

MARCH 2022

TIMELY TOPICS

JORDAN CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER



EARLY SOCIAL SKILLS

IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

- Early Childhood Social Skills
- Building Blocks of Social Skills
- How to Teach Early Social Skills
- Class Information

PARENT CLASSES:

3/30/22

- Are You Concerned About Autism?
- How To Teach Your Child to Follow Directions

Social skills start developing in the first few months of life! Our babies learn to look at our faces, make noises and smile when we talk to them, cry out for us when they need something, and settle down when we pick them up.

As our babies become toddlers and preschoolers, social skills become more complex and incredibly important for overall development. They learn how to interact and communicate with familiar adults and kids by using gestures, words, facial expressions, and body language.

Early social skills help our child develop a wide variety of skills including: communication, problem solving, cooperation, sharing, adapting to new situations, sharing, asking for help, as well as understanding rules and expectations and developing friendships.

Many families have been concerned over the past two years about the lack of opportunities for their children to be around other kids and to develop some of these early social skills.

This month we'll cover skills that are needed to develop these early social skills as well as how to provide opportunities at home and during your daily activities to develop these incredibly important skills.

Building Blocks

As our kids get older, play and social skills become more complex. If your child is struggling with playing and interacting with adults and kids, it's possible they are missing some prerequisite skills needed to develop social skills.

Attention to people and activities

- Babies and young kids learn by watching other people and then trying to do it themselves.
- They also need to attend to activities and toys long enough to complete the activity.



Pre-language Skills

- Gestures, facial expressions, imitating actions and sounds, and joint attention are all important for developing social skills.
- These are all used to communicate and interact with someone before words develop.



Understanding of Words

- A huge part of interactions is understanding the words that someone else is saying.
- Understanding simple directions, responding to their name, and understanding simple nouns and verbs show us that our child is comprehending language.



Building Blocks

As our kids get older, play and social skills become more complex. If your child is struggling with playing and interacting with adults and kids, it's possible they are missing some pre-requisite skills needed to develop social skills.

Using Language

- Using words, sounds, signs, and/or pictures to communicate with people.
- We want kids to communicate for a variety of reasons -- to request items, refuse items, ask and answer simple questions, and to talk about what they see and what they are doing



Self-Regulation

- Self-regulation is the ability to manage our actions and emotions depending on the situation.
- Toddlers and preschoolers are just starting to learn this skill and it will continue to develop through adulthood.
- They need a lot of support and practice to develop self-regulation.



Play Skills

- Toddlers and preschoolers are able to choose their own activity and attend to it for several minutes.
- They are also playing with similar toys and materials while near other kids.
- They are learning how to take turns. Sharing starts in preschool.



Teaching and Improving Social Skills

Early social skills are critical for our babies, toddlers, and preschoolers to develop. If you're noticing delays in your child's social skills or have concerns, please talk to your early intervention provider or preschool teacher for additional ideas related to their specific needs.



Turn Taking Games with Adult

Learning how to turn take with an adult is easier than with kids because we can respond more consistently and provide help when needed. Practice with adults first, then kids.

Examples: Rolling a ball back and forth, blowing bubbles, taking turns going down a slide, putting in puzzle pieces, or putting blocks on a tower



Visual Reminders

Use pictures or a poster for certain social rules. Pictures are very helpful for young kids, especially when they also have a language delay. Take a picture for each step or for each rule.

Examples: Pictures of your house rules (quiet mouth, hands to self, stay with adult), how to ask a friend to play, how to ask for help, how to wait for a turn, etc.



Simple Responsibilities

Give your child responsibilities that allow them to participate in daily activities and can build up their confidence.

Examples: Helping set the table, putting laundry in the washing machine, feeding the family pet, etc.



Be Close / Provide Support / Praise Efforts

We need to be close by so we can intervene to help our kids use new and emerging skills. We can model the sign or word to use. We can model appropriate play. We can also redirect to a new activity if things aren't going well.

Lastly, we need to praise efforts as they learn to use their new skills.

Join Us!

Free Classes for Parents!

Date For All Classes:

- **Wednesday, March 30, 2022**

Location:

- **ZOOM**
 - **Meeting ID: 663 934 6024**
 - **Password: 589035**

Are You Concerned About Autism?

- **9:30am - 10:30am OR 1:00pm - 2:00pm**

Teaching Your Child to Follow Directions

- **11:00am - 12:00pm**

Please RSVP by emailing or calling:

- **Lisa Cvetnich at lisa.cvetnich@jordandistrict.org**
- **801-567-8510**

We'll see you there!