

Resource for parents

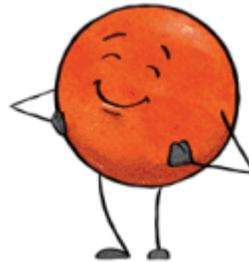
Social Skills · Basic Skills



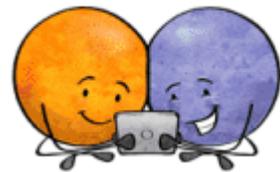
Following Directions



Using Manners



Having a Positive Attitude



Working with Others



Good Hygiene



Using Polite Words



Taking Turns



Greetings



Waiting & Having Patience



Being a Good Sport



Listening to Others



Understanding Personal Space

Pathway 2 Success



Following Directions: This is having the ability to listen, understand expectations, and follow through in a timely manner. Learners need to learn how to follow directions to help them complete tasks, whether it is an assignment in class or instructions from a future boss.

Strategies to teach:

- Play games for following directions, like Simon Says and Freeze.
- Practice giving both verbal and visual directions.
- Teach and practice how to read directions BEFORE starting an assignment.
- Have learners highlight or underline directions on assignments before starting.
- Have learners make a checklist for following directions for any task (like making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich) to help them see why directions should be clear and followed well.

Using Manners: Our manners are the courteous behaviors to we to show we are kind and respectful. All kids need to understand manners so they can be socially appropriate in a variety of settings, such as a restaurant, at the library, or even answering the phone.

Strategies to teach:

- Post visuals of “manner words,” such as please, thank you, and you’re welcome as reminders.
- Make it a habit to model and say these words with students and colleagues.
- Explicitly teach about manners and discuss what manners we use in different settings.

Having a Positive Attitude: A positive attitude is the first step to having a growth mindset. By having a positive attitude, kids can learn to be more optimistic and see the bright side of things.

Strategies to teach:

- Model having a positive attitude, even when things don’t go as planned (ex: “I was really looking forward to outdoor recess today, but now I am excited to play some chess instead!”).
- Practice and discuss positive self-talk.
- Read picture books about a positive attitude

Working with Others: All learners need skills to positively work with others by listening, collaborating, helping, and doing their fair share.

Strategies to teach:

- Explicitly teach skills for working well with others.
- Make a list of “group ground rules” for how to work successfully with others (listening to each other, staying with the group, staying positive, etc.).
- Give lots of practice in partners and small groups.
- Make sure students are frequently working with different people.
- Sometimes give learners the chance to pick their partners, while assigning students at other times.
- Keep a list of sentence starters kids can use in groups to collaborate such as, “I really like how you...” and “Can we try...”

Good Hygiene: Proper self-care means keeping yourself well-groomed and neat. This is an important skill because not only is it about being clean, but it helps everyone make a positive first impression.

Strategies to teach:

- Talk about what good hygiene means, such as washing hands and showering/bathing daily.
- Give reminders for hygiene, depending on age level.
- Talk to the school counselor or social worker about coming in for a lesson on hygiene.

Using Polite Words: Using kind and polite words is just another way to spread kindness to others. Sometimes, I call this “using kind words only.”

Strategies to teach:

- Teach about kindness and why it matters.
- Discuss polite and kind words.
- Teach about using a social filter, including thinking about how our words impact others.

Taking Turns: Learning to turn-take involves alternating between two or more people. This is an important skill to show courtesy and respect during conversations and other activities.

Strategies to teach:

- Explain what it means to take turns and discuss scenarios, such as in sports, conversations, games, and more.
- Practice turn-taking with board games.
- Practice turn-taking with conversations (whole class and small groups).
- Have students hold a special tangible (a ball or stuffed animal) when it is their turn to talk.

Greetings: Welcoming others and making them feel valued is an important social skill. By teaching kids and young adults how to properly greet others, it can help create a positive community for all. This is also an important lifelong social skill for the workplace and beyond..

Strategies to teach:

- Model greetings each morning with each student as they walk in.
- Teach different greeting and allow students to choose how to greet each other.
- Start the day with a morning meeting and a greeting.

Waiting and Having Patience: Developing patience is a critical skill during times when we have to wait. Kid and young adults might have to wait in line at the pencil sharpener or wait for their turn to speak in a group, just to name a few. By having patience, they show that they are courteous and respectful to all.

Strategies to teach:

- Teach strategies for what to do when waiting (doing something else, using positive self-talk, etc.).
- Discuss scenarios when kids have to wait and discuss how they can handle it.
- Read picture books about patience
- Use social scripts to help teach skills for how to wait in social situations.

Being a Good Sport: Learning to be a good sport can help kids and young adults be respectful when they engage in games and activities. It can also help them positively cope with losing by focusing on having fun instead of winning.

Strategies to teach:

- Teach and discuss expectations for being a good sport.
- Focus on having fun, playing, and learning rather than winning.
- Give reminders about being a good sport before activities.
- Use social scripts to remind about being a good sport before activities.
- Practice being a good sport during games (anything from board games to outdoor sports during recess).
- Practice and discuss having a growth mindset to help when students lose.

Listening to Others: Skills for listening are critical to building positive relationships with others. Kids and young adults should learn how to focus their attention to others, put away distractions, and really think about what someone else is saying.

Strategies to teach:

- Start the day with a morning meeting and give time to share thoughts.
- Teach the basics for listening: making eye contact, putting distractions away, thinking about what someone is saying.
- Give discussion time in your content area subjects.
- Practice listening with discussion times.
- Teach students how to summarize what they heard: “So what I heard you say is that...”.

Understanding Personal Space: Having a good understanding of personal space helps everyone feel more comfortable in social situations. It also gives way to teaching that consent is needed to be in someone else's personal space.

Strategies to teach:

- Teach students that they have an invisible bubble around them called their personal space. Explain why having personal space is important.
- Teach and discuss expected behaviors with personal space such as standing an arm's length away while talking and keeping hands to self.
- Act out what personal space looks like in different scenarios.
- Teach students how to ask permission if they would like to give a friend a hug.
- Read picture books about personal space