

Promoting Social Behavior for Children and Adolescents: Caregivers' and Teachers' Role

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Outline

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- ▶ **Benefits of Social Skills**
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- ▶ **Social learning Theory**
- ▶ **How Learning Occurs?**
- ▶ **Zones of Regulations**
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- ▶ **How to maintain the skills taught**
- ▶ **Conclusion**

Defining Social Skills

What are Social Skills?



What are social skills?

- ▶ Social skills are behaviors that promote positive interaction with others and the environment.

Participation

Helpfulness

Communication

Problem Solving

Negotiation

Benefits of social skills

- ▶ Social skills are critical for the ability to interact with, adapt to, and function within the environment.
- ▶ Being able to interact successfully with others is a key to many of the experiences that enrich life, such as having friendships, participating in recreational activities, or joining groups, and becoming a contributing member of society.

According to Research

- ▶ According to Cartledge and Milburn (1995):

Socially
acceptable
learned behaviors

Enable individuals
to interact in ways
that elicit positive
responses

Assist in avoiding
negative
responses from
them

According to Research

- ▶ According to Walker et al (1995):



Lack of social skills can result in:

- ▶ Social skills are the foundation for getting along with others. A lack of social skills can lead to behavioral difficulties, emotional difficulties, difficulty in making friends, aggressiveness, problems in interpersonal relationships, poor self-concept, academic and work failures, concentration difficulties, isolation from peers, and depression.
- ▶ Social Skills Training Social skills training (SST) is a form of behavior therapy used by teachers, therapists, and trainers to help persons who have difficulties relating to other people.

Main Components of Social Skills

Communication

- Takes turns in conversations
- Makes eye contact when talking

Engagement

- Makes friends easily
- Invites others to join in activities

Conflict

- Follows classroom rules
- Stays calm when teased

Responsibility

- Respects the property of others
- Takes responsibility of one's actions

Empathy

- Forgives others
- Feels bad when others are sad

Social skills and Academic Success

- ▶ The ability of young children to manage their emotions and behaviors and to make meaningful friendships is an important prerequisite for school readiness and academic success (Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2004)
- ▶ The development of social skills lays a critical foundation for later academic achievement as well as work-related skills (McClelland & Morrison, 2003).

Social skills and Academic Success

► Social and emotional capability is crucial to school success. Without this children are at risk of :

- Being unable to transition successfully to school
- Behavior problems
- Academic Failure
- Social problems; problems that often remain in adolescence and even adulthood

Social Learning Theory: Albert Bandura

- ▶ Bandura stated that “most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action” (Bandura, 1977).

Social Learning Theory: Albert Bandura

- ▶ The incorporated social aspect of this theory is known as “observational learning (or modeling)” as people have the ability to learn by simply watching others (Social Learning Theory: Understanding Bandura's Theory of Learning, n.d.).
- ▶ (Video)

Social Learning Theory: Albert Bandura

3 main concepts of the theory:

1. Individuals have the ability to learn through observation
2. Mental states are a fundamental part of this process
3. When something is learned this does not always follow by a change in behaviour.

How Learning Occurs?

- ▶ Because of the importance of social development in the formative early years, all children need to learn and practice social skills.
- ▶ Many children spend a significant portion of their day in child care or preschool settings, so it is incumbent on teachers of young children to positively influence children's social development.

How Learning Occurs?

- ▶ Children learn many behaviors from observing other children or adults.
- ▶ Children can teach each other important skills.
- ▶ Learning is improved when opportunities to respond are increased.
- ▶ Learning is improved when time-on-task is increased.
- ▶ Learning is improved when feedback about effort & products is provided in a timely manner.
- ▶ Learning is improved when reinforcement is provided.
- ▶ Academic performance & classroom behavior are highly interrelated.

Zones of Regulation

The **ZONES** of Regulation®

			
BLUE ZONE Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	GREEN ZONE Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	YELLOW ZONE Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	RED ZONE Mad/Angry Mean Terrified Yelling/Hitting Out of Control

Zones of Regulation

Green Zone

I am good to go.

 Happy	 Calm	 Ready	 Okay
--	---	--	---

I can do these:

 Learn	 Listen	 Work hard	 Expected behaviors
--	---	--	---

VisualTools.com

Blue Zone

I am running slow.

 Sad	 Tired	 Bored	 Sick
--	--	--	---

I can try these tools:

 Take a break	 Talk to an adult	 Ask for a hug	 Listen to music
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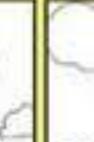
VisualTools.com

Yellow Zone

I need to take caution.

 Worried	 Nervous	 Annoyed	 Upset
--	--	--	--

I can try these tools:

 Take a break	 Get a drink	 Walk	 Inner coach
---	--	---	--

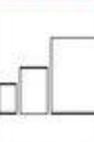
VisualTools.com

Red Zone

I need to STOP.

 Mad	 Yelling	 Mean	 Hands on
--	--	---	---

I can try these tools:

 Deep breaths	 Size of problem	 Run	 Take a break
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VisualTools.com

Size of the Problem

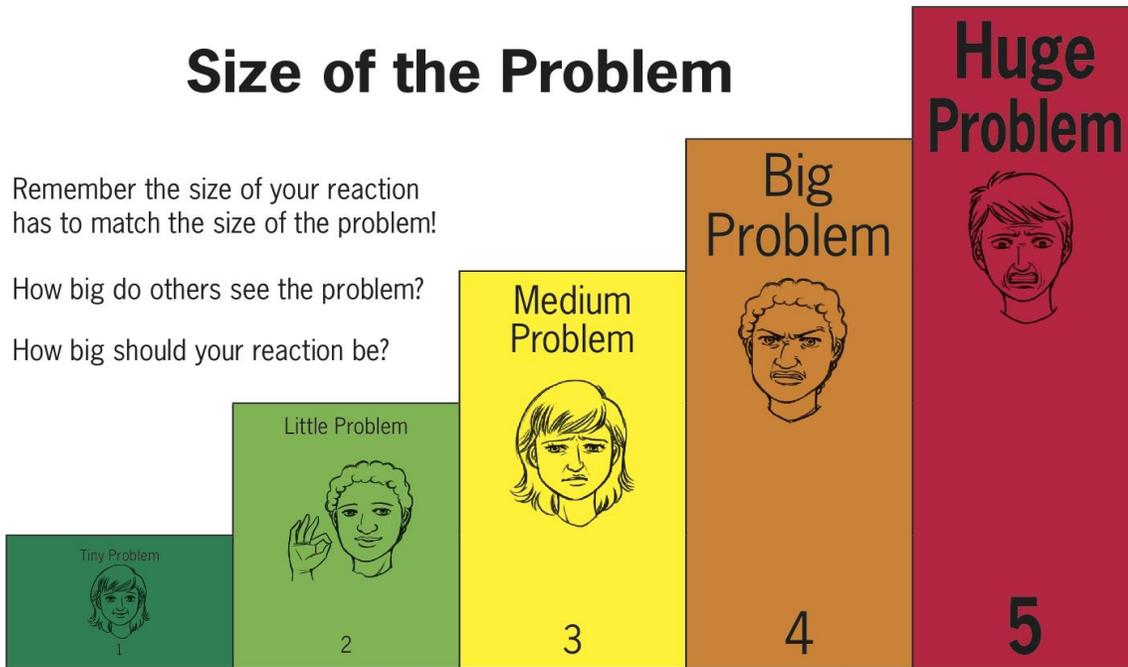
The **ZONES** of Regulation® Reproducible W

Size of the Problem

Remember the size of your reaction has to match the size of the problem!

How big do others see the problem?

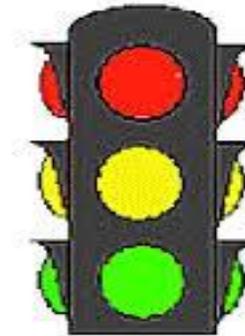
How big should your reaction be?



Visual adapted by Leah Kuypers, Donna Brittain and Jill Kuzma for The Zones of Regulation® from the original work of Winner's *Think Social!* (2005), pages 44-45, www.socialthinking.com, and Buron and Curtis' *The Incredible 5-Point Scale* (2003), www.5pointscale.com

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Stop

Think

Do

A multi purpose tool for improving children's social and learning skills in clinics and schools

How teachers can teach social skills?

Skills that can be worked on in the class and in the natural environment:

Listen to others

- Follow directions

Follow classroom rules

- Ask for help

How teachers can teach social skills?(cont'd)

Skills that can be worked on in the class and in the natural environment:

Take turns

- Share toys/games

Cooperate with others

- Control temper in conflict situations

How teachers can teach social skills?(cont'd)

Skills that can be worked on in the class and in the natural environment:

Acts Responsibly With Others

- Says when they feel happy/sad

Shows Kindness to Others

- Follow game rules and accept losing

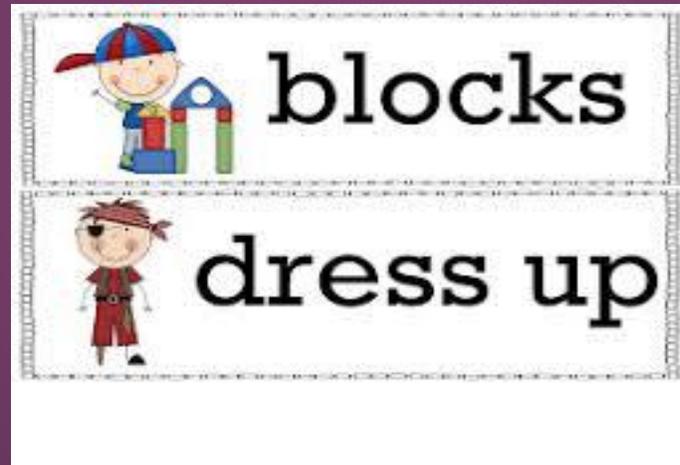
How teachers can teach social skills?(cont'd)

Teachers report that 16% to 30% of the students in their classrooms pose ongoing problems in terms of social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties (Raver & Knitzer, 2002).

How to work on such skills?

1. Arrange the Environment to Promote Positive Social Skills:

- ▶ Learning materials that encourage cooperative play include pretend cars and trucks, blocks, imaginary food and cooking props, and puppets. Select toys and activities that promote cooperation, helpfulness, and generosity, rather than those that are competitive .



How to work on such skills?

2. Enhance Social Functioning Through Play :

Role
playing/Building
Blocks

Develop skills
such as one-to-
one
correspondence

Early writing and
reading
behaviors, as well
as counting and
patterning.

Free play is an effective, spontaneous way for children to apply social skills that have been taught directly.

How to work on such skills?

3. Build on Teachable Moments :

- ▶ When teaching young children appropriate social behaviors, everyday events often become teachable moments.
- ▶ What happens when the bell rings?
- ▶ How can you use this moment to teach appropriate social behaviors?
- ▶ Effective transitions help focus children's attention while waiting for a turn (Pica, 2003).



How to work on such skills?

4. Prevent Inappropriate Behavior :

Effects of problem behaviors

- ▶ Problem behaviors attract teacher and peer attention. Some children seek this attention, even when it is negative.
- ▶ Problem behaviors provide negative role models that other young children may imitate.
- ▶ Problem behaviors can create situations where children are hurt, resulting in a classroom where children do not feel safe.

How to work on such skills?

4. Prevent Inappropriate Behavior :



Plan for
transitions



Offer
choices



Choices
should be
limited, safe,
and
appropriate

How to work on such skills?

5. Promote Peer Learning :

- ▶ When a child has difficulty with social skills, seat her between two socially adept peers during circle time and snack time.
- ▶ During playground time, centers, and other play activities, encourage the children with strong social skills to invite a child with less mature social development to join them.
- ▶ When teachers affirm appropriate social behaviors, other children see this happening and are more likely to imitate behaviors that are socially enhancing.



How to work on such skills?

6. Tell/show social stories :

(video)

- ▶ The effectiveness of social stories with children with disabilities is widely documented (Sansosoti, Powell- Smith, & Kinkaid, 2004). In recent years social stories have become increasingly popular among preschool and elementary teachers (Lynch & Simpson, 2005).



How to work on such skills?

7. Modeling:

- ▶ Effective modeling specifies what should be taught.
- ▶ The modeled behavior should be simplified.
- ▶ Role-play, positive feedback/reinforcement, corrective feedback, avoidance negative comments, and repeat steps are some of the factors that need to be considered.
- ▶ The use of modeling and role-play reinforces the concept of social skills and has been widely accepted as a technique for teaching a variety of social behaviors to children and youth (Bandura, 1977; McGinnis and Goldstein, 1997).

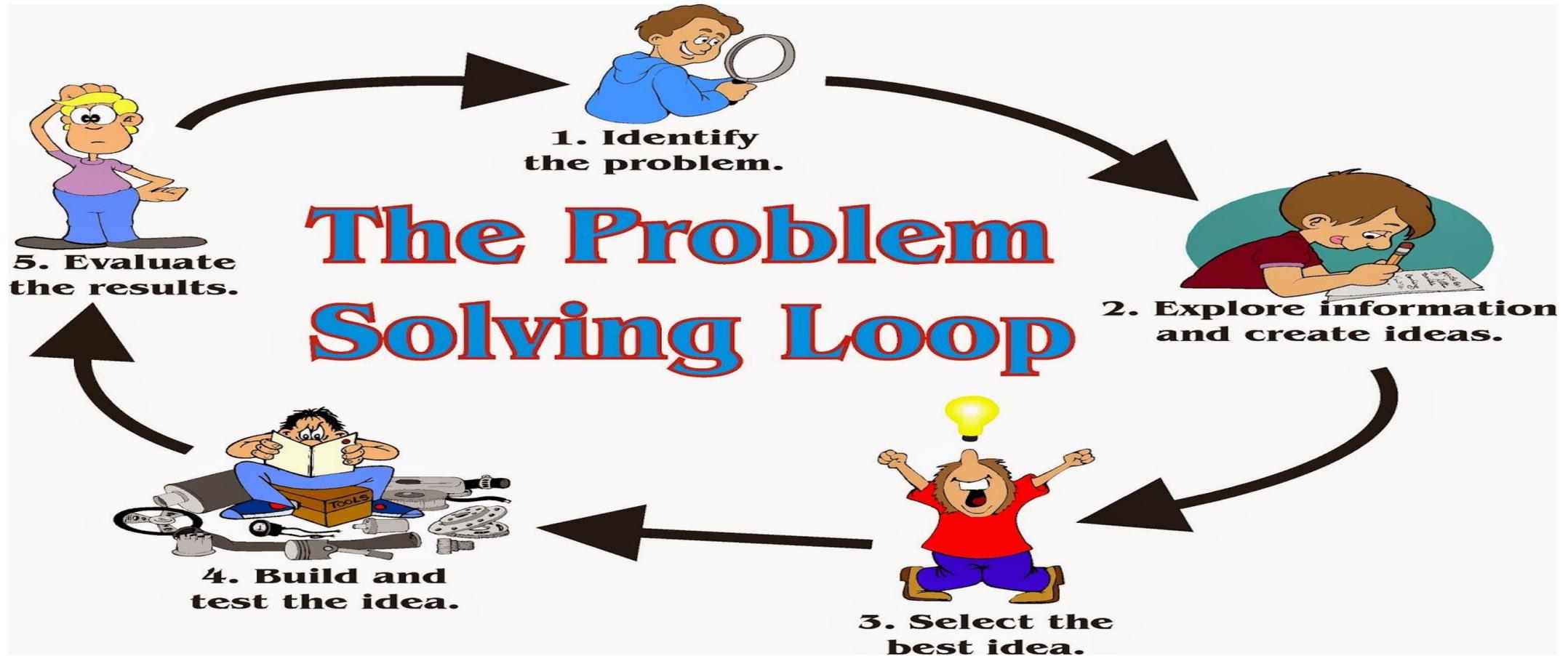


How to work on such skills?

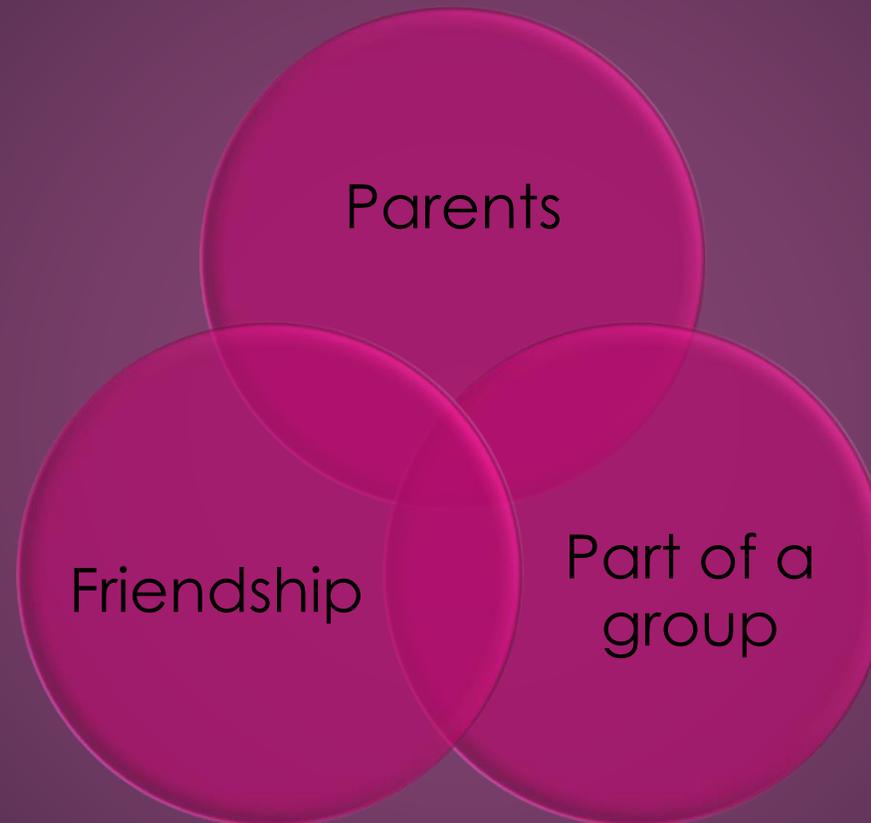
8. Looking forward—problem solving:

- ▶ Children need a chance to say how they feel and then we might say, 'Let's see if we can work out a way that you can both have a turn', and invite the children to think of ways they could both have something they want.
- ▶ For younger children the adult needs to come up with a solution, talking through the process so the children are learning how listen to each other and to problem solve.

How to work on such skills?



How parents can help?



How parents can help?

▶ **1. Social Development :**

- ▶ Friends become important from about three years of age and they need other children of their own age to socialize with.
- ▶ Friendships of three and four-year-olds are often, but not always, about having similar interests at the time.

▶ **2. Helping children with friendships:**

- ▶ When a new child comes over to play parents provide activities that make the time enjoyable for both children and keep an eye on play to make sure it is successful.

How parents can help?

▶ **2. Helping children with friendships**

- ▶ Where a child appears to be neglected by the group, being chosen and given some status by the educator can help.
- ▶ Pairing a child who is missing out on being chosen with a popular child for tasks and activities also helps.

▶ **3. Being in the group**

- ▶ Some children get stuck at the stage of watching and may need some coaching to take the next step. Some children miss the steps and push into the group. These children may be resented or rejected. Some coaching will often help them to think about the response they get and try another way.

How to maintain these skills?

- ▶ Research has shown that naturally occurring reinforcers, such as praise, attention, and positive feedback are the most effective way to encourage new behaviors in different settings (Elksnin and Elksnin, 1998).
- ▶ Social skills taught are also reinforced in other settings. For example, students may learn at school that phrasing requests to adults in a respectful manner leads to praise and also makes it more likely that the student will get what he or she asks for. If the same is true at home, there is a greater probability that the desired skill will become a part of the student's behavioral repertoire (Scott and Nelson, 1998).

How to maintain these skills?



THUMBS UP!

Conclusion

- ▶ One of the most consistent and long-standing criticisms of SST programs is that the skills which students learn during the training are often not maintained or generalized (Nelson and Rutherford, 1988).
- ▶ Social skills intervention cannot be successful if it occurs in isolation.
- ▶ Goldstein et al. (1998) practice of implementing “social skills homework” addresses this problem by assigning social skills activities for the students to practice in settings outside of the training setting.
- ▶ The student is taught the social skill, then expected to practice the skill independently and report the outcome.

Conclusion

Thank you for participating!
Any questions?

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