

Social Skills Assessment

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Social Skills Assessment

Not every child needs every lesson

In this handout there are six assessment forms to use with your children. It is my hope that the information will give you a quick checklist to see what skills need to be presented or reintroduced to your child. These assessments should also serve as a progress report of your child's development, showing in black and white what skills your child has acquired.

In addition there is a skills worksheet that will help you identify specific behaviors that indicate a child may be struggling with acquiring certain skills.

1. Care of the Self: Skills Assessment
2. Care of the Home: Skills Assessment
3. Care of Others: Skills Assessment
4. Grace and Courtesy/Social Skills: Skills Assessment
5. Expressing Emotion: Skills Assessment
6. Skills Worksheet

How to Use the Skills Assessments

In each assessment you will rate each skill in the following manner:

Next to each item, indicate the level of skill your child shows, using the following scale:

1. Shows independence in this skill.
2. Is working and developing this skill
3. Needs help to develop this skill

I would recommend that every three months or so you assess your child's progress and target presentations around the skills that you rate as a 3, while continuing work on skills that you rate as 1's and 2's.

I would also recommend that each parent, and perhaps a grandparent or two, do the assessments to provide additional insight into your child.

As to be expected with two-and-half to three-year-olds, most of their skills will be at the three level, which indicates that help is needed to develop a skill. By the end of your child's sixth year, I would hope that your child would be working at a skill level of 1 for most of the activities shown in this book.

Remember the sensitive periods for social skills

I recommend that around age four-and-a-half to age five, that you do the Skills Worksheet to aggressively focus on any lack of social skills or manners. Children are in a sensitive period of acquiring social skills until about age six. Around age four-and-a-half, we start to see a diminishing interest in the child to master manners.

The good news is we have until about the age of six to help the child acquire skills in a way that is easy and natural for them. Around the age of six years, about the time of losing baby teeth and cutting permanent teeth, children enter into a new period of development. During this time children are interested in working in a group and doing activities with their friends, at the expense of doing things with their parents. The manners and social skills learned before the age of six form a foundation, strong or not, for teamwork and having friends.

Assessments help create an overview

Let's look now at each assessment and the skills worksheet to help give us a overview of the skills a child will need to have a firm foundation for next phase of development during the ages of six to twelve years.

Care of the Self: Skills Assessment

Name of Child _____ Date _____

Person making assessment _____

Next to each item, indicate the level of skill your child shows, using the following scale:

1. Shows independence in this skill.
2. Is working and developing this skill
3. Needs help to develop this skill

Body

- _____ washes hands independently
- _____ after washing hands leaves area clean
- _____ after washing hands, clothes are dry
- _____ can apply hand lotion successfully
- _____ can wash face independently
- _____ can bath independently (Note: children need adult supervision in bathing)
- _____ can brush teeth independently
- _____ can squeeze out toothpaste
- _____ can replace cap on toothpaste tube
- _____ leaves sink clean after brushing teeth
- _____ can blow nose independently
- _____ covers mouth when coughing
- _____ remembers to wash hands after blowing nose or coughing into hand
- _____ can brush hair independently

Clothes

- _____ can put on and off a shirt independently
- _____ can put on and off pants independently
- _____ can put on and off coat independently
- _____ can zip and unzip coat independently
- _____ can put on/off hat independently
- _____ can put on gloves or mitten independently
- _____ can put on socks independently
- _____ can put on shoes independently
- _____ can polish shoes independently

Eating

- _____ can get a drink of water
- _____ can prepare a simple snack
- _____ can clean up a spill
- _____ can use a spoon to eat
- _____ can use a fork to eat
- _____ can use a table knife to cut own food

Care of the Home: Skills Assessment

Name of Child _____ Date _____

Person making assessment

Next to each item, indicate the level of skill your child shows, using the following scale:

1. Shows independence in this skill.
2. Is working and developing this skill
3. Needs help to develop this skill

- _____ can make own bed
- _____ can put away toys
- _____ leaves activities ready for the next person
- _____ leaves the bathroom clean
- _____ can sweep kitchen or other area
- _____ can clean a table
- _____ can dust
- _____ can make a flower arrangement
- _____ can water houseplants
- _____ can fold laundry
- _____ can set table
- _____ can wash hands and tidy up to get ready to eat
- _____ can help with various outdoor chores as pertinent to your situation

Outdoor chores

- _____ weeding
- _____ picking dead leaves off plants
- _____ sweeping porch
- _____ raking
- _____ watering with a hose
- _____ digging holes for small plants
- _____ using a hoe
- _____ gathering fruits and vegetables
- _____ feeding animals

Care of Others: Skills Assessment

Name of Child _____ Date _____

Person making assessment

Next to each item, indicate the level of skill your child shows, using the following scale:

1. Shows independence in this skill.
2. Is working and developing this skill
3. Needs help to develop this skill

_____ greets guests with consideration

_____ can offer and prepare a drink for others

_____ can offer and prepare a snack for others

_____ thinks of others comfort by offering a pillow

_____ independently thanks guests for visiting

_____ can accept or decline offers of food graciously

_____ is pleasant company on shopping trips

_____ 30 minutes in length

_____ 60 minutes in length

_____ longer than 60 minutes

_____ is pleasant company for meals at restaurants

_____ 30 minutes in length

_____ 60 minutes in length

_____ longer than 60 minutes

_____ comes when called by name either at home or in public

_____ can respond to command of *freeze* or *stop*

_____ walks around swings to avoid getting knocked down

_____ knows how to enter and leave a birthday party or other event

_____ know how to get help if someone is hurt

_____ laughs with others

_____ developing a sense of humor

_____ demonstrates empathy towards others

_____ asserts rights and needs appropriately

_____ expresses wishes preferences clearly

Social Skills/Grace and Courtesy: Skills Assessment

Name of Child _____ Date _____

Person making assessment

Next to each item, indicate the level of skill your child shows, using the following scale:

1. Shows independence in this skill.
2. Is working and developing this skill
3. Needs help to develop this skill

_____ uses please in daily routine without prompting
 _____ says thank you in daily routine without prompting
 _____ says excuse me in daily routine without prompting
 _____ knows how to shake hands
 _____ invites other to play

_____ can sit quietly for a period of time (listening to a book, etc.)
 _____ for ten minutes
 _____ for twenty minutes
 _____ for thirty minutes
 _____ for over thirty minutes

_____ can initiate a conversation
 _____ can interrupt a conversation politely

_____ can politely ask a question
 _____ can offer an apology
 _____ knows how to give a compliment
 _____ knows how to accept a compliment
 _____ understands concept of personal space

_____ will try new foods
 _____ knows how to ask for assistance
 _____ knows how to ask for permission
 _____ knows how to take turns
 _____ knows how to look at a hands-off object
 _____ knows how to carry a fragile object
 _____ is involved in process of writing thank you notes

Expressing Emotion: Skills Assessment

Name of Child _____ Date _____

Person making assessment _____

Next to each item, indicate the level of skill your child shows, using the following scale:

1. Shows independence in this skill.
2. Is working and developing this skill
3. Needs help to develop this skill

_____ is able to express anger appropriately
 _____ is able to express sadness appropriately
 _____ is able to express fear appropriately
 _____ is learning to read facial expressions
 _____ is learning to interpret body language
 _____ is learning to express emotion using art
 _____ using drawing
 _____ using dancing
 _____ using music

My child can express the following feelings:

_____ disappointed	_____ empty	_____ hated
_____ frustrated	_____ trapped	_____ eager
_____ happiness	_____ obligated	_____ excellent
_____ joy	_____ amused	_____ engaged
_____ secure	_____ fortunate	_____ indifferent
_____ safe	_____ effective	_____ anger
_____ satisfied	_____ rotten	_____ inept
_____ tiredness	_____ infuriated	_____ invisible
_____ resentment	_____ idiotic	_____ tremendous
_____ peaceful	_____ spirited	_____ tingly
_____ empowered	_____ peaceful	_____ lonely
_____ relaxed	_____ puzzled	_____ lousy
_____ undesirable	_____ resigned	_____ lost
_____ lethargic	_____ terrified	_____ forgiven
_____ needy	_____ special	_____ funny
_____ confident	_____ wonderful	_____ fearless
_____ optimistic	_____ vibrant	_____ grumpy
_____ loved	_____ regretful	_____ guilty
_____ insulted	_____ intolerant	_____ gullible
_____ resentful	_____ gullible	_____ enthusiastic
_____ ignored	_____ fantastic	_____ enriched
_____ excited	_____ elated	_____ empathetic
_____ energized	_____ hesitant	_____ sadness
_____ connected	_____ horrible	

When Do I Know There Is A Problem?

We need to become observers

It is important that we become observers of our children's development. As we watch our children interacting with others during work and play, we obtain vital information in helping us know where our children might need some guidance or redirection.

When your child is around the age of four-and-a-half to age five years, take a few minutes to look over these next couple of pages. If your child is having difficulty acquiring certain social skills, looking at the following behaviors in conjunction with the Skills Worksheet. The information that you obtain from this worksheet will help you focus on specific presentation and skills to help your child.

Certain behaviors indicate need for social skills guidance

As we observe a child working and playing, we will notice that a child who lacks the necessary social skills and manners exhibits one or more of the following behaviors:

- Spends a large portion of their time involved in solitary activities.
- Appears shy, timid or anxious.
- Complains of having no one to play with.
- Is negative, bossy or annoying with children and adults.
- Appears physically clumsy and awkward.
- Has odd behaviors that you do not see in their peers.
- Teases other children.
- Provokes others to misbehave.
- Fights with others.
- Interrupts others.
- Always has to have the last word.
- Acts aggressively towards others.
- Manipulates situations or others.
- Threatens others to obtain his or her way.

Important Questions to Ask

If you observe a child at work and play exhibiting these behaviors, ask yourself these questions:

- Does this child lack certain social skills?
- Does the child have the skills but isn't using them?
- Does the child lack social skills and have some other problem, such as poor language skills, emotional turmoil or other situation?

Does the child have the social skills, but lack the self-discipline to stop and think what to do?

What help can we give?

After asking these questions, you should have a clearer idea of what adult help the child needs.

If the child lacks certain social skills we need to find a way to show the child how to interact with others appropriately. The presentations in this book will help you with specific skills and offer you a template to create other presentations to address other skill needs.

If the child has the skills, but isn't using them, we need to offer friendly reminders and perhaps reintroduce the skill through a sketch or presentation.

If the child lacks the social skills and has another problem, we need to teach the social skills along with offering help with the problem.

For example, a child who is spending most of their time in solitary activities and is not speaking clearly needs help with acquiring social skills, along with making sure speech issues are addressed.

If the child has the social skills, but lacks the ability to stop and reflect on a situation, we need to help the child become aware of the need to stop and make a choice on how he or she will react to a challenge. The child in this circumstance will be greatly helped by being shown the skill through role playing and sketches. These presentations should assist the child in learning to stop and think through an incident before acting.

Use Skills Worksheet to form an Action Plan

Use the following Skills Worksheet and Action Plan in conjunction with the other skills assessments to get a clear picture of the help your child needs.

Each person's social being connects to the world by the use of the hands. When we can help our children know how to act, or how to use their hands with love and consideration, in a wide variety of circumstances, we are helping our children become happy and healthy, now and for the rest of their lives.

Skills Worksheet and Action Plan

Name of Child _____ Date _____

Person making assessment _____

Behaviors. List the behavior or behaviors that you see are evidence of your child lacking certain social skills. Use list from the previous page. If more than three, list the ones that concern you most.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Child's Strengths. List your child's strongest social skills. These would be items you rated as "1's" in the assessments. Use your child's strengths to help bolster weaknesses.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Action Plan. List the skills you rated as "3's" on the skills assessment that seem to connect to behaviors A, B and C above. These will be the skills that you should work on with your child.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

SUMMARY

- ❖ Observe your child at work and play to understand what skills you need to guide and assist your child to develop.
- ❖ Remember, not every child needs every lesson.
- ❖ Use the Skills Assessments to help you focus on important skill development and to see progress.
- ❖ If your child exhibits certain behaviors as shown on page 9, your adult guidance and intervention for social skill development is imperative.
- ❖ To help you understand what kind of help you need to give, ask yourself these four important questions:
 1. Does this child lack certain social skills?
 2. Does the child have the skills but isn't using them?
 3. Does the child lack social skills and have some other problem, such as poor language skills, emotional turmoil or other situation?
 4. Does the child have the social skills, but lack the self-discipline to stop and think about what to do?
- ❖ Use the Skills Worksheet on page 10 to develop an Action Plan for your child's social skill development.