



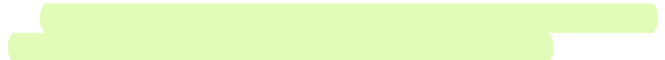
KEY TERMS

Anxiety disorders	Sensory integration
Mood disorders	Applied behavior analysis
Autism spectrum disorders	Relationship development intervention
Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders	Social stories
Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder	Mind reading
Social cognitive	Video detective
Executive function	Emotions charades
Theory of mind	Power cards
Weak central coherence	Stress thermometer
Joint attention	Incredible five-point scale
Social cognitive	SOCCSS
Behavior modification	Video modeling
Self-determination	Social autopsies
Peer-mediated intervention	Comic strip conversations
	Privacy circles

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What are the diagnostic categories and potential problems of children who may have social participation deficits?
2. What are the major theories that explain social skill deficits in children?
3. What are the roles of occupational therapists and other team members who provide services to children and youth with social skill impairments?
4. What specific types of skills can be addressed with social skills interventions?
5. How do theories and approaches inform social skills intervention?
6. What are the principles and strategies that occupational therapists use to improve social skills in children?
7. What evidence supports interventions that can be used with children who have social skill impairments?

International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health, Occupational Therapy Practice Framework, and Social Participation



Importance of Social Skills and Social Participation



BOX 11-1 Examples of Social Goals**Demonstrate Specific Social Behaviors**

- Appropriately greet others.
- Introduce self (to peer and adult).
- Ask someone to play.
- Start a conversation.
- Appropriately give compliments.
- Ask for help.
- Appropriately respond to irritating behaviors of others.
- Participate in conversations.
- Talk about areas outside of special interests.
- Demonstrate cooperative interaction during activities with peers.
- Look at others while engaged in conversation.
- Increase social initiations.
- Participate in conversations.
- Take turns in conversations.
- Start conversations

Awareness of Social Rules

- Demonstrate awareness of unwritten social rules.
- Maintain appropriate physical distance from others.
- Use respectful words when disagreeing with others.
- Stand up for self in an appropriate manner.
- Improve appropriate social responding.
- Use good manners.
- Participate and cooperate in a group project.
- Deal appropriately with irritating behavior by peers.
- Exhibit good manners and good friend behaviors.

Awareness of Others

- Assist others when needed.
- Demonstrate how and when to interrupt.

- Demonstrate how to share a friend with others without becoming jealous or angry.
- When talking, pause appropriately to allow others to talk.
- Differentiate between types and topics of conversation appropriate for different people and situations (e.g., peers, teachers, girls, boys).
- Verbalize understanding of intentions of others.
- Demonstrate increased social motivation.
- Correctly read nonverbal cues.

Executive Function Skills**Self-Management**

- Recognize and verbalize uncomfortable sensory feelings.
- Demonstrate strategies to deal with uncomfortable sensory feelings.
- Apply strategies that help to calm self.
- Keep hands and feet to self.
- Participate in activities when rules are made by others.
- Reduce interfering behaviors.
- Use appropriate voice volume.
- Take turns.
- Follow directions given by adults after first time.
- Stay with group while participating in an activity.
- Think before acting.

Problem Solving

- Ask for help when needed.
- Negotiate with friends.
- Deal with bullies appropriately.
- Compromise when you disagree.

Occupational Therapy Goals for Social Participation and Social Skills**Social Participation Impairments in Specific Childhood Conditions****Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Anxiety Disorders

Learning Disabilities

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Mood Disorders

TABLE 11-1 Developmental Disorders and Common Social Problems

Diagnosis	Common Social Problems
Autism spectrum disorders	Interpersonal communication, social relationships, relatively poor insight into their own difficulties, being teased or bullied, executive function, theory of mind, social awareness, social motivation, social problem solving
Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder	Social competence, social relationships, social problem solving, inappropriate friendliness, difficulty with peer relationships and socially appropriate interactions, social withdrawal, being teased or bullied, poor social judgment, difficulties with perceiving or responding to social cues, exhibiting consideration for others, forming reciprocal friendships, executive function, theory of mind, social problem solving
Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder	Attentional and cognitive functions, such as problem solving, planning, orienting, flexibility, sustained attention, response inhibition, working memory, emotional regulation, executive function
Anxiety disorders	Social skills, social interactions, awareness of others, self-management, problem solving, executive function
Learning disabilities	Social awareness, social interaction, inability to cooperate and establish positive relationships with peers, social problem solving, executive function
Mood disorders	Self-regulation, coping, communication skills, social skills

Theoretical Basis of Social Deficits

Assessment of Social Participation in Children

Theoretical Models and Approaches for Social Skills Interventions

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Goal Attainment Scaling

Peer-Mediated Intervention

TABLE 11-2 Specific Assessments for Social Impairment

Name of Measure	Brief Description of Content
Caregiver-Teacher Report Form (CTRF) ¹	For children ages / to 5 years old, this questionnaire is designed to obtain caregivers' or teachers' reports of children's academic performance, adaptive functioning, and behavioral-emotional problems. Teachers rate the child's academic performance in each subject on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (far below grade level) to 5 (far above grade level). For adaptive functioning, teachers use a seven-point scale to compare the child to typical pupils for how hard he or she is working, how appropriately he or she is behaving, how much he or she is learning, and how happy he or she is.
Teacher Report Form (TRF) ¹	Questionnaire for children ages 6 to 18 years old. See Caregiver-Teacher Report Form for description.
Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) ¹	Designed to assess the behavioral problems and social competencies of children per parent report for ages / to 5 years and ages 6 to 18 years. Subscales include Social Withdrawal, Somatic, Anxious/Depressed, Social Problems, Uncommunicative, Hyperactive, Delinquent, and Aggressive. The CBCL also includes 20 social competence items covering the child's activities, social relations, and school performance. Questions are easy to understand; items address behaviors found across a wide range of functioning; and probes regarding social behaviors are useful with investigations of children with ASD.
Friendship Qualities Scale ³¹	Theoretically grounded, multidimensional measurement instrument to assess the quality of children's and early adolescents' relationships with their best friends according to five conceptually meaningful aspects of the friendship relationship: companionship, conflict, help-aid, security, and closeness.
PKBS-2: Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales ¹⁰³	Separate score conversion tables are available for home-based and school-based raters. Completion of the rating form takes about 12 minutes. The Social Skills scale includes 34 items on three subscales: Social Cooperation, Social Interaction, and Social Independence. The Problem Behavior scale includes 42 items on two subscales, Externalizing Problems and Internalizing Problems. In addition, five supplementary problem behavior subscales are available for optional use. The PKBS-2 was standardized with a nationwide sample of ratings of 3317 children ages 3 through 6 years. Ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and special education classification of the standardization sample are very similar to those characteristics of the U.S. population, based on the 2000 census.
School Social Behavior Scales, 2nd edition (SSBS-2) ¹⁰²	64-item questionnaire designed to assist school personnel in identifying student deficits in school-related social competence and antisocial behaviors. It can be completed in 5 to 10 minutes by teachers to help identify social skills goals for children 5 to 18 years of age. It provides an inventory of a student's ability to apply the skills necessary to meet with success in school settings and for eventual success in employment settings. It was standardized with a national sample of 2280 students, in grades K-12. Raw scores are converted to T-scores, percentile ranks, and descriptive Social Function Levels.
Social Communication Questionnaire (SCQ) ¹³⁴	Brief questionnaire used to evaluate communication skills and social functioning in children older than 4 years who may have autism or autism spectrum disorder (ASD). It is completed by a parent or other primary caregiver in less than 10 minutes. Current and lifetime versions are available.
Social Responsiveness Scale, 2nd edition (SRS-2) ⁴⁸	65-item questionnaire that inquires about a child's ability to engage in emotionally appropriate reciprocal social interactions through interpersonal skills and communication. It can be used as a screener or as an aid to diagnose ASD. It uses a quantitative scale to determine where a child falls within the range of social behaviors that are addressed and occur in the population as a whole. The SRS divides these behaviors into five subscales to be used for treatment planning and evaluation of program effectiveness; these include social awareness, social cognition, social communication, social motivation, and autistic mannerisms. A singular T-score is then generated and determines the severity of social deficits.
Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) ⁶⁹	The SSIS provides a broad, multirater standardized assessment of social skills and problem behaviors of students from preschool through high school. Students are rated in areas of how often behaviors occur and how important each behavior is to the respondent. Forms consist of three-point, Likert-type scales reported by the teacher, student, and/or parent. Separate forms are used for preschool, elementary, and secondary levels of school.
Triad Social Skills Assessment, 2nd edition ¹⁴⁸	Designed for children ages 6 to 12 years who have basic reading skills at the first-grade level. It is criterion-based and assesses knowledge and skills in three areas: cognitive, behavioral, and affective. Sources of information are (1) parent report, (2) teacher report, (3) observation, and (4) direct child interaction.

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FIGURE 11-1 Goal attainment scale examples.

TABLE 11-3 Theoretical Approaches and Models Supporting Social Skills Groups

Intervention Approach or Model	Principles	Strategies
Peer-mediated	Typically developing children are partnered with children who have disabilities to affect behavioral changes in the children with disabilities.	During therapy sessions or social skills groups, a same-age or slightly older peer is included in the session to provide role modeling and help facilitate socially appropriate behaviors in the child who has social impairment.
Sensory integration	Children may need to learn more effective habits for modulating their sensory processing needs in a safe, acceptable manner in social situations through sensory integration.	Activities might include hanging on a trapeze bar upside down and swinging back and forth, jumping into a ball pit, or pulling themselves up a ramp on a scooter board.
Self-determination	This involves satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness promote well-being.	Children make choices, indicate preferences, problem solve, plan, and initiate activities included in therapy and social skills group sessions.
Social-cognitive	Children learn by observing the behavior of others. Groups based on this theory include two phases, acquisition and performance.	Participant goals are addressed and worked on by the entire group during the didactic social skills segments of the groups. The leaders or other participants describe and demonstrate the social skills, followed by others performing the skill.
Behavioral interventions	Behavior is a response to an environmental stimulus and behavior is reinforced by environmental consequences that follow.	A reward system is used, such as a goal chart, to recognize and reward attempts to work on goals. Rewards are provided at the end of the session if the number of attempts to work on goals meets previously identified quotas.

Sensory Integration Intervention

FIGURE 11-2 Principles of sensory integration theory can be included in each session to enhance participants' ability to filter sensations, attend to those sensations that are relevant to the activity, and maintain and personally recognize their optimal levels of arousal throughout sessions. (Photo by Washington University Program in Occupational Therapy.)

Self-Determination

FIGURE 11-3 By encouraging the children to make their own choices in social skills sessions, activities become increasingly meaningful, intrinsically motivating, and more satisfying. (Photo by Claudia Hilton.)

FIGURE 11-4 Children can learn by observing the behavior of others. (Photo by Cheryl Klohr.)

Social Cognitive

Interventions for Social Skills

Behavioral Interventions

Social Interventions

Promoting Specific Social Behaviors and
Adherence to Social Rules

FIGURE 11-5 Goal chart.

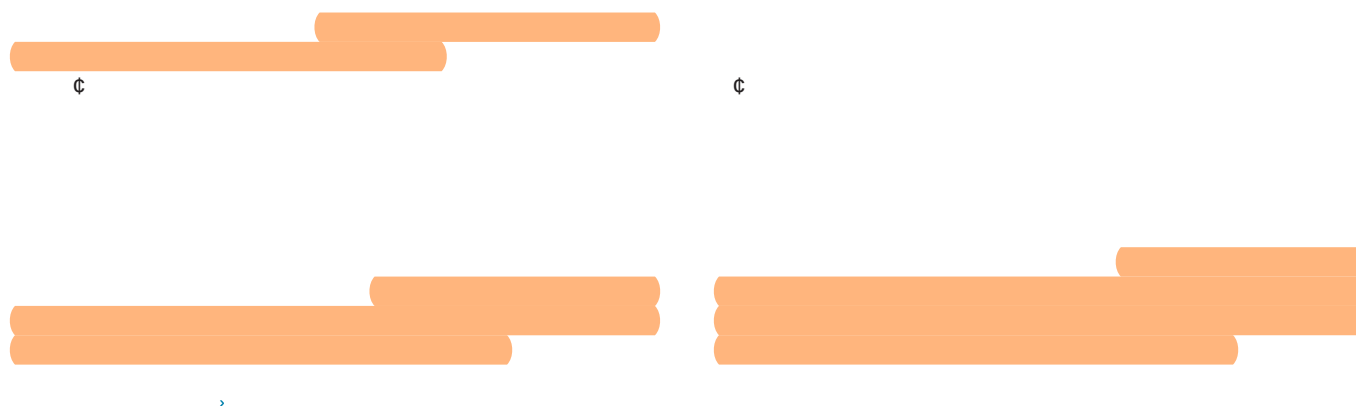
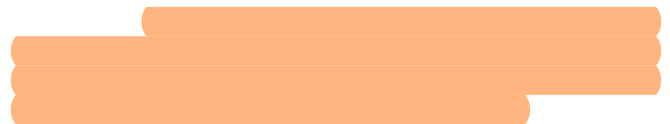


FIGURE 11-6 Some children who may not be ready for social skills groups can benefit from the less threatening structure of a dyad. (Photo by Cheryl Klohr.)



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Enhancing Social Awareness and Relationships
with Others

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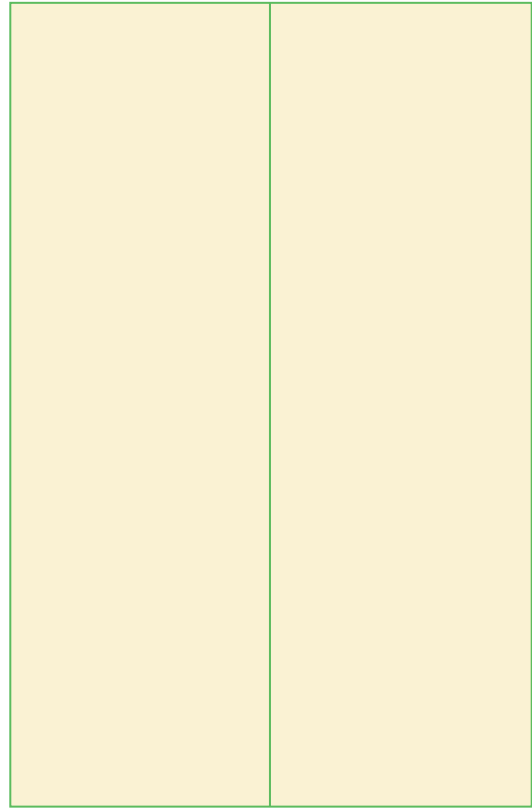


FIGURE 11-7 Suggested emotions for emotions charades.

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CASE STUDY 11-2 Stephanie

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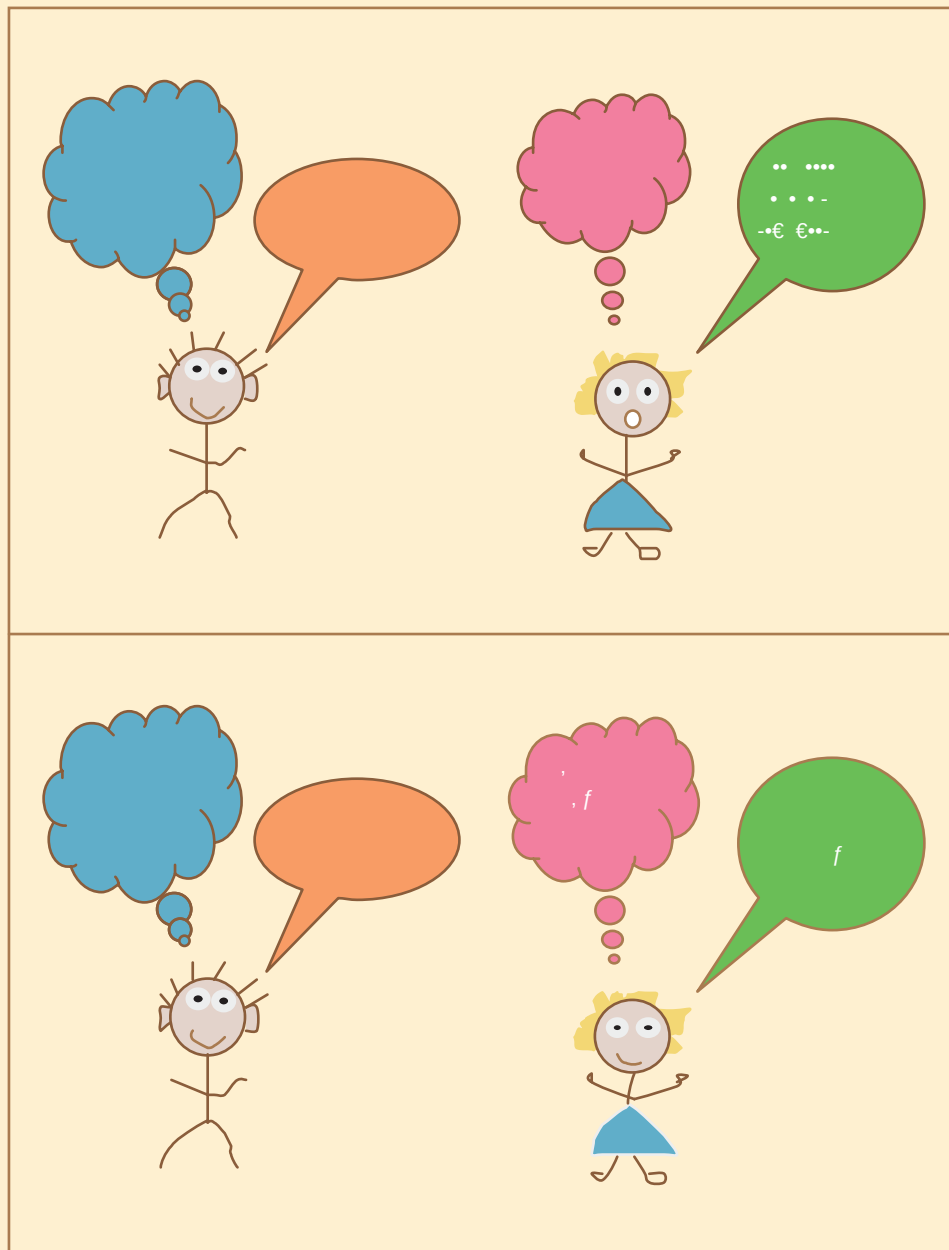


FIGURE 11-8 Comic strip conversation.

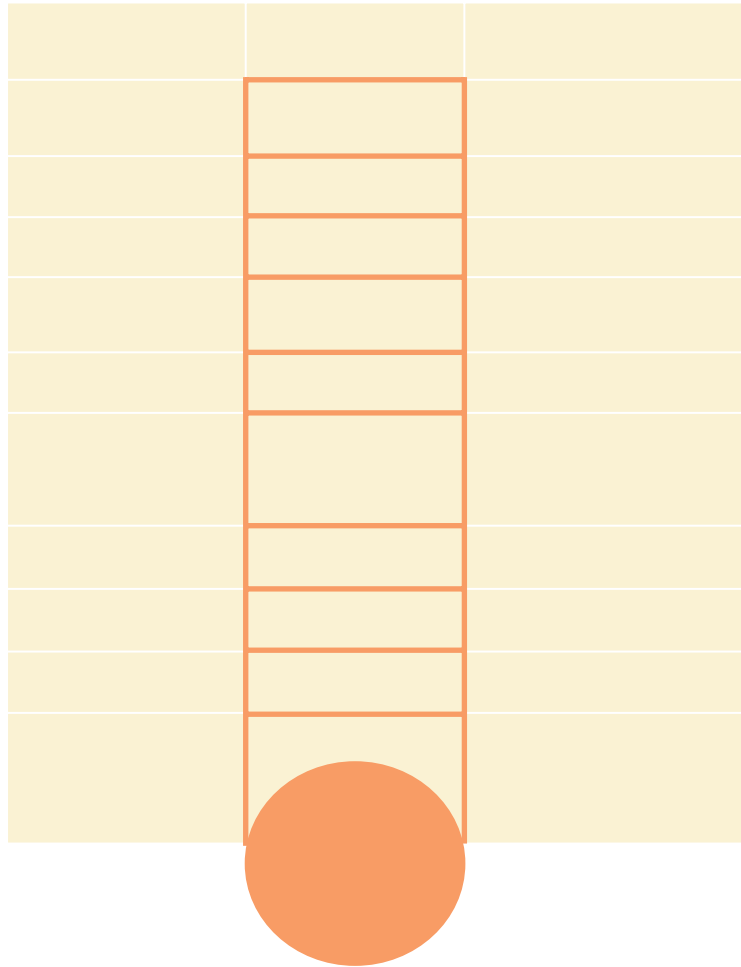


FIGURE 11-9 Labeling thermometer.

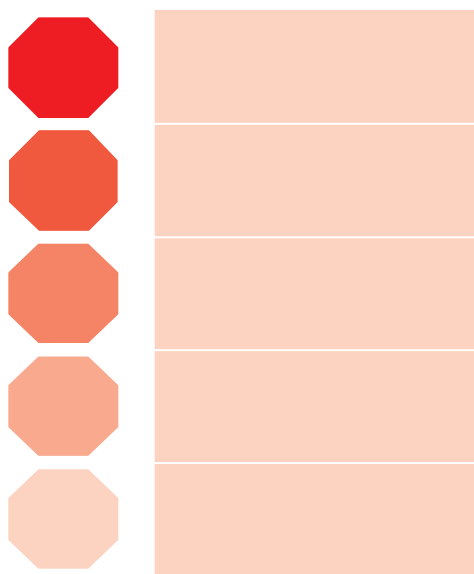


FIGURE 11-10 Voice volume scale.



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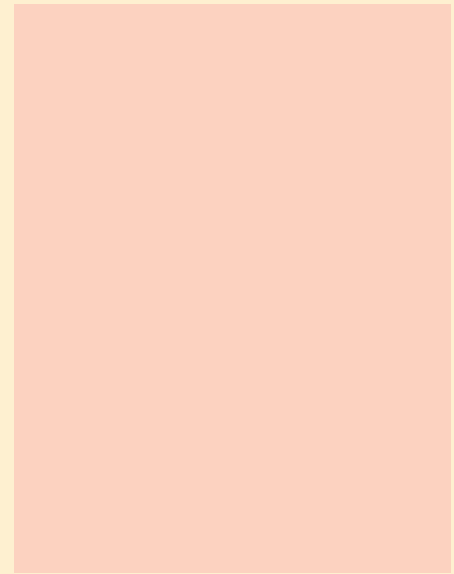


FIGURE 11-11 Who can I touch scale.

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Description and Evidence for Specific Interventions in Social Skills Groups

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**CASE STUDY 11-4 Sam**

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FIGURE 11-12 Example of SOCCSS—Jeremy and Sam.

BOX 11-2 Key Elements of Social Skills Groups

- Parents, participants, and therapists should be involved in establishing goals.
- Consistent and predictable format—a visual schedule should be posted at each session.
- Rules for behavior for the group should be determined by the group and then posted.
- Parents should receive intensive training and home programming.
- Clients and parents should be provided with immediate feedback and “homework.”

FIGURE 11-13 Social skills group activities allow children opportunities to practice their new skills in a structured environment, with immediate feedback. (Photo by Cheryl Klohr.)

Key Characteristics

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Process of Developing the Social Skills Group**Social Group Themes and Activities**

FIGURE 11-14 Schedule of activities.

FIGURE 11-15 A shopping theme can give children an opportunity to role play social situations in the community. (Photo by Claudia Hilton.)

TABLE 11-4 Social Skills Group Themes

Theme	Topics That Might Be Covered
Grossology	Making goop, flubber, slime, silly putty, instant worms, or other sticky, gooey, gross materials (recipes can be found on the Internet). Making earthworms, pudding “cake” with chocolate cream-filled cookies (recipe can be found on the Internet) Identifying “body parts” by touch without being able to see them (spaghetti noodles worms, dried apricot or pear ear, candy corn tooth, peeled grape eyeball, cooked cauliflower brains, extra dense jello liver)
Let’s build it Aviation	Select items that can be built; can start with individual projects and later construct a large group project This could include any aviation project, such as paper helicopters (patterns can be found on the Internet), parachutes made from plastic bags cut into squares and connected to small army men by strings from the corners, paper airplanes. The group can find a balcony or parking lot from which to drop them toward a target placed on the ground.
Creepy bugs	Activities that involve insects, such as making a collage of favorite insects cut from magazines, drawing insects, construction of insects, making no-bake cookies that look like insects, collecting insects
The wild world Showtime	This can include activities that involve animals, similar to the insect theme (above). This usually culminates in some type of show that can be presented to parents at the end of the theme segment and may involve acting out a short book or a singing or musical instrument presentation.
Chef school	This can involve any type of food preparation. Caution should be given to safety when using a stove or oven and to prepare items that will be ready by the end of the session. In addition, diet restrictions of the participants need to be considered, so using gluten-free flour or preparing items that do not include milk products, peanuts, or soy may be incorporated into the planning. Some creative and easy recipes are available on the Internet, such as candy sushi, Missouri mud, snack mix, fruit smoothies, pretzels, and tortilla snowflakes.
Transporters	Transportation theme that includes trucks, trains, or other favorite vehicles. It can involve drawing or constructing individual vehicles or making a group train or wall mural.
Make it grow	Any activity involving learning about or growing plants, such as growing sprouts, starting bean plants in pots, and planting plants in an outdoor space.
Rock star	Activities can include making easy percussion instruments, such as rain sticks, tambourines, drums, or chimes (patterns available on the Internet); identifying and making a collage of favorite musicians, performing a musical performance for parents at the end of the segment
Shopping	Activities revolve around various shopping experiences. Participants can make items to sell to each other, parents, and staff; set up a store to sell the items; or set up a simulated store to work on money exchange.

Summary

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