

Social skills learning and supports

This element is organised into 5 sub-elements:

- **Communication** – students learn to negotiate and communicate effectively with others through verbal and non-verbal means in a range of contexts.
- **Collaboration** – students cooperate in groups and constructively contribute to ways of working and outputs. They develop the ability to initiate and manage successful personal relationships through participation in a range of group activities.
- **Leadership** – students explore the ways that they can lead themselves and others. Students build their leadership capacity by examining a range of approaches and learn to select appropriate strategies in different situations.
- **Decision-making** – students choose from possibilities to solve problems. They develop their understanding around factors that influence decisions and learn to evaluate the outcomes of decisions.
- **Conflict resolution** – students develop and apply strategies to prevent, defuse and resolve conflict to reach constructive outcomes.

TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS

1. Name the skill
2. Establish need for the skill
3. Define the skill
4. Model the skill
5. Attention
6. Retention
7. production
8. Select teaching methods e.g. role play,
9. Set up the lesson e.g. role play
10. Conduct the lesson e.g. role-play
11. Feedback
12. Practice through the week.

What can be done to improve social skills?

- **Play** with the student to help develop joint attention, turn-taking, shared interests, cooperation and appropriate play with toys.
- **Emotions:** Help the child to understand and display their own emotions and to recognise these emotions in other people.
- **Empathy:** Help the child to understand and recognise how other people are feeling in particular situations.
- **Social stories:** These are stories which are used to teach children specific social skills that they may find difficult to understand or are confusing. The goal of the story is to increase the child's understanding by describing in detail a specific situation and suggesting an appropriate social response.
- **Social skill groups:** These are groups run with the express purpose of mastering social interaction with others.

What activities can help improve social skills?

- **Visuals:** Make up a poster of rules to remember when starting a conversation (e.g. using a friendly voice, making eye contact, using appropriate greetings, such as 'hello').
- **Role play:** Practise playground/party scenarios where the child does not know anybody. Model and create a list of different things you can say:
 - To join others who are playing (e.g. "Can I play too?").
 - To introduce yourself (e.g. "Hi my name is").
 - To politely negotiate with peers (e.g. "I don't want that one. Can I have the blue car please?").
- **Sing songs,** such as 'If you're happy and you know it' to help teach different emotions.
- **Masks:** Make masks together to help improve eye contact.
- **Turn taking:** Play turn taking games (e.g. board games) to encourage a child to say whose turn it is in the game (e.g. "My turn", "Your turn").
- **Games:** Play board games with the child. Make sure the child is not always the 'winner' so that they learn about 'losing' in a game and are able to cope better when this happens with their peers.
- **Bean bag conversation:** Throw a bean bag around a circle and each child takes a turn to contribute to the conversation. Think of different ways to contribute to the conversation (e.g. ask a question, comment on what has been said, add something related to the topic).
- **Watch and comment:** Role play different situations and comment about appropriate and inappropriate attempts of communication (e.g. standing too close or too far from another person, not using appropriate eye contact, interrupting a conversation).

Examples of Social Skills Lessons and Sequenced Learning Experiences

Various social skills

[20 Social Skills Activities To Help Child & Youth with Development | HIGH5 - HIGH5 TEST](#)

Listening

[skill_step_posters.sselpc.qxd \(weebly.com\)](#)

[Good Listeners SLANT Poster :: Teacher Resources and Classroom Games :: Teach This](#)

Accepting 'No'

[fm.sselpc.qxd \(researchpress.com\)](#)

Feelings

[Self Regulation Tool Kit :: Teacher Resources and Classroom Games :: Teach This](#)

Coping

[Is Something Bugging You? :: Teacher Resources and Classroom Games :: Teach This](#)

Apologising

[fm.sselpc.qxd \(researchpress.com\)](#)

[How To Apologise - Posters :: Teacher Resources and Classroom Games :: Teach This](#)

[Personal and Social Capability | V9 Australian Curriculum](#)

[General capabilities | V9 Australian Curriculum](#)

