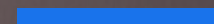




Social Skills Training- A Lifespan Approach



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Who is Here Today?

Parents or Caregivers?

Siblings?

Individual with Down Syndrome?

Service Providers?

Other Professionals?



Objectives

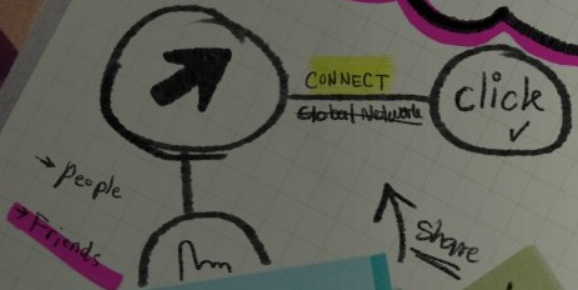
1. Understand why direct social skill teaching is required
2. Obtain mastery of the social skill development throughout different age ranges
3. Learn how to spot when a person is lacking a particular social skill and what to do

Why Teach Social Skills?

CHECK LIST:

- chat
- share

cloud
↑↓



SOCIAL MEDIA

Tweet

hello!



good!

- NETWORK
- internet
- connect

SHARE

Why Teach Social Skills?

People with Down Syndrome often have challenges with communication and social situations.



These challenges often impact the following areas:

Building and maintaining
friendships

Academic progress

Maintaining employment

Living independently



By explicitly teaching social skills, we can:

Increase self-esteem and
emotional well-being

Promote inclusion and
participation in community life

Enhance learning outcomes

Support long term independence
and overall quality of life

The Lifespan Approach

Foundational Social Skills (Birth to Age 5)

Emerging Social Skills (Middle Childhood- Age 6 to Age 12)

Advanced Social Skills (Adolescence- Age 13 to Age 18)

Adult Social Skills (Age 18+)

Foundational Social Skills (Birth to Age 5)

Importance of These Skills:

- Laying the groundwork for all future social skills
- Helping children to connect with others
- Beginning to understand non-verbal cues
- Learning the process of social understanding & learning

Focus:

- Increasing early communication
- Increasing engagement
- Teaching self-regulation

Key Skills Acquired During Foundational Social Skills

Joint Attention

Facial
Recognition

Imitation of
Sounds and
Actions

Turn Taking

Simple Gestures
and Facial
Expressions

Responding to
Name

Following
Simple
Directions

Emerging Social Skills (Middle Childhood- Age 6 to Age 12)

Importance of These Skills:

- Building on foundational skills to allow for more complex interactions
- Enhancing group learning
- Enhancing self-advocacy

Focus of These Skills:

- Expanding communication
- Increasing social reciprocity

Key Skills Acquired During Emerging Social Skills

Conversational Turn
Taking

Initiating and
Maintaining
Conversation or Play

Understanding and
Expressing Emotions

Using Polite
Language (e.g.,
"Please" and "Thank
You")

Recognizing Personal
Space and
Boundaries

Basic Conflict
Resolution (e.g.,
asking for help, using
words instead of
aggression)

Advanced Social Skills (Adolescence- Age 13 to Age 18)

Importance of These Skills:

- Refining previously learned skills to apply them to new situations

Focus of These Skills:

- Navigating more nuanced social situations
- Helping to prepare for adult interactions

Key Skills Acquired During Advanced Social Skills

Perspective Taking
(understanding other
people's thoughts
and feelings)

Problem Solving in
Social Contexts

Appropriate Decision
Making (e.g., peer
pressure resistance)

Relationship Building
and Maintenance
(e.g., friendships or
early relationships)

Navigating Social
Norms and
Expectations

Digital or Online
Communication

Adult Social Skills (Ages 18+)

Importance of These Skills:

- Increases independence
- Increases community integration
- Enhances workplace readiness

Focus of These Skills:

- Supports autonomy and personal fulfillment
 - Allows for person to generalize skills into more broader contexts
-

Key Skills Acquired During Adult Social Skills

Workplace Etiquette
and Professional
Communication

Independent Living
Social Skills (e.g.,
communicating with
landlord)

Building or
Maintaining
Relationships (either
friendships or
romantic)

Conflict Resolution in
Complex Scenarios

Setting and
Maintaining Personal
Boundaries

Self-Advocacy and
Clearly Expressing
Needs

It's Important to Note

01

These skills
build on
each other!

02

You cannot expect the person to learn a skill from advanced social skills if they don't have most (or all) of the foundational and emerging social skills.

03

Each person
will be different
and will have
“splinter” skills.

04

Utilize the
person's
strengths to
increase the
skills.

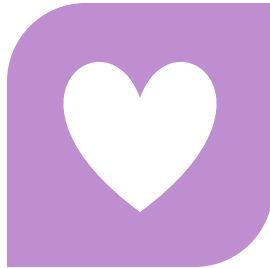
05

Find helpful
peer models
who will be
patient!

Strategies to Use if Key Skills are Missing



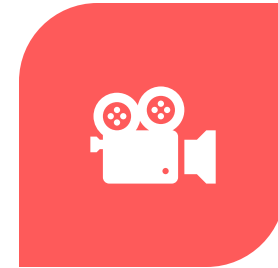
EXPLICITLY TEACH THE SKILL IN
THE MOMENT



REVIEW EXPECTED AND
UNEXPECTED BEHAVIORS FOR
SPECIFIC SOCIAL SCENARIOS



ROLEPLAY SCENARIOS FOR
ADDITIONAL REPETITION OF
SKILLS



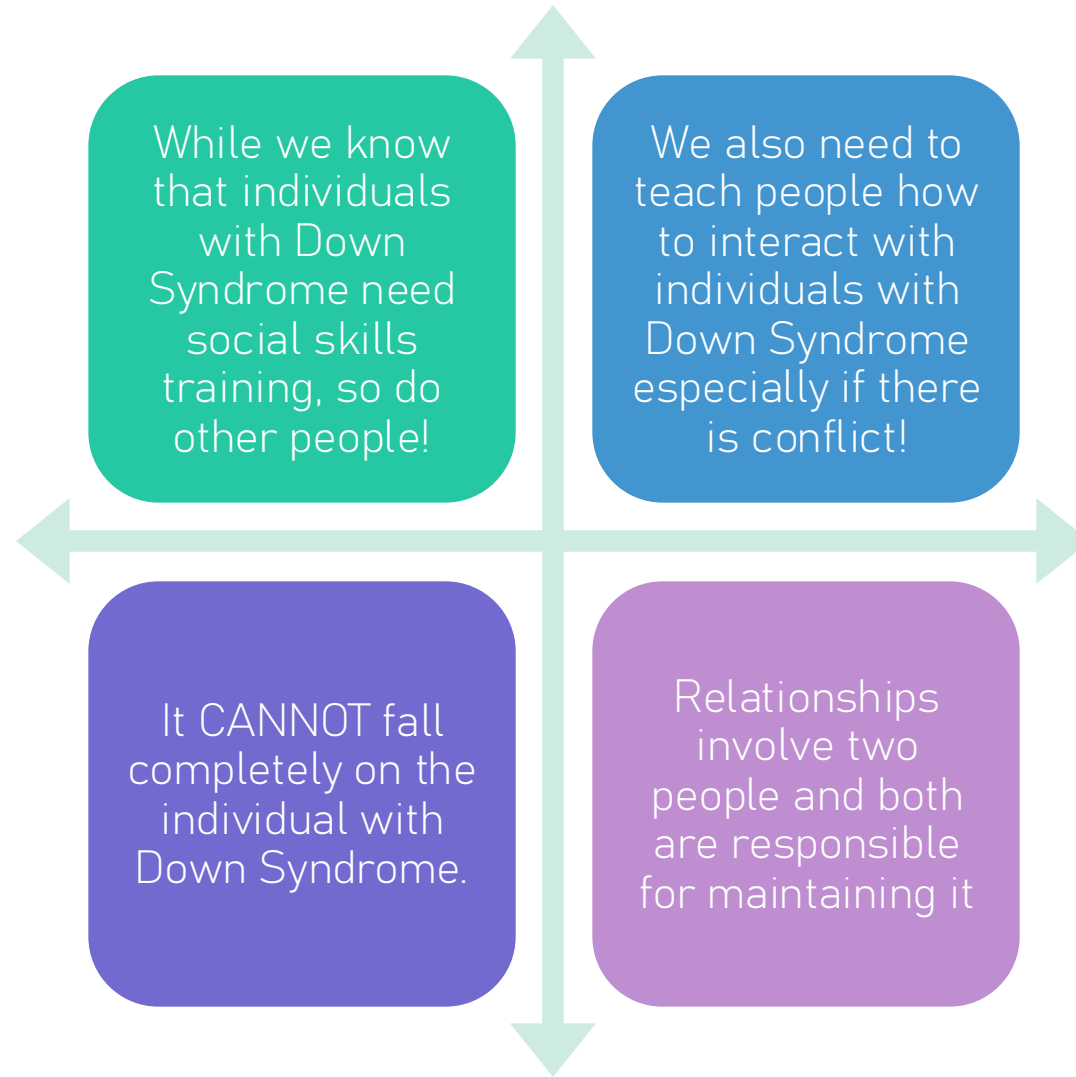
VIDEO MODELING-SHOW HOW
TO APPROPRIATELY ENGAGE IN
THE SKILL

Why Does This Help Foster Friendships?

- Helps to target areas that may make obtaining and maintaining a friendship more difficult
- Allows individuals to build skills based on their strengths
- Builds confidence which can promote more outgoing behavior
- Helps to attract individuals who have similar interests
- Humans are social beings! Having friends is essential to our existence and being a team player
- We all want to be liked!



A FEW LAST THOUGHTS!



Questions and Thank YOU!



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