

# Teaching Social Language Skills: A Collaborative Approach

Presented by Patty Taggart Gerrior, M.S./SLP  
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Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007, 3:45-5:15 OSLHA 62<sup>nd</sup> Convention

*This presentation will provide examples of the activities and strategies used in our weekly "Monday Friends" group, monthly community social activities and summer camp. Our purpose for these groups is to provide our group members opportunities for communicating and interacting with peers in a playful and facilitating environment. We strive to help them to be successful in building relationships, play, and working together in groups. We do this by addressing not only the communication /social thinking deficits (SLP) but also the attention and sensory deficits (OT) that can significantly impact interactions. By combining the strengths and expertise of both disciplines (OT/SLP) and providing safe and multiple opportunities to practice target skills, we plan to make each group activity a time of successful interaction and fun. We will share what has worked and what has not worked and demonstrate a variety of sensory input /strategies used to have more successful and appropriate participation in groups. This presentation is intended to be interactive with participation and discussion encouraged!*

## Measurable Learning Outcomes:

- 1 The participant will be able to identify 3 activities for teaching/practicing social language skills in natural contexts.
- 2 The participant will be able to replicate several activities that they can use with groups to promote friendships among children with social language and social thinking deficits.
- 3 The participant will learn about sensory strategies to help maintain appropriate level of alertness for successful participation in groups.

## Introduction

Why we decided to do groups and how do we arrange and fund these groups.

## Goals of Group

1. Increase successful social interactions(ex. reciprocal communication; understanding what social rules are and why we need them to build friendships) and social thinking(ex. saying and doing what is expected; thinking of others) through direct teaching, role play, and natural opportunities of peer interactions.
2. Provide a variety of environments to interact and play with peers.
3. Learn how and when sensory strategies (ex. fidgets; movement breaks) will help to keep each child at the optimal level of alertness during activities.

## Group Activities

### Example One: Initiate Greetings/ Reciprocal Conversation Activities.

#### Strategies:

Contingent word/phrases practice; passing ball; partner role play  
Wheel of Friendship/ visual pictures/ balls/

#### Sensory:

Chairs and seating options/ rotation movement; hand fidgets/weighted balls

## **Group Activities**

### **Example Two: Thinking About You Activities.**

Recognizing that what you say and do affects those around you.

#### **Strategies:**

Whole Body Listening

Group expectations written out and individual

Role play with puppets “Chief Thomas” and “Builder Bob”/Charades

Following other's lead(motor Simon Says; group snowman picture)

#### **Sensory:**

Seating options/decreasing the lighting/changing rooms/holding fidgets/weighted vests/music choices

### **Example Three: Making and Maintaining Friendships Activities**

#### **Strategies:**

Providing structured sharing time; using comment and question cards and talking ball.

Feeling part of a group: Naming group; showing support “Say and Do” practice.

Practicing giving and receiving compliments “Say and Do” practice.

Expressing feelings using “I statement” format.

Planned group social events: Thanksgiving dinner; Super Bowl party; plays; singing; “Friday Friends” monthly community outing.

#### **Sensory:**

Predictable routine/tailor sensory to individual needs/seating and room options.

### **Example Four: Team Sports Activities**

Learning recess games;waiting turn; showing support

Entering and exiting a game/turn taking/following rules

#### **Strategies:**

Adapting games: (ex 4 square; volleyball;football) by providing visual cues(tape on the floor)and decreasing speed and intensity of play by using variety of ball types/balloons.

#### **Sensory:**

Changing the type of ball for individual needs; monitoring loudness; time timers

## **Community Outing Activities**

#### **Examples:**

Skating/Bowling/Laser Tag/Tennis/Pump It Up/Putt-Putt/Hayrides/“Not So Haunted Trail”

#### **Strategies:**

Teen helpers to interact/ Location conducive to “Parents Night Out” and flexibility.

#### **Sensory:**

Ask to modify locations if possible: ex. no fog at laser tag/turn music down at skating rink/ renting the facility to decrease numbers.

## **References and Resources**

## *Social Skills/Communication*

### **Peer Play and the Autism Spectrum**

Integrated Play Groups (IPG) Field Manual

Pamela Wolfberg (2003)

Autism Asperger Publishing Co. ISBN: 1-931282-17-X

“What To Do/What To Say”..Social Communication Cues.

### **Social Skills Training**

Jed E. Baker (2003)

Autism Asperger Publishing Co. ISBN: 1-931282-20-X

“Greetings/Asking Someone to Play”

### **Social Skills Picture Book**

Teaching Play, Emotion, and Communication to Children with Autism

Jed E. Baker (2001)

Future Horizons Pub. Co. ISBN: 1-885477-91-0

“Real pictures of children..doing what is right /wrong” (Goofus and Gallant:)

### **Social Skills Strategies**

A Social Emotional Curriculum for Adolescents, Book B

Nancy Gajewski, Patti Hirn, Patty Mayo (1998)

Thinking Publications ISBN: 1-888222-28-X

Using “I messages and statements”

### **Scripting: Social Communication for Adolescents**

Patty Mayo and Patti Waldo (1994)

Thinking Publications ISBN: 0-93599-08-X

“Prewritten role play scripts for readers..ex. Accepting a compliment.

### **Teaching Friendship Skills, Primary Version**

Pat Huggins (1998)

Sopris West Pub. Co. ISBN: 0-944584-69-1`

Pre-made very visual forms for discussion and practice.

### **Teach Me Language and Companion Exercise Forms**

A Language Manual for Children with Autism, Asperger and Related Developmental Disabilities

Sabrina Freeman and Lorelei Dake (1997)

SKF Books ISBN: 0-96575-51-3

Reciprocal Conversations/ Finding out About Someone/ Asking and Answering/Topicalization

### **Navigating The Social World**

A Curriculum for Individuals with AS, High Functioning Autism, and Related Disorders  
Jeanette McAfee (2002)  
Future Horizons Publishing  
ISBN: 1-885477-82-1

Gives goals and clear instructions and activities to address social skills/emotions/behavior/thinking

**Comic Strip Conversations**

Carol Gray (1994)  
Future Horizons ISBN: 1-888477-22-8

Visual cues and format for using line drawings to understand situations.

**Inside Out: What Makes A Person With Social Cognitive Deficits Tick?**

Michelle Winner (2006 -R)  
[www.socialthinking.com](http://www.socialthinking.com) ISBN: -9701320-2-6

**Think Social** Social Skills and Social Lessons also by Michelle Winner,  
and Workshops “Thinking About You and Thinking About Me”/ “Building a Social Curriculum  
in Schools” Michelle Winner, Indiana Resource for Autism, Indiana University, March, 2007.

Wealth of material for teaching the social skills needed (the what) and also (the why) learning the skill  
is necessary. Great ideas for lessons and groups and forms. I adapted with my own forms to tailor and  
add visual pictures if needed.

**Things I Can Say and Do/ Autism & PDD “Feelings & Actions”**

Michelle Saunders  
LinguiSystems

Ready made templates for use in a wide variety of situations.

*Games:*

**Communicate**

Patty Mayo and Patti Waldo  
Thinking Publications

Lots of situations pre-printed on business size card stock for role play and practice in  
social interactions with group.

**Communicate Junior**

Patty Mayo et. al.  
Super Duper

Learning/practicing social skills while moving along a pizza theme game board.

**Use Your I's**

Express Feelings Using I messages  
Donna McGoff; Creative Therapy Store

Board game to practice using “I statement” format (I feel....when....because...I want/need.....)

## **Puppets**

SouthPaw

Used to reinforce good communication and social skills and group expectations. Also used to show right and wrong way to communicate/interact/behave in a group (like Goofus and Gallant)

## **“Wheel of Friendship”**

(hand crafted like wheel of fortune)

Used to practice communication skills/ increase participation/work with partners.

### *Sensory Resource Equipment*

#### **Sensory Processing Disorder**

SPD is a complex disorder of the brain. People with SPD misinterpret everyday sensory information, such as touch, sound, and movement. This can lead to behavioral problems, difficulties with coordination, and many other issues. This site contains a scientific research section, a national directory of professionals, conference listings, and many more areas just for you.

<http://www.sinetwork.org>

#### **Products used during group:**

“Mustard and ketchup” from Hot Dog Kit weighing 10 pounds each Southpaw Enterprises

Weighted vests Southpaw Enterprises

Bear Hug Southpaw Enterprises

Time Timers

HowdaHug Chair

Music: Say G'day CD

OTvest Integrations

Giant Yuk-E-Balls set of 6 Integrations

Fidget Ball Set Integrations

**CAMP SILVER LAKE: @**

**WWW.THERAPYCONNECTIONS.NET**



**INTEGRATIONS: @**


**INTEGRATIONSCATALOG.COM**

**SOUTHPAW ENTERPRISES: @**

**WWW.SOUTHPAWENTERPRISES.COM**


sing to the tune  
"Do Your Ears Hang  
Low"


 Can you bake a cake? 

steak  



Can you cook a T-bone steak?  


sundae  


Can you make a chocolate sundae?  


shake  




Can you make an icecream shake?  


cup of water  


Can you drink a cup of water?  


clean dishes  


Clean the dishes like you ought to?!  


 Can you bake a cake? 

show you are listening



show you are listening



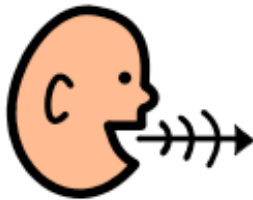
show you are listening



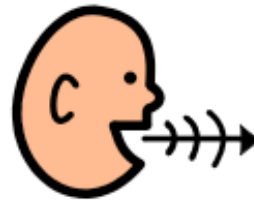
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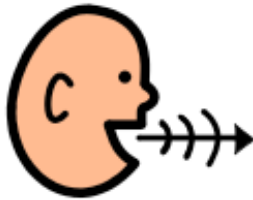
tell



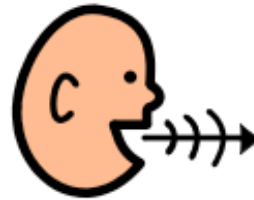
tell



tell



tell



question



question



question



question



question



question



question



question



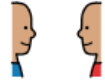
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A compliment is saying something nice.



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I can say "you are nice."



We can say "you are a good helper."



I can say "you are fun to be with."



saying nice things makes me feel good!



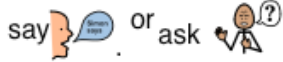
### Conversation Record

ASK a Question:



?

NOW, SAY or ASK TWO MORE THINGS!!



1.

.!?

2.

.!?

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Who did you talk with? \_\_\_\_\_ Where \_\_\_\_\_  
(ex. Mom, teacher, friend)

adapted Teach Me Language p.18 by P. Gerrior

I- STATEMENT FORM

I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
when \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_  
What I want or need is \_\_\_\_\_

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Making "I statements....."

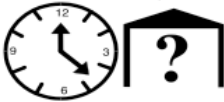
Make it work for you!

I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
(State how you feel)



examples:  
happy, sad, mad,  
frustrated, upset, lonely,  
loved, accepted, badly, hurt

When \_\_\_\_\_  
(State the problem)



examples:  
I am in gym class and I get left out...  
my questions don't get answered...

Don't use "You"!!  
ex: You leave me behind and you don't answer my questions

Because \_\_\_\_\_  
(state the reason why you feel that way)



examples:  
because I want to play too  
because I want to understand

What I want or need is \_\_\_\_\_  
(state what you want or need)

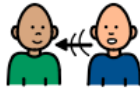


examples:  
I want to join this game, please.  
I need to hear the directions again.

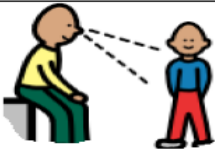
(Adaptation of social skill strategy.) P. Gerior  
N. Gajewski et. al.

## RULES FOR TALKING WITH FRIENDS

When you want to say something to someone, say their first name to get their attention.



"Hey Johnny....."



Always look at the person you are talking to.

Look to see if they are still watching you and showing they are listening.  
Talk in turns!

Face the person you are talking to or turn your body towards them.

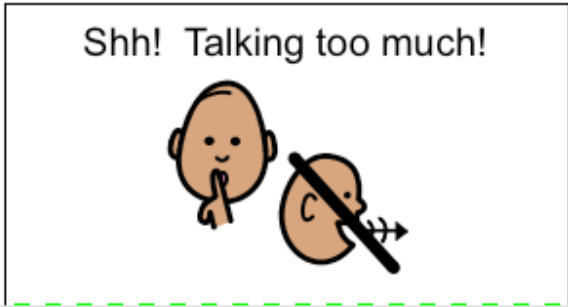
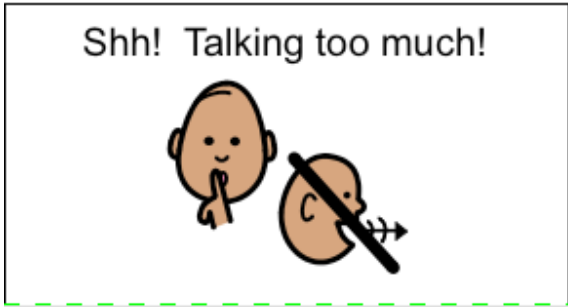
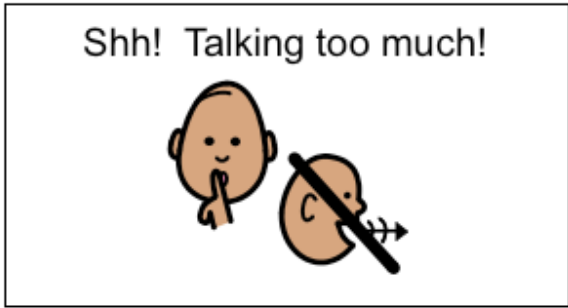
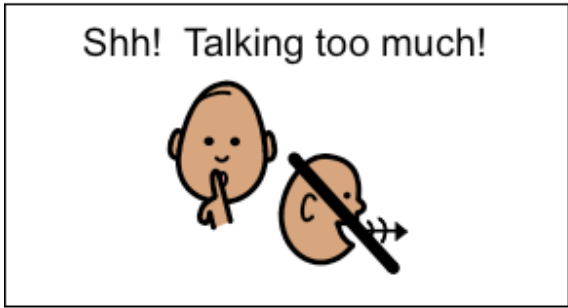
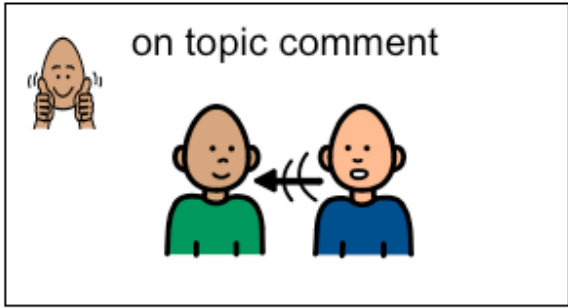
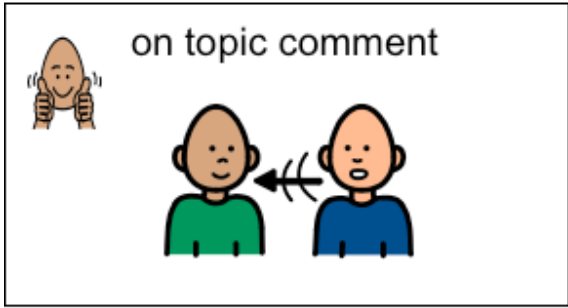
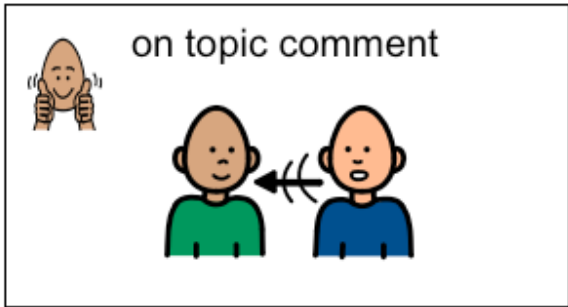
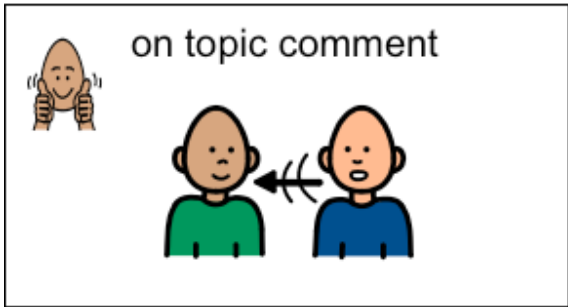


Always listen to what the other person is saying.



How do you show you are listening? By watching with your eyes.  
By making comments and asking questions about what they are saying.

(Adaptation of M.Winner. activity). P. Gerrior



# Making "I statements....."

# Make it work for you!

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(State how you feel)



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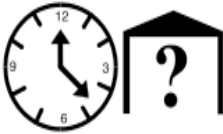
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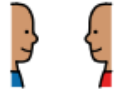
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Add -a -Thought

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