



Teaching Social Skills Tip Sheet

Communication and social behavior weave throughout all aspects of life. Social skills are sets of commonly understood rules for interacting and communicating. These rules are often unspoken but guide social behavior, including both verbal and nonverbal interactions such as gestures, facial expressions, and body language. Navigating almost any community setting or activity requires some type of social interaction. Therefore, educators play an important role in helping to prepare our students for the social world they will encounter after they graduate.

What Social Skills Are Important for Students to Learn?

- Initiate, maintain, and end social interactions appropriately
- Maintain eye contact
- Maintain appropriate personal space
- Understand facial expressions, 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.

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

Have the student ask for help when looking for something at the store.

Social Skills Goals

Postsecondary Goal

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

Annual Goal

Given a visual prompt, Ellie will ask other people what their opinions are on a topic in 4 out of 5 trials for 4 consecutive sessions as measured twice a week by teacher-made data sheets by December.

Transition Service

Ellie will participate in a social skills groups to discuss their opinions on different topics.

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