

# **Social Skills**

## **CONVERSATION SKILLS**

Listening to Others

Starting a Conversation with a New or Unfamiliar Person

Maintaining Conversations by Asking Questions

Maintaining Conversations by Giving Factual Information

Maintaining Conversations by Expressing Feelings

Ending Conversations

Entering into an Ongoing Conversation

Staying on the Topic Set by Another Person

What to Do When Someone Goes Off the Topic

Getting Your Point Across

What to Do When You Do Not Understand What a Person is Saying

# Social Skills

## Listening to Others

- Step 1.** Look at the person.
- Step 2.** Let the person know that you are listening by either nodding your head OR saying something like “Uh-huh” or “OK” or “I see.”
- Step 3.** Repeat back what you heard the person saying.

# Social Skills

## Starting a Conversation with a New or Unfamiliar Person

- Step 1.** Choose the right time and place.
- Step 2.** If you do not know the person, introduce yourself. If you know the person, say “Hi.”
- Step 3.** Choose a topic that you would like to talk about OR ask a question.
- Step 4.** Judge whether the other person is listening and wants to talk.

# Social Skills

## Maintaining Conversations by Asking Questions

- Step 1.** Greet the person.
- Step 2.** Ask a question about something you would like to know about.
- Step 3.** Judge whether the person is listening and is interested in pursuing the conversation.

# Social Skills

## Maintaining Conversations by Giving Factual Information

- Step 1.** Greet the person.
- Step 2.** Share some information about a topic you would like to discuss.
- Step 3.** Judge whether the other person is listening and is interested in pursuing the conversation.

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## Maintaining Conversations by Expressing Feelings

- Step 1.** Greet the person.
- Step 2.** Make a brief statement about how something makes you feel.
- Step 3.** Judge whether the other person is listening and is interested in pursuing the conversation.

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## Ending Conversations

- Step 1.** Wait until the other person has finished speaking.
- Step 2.** Use a nonverbal gesture such as glancing away or looking at your watch.
- Step 3.** Make a closing comment such as “Well, I really must be going now.”
- Step 4.** Say, “Good-bye.”

# Social Skills

## Entering into an Ongoing Conversation

- Step 1.** Wait for a break in the flow of the conversation.
- Step 2.** Say something like “May I join you?”
- Step 3.** Decide whether the people engaged in the conversation are OK with your joining in.
- Step 4.** Say things related to the subject of the conversation.



# Social Skills

## Staying on the Topic Set by Another Person

- Step 1.** Decide what the topic is by listening to the person who is speaking.
- Step 2.** If you do not understand what the topic is after listening, ask the person.
- Step 3.** Say things related to the topic.

# Social Skills

## What to Do When Someone Goes Off the Topic

- Step 1.** Say something like “That’s interesting; can we talk about that after we finish this discussion?”
- Step 2.** If the person has forgotten what the topic is, politely remind them.
- Step 3.** Judge whether the other person is still interested in the original topic.
- Step 4.** If the other person is interested, continue the discussion. If they are not interested, politely end the conversation or talk about something new.

# Social Skills

## Getting Your Point Across

**Step 1.** Decide on the main point you want to get across.

**Step 2.** Speak in short sentences and stay on the topic.

**Step 3.** Pause to let the other person speak or ask questions.

**Step 4.** Answer any questions.

# Social Skills

## What to Do When You Do Not Understand What a Person is Saying

- Step 1.** Tell the person that you are confused or that you did not understand what was said.
- Step 2.** Ask the person to repeat or explain what was just said.
- Step 3.** Ask further questions if you still do not understand.