, responsible, friendly, empathetic etc.)

Mystery Buddies: Put all the student names in a hat. A child draws a student name and they become the student's mystery buddy. The mystery buddy then offers compliments, praise and does nice things for the student. The students can then guess their mystery buddy at the end of the week.

Welcoming Committee: The welcoming committee can consist of 1-3 students who are responsible for welcoming any visitors to the class. If a new student starts, the welcoming committee makes sure they feel welcome and they also help them with the routines and become their buddies.

Good Solutions : This activity takes some help from other teaching staff members. Have teachers leave you notes of the conflicts that have arisen at recess or in the classroom. Collect these as often as you can. Then within your own classroom, present the situations that have happened, ask the students to role play it or to come up with positive solutions and practical advice to avoid repeats of the incidents.

Always a Need for Social Skill Development: Using the ideas from this list of fun activities will help model and promote good social skills within the classroom. Use the activities found here to regularly help develop good habits and you'll soon see improvement with students in your classroom who need help with improving their social skills.

## **SAMPLE SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAM FOR STUDENT**

Sandy has a problem in the area of making friends. I have sat down and talked with Sandy about this area. She has made lots of excuses and blamed many others for this problem, but does admit she would like more friends. In addition, she has agreed to work on this area.

AREAS OF FOCUS: (Sandy must be taught effective ways to approach students)

- a) When asking student to play with you, smile and ask them if they would like to play at recess.
  - b) Be specific in the area they will be involved (example: jump rope, kickball).
  - c) If they say no, say "okay, maybe tomorrow".
  - d) If they say yes, when going out to recess, walk out with them.
  - e) Allow them to go first or have the better place in the game.
  - f) Be sure to thank them at the end and let them know you had a good time.
- (I would want to role play this with Sandy several times before implementing)

For two weeks, we have developed a program for her to attempt each day. There are no consequences for failure, only "no friends". The following is a sample of a type of program you may try to implement with one of your students.

1. Sandy will approach one of the students before recess and ask them to play a specific game with her (four-square, basketball, etc.).
2. If student says no, Sandy will choose one more student. If this student says no, she will meet with teacher (at some point in the day) and discuss how she approached the students and what she will do tomorrow.  
[it may be necessary to talk to a few students ahead of time and get their support].
3. Once Sandy has chosen a person to play with during recess, she will let the teacher know how it went during the recess. The teacher will also meet with the student involved to get feedback.
4. Sandy must choose at least 3 different students to play with in the course of the two weeks.

At the conclusion of the two weeks, the teacher and Sandy will discuss what went well and if there were any problems. To increase the effectiveness, the teacher may want to connect with the family and share this with the parent(s). While it is not essential for the family to support, it does increase the chances of success.

## "WHOLE CLASS PROGRAM" SAMPLE

(SEE DISCUSSION GUIDELINE PAGE FOR ANOTHER SAMPLE)

*This sample is only to give you an idea of a possible approach; it is not intended for you to implement this particular program.*

The class (English) has been having problems with getting started when the bell rings (no, not in your class, but you have a friend ...) It seems that they continue to talk and it gets very frustrating (for your friend) and he/she is beginning to thoroughly dislike this class.

GOAL: To teach students how to use time wisely and encourage organization in class.

PRE-TEACHING STRATEGY: The class will be reminded of the rules of the classroom. The cue will be the bell, announcements or whatever is appropriate at your school. Practice with the class, giving them an activity and after a few minutes give them feedback. Help those students who are off task by using proximity and personal touch. (no, not around the throat).

1. The teacher will address the class and let them know of the frustration and the importance of changing the behavior. It wastes time, it takes energy for the teacher and students to get on track, it prevents class from getting special privileges (free time, snacks, etc.).
2. Beginning tomorrow, the class will walk in and find a "starter" problem on their desk. They are to begin working on it silently. They will work on the problem for 5 minutes. At the conclusion of the time, the papers will be collected. All completed papers will receive extra credit points (or any other focus of teacher's choice). Any talking will result in a check mark. Two checks within a five minute period will result in a consequence (after class, no extra points, extra work, etc.).
3. If a student finishes the assignment early, they are to turn in the paper and begin reading the story for the day.
4. If 90% of the class completes their assignment each day, the class earns a point. If the class earns 4- points for the week, they will earn free time (or whatever is chosen by teacher).

Each week the type of assignment will change. One week the students may be asked to look up words in a dictionary and write their definitions. Another week they may be asked to write about their night before at home. Another week they may be asked to write about people in their life. Each time, a minimum number of sentences or part of a page will be used to decide completion.

## DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

Choose one behavior for the students to focus on in a class discussion. (For example “eye contact.”) Over the next 2 minutes of the discussion, periodically point out a student giving eye contact and tell them to give themselves a point. You may also do group points “Anyone who is giving eye contact, give a point to yourself.” This will increase awareness of skills. Nothing needs to be given for points except high fives, claps, or “way to go” comments.

Behaviors that contribute to productive discussions:

- 1. expressed my ideas, opinions, view
- 2. stayed on the subject during the discussion
- 3. listened to what others were saying
- 4. allowing others to finish speaking without interrupting
- 5. had eye contact with person who was speaking
- 6. maintained attentive body posture:
  - leaned forward
  - visually followed the flow of discussion (watched people sharing)
  - no distracting gestures
- 8. other

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I FEEL VERY GOOD ABOUT MY DISCUSSION BEHAVIOR TODAY

YES

NO

WHY? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**STEPS TO TEACHING:**  
*DEALING WITH ANOTHER'S ANGER*

**STEPS**

**EXPLANATION**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Listen to what the person has to say.  | Don't interrupt or look upset. Be open to their ideas.             |
| 2. Think about your choices:<br><br>a) keep listening<br>b) ask questions (why are you angry?, are you mad at me?, what can I do to help?)<br>c) offer solutions to the problem<br>d) ask to have another person present<br>e) tell the person you need to leave and think about it | Look at the consequences of each choice.                           |
| 3. Act out your best choice   | If one approach doesn't work, then look for an alternative choice. |

When teaching this to kids, role play with them. Have one person "pretend" to be angry. Have another student be the one working on the steps. In order to help them be successful, a person should stand next to or behind the person thinking of options. The additional person can "coach them" through the steps. It may be helpful to list the steps on the board or on a piece of tag board, so kids can see them. Once you teach a skill, keep it posted. A classroom could be decorated with skills throughout the year.

## **SKILL GAMES FOR TEENAGERS**

Games are great ways to help groups of teens learn skills for working together. Skills can be learning and practiced in a fun, non-threatening way.

**Building Blind:** Students work in pairs or triads. One student is designated as the "leader", the other students are the "builders". The leader has visual access to a simple structure (made of Legos, tinker toys, or similar items), but the builders do not. Each group also has a box of building materials identical to those used to make the hidden structure.

The task is for the team to duplicate this structure under two conditions: the builders cannot see the original structure, and the leader cannot touch the original structure or any of the building materials. The leader must direct his teammates using verbal cues only. This forces the leader to be precise in the directions he gives and forces the builders to use listening skills and follow instructions exactly. A great game for helping kids learn how to work together.

**Back Drawing:** This game is played in pairs. One student is the "artist" and sits behind their partner. The artist is given a short list of simple items and shapes (i.e. heart, star, face, etc.) that she will then use her finger to trace one at a time onto her partners back. The object is for the partner to identify as many of the shapes as possible. Each drawing can be repeated only one time. This activity forces kids to pay careful attention and use visualization skills.

**Blind Obstacle Course:** Set up a simple obstacle course that involves items to walk around, step over, and duck under. Students work in pairs. One member of each team is blindfolded and must rely on their partner to direct them through the course. Leaders must give clear, specific directions, and followers must rely solely on their listening skills to gather information about how to navigate the course. Another great activity for promoting teamwork.

**Directions, Directions:** Students work in groups of 4-6. One person starts, identifying and performing a small task (i.e. "Clap hands three times"). The next person repeats and performs the same tasks, then adds on one of their own (i.e. "Clap hands three time, stick out tongue"). Play continues around the group, with each person performing and adding a new task to the mix. Students who cannot complete the sequence correctly are out until the next round. This game requires students to follow directions, focus, listen carefully, and utilize memory skills.

Teaching decision-making is an important strategy for children. Often they are non-committal (I don't know) or they defer (I don't care). This may stem from a fear of being wrong, uncertainty as to what to say, or even a lack of confidence. The following procedures may be taught to individuals or a class.

## **DECISION-MAKING STRATEGIES**

**PROBLEM-** What is the problem? It is important to focus on the issue. This is an important starting point and may take the most time. Facilitate this by asking questions, not by telling them what to say.

**INFORMATION-** What has been attempted? What has taken place around the problem? Who is involved? Get the crux of the situation from the person.

**ALTERNATIVES-** List possible solutions. Don't discount anything. When the child says, "I don't know", tell them to "take a guess." Keep a running list of strategies. You can add one or two along the way, but be sure the child is involved. Great phrases to use when you want the person to continue is, "another idea might be ... " or "what else?"

**CONSEQUENCES-** Help the person evaluate the consequences of the choices. What will happen if they choose "A" versus "B"? What are the positive or negative results of the choices?

**CHOICE-** Encourage a decision. "We talked about a lot of things, what sounds good to you?" If they need help, you may say "sounds like you feel best trying ... "

**ACTION-** After the decision let them know you will check back with them to see how it went.

**THINGS TO AVOID-** "You should ... ", "If I were you ... ", "Why don't you ... ", "It's easy. Just..."

You may also write out a form that children can fill in to organize their thoughts. By using some of the headings from above, you may teach the class how to write out their own decision making form. Practicing as a group will be helpful. Utilize a common problem from recess, lining up, passing period, lunch, etc.

**This sheet may be used to help children to focus on behavior change or setting a goal (futuring) in life.**

### **GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET**

What are your strengths in school? (for example: good in a particular subject, good communicator, get along with people, good listener)

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What areas do you want to improve? \_\_\_\_\_

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Choose one area to focus on for change. Write it out. \_\_\_\_\_

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What makes this area hard to change? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who can help you with this change? \_\_\_\_\_

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Develop a plan for this change. Choose a person to help you with developing your plan. \_\_\_\_\_

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When will you begin this plan? (for example: tomorrow, when I am at home, 3<sup>rd</sup> period). \_\_\_\_\_

## **Activities for social skills training**

1. **Compliment cards**-pass out index cards and have each student write their name at the top (or you can write their names). Shuffle them up and pass them out to students. Each person must write a compliment on the card he/she was given. You may want to explain superficial comments (I like your backpack) and personal comments (you have a nice smile).
2. **Discussion Guidelines**- choose a specific skill that children need for classroom discussions. For example, staying on the topic. Each time a child discusses something on topic, he/she puts a hash mark on their paper. The goal is to get them to focus on staying on topic.
3. **Rating Scales**- the key to rating scales is to be specific and help the children know exactly what they are rating. You may use any scale you like, but be sure it is at least " 1 to 5." You may use it for reducing noise, quality of work, on task, to name a few. You may also have them rate their fellow students.

## **GAMES THAT TEACH SOCIAL SKILLS**

**1. BEAT THE CLOCK-** the teacher stops teaching when children are off task or making noise. They lose that time from their free time. This helps students to self-monitor and use of peer pressure. "I am going to teach for the next 20 minutes. You will have the rest of the time to work quietly. If people are off task, I will stop teaching and this will come off your time." Be specific when students are off task, "I see one, two, three students talking." You may keep track of time on the board. The use of a stop watch will assist in this activity.

**2. SIMON SAYS-** helps in the area of listening skills, following directions, increasing observation skills and paying attention. Students are asked to follow directions given by the teacher. However, they are to only follow the ones that are preceded by "Simon Says." You can certainly change this to "your name says". If they don't listen carefully, they are out of the game.

**3. TEACHER-STUDENT COMPETITION-** Let the students know that you are going to play a game. Each time they raise their hand to answer a question, the "student" section gets a point, each time they talk out, the "teacher" section gets a point. You can do this throughout the day or for a short time period. A reward may be given for the winner.

**4. TELEPHONE GAME-** helps students in the area of paying attention, listening skills, verbal clarity, and avoiding distractions. Get 8 to 10 students, share a three or four sentence story with the first one and have them whisper it to the next one. See how the story changes at the end.

## NINE STEPS TO CORRECTIVE TEACHING

1. INITIAL PRAISE/EMPATHY
  - "I" statements
  - Praising (be specific, positive)
2. DESCRIPTION/DEMONSTRATION OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
  - Point out error and ways to correct
  - Don't dwell on negative
3. CONSEQUENCES
  - Loss of privileges
  - Allow them to earn privileges back, if appropriate
4. DESCRIPTION AND DEMONSTRATION OF APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
  - Task analyze (break it down to small steps)
  - Does the student understand the skill
5. RATIONALE
  - When is the skill important?
  - What is the benefit of knowing the skill?
6. REQUEST FOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
  - Student should model, demonstrate skill
7. PRACTICE
  - Role-play and verbalize skill
8. FEEDBACK
  - Let the student know you will look for skill demonstration
9. GENERAL PRAISE
  - Follow through and find a place to praise child

# • SOCIAL SKILLS

## **Games**

Large Group Interaction

Group Discussion Games

## PETE'S DAY

Pete fell out of bed, knowing he had waited too long and would be late for school. He had gone to Gordon's house, against the wishes of his parents. But under the new "trust" plan, which he was given after months of arguing, he was allowed to make his own decision. He was 17 years old and almost a Senior.

He arrived late to English and smiled at his friends' Jim and Linda. He next heard his teacher talking about reviewing for the test tomorrow. His heart sank. He forgot about the chemistry test next period. During the review for tomorrow's English test, he studied chemistry. He would ask Linda to brief him on the novel, which he hadn't read.

He could skip chemistry class and try to get a note to explain his absence; or he could ask his teacher for a postponement. But since he hadn't been turning in his work regularly, he doubted that would work. He finally decided to go see the counselor during second period and talk about his college plans. As he left English, he made plans with Jim to meet him that night to study. You could always count on Jim.

During his conference with the counselor, chemistry came up. His teacher had mentioned to the counselor that Pete was not turning in his work. The counselor's pleasant face really went sour when she learned that Pete had missed chemistry to talk with her.

At lunch, Linda reminded Pete about the scholarship meeting in the auditorium. She also asked if he had remembered his application which was due today. He had put off discussing this with his parents for so long, he forgot the due date. And he was really discouraged to learn all late applications would be reviewed after the earlier ones. Chances of college were looking slimmer and slimmer, especially if he didn't talk to his chemistry teacher.

Finally the day was over. While on his way to basketball practice, he stopped and talked with some friends. This made him late and he had to run extra laps. What a day. He got a ride home with George, even though his parents thought George was a bad driver and discouraged him from doing this. As he pulled in front of the house, his mother was looking out the window and saw he was with George.

Feeling low when he got home, he was pleased to see an excited look on his Dad's face. His Dad had two tickets to the basketball tournament tonight and wanted Pete to go. Pete's face lit up until he remembered his meeting with Jim. But he loved basketball so much and hardly ever got to do things alone with his Dad. Pete slowly began walking to the phone to call Jim.

List the choices that you believe Pete had throughout the day. Put a star by the three most important decisions he made and tell why you feel this way.

### SARAH'S BIRTHDAY PARTY GUEST LIST

After you have read the story, list the four guests you think Sarah should invite to her party.

Sarah's mother told her to invite four friends to her tenth birthday party. Sarah had a great party planned. First, her guests and she would go to a movie. Next, they would come home and open presents and eat cake. Then, they would all go to the park and play Frisbee, skateboard and "just goof around." But Sarah had to limit her list to four friends. This was hard for her as she had a list of six. Can you help her choose from the following friends?

1. **Tom**- Tom has lived next door since they both were three years old. They have been in the same class every year. Tom has been like a brother and they always have fun together. There's only one problem- he is a boy.
2. **Carol**- Carol is new in Sarah's school. She moved recently and only knows a few students. Her parents own a big sandwich shop in town. They have offered to provide special food for the party---FREE! Sarah likes Carol; she thinks she is really funny.
3. **Joanne**- Joanne was Sarah's partner for the science fair project. They spent a lot of time working together and ended up getting first prize. They had their picture in the paper and received a ribbon. While Joanne is not very popular, she really helped Sarah on the project and has tried to be her friend.
4. **Bill**- Bill is Sarah's cousin. He recently moved away to a town about 30 minutes away. He and Sarah have been close and she hasn't had much of a chance to see him.
5. **Mary**- Mary is in the same grade as Sarah, but in a different room. She is a bit of a loner and the kids make fun of her. Last month Sarah went to Mary's birthday party and had a great time.
6. **Nicole**- Nicole is the most popular girl in the school. Sarah has always admired her and wanted to be part of "her group." Recently, Sarah has been included in their activities, mainly because Nicole told them to invite Sarah. Nicole always seems to have money and has promised to buy Sarah a "great" present.

## GOING TO CAMP WILLOW

Pick five friends to go with you to Camp Willow. They will be your teammates and be in all your activities (athletic, art, free time). The camp has cool prizes for winning athletic events and gives extra rewards for special art projects. There is also one night of story-telling and drama where a major award is given out.

1. Mona Mouth- she has the best stories and makes everything very funny. Talking is her favorite thing and it can really go on a lot. She also makes fun of other people, including you.
2. Milford Muscle- the best athlete in town. He will certainly help you win all the athletic contests. He can be a bully and push his weight around.
3. Richie Money- very rich and always wants to tell you how much money he has. He is generous and buys lots of snacks and gifts for his friends. He wants friends, but doesn't know how to get them without "buying them."
4. Fanny Favorite- she knows the head counselor very well and can get special favors. She thinks she is "pretty cool" and better than most people. She has been to camp many times and knows all the things to do in order to get privileges.
5. Mel Music- plays the guitar and sings well. He will entertain the group with his talent. He is a bit immature and can be embarrassing with his need for attention.
6. Nellie Know it all- Nellie knows about nature and camping. She reads a lot and likes to be alone. It can be hard to have fun with her.
7. Leroy Leader- the best leader at the camp. Well respected and people listen to him. He does have asthma and is unable to participate in most physical activities. If he is selected, the chance of winning many athletic events is very small.
8. Mark Moody- He is either happy or sad. When he is in a good mood, he is funny and a good friend. If in a bad mood, he is terrible company and not nice.
9. Sonny Sneak- the most creative person at camp. He is really good at art and making projects. He can lie and sneak out of the cabin which is against the rules.
10. John Joker- the funniest person in the group. He makes everyone laugh. He can be very loud which embarrasses people.

## **WHO WILL BE CHOSEN?**

**It has finally happened. A nuclear war is inevitable. The country has taken precautions for such an event by building a special shelter with enough supplies for 2 years. The fallout should end after three years. Listed below are the potential inhabitants of the shelter and a major part of the future generations. You must choose only five people.**

1. John Jameson, 29, body builder, Caucasian. Doesn't drink or smoke. Written several books on fitness, health foods, proper diet.
2. Ralph Smith, 33, CPA, African American. Handles finances for large corporations. Excellent business mind, conservative political views.
3. Bonnie Anderson, 28, homemaker, Caucasian. Recently widowed, has two children. Chosen "Mother of the Year" by Child Welfare group.
4. Sharon Cale, 55, retired teacher, Asian-American. Degree in Child Development. Strongly religious, opposes abortion and capital punishment.
5. Cole Hansen, 38, farmer, Caucasian. High school dropout. Regions top farmer and crop producer. Skilled in areas of soil content, growing of fruits, vegetables, and wheat.
6. Jerry Alling, 51, Physician, Caucasian. One of premiere surgeons the past 20 years. Retired. Very liberal life views.
7. King Golden, 37, self-made millionaire, African American. Skilled architect and owns construction firm. Liberal views politically.
8. Terri Cain, 31, politician, Caucasian. Nationally recognized labor leader. Expert in communication and community organization.
9. Linda Tate, 43, R.N. Native American. Experience in emergency rooms and health clinics.
10. Vince Toney, 40, scientist, Asian-American. Helped design the shelter and electrical aspects. Poor social skills, especially with women.
11. General Tom Harman, 57, U.S. Army, Caucasian. Brilliant military strategist. Recognized leader in organizational skills and team building.
12. Carolyn Easterly, 26, African American, American Idol winner/Ms. America Pageant winner. Masters degree in electrical engineering.
13. Val Graham, 14, student, Russian American. Considered to be a child prodigy in area of computers. Already accepted to MIT, Harvard, and Stanford. Doesn't like "uneducated people."
14. Sarah Zoma, 54, CEO-pharmaceutical company, Mexican American. Exceptional understanding of medications. Recognized as one of the top executives in the world.

**CAR WASH**  
**(Self-Esteem/Peer Relationship)**  
**All Ages--No additional supplies needed**

Explain to the students how a car gets dirty and needs to be cleaned. Does throwing dirt on it clean it? By rubbing it with a cloth? By using dirty water? Clean water? Our insides, our self-esteem or inner perspective is much the same. It must be cleaned by positive and refreshing words. What happens to a person if negative things are said all the time?

Have a group of students make two lines, facing each other with a space of six to eight feet between them. It works best if there are no more than five or so in each line. Choose a student to walk down the middle between the two rows. The student will turn and face a person in row one. A compliment or positive statement will be made to the person in the middle. Next, the student will turn around and face a person in the other row. Another compliment or positive statement will be made.

Continue this process until they have gone through the entire line. Be sure that the compliments are all original and not repeats of what was said to the person by another line member.

VARIATION: Allow a person to choose the people to be in his/her line.

## NASA EXERCISE INDIVIDUAL WORKSHEET

**INSTRUCTIONS:** You are a member of a space crew originally scheduled to connect with a mother ship on the lighted surface of the moon. Due to mechanical difficulties, your ship was forced to land at a spot some 200 miles from the rendezvous. Since survival depends upon reaching the mother ship, the most critical items available must be chosen for the 200-mile trip. Below are listed the 15 items left intact and undamaged after the landing. Your task is to rank order them in terms of importance to your crew in allowing them to reach the mother ship. Place the number " 1 " by the most important item, the number "2" by the second most important, and so on, through number "15," the least important. PLEASE DO THIS BY YOURSELF WITHOUT HELP FROM OTHERS.

- Box of matches
- Food Concentrate
- 50-feet of nylon rope
- Parachute silk
- Portable heating unit
- Two 45 caliber pistols
- One case of dehydrated Pet milk
- Two 100-lb tanks of oxygen
- Stellar map (of the moon's constellation)
- Life raft
- Magnetic compass
- 5-gallons of water
- Signal flare
- First aid kit containing injection needles
- Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter

WHEN COMPLETED, PLEASE TURN YOUR PAPER OVER.

## NASA EXERCISE GROUP WORKSHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: This is an exercise in group decision-making. Your group is to use the method of Group Consensus in reaching its' decision. This means that each group member must agree upon the prediction for each of the 15 survival items before it becomes a part of the group decision. Consensus is difficult to reach. Therefore, not every ranking will meet with everyone's complete approval. Try, as a group, to make each ranking one that all group members can at least partially agree. Here are some guidelines to help you:

1. Avoid arguing for your own individual choice. Listen to what others have to say.
2. View differences of opinion as helpful rather than a hindrance. Remember, with more than one person, you have more information.
3. Avoid changing your mind because you feel pressured or want to "get it done." You have important areas to share and you may help the group come to a clear decision.

Box of matches

Food Concentrate

50-feet of nylon rope

Parachute silk

Portable heating unit

Two 45 caliber pistols

One case of dehydrated Pet milk

Two 100-lb tanks of oxygen

Stellar map (of the moon's constellation)

Life raft

Magnetic compass

5-gallons of water

Signal flare

First aid kit containing injection needles

Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter

WHEN COMPLETED, PLEASE TURN YOUR PAPER OVER.

## NASA EXERCISE ANSWER SHEET

To evaluate the final score, each student should figure out the difference between the score they have and the actual score. For example, if for matches, the student wrote "10" there is a difference of "5." This should be done for each one and a final score totaled.

<u>CORRECT NUMBER</u>	<u>RATIONALE</u>
<u>15</u> BOX OF MATCHES	NO OXYGEN
<u>4</u> FOOD CONCENTRATE	CAN LIVE W/O FOOD
<u>6</u> 50-FEET OF NYLON CORD	TRAVEL OVER TERRAIN
<u>8</u> PARACHUTE SILK	CARRYING ITEMS
<u>12</u> PORTABLE HEATING UNIT	LIGHTED SIDE OF MOON HOT
<u>10</u> TWO .45 CALIBER PISTOLS	SOME USE FOR PROPULSION
<u>11</u> ONE CASE OF DEHYDRATED PET MILK	NEEDS WATER TO WORK
<u>1</u> TWO 100-LB. TANKS OF OXYGEN	NO AIR ON MOON
<u>3</u> STELLAR MAP (CONSTELLATIONS)	NEED FOR NAVIGATION
<u>9</u> LIFE RAFT	SHELTER/CARRYING
<u>14</u> MAGNETIC COMPASS	DIFFERENT MAGNETIC FIELD
<u>2</u> 5 GALLONS OF WATER	NEED WATER - DEHYDRATION
<u>13</u> SIGNAL FLARES	NO OXYGEN
<u>7</u> FIRST AID KIT WITH INJECTION NEEDLES	FIRST AID-O.K., BUT NEEDLES WORTHLESS DUE TO SPACE SUIT
<u>5</u> SOLAR POWERED FM RECEIVER- TRANSMITTER	COMMUNICATION

**THIS IS JUST A FUN ACTIVITY. YOU MAY DISAGREE WITH THE ANSWERS GIVEN BY THE AUTHOR OF THIS ACTIVITY. JUST ENJOY AND GO WITH THE FLOW.**

**FOUR CORNERS**  
**(Cooperation/Team Development)**  
**All Ages-No additional supplies needed**

This activity works best in a larger area or a place where the corners of your room are more open. It is an excellent day starter, beginning of the year or semester time, or when you want to develop some cohesiveness and teamwork. This might be part of a practice time for a team, band, etc.

Ask the class to divide equally into the four corners of the class. It isn't essential that everyone has eight students, but be careful that one does not have five and another have eleven. Have each group designate a runner. As the facilitator, be in the center of the room.

Tell each group that they be required to follow certain directions. Once completed, the runner should come quickly to you. The first runner to get to you is declared the winner for that round.

Ask students a series of fun, but non-threatening or embarrassing questions. For example:

1. Have your runner bring me a shoe with no laces.
2. Have your runner tell me the total number of all your ages added together.
3. Have your runner bring me a pen or a pencil.
4. Have your runner tell me how many people were born in a month beginning with the letter "A" or "M."

You may think of your own fun questions. When completed, have them discuss how well they worked together. Were there any difficulties?

VARIATION: Change runners after each round. Change the composition of groups after a couple of rounds.

AS THE STOMACH TURNS (*another dope opera*)  
(May be best used for older students. Use your own judgment)

A young woman, Karen, meets Tom at the store. He invites her over for dinner. While she doesn't know much about him, she decides to go to his house anyway. Karen calls a friend because she needs a ride to the house. When she is telling her friend, Barb, about the upcoming dinner, her friend tells her it is a bad idea. Barb has heard bad things about Tom and is worried for Karen. However, she says it is up to Karen and agrees to give her a ride to the house.

On the way to the house, they stop for gas. Karen runs into an old boyfriend, Bill. She broke up with him because he gets very angry and abusive. He asks Karen out, but she says she is going over to Tom's house. Bill becomes very jealous and calls her names. He slaps her, gets in his car and drives away. When Karen gets to Tom's house, she is feeling upset and alone. Her time with Tom is just okay, but he seems to care about her.

When it is time to go, he refuses to let her leave. He begs her to stay longer. There is something in his voice which scares Karen. She remembers the concern from Barb. When Tom grabs her arm, she panics. This brings up the hurt from Bill and their past relationship. In an effort to get away, Karen grabs a vase and hits Tom over the head. She runs out of the house, leaving Tom bleeding and screaming at her.

WHICH OF THESE PEOPLE DO YOU FIND THE MOST OFFENSIVE? LIST THE PEOPLE IN ORDER FROM (1) BEING THE MOST OFFENSIVE TO (4) BEING THE LEAST OFFENSIVE.

**ROADBLOCK**  
**(Problem Solving/Decision Making)**  
**All Ages-No additional supplies needed**

Choose one person to be the "roadblocker." Have the student (or the teacher) choose five or six other people to form a circle around the person. Use an actual example or make up a scenario. For example, "Lisa does not bring her materials to class."

This can be a lot of fun and very effective if Lisa will agree to be in the middle.

Have the people around Lisa begin to give her short, quick suggestions as to what she can do to overcome her "problem." After each statement, she should make up a reason the solution won't work. It does not have to be legitimate or make sense, let them have fun.

After Lisa "blocks" the first statement, someone else give a solution, she blocks that one and so on for a minute or two (depending on the flow of the game). The teacher may need to step in occasionally to facilitate, give a suggestion or help with a block. Don't let one person argue with the middle person. The suggestions should be short and quick.

Example- Solution: "You could put all your materials in your notebook."

Block: "I don't have a notebook."

Solution: "One of your friends could remind you."

Block: "I don't have any friends."

While this is going on, choose one student to write down all the suggestions or solutions.

When the activity is over, you now have a list of possible ideas to help Lisa. You can give her a copy of the list and have her choose one to try the next day.

ALTERNATIVE IDEAS: Allow Lisa to be on the outside giving her own solutions, let her take notes, or even let her observe.

**"I JUST WANT TO GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY"**  
**Elementary Age activity**

John wants to go across the street and play with Sarah. But Bill is outside and says he will beat John up. John calls Sarah for help, but Sarah says if he is too chicken to come over, then she will get another friend. Just then, Steve knocks on John's door. He says that for \$5 he will beat up Bill. So John pays Steve who then beats up Bill. When John goes over to Sarah's, she has another friend over and tells John to go home. When John begins to argue, her new friend Alice pushes John and tells him to leave because everyone hates him.

Rank the five people in this story. Give a number one to the person who is the meanest or the one you like the least. Continue on until you rank the person who is the least unkind with the number 5.

**SPACE INVADERS**  
**(Personal Space Skills)**  
**All Ages--No additional supplies needed**

Ever had problems when students line up and they bump into one another, touch one another, or touch another person's hair, arm, leg, etc? What about when students are in the hallway? Do they infringe on another's space? This activity is an excellent way to help students recognize the need to respect one another's personal space.

Be sure you have an open space. Either clear out part of your classroom or move to the gym, multi-purpose room, or even outside. Have students form two lines, each line facing the other. The line should be around 10 feet (or more) away from each other. They should each have one person directly across from them as a partner. If there is an odd number, the teacher may need to be a part of the line. (You may want to have  $\frac{1}{2}$  the class participate at one time, then the other  $\frac{1}{2}$ , plus use one student again, to ensure an even number).

Ask the students if they are a little too far away to carry on a normal conversation. Naturally, the answer is "yes." Designate one line as #1 and another as #2. Have line #1 stand still. Tell line #2 to begin walking, when you tell them to, toward line #1. When line #2 gets close enough to carry on a conversation, tell line #1 to simply raise their hand in a "stop sign" motion. Then begin.

Once line #2 is within a few feet, students will raise a hand in a stop sign signal. Yes, some will be funny and let the person continue to walk into them, but this will be a short lived problem.

Once the student stops, ask line #1 to re-position the person if they are too close or too far.

Ask all students to put their hands at their sides, no talking, make eye contact with partner and have line #2 take a step forward. Remind them no talking or noise. Wait about 5-10 seconds and tell them to step forward again. Allow the giggling, shuffling, and talking to increase (5-10 seconds) until you say, "Take a giant step backwards."

Have the students sit down. Discuss how they felt when they were several feet apart. How about once they step closer to one another? What were indicators of discomfort? (Talking, giggling, shuffling, touching). Take the time to discuss personal space (2 to 3 feet apart for comfort) and how it can impact people. What happens when someone wants to intimidate another (move closer)? When we are frustrated or angry, do we want to have people smother us or give us space? We usually move closer to people--when we intimidate or when we are intimate. This will increase the awareness and importance of giving everyone an arm's length of space during normal times.

**VARIATION:** After one group moves closer, have them return to 10-foot distance and repeat process, giving the other line the opportunity to move forward. Repeat the process. Once completed, ask which was more comfortable, moving toward the person or having someone move toward you? Usually, people say moving toward was better as you could control how far you moved forward.

# DESIGN A FRIEND

**LOOKS:**

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**INTERESTS:**

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**IS GOOD AT:**

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**QUALITIES:**

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**SOCIAL SKILLS A FOUNDATION FOR LEARNING  
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**The following two books are written by your instructor and contain a faith based perspective and biblical references.** These are available on line or through bookstores.

*What To Do When Words Get Ugly.* Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2016 (edited/revised edition). Examines the topic of gossip and how it impacts people. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665

*When to Speak Up and When to Shut Up.* Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2006. Communication book discussing conflict and encouragement. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665 (over 300,000 copies sold).

Both books are available in CD format at audio books.