

Social Skills Training

Group Handouts

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

Making Requests

- Step 1.** Look at the person.
- Step 2.** Say exactly what you would like the person to do.
- Step 3.** Tell the person how it would make you feel.

In making your request, use phrases like:

“I would like you to_____”

“I would really appreciate it if you would do_____”

“It’s very important to me that you help me with
_____”

Social Skills

Expressing Positive Feelings

- Step 1.** Look at the person.
- Step 2.** Tell the person exactly what it was that pleased you.
- Step 3.** Tell the person how it made you feel.

Social Skills

Expressing Unpleasant Feelings

- Step 1.** Look at the person. Speak calmly and firmly.
- Step 2.** Say exactly what the other person did that upset you.
- Step 3.** Tell the person how it made you feel.
- Step 4.** Suggest how the person might prevent this from happening in the future.

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.

Social Skills

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.

Social Skills

Ending Conversations

Step 1. Wait until the other person has finished speaking.

Step 2. Use a non-verbal 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.

Social Skills

Refusing Requests

Step 1. Look at the person. Speak firmly and calmly.

Step 2. Tell the person you cannot do what the person. Use a phrase such as “I’m sorry but I cannot_____.”

Step 3. Give a reason if it seems necessary.

Social Skills

Making Complaints

Step 1. Look at the person. Speak firmly and calmly.

Step 2. State your complaint. Be specific about what the situation is.

Step 3. Tell the person how the problem might be solved.

Social Skills

Responding to Complaints

- Step 1.** Look at the person and remain calm.
- Step 2.** Listen to the complaint, keeping an open mind.
- Step 3.** Repeat back what the person said.
- Step 4.** Accept responsibility and apologize, if necessary.

Social Skills

Expressing Angry Feelings

- Step 1.** Look at the person. Speak firmly and calmly.
- Step 2.** Tell the person specifically what they did that made you angry. Be brief.
- Step 3.** Tell the person about your angry feelings. Be brief.
- Step 4.** Suggest how the person might prevent the situation from happening in the future.

Social Skills

Asking for Information

- Step 1.** Use a calm and clear voice.
- Step 2.** Ask the person for the information you need. Be specific.
- Step 3.** Listen carefully to what the person says.
- Step 4.** Repeat back what the person says so that you understand what has been said.

Social Skills

Letting Someone Know That You Feel Unsafe

- Step 1.** Choose a person you trust to speak to.
- Step 2.** Tell that person what is making you feel unsafe. Try to be *specific* about your fears.
- Step 3.** Ask the person for advice.

Social Skills

Asking for Help

- Step 1.** Choose a person whom you feel you can trust.
- Step 2.** Use a calm and clear voice.
- Step 3.** Tell the person what you need help with. Be specific.
- Step 4.** Listen carefully to what the person suggests.
- Step 5.** Thank the person for their help.

Social Skills

Responding to Unwanted Advice

- Step 1.** Politely acknowledge the advice given.
- Step 2.** Express appreciation for the person's concern.
- Step 3.** Tell the person that you will think about it, and then change the subject.
- Step 4.** If the person persists, let the person know that you are not interested in the advice.

Social Skills

Compromise and Negotiation

- Step 1.** Explain your viewpoint briefly.
- Step 2.** Listen to the other person's viewpoint.
- Step 3.** Repeat the other person's viewpoint.
- Step 4.** Suggest a compromise.

Social Skills

Leaving Stressful Situations

- Step 1.** Determine whether the situation is stressful (i.e., tune in to your thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations).
- Step 2.** Tell the other person that the situation is stressful and that you must leave.
- Step 3.** If there is a conflict, tell the person that you will discuss it with them at another time.
- Step 4.** Leave the situation.

Social Skills

Disagreeing with Another's Opinion without Arguing

- Step 1.** Briefly state your point of view.
- Step 2.** Listen to the other person's opinion without interrupting.
- Step 3.** If you don't agree with the other person's opinion, simply say that it is OK to disagree.
- Step 4.** End the conversation or move on to another topic.

Social Skills

Responding to Untrue Accusations

- Step 1.** Using a *calm* voice, simply deny the accusation.
- Step 2.** If the other person continues to accuse you, ask the person to stop.
- Step 3.** If the person does not stop accusing you, tell them that you are going to ask a staff member to assist with the situation.
- Step 4.** Walk away and get assistance if necessary.

Social Skills

Making Apologies

Step 1. Look at the person.

Step 2. State the apology: "I'm sorry for_____."

Step 3. If realistic, assure the person that it won't happen in the future.

Social Skills

Locating Your Missing Belongings

Step 1. Ask yourself these questions:

a. When did I have it last?

b. Was there anyone around me at that time?

Step 2. Take some time to look carefully for the item you cannot find.

Step 3. If you still have not found the item, ask someone for help. Say something like “Have you seen my_____? I am looking for it.”

Social Skills

What to Do If You Think Somebody Has Something of Yours

- Step 1.** Using a calm voice, ask the person if they have the item.
Do not accuse the person.
- Step 2.** Listen to the person's answer.
- Step 3.** If you are not satisfied with their answer, ask a staff person or someone you trust for help.

Social Skills

Asking for Privacy

- Step 1.** Identify the person you need to talk to about getting privacy.
- Step 2.** Choose the right time and place.
- Step 3.** Explain to the person that you need some private time.
- Step 4.** Tell the person of a time period when you will need privacy.

Social Skills

Checking Out Your Beliefs

- Step 1.** Choose a person you trust to talk to.
- Step 2.** Tell the person what your belief is.
- Step 3.** Ask the person what their opinion is.
- Step 4.** Repeat back the opinion, and thank the person for their point of view.

Social Skills

Reminding Someone Not to Spread Germs

Step 1. Look at the person.

Step 2. Tell the person how they are spreading germs: *Be specific.*

Step 3. Suggest what the person can do differently.

Step 4. Thank the person if they follow your suggestion. If your suggestion is not followed, tell someone in charge.

Social Skills

Eating and Drinking Politely

- Step 1.** Take your time and check the temperature of the food or drink.
- Step 2.** Take small bites or sips and chew all food thoroughly.
- Step 3.** Swallow what is in your mouth before speaking.
- Step 4.** Use a napkin to wipe hands and mouth.

Social Skills

Giving Compliments

- Step 1.** Look at the person.
- Step 2.** Use a positive, sincere tone.
- Step 3.** Be specific about what it is that you like.

Social Skills

Accepting Compliments

Step 1. Look at the person.

Step 2. Thank the person.

Step 3. Acknowledge the compliment by:

a. Saying how it made you feel *or*

b. Stating your feeling about the item that was complimented

Social Skills

Finding Common Interests

- Step 1.** Introduce yourself or greet the person you want to talk with.
- Step 2.** Ask the person about what activities or hobbies they enjoy doing.
- Step 3.** Tell the person about what activities or hobbies you enjoy doing.
- Step 4.** Try to find a common interest.

Social Skills

Asking Someone for a Date

- Step 1.** Choose an appropriate person to ask.
- Step 2.** Suggest an activity to do together.
- Step 3.** Listen to the person's response and do one of the following:
 - a. If the person responds positively to your suggestion, choose a day and time to get together. Be willing to compromise.
 - b. If the person indicates that they are not interested in going out on a date, thank the person for being honest with you.

Social Skills

Ending a Date

- Step 1.** Thank the person for spending time with you.
- Step 2.** If you enjoyed the date, tell the person that you would like to get together again.
- Step 3.** Say “Good-bye.”

Social Skills

Expressing Affection

- Step 1.** Choose a person whom you are fond of.
- Step 2.** Pick a time and place where you can be with the person in private.
- Step 3.** Express affection using a warm and caring voice tone and/or by offering a warm physical gesture.
- Step 4.** Tell the person why you feel this way.

Social Skills

Refusing Unwanted Sexual Advances

- Step 1.** Using a firm voice, tell the person that you are not interested in having sex.
- Step 2.** Depending on your relationship with that person, explain why you feel that way.
- Step 3.** If the person does not listen and continues to pressure you, leave the situation.

Social Skills

Requesting That Your Partner Use a Condom

- Step 1.** Choose a time and place where you and your partner can talk in private.
- Step 2.** Tell your partner that you would like him to wear a condom.
- Step 3.** Explain your reasons for making the request.
- Step 4.** If he refuses, tell him that you will not engage in any sexual activity with him until he uses one.

Social Skills

Refusing Pressure to Engage in High-Risk Sexual Behavior

- Step 1.** Tell your partner that you will not engage in the high-risk sexual activity.
- Step 2.** Explain your reason for refusing to do so.
- Step 3.** If you still want to engage in sex, suggest a different sexual activity that is safer.
- Step 4.** If the person continues to pressure you, tell them that you need to leave.

Social Skills

Making a Doctor's Appointment on the Phone

- Step 1.** Identify yourself or give your name.
- Step 2.** Tell the person that you would like to make an appointment to see the doctor.
- Step 3.** Listen to the person's response. Be ready to provide any information that the person may ask for.
- Step 4.** Repeat back the time and date of the appointment given to you and then thank the person for their help.

Social Skills

Asking Questions about Medications

- Step 1.** Choose a person to speak to, such as a case manager, a nurse, a doctor or a family member.
- Step 2.** Ask the person your question about medication. Be specific.
- Step 3.** If you do not understand the person's answer, ask more questions.
- Step 4.** Thank the person for their help.

Social Skills

Asking Questions about Health-Related Concerns

- Step 1.** Choose a person to speak to, such as a case manager, a nurse, or a doctor.
- Step 2.** Ask the person your question.
- Step 3.** If you do not feel comfortable with the person's answer or if you do not understand, ask more questions.
- Step 4.** Thank the person for their help.

Social Skills

Complaining about Medication Side Effects

- Step 1.** Choose a person to speak to, such as a staff member, a nurse, a doctor, or a family member.
- Step 2.** Tell the person you are concerned that you may be experiencing side effects from your medication.
- Step 3.** Describe the symptoms you are experiencing. Remember to be specific.
- Step 4.** If you are speaking to a medical person, ask for advice about how to handle the symptoms. If you are speaking to a nonmedical person, ask for help in setting up a medical appointment.

Social Skills

Requesting a Change in Your Medication Dosage

- Step 1.** Choose an appropriate person to speak to (e.g., a nurse or doctor).
- Step 2.** Explain why you want a change in your medication dosage.
- Step 3.** Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of changing your medication dosage.
- Step 4.** Ask questions if you do not understand what is being said.
- Step 5.** If you disagree with the advice, suggest a compromise.

Social Skills

Asking about a New Medication You Have Heard About

- Step 1.** Tell your doctor that you have heard about a new medication called_____.
- Step 2.** Ask your doctor if they think that this medication may be helpful for you.
- Step 3.** Discuss the pros and cons of changing to a new medication.
- Step 4.** Listen carefully to what the doctor says.
- Step 5.** Let the doctor know what you think.

Social Skills

Reporting Pain and Other Physical Symptoms

- Step 1.** Choose an appropriate person to speak to.
- Step 2.** Tell the person that you are not feeling well.
- Step 3.** Describe the symptoms (e.g., pain, dizziness) to that person.
- Step 4.** Listen to that person's response and ask for help if you need it.

Social Skills

Interviewing for a Job

- Step 1.** Make eye contact with the interviewer.
- Step 2.** Shake the interviewer's hand and introduce yourself. Remember to use a confident voice tone.
- Step 3.** Tell the interviewer why you are interested in this job.
- Step 4.** Answer any job-related questions the interviewer asks you.
- Step 5.** Thank the interviewer for their time.

Social Skills

Asking for Feedback About Job Performance

- Step 1.** Identify an area of your job that you would like some feedback about.
- Step 2.** Request feedback from the appropriate person. Say something like:

“I’m interested in knowing how you think I am doing with _____. I would like to talk to you about it when you have a chance.”
- Step 3.** Listen carefully to the person’s response, especially any suggestions that they may make.
- Step 4.** If you do not understand the suggestions, ask the person to clarify them.
- Step 5.** Thank the person for their time.

Social Skills

Responding to Criticism from a Supervisor

- Step 1.** Without interrupting or getting angry, listen carefully to what is being said to you.
- Step 2.** Repeat back what your supervisor said.
- Step 3.** Ask your supervisor what you can do to improve the situation.
- Step 4.** If you do not understand what was said, continue to ask questions until it becomes clear.

Social Skills

Following Verbal Instructions

- Step 1.** Listen carefully to the person giving instructions.
- Step 2.** If you are confused about what was said, ask the person to repeat the instructions.
- Step 3.** Repeat back the instructions to the person.
- Step 4.** Ask more questions if you still do not understand.

Social Skills

Joining Ongoing Conversations at Work

- Step 1.** Wait for a break or a pause in the flow of the conversation.
- Step 2.** Say something like “Mind if I join you?”
- Step 3.** Say things related to the conversation topic.

Social Skills

Solving Problems

- Step 1.** Define the problem.
- Step 2.** Use brainstorming to generate a list of possible solutions.
- Step 3.** Identify the advantages and disadvantages of each solution.
- Step 4.** Select the best solution or combination of solutions.
- Step 5.** Plan how to carry out the best solution.
- Step 6.** Follow up the plan at a later time.

Social Skills

Offering an Alternative to Using Drugs and Alcohol

- Step 1.** Look at the person. Make eye contact.
- Step 2.** Use a firm voice and tell the person that you don't want to use drugs or alcohol.
- Step 3.** Give the person a reason why you do not want to use.
- Step 4.** Suggest another activity. If the person has drugs or alcohol with them, leave the situation.

Social Skills

Requesting That a Family Member or Friend Stop Asking You to Use Drugs and Alcohol

- Step 1.** Look at the person. Make eye contact.
- Step 2.** Use a firm voice and tell the person that you don't want to use drugs or alcohol.
- Step 3.** Give the person a reason why you do not want to use.
- Step 4.** Request that the person not ask you to use drugs or alcohol.

Social Skills

Responding to a Stranger or a Drug Dealer

- Step 1.** Decide whether to make eye contact.
- Step 2.** Tell the person that you don't want to use drugs or alcohol. Be brief.
- Step 3.** *If appropriate*, give the person a reason why you do not want to use.
- Step 4.** Leave the situation.