

Positive Parenting

Teaching Your Child Social Skills

Social skills are very important for your child to develop at an early age. A child is more successful in school and in daily activities when social skills have become automatic.

Parents are the role models and teachers for their children. A child is learning by example at all times.

Social skills are developmental, as children mature their skills as well as their parents' expectations should increase. Children should gradually assume new skills along with new responsibilities.

Use the following checklist to see how your child may be developing.

My child...

- is polite (please, thank you)
- is kind to others
- shares with others
- cooperates
- follows house rules
- asks permission
- takes turns, allows others to play
- has self-control
- takes turns in conversation
- makes eye contact
- uses appropriate body language
- deals appropriately with anger
- will say "I'm sorry"

There is no specific age when a child should have mastered the skills listed above. What is more important is that the child continues to make progress. These skills must be taught, modelled, and reinforced daily – ***PRACTICE IS CRITICAL.***

What Can Parents Do

1. Consistency and role modelling social skills are critical.
2. Expect your child to be polite.
3. Choose a 'teachable' moment.
4. Teach the skill before you need it.
5. Provide undivided attention at your child's level daily.
6. Praise your child for their efforts.
7. Role-play with toys or puppets.
8. Invite other children into your home.
9. Join outside activities.
10. Focus on any areas of weakness.
11. Teach your child to resolve conflicts in a positive way.
12. Make it fun.
13. Look for opportunities for your child to do something for others.
14. Practice, practice, practice all of the time.

Tip: Treat your child with kindness and respect so he/she will treat others in the same fashion.