

Facilitating a Social Skills Group for Middle School Boys

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Why form a Social Skills group?

- ASD involves impairments in social interaction, social communication, restricted interests and stereotyped behavior patterns, as well as cognition
- Impairments result in difficulty forming and maintaining friendships, reading nonverbal body language, and overall social and emotional reciprocity
- Students on the spectrum need specially designed instruction to meet their needs in these areas and to generalize their skills across settings

Why form a Social Skills group?

- Teachers start addressing social needs of students with ASD in preschool and continue through high school
- The employment rate of adults with ASD, based on 2010 information, is 9.5%
- 90% of individuals with ASD are unemployed
- A primary reason people with ASD have difficulty with employment is social skills deficits

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)

- The University of North Carolina (UNC) and the National Professional Development Center (NPDC) on Autism have identified 24 EBPs
- Social Skills Groups are one of the EBPs.
- More information is available at the following website: autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu

Decisions, Decisions

- There are several students enrolled in the middle school where Mrs. Foote teaches
- Challenges were identified across classroom settings
- HMS is a C.A.R.E. for kids school in the JCPS school system and time is set aside each day, school wide, for social and emotional development
- This was a perfect opportunity to form a social skills group to address the specific needs of the students with ASD.
- Administrative support is important to the success of the group

How to Get Started!!

1. Identify students that would benefit from structured social skills instruction.
2. Review Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)
 - Where do they struggle?
 - How can you support their goals and objectives?
3. Gather input from teachers, parents, and students.
 - checklists, parent letter, questionnaires

4. Select curriculum that teaches and supports each skill.
 - Social skills books, series, video modeling, internet sites, YouTube videos, PowerPoint, etc.
5. Plan for generalizations
 - Practice with group, video tape skills and critique together, practice skills with other groups/peers

What Does a Class Look Like?

- Based on the C.A.R.E. for Kids Program
- Goal for CARE: to help students develop social responsibility and positive relationships with both adults and other classmates (Crawford, 19).
- CARE group is first 25 minutes of every day.



Greeting



- A. Students go around the circle and greet each other, using proper skills.
- Examples: fist bump greeting, choice of voice greeting, choice of language greeting, meet in the middle, etc.

Activities

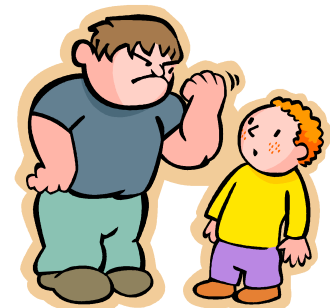
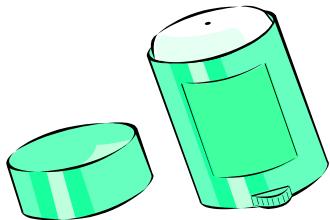
- Work on specific skills as a class.
- Teach, Discuss, Model, Practice, and Role Play each skill.
- Include visual supports, examples, videos, cartoons, games, etc.
- Group work

- Games and competition are part of the activities.
- Takes place in a safe environment with coaching.
- Activities and games are also played with other CARE classes/peers.
- Skills and expectations are discussed and practiced before participating with other group.
- Time given for debriefing and feedback of successes and areas for growth.



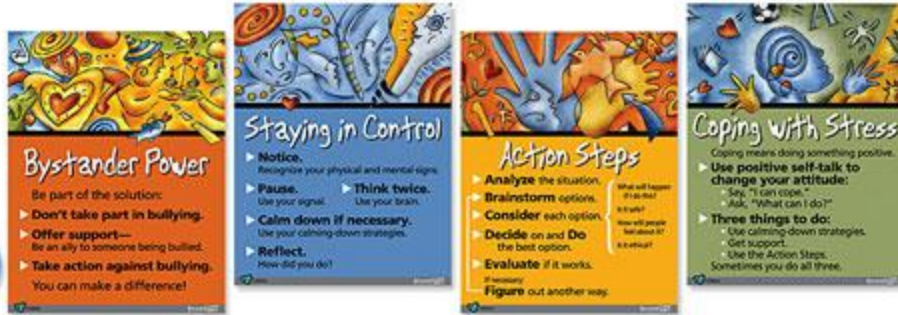
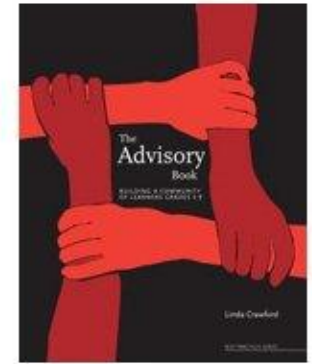
Pop-up Pow-Wows

- Opportunities arise for “frank” discussions.
- Bullying issues, appropriate hygiene, proper classroom/public etiquette, peer relationships, etc.
- Group members share their ideas on how to handle the situation.



Curriculum Materials

The Advisory Book
by Linda Crawford



Second Steps Social Skills Program

Click to LOOK INSIDE!



Model
Me
Kids



You  Tube

Super Skills by
Judith Coucouvanis

Incentives for Participating and Generalizing



- Caught You Award!!!

- Leisure Time

-every Friday

-must be earned by participating in the lessons/activities

-involves them playing games together, building Lego's, participating in areas of interests

Caught You Award!!!	
For _____	
Name _____	
Teacher _____	
Date _____	

Examples

- Transition videos
- Pictures of participating with other CARE groups
- Video modeling
- Role playing

Results

- Pre and post assessment results were collected and analyzed using the Super Skills Profile of Social Difficulty found in Judith Coucouvanis' Super Skills curriculum guide
- Super Skills Profile of Social Difficulty examines 4 skill sets:
 - Fundamental skills
 - Social Initiation skills
 - Social response skills
 - Getting along with others

Next Steps

- The group continues this year
- The overall goal is to continue to become more systematic and focused in teaching skills specific to the needs of the students in the class
- Generalization of skills is also a continued focus

References

- Reference list to be provided on site