



### TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS: TIP SHEET

Communication and social behavior weave throughout all aspects of our life. Navigating almost any community setting or activity requires some type of social interaction. And this is true of just about every job. Therefore, we as teachers can play an important role in helping to prepare our students for the social world they will encounter after they graduate.

#### What Do We Mean By Social Skills?

Social skills are sets of commonly understood rules for interacting and communicating. These rules are often unspoken, but they guide social behavior, including both verbal and non-verbal interactions, such as gestures, facial expressions, and body language.

#### What Social Skills are Important for Students?

- Initiate, maintain, and end social interactions appropriately
- Maintain eye contact
- Maintain appropriate personal space
- Understand facial expressions and gestures, and their relationship with emotions
- Take turns in conversation
- Interact appropriately with authority figures
- Utilize good listening skills
- Understand appropriate use of social media

#### How Can I Teach Social Skills?

##### *At home*

Create a task analysis on writing a social media post and applying security settings. Have the student set up a social media account with their family at home and write a social media post.

##### *In the classroom*

Prepare for a community outing by role-playing potential interactions at the grocery store.



# Transition

T E N N E S S E E

## *At school*

Create a video model of someone initiating a social interaction with a peer. Show the student the video model before the student attends a school club meeting. Have the student practice initiating social interactions with peers at the school club meeting.

## *In the community*

Develop a social story for riding the bus

## **Social Skills Goals**

### *Postsecondary Goal*

After graduation, Leilani will join a book club at the local library.

### *Annual Goal*

When provided a verbal prompt at lunchtime, Ellie will initiate communication interactions with others by asking questions in 4 out of 5 opportunities.

### *Transition Service*

Leilani will call the library to inquire about their book club.