Increasing Pro-social Peer Relationships for Youth Displaying Antisocial Conduct Through
“Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills”

by

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The procedures in this parent training manual are meant to be used by agency staff, as part of the broader services they provide, or under supervision of agency staff.
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the incredible little team of multi-systemic therapists who help create big changes with families each and every day, and to families who commit to working harder at being stronger together.

You may be small, but you are so very mighty.
ABSTRACT

The “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” parent training manual was created in order to teach and encourage parents to facilitate the development and continued improvement of social skills in their youth. The manual documents a variety of empirically supported best-practice strategies for improving social skills in adolescents who display antisocial behaviour problems. The manual improves accessibility to the strategies, and breaks them down into step-by-step instructions so that parents may assist in the coaching and further development of their adolescent’s social skills. Additionally, the manual was evaluated using a “Satisfaction Survey”. Two families with youth between the ages of 12 and 17 were provided with the manual and completed the survey after using the manual. In addition, four therapists also completed the survey. Three components were evaluated: how the manual looked to the user, how helpful the user found the strategies to be and whether they were easy to implement, and which sections of the manual were used. Furthermore, the user was asked to provide comments and feedback. Results revealed high user satisfaction with the manual for both therapists and clients. Further research is required in order to evaluate the effectiveness and frequency of use of the strategies contained in the manual, as well as for a comparison of the parents and youth who used “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” to a control group.
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CHAPTER I: Introduction

As awareness of mental health issues rises, the specific needs of children and adolescents diagnosed with mental health disorders have become a matter of serious concern. Disorders of particular concern include those that manifest themselves in antisocial conduct such as aggression, violence, and theft, as these behaviours may have a severe impact on society when left untreated (Borduin et al., 1995). Conduct disorder has been found to be relatively pervasive, affecting as many as 11% of 11 to 15 year olds (Curtis, Ronan, Heiblum, & Crellin, 2009), and for males under age 18, antisocial conduct is one of the most commonly diagnosed disorders in mental health settings (Apsche, Bass, Jennings, & Siv, 2005). Additionally, 80% of these youth are at higher risk of meeting criteria for psychiatric diagnoses (Kazdin & Weisz, 2003 as cited in Apsche et al., 2005). Conduct disorder has also been found to be the most recurrent psychiatric diagnosis for youth associated with the juvenile justice system, with proportions as significant as 81% to 91% of incarcerated youth (Boesky, 2002 as cited in Apsche et al., 2005). Given the prevalence and serious consequences of conduct related disorders, it is of great importance that treatment be empirically supported, targeted, and modified appropriately in order to be most effective, thereby lessening the negative impact such behaviours may have on communities worldwide.

Children and adolescents who display antisocial behaviour have presented as exceptionally difficult to treat effectively, and many of the interventions offered have little success, while others are not effective at all (Henggeler, Schoenwald, Borduin, Rowland, & Cunningham, 2009; Ogden & Halliday-Boykins, 2004). An effective treatment that has received strong empirical support for the treatment of youth ages 12-18 displaying antisocial behaviour is multi-systemic therapy (MST). MST is a home-based model of service delivery, unique from other more traditional forms of therapy in that it addresses identified risk factors for antisocial behaviour in several contexts of an individual’s life, such as the family, peer, school, and neighborhood (Henggeler et al., 2009). An area of significant focus in MST is to surround the youth with contexts that support pro-social behaviour, such as pro-social peers (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2010). This can be challenging if the youth lacks the appropriate social skills required to develop positive relationships with others.

Rationale

The purpose of this study was to develop a parent training manual that documents best-practice strategies for improving social skills of adolescents who display antisocial behaviour problems. It should be noted that Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville’s MST team’s current outcome data has determined that there is a gap in the achievement of the important goal under the MST model of improving youth involvement in pro-social activities with peers that are positively influential on the youth. This study aimed to minimize this gap with the creation of a parent training manual that was hoped to allow increased ease for therapists to focus on this issue with families by providing ready tools to utilize with their clients. The aim of the manual was to improve parent and therapist accessibility to the strategies, and break them down into step-by-step instructions so that parents might assist in the coaching and further development of their adolescent’s social skills. It was hoped that the manual would
also assist in the maintenance and generalization of gains made during the course of MST by acting as a prompt and guide for parents to assist in the goal of creating contexts in their child’s life that support pro-social behaviour. Use of the manual by parents might also encourage the youth’s development of pro-social peer relationships and engagement in positive activities. A “Satisfaction Survey” was created in order to evaluate the manual and provide opportunity for the user to give valuable feedback that could be used to determine particular strengths or weaknesses of the manual, and as a result, ensure that the manual was serving its intended purpose and allow for improvements to be made. In summary, it was hypothesized that the manual would improve parent and therapist accessibility to useful techniques and tools for improving the social skills of youth with antisocial behaviours, as well as assist in the maintenance and generalization of the skills learned during the MST process. The manual’s ability to achieve its intended purpose was measured through the satisfaction survey results.

Overview

The present study provides an overview of the MST model and the background of antisocial behaviour in youth, discusses antisocial behaviour and its relationship to social skill development, and explains the parenting role as it pertains to social skill development. A review of empirically supported social skills training strategies is then provided, covering effective parental monitoring, modelling and role-playing, as well as the importance of breaking skills down into step-by-step actions. The study is then described in two sections, the “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” manual (outlined in the Method section) and the “Satisfaction Survey”. The “Satisfaction Survey” evaluated the manual in order to ensure that it was meeting the needs of its users and provided opportunity for improvements to be made based on their feedback. The participants completed the survey following their use of the manual, and results are outlined in the Results section. Additionally, discussion regarding strengths and limitations of the study and further research is covered in the final section.
CHAPTER II: Literature Review

The following review of the literature provides an overview of the MST model as it applies to treating antisocial youth, and provides information regarding antisocial youth and social skill development. The parental role in developing appropriate social skills in youth with antisocial behaviour is also discussed. Best practices for encouraging the development of appropriate social skills are presented, and examples of successful application of these methods are given.

The Multi-Systemic Therapy Model

Multi-systemic therapy (MST) is an intensive, community-based treatment model that was designed to address the various risk factors and correlates of antisocial behaviour that have been identified through extensive research studies worldwide (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2010). MST focuses on contexts within which youth are embedded such as family, peer, and school, that contribute to negative behaviours and antisocial conduct (Henggeler et al., 2009; Curtis et al., 2009). Within these contexts, MST interventions aim to increase caregivers' parenting skills, improve family functioning and relationships, develop the youth’s positive behaviours and engage them with pro-social peers, help youth improve their grades or gain meaningful employment, help the adolescent participate in pro-social activities (e.g., sports or clubs), and to create a support network of family, neighbours, and friends in the community to assist caregivers in sustaining the changes made over the course of treatment (MST Services, Inc., 2010). MST is strengths-focused and aims to build on existing abilities and strengths of the family (e.g., love of one another, good external social support), youth (e.g., willingness and commitment to participate), and other key contributors (e.g., supportive school) in the youth’s life in order to ensure treatment success (Henggeler et al., 2009). MST research suggests that for treatment to be effective, interventions must also target identified risk factors in the various contexts of the youth’s life, for example, youth attention problems or impulsivity, low parental monitoring, parental substance abuse, youth association with deviant peers, and low grades and high truancy at school (Henggeler et al., 2009; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2010).

MST therapy is delivered in the contexts in which problems occur, and, as often as possible, interventions are implemented by caregivers and/or teachers in order to create more naturalistic and easily generalizable behaviour changes in the youth (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2010). As caregivers are most often the main facilitators of change during the process of MST, interventions aim to empower parents to learn the skills and acquire the resources required to engage in more successful parenting of their youth (Henggeler et al., 2009; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2010). As caregiver effectiveness improves (e.g., ability to monitor and support), the therapist supports the caregivers in developing and implementing interventions focused on decreasing youth antisocial conduct and promoting or enhancing effective youth functioning, with the overall goal being to create contexts that support the youth’s pro-social behaviour (e.g., pro-social peers, supportive school; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2010).
As noted previously, MST has been studied internationally, and shown to be effective with youth who display antisocial conduct. However, in a controversial review of eight studies by Littell, Popa, and Forsythe (2005), of which the purpose was to provide unbiased information regarding the effectiveness of MST compared to other methods of treatment, results demonstrated no significant effects of MST on most measures of treatment efficacy. For example, no significant between-group differences were found for the percentage or duration of out-of-home placements, or on the number of youth arrested or convicted either immediately following treatment or within a one-year follow-up. Also, post-treatment data showed no significant differences on measures of peer relations, youth behaviour problems, or family functioning. It is important to note that a follow-up report by Ogden and Hagen (2006) asserted that conclusions drawn in the Littell et al. meta-analysis might be premature, as this study possessed significant methodological issues that cast its claims regarding the effectiveness of MST in doubt among professionals in the mental health field. Therefore, although Littell et al. concluded that there is little evidence to support the advantage of MST over other available methods of treatment, it has also been demonstrated through multiple longitudinal studies that MST is successful at producing significant positive long-term outcomes (Ogden & Halliday-Boykins, 2004; Curtis et al., 2009). These long-term outcomes have been shown to outlast those of various other treatment options for this population of youth (Borduin et al., 1995; Letourneau et al., 2009; Sawyer & Borduin, 2011; Schaeffer & Borduin, 2005). Given the potential for long-lasting detrimental consequences of antisocial behaviour, it would be important to consider the sustainability of outcomes when selecting treatment; the long-term positive results that MST potentially offers makes it an encouraging option.

Antisocial Behaviour and Social Skill Development

Antisocial behaviour in children and youth has been a serious concern for mental health practitioners for many years (Bullis, Walker, & Sprague, 2001), but recent events occurring around the globe (e.g., bullying in schools and online, school shootings) has stimulated this concern further to become a part of public awareness and national agendas (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [U.S. DHHS], 2001). Statistics in both Canada and the U.S. have supported the concerns about rising violence among youth. For example, in Canada in 1998, 106,984 youths aged 12 to 17 were charged with a Criminal Code offence, and one in five youths were charged with a violent crime (Savoi, 1999). Furthermore, in 2006, although the national crime rate was down 3% since the previous year and was the lowest it had been in over 25 years, the youth crime rate was up 3%, and since 1961 when statistics were first obtained, the rate of homicides committed by youth under the age of 18 was the highest it had ever been (Taylor-Butts & Bressan, 2006). In the U.S., there was an increase in arrest rates of youths for violent offenses between 1983 and 1993 of about 70 percent (U.S. DHHS, 2001). Additionally, and particularly disturbing, the rate of homicides in the U.S. in this same time frame and committed by youths aged 14 to 17 nearly tripled (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999).

Developmental theories propose that involvement with deviant peers and vulnerability to peer pressure are significant factors that influence adolescent antisocial behaviour (Monahan, Steinberg, & Cauffman, 2009). The idea behind this is that deviant peers may promote antisocial conduct through processes such as positive reinforcement and modeling of negative behaviour (Reitz, Prinzie, Dekovic, & Buist, 2007). Henggeler et al. (2009) also state that peer interactions play a key role in the social development of youth, and that friends who engage in negative
conduct can have influential roles in the development of youth antisocial behaviour. The deviant youth’s development of friendships with other antisocial youth can be explained in the way that unique individual characteristics of the youth form the relationship, and the relationship forms the individual youth in return (Dishion, Andrews, & Crosby, 1995). There is support for the suggestion that antisocial youth tend to interact more with other antisocial or rejected peers, and for the hypothesis that youth are drawn to peers most like themselves (Cairns & Cairns, 1991 as cited in Dishion, Andrews, & Crosby). Studies have demonstrated that aggressive boys are more likely to have friends who are antisocial as well (Cairns & Cairns, 2001, as cited in Sørlie, Hagen, & Ogden, 2008).

The relationship between antisocial youth and their antisocial peers may be inverse, in that an adolescent may be involved with peers who engage in negative conduct which results in the development of antisocial behaviour of the youth or the youth may lack appropriate social skills to develop positive and pro-social friendships, resulting in low or poor quality peer relationships (Criss, Shaw, Moilanen, Hitchings, & Ingoldsby, 2009; Sørlie et al., 2008). Individuals with strong social abilities are said to be socially competent, meaning they display socially appropriate behaviour and abilities such as self-assertion that promote intrapersonal growth (Sørlie et al., 2008). Social competence can differentiate between youth who display antisocial behaviour from peers who do not engage in negative conduct (Henggeler et al., 2009). Various studies demonstrate that children and youth who exhibit antisocial behaviour are more likely to be rejected by peers and adults and are less socially competent in comparison to peers who do not engage in antisocial conduct (Becker & Luthar, 2002; Fontaine, McCrory, Boivin, Moffitt, & Viding, 2011; Hoza, Molina, Bukowski, & Sippola, 1995). One way to address this lack of social skills with youth who engage in antisocial behaviours is to offer them opportunities to learn and practice appropriate social skills and behaviours through teaching methods such as modeling, role-playing, and reinforcement.

The Parenting Role and Social Skills

Family dynamics associated with parenting are especially vital in the successful development of a child’s emotion management, social skills, and motivation to succeed (e.g., academically; Henggeler et al., 2009). It seems that these same dynamics are also relevant for the development of delays and various developmental and behavioural issues in children (Deković, Janssens, & Van As, 2003). Key family dimensions that have been shown to contribute to a child’s overall development include caregiver affect and control, which contribute to parenting style (Henggeler et al., 2009). For example, in a study by Deković et al. (2003), it was demonstrated that supportive parents who practice more indirect guidance, such as supervision rather than disciplinary strategies, and parents whose behaviour is consistent over time have a lower risk that their child will display antisocial behaviours. In addition, Deković et al. state that using measures of strict control to discipline an adolescent is not developmentally appropriate, and indicated that parent-adolescent relationships that include high levels of conflict and a lack of warmth and acceptance are at increased risk for fostering youth antisocial behaviour. In a study by Webster-Stratton & Hammond (1998) assessing antisocial conduct and social competence, the contribution of a variety of risk factors were evaluated, such as socioeconomic status, current levels of stress and social support, and parenting competence. Results showed that there are related risk factors for antisocial behaviour and low social competence, and more
severe or authoritarian parenting style significantly increased risk for low social competence and behaviour problems. Displays of positive emotion, praise, and physical warmth were factors related to improved social competence. Criss et al. (2009) demonstrated similar findings, showing that positive family experiences and pro-social peer relationships in childhood were significantly related to decreased risk for conduct problems and increased development of social skills in early adolescence.

Social Skills Training Strategies

**Parental Monitoring.**

An important characteristic of positive parenting is parental knowledge regarding where the youth is, what they are doing, and who they are with (Kerr & Stattin, 2000), and studies have demonstrated that increased parental knowledge is directly linked to decreased problem behaviours in youth (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; Kerr & Stattin, 2000). For example, Reitz et al. (2007) found that less parental knowledge resulted in increased levels of delinquent and aggressive behavior. In addition, Jacobson and Crocket (2000) demonstrated that higher levels of parental monitoring are strongly associated with higher grade point averages and lower levels of delinquency in youth. Kerr & Stattin indicated that both parents' and youths' perceptions of parental knowledge about the adolescents' daily activities were linked to measures of internal adjustment and relationships with parents. Based on this information, it would be extremely important for parents to practice the skill of monitoring their adolescent’s activities closely and carefully in order to ensure the safety and well-being of their child. Kerr and Stattin suggest that parents might monitor their adolescent’s activities in a number of ways, such as requiring that youth describe where they intend to go and with whom, get permission before going out, and explain where they have been if they violate curfew, what they have been doing, and with whom. Parents might also monitor their youth’s activities by talking with them about their school and extra-curricular experiences, connecting with parents of their adolescent’s friends so that they can act as resources for information, and talking with their adolescent’s friends about their thoughts and feelings about various issues in order to be aware of what influences their child might be facing.

**Modeling, Role Playing, and Reinforcement.**

It is important to consider that if exposure to deviant peers promotes antisocial behavior through positive reinforcement and modeling of new types of problem behaviour (Reitz et al., 2007), it might be relevant to use these same natural and non-intrusive techniques to model and reinforce appropriate pro-social skills. A well-researched option for assisting in developing social skills is social skills training (SST). According to Spence (2003), SST aims to improve an individual’s ability to carry out social behaviours that are essential in successful social interactions. SST utilizes elements of psycho-education, role-playing, and modeling along with building skills such as deep breathing that can assist in emotion management which is an essential aspect of successful communication skills (Harrell, Mercer, & DeRosier, 2009). Meta-analytic studies recommend SST methods that implement behavioral modeling with instruction in social awareness skills, self-regulation techniques, and social problem solving skills in order to ensure the most significant treatment effects (Harrell et al., 2009; Spence, 2003). Behavioural SST methods include skill breakdown and explanation, modeling, role-playing or skill rehearsal, feedback, and reinforcement (Spence, 2003). Social skills training can be done both in groups and individually; however, in a meta-analytic review of 38 social skills training interventions
with antisocial youth by Ang & Hughes (2002) examining group composition and treatment effects, it was indicated that SST interventions delivered in group contexts in which groups were composed of only/mostly antisocial peers resulted in decreased success of treatment. These findings suggest that either individual SST or group SST in which the groups are composed of both pro-social and antisocial peers might result in more positive treatment outcomes.

**Learning Social Skills Step-By-Step.**

As noted above, Spence (2003) and Harrell et al. (2009) described the importance of behavioural techniques when teaching a social skill. Social skills can be simplified for teaching purposes by being broken down into simple steps or instructions that can be understood by youth and taught by parents. This process of breaking a skill or behaviour down to its more simplified parts is a behavioural method that has been termed “task analysis” (Miltenberger, 2008). Task analysis is useful when teaching complex behaviours, and involves identifying all of the behaviour steps that are necessary to perform the full behaviour or skill. The next step is to then teach the behaviour steps, and chain them together into the appropriate sequence of behaviours, a process which is guided with the use of modeling, prompting, feedback, and reinforcement (Miltenberger). The entire process of analyzing a task and chaining each of its components into the full task is called behavioural skills training (BST), which involves the following teaching components: modeling of the desired behaviour/skill by the teacher/parent, instructions describing each step to performing the desired behaviour/skill are given by the teacher/parent, the learner rehearses the behaviour/skill, and the teacher/parent provides feedback immediately following the rehearsal of the behaviour/skill (Miltenberger). It is important that, when giving feedback, praise is given first as reinforcement and is followed by further instruction on how to improve the behaviour/skill if necessary. Parents can use these techniques to teach and rehearse social skills one-on-one with their child, and then practice using available and naturalistic opportunities with siblings or friends, which also encourages generalization of the newly acquired or improved skill.

**The Present Study**

There are a variety of potential approaches that caregivers might take to encourage the development of social skills for their child. In teaching their child, a parent may acquire new knowledge and skills as well. As they exert positive parental influence, they will assist their child in the continuous effort towards the learning process. The “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” manual has been developed specifically for parents of youth displaying antisocial behaviour, and focuses on teaching a variety of key social skills using the empirically supported teaching methods previously outlined to increase opportunities for the youth’s successful learning. The manual was developed to assist with teaching and improving social skills that youth may require in their everyday lives; for example, how to appropriately ask someone on a date, how to deal with rumours, and how to manage emotions such as anger. The manual was intended to target youth aged 12-18 who display antisocial conduct. The manual encouraged the practice of skills both with parents during the learning process, and in real-life situations with siblings or peers. The purpose of the present study was to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of the “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” manual. It was hypothesized that the manual would improve parent and therapist accessibility to useful techniques for improving the social skills of youth with antisocial behaviours, as well as to support the maintenance and generalization of skills learned during the MST process.
CHAPTER III: Methodology

Section 1: Manual Overview

A social skill building manual (see Appendix D) was designed for parents of youth displaying antisocial conduct and for use by multi-systemic therapists with the clients and families with whom they work. The manual was created by incorporating best-practice strategies into social skill building techniques. This was done by breaking each social skill down into steps and following each set of steps with suggestions for practicing the skill and implementing the best-practice strategies. The manual was designed to be used in conjunction with the MST services that the family using the manual would already be receiving, and be implemented as part of the MST treatment process.

In order to create the manual, the researcher gathered and organized resources used by the MST therapists at Children’s Mental Health of Leed’s and Grenville, as well as incorporated valid materials from various other resources such as books and the Internet. The topics included in the manual were organized into categories: basic communication, applying the basics to real-life, feelings, coping with anger, problem solving and conflict resolution, potential barriers to success, and maintenance and generalization tips. The manual consisted of hands-on tools that could either be assigned as weekly homework by the MST therapist, or used independently by the parent by choice. The researcher presented the manual section by section to the MST team and provided instruction on how the therapist might go about introducing and using the materials in the manual. Table 1 provides an outline of the manual’s topics, as well as the handouts included within each topic’s section.

Table 1.
Composition of Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping Your Teen Build Social Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Main Topic</th>
<th>Activities/Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>- Just to Get You Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 2: Applying the Basics to Real-Life</td>
<td>- Making Personal Appointments Over the Telephone - Asking Someone on a Date - Peer Pressure: Tips for Parents - Handling Peer Pressure - Dealing with Rumours - Dealing with Family Problems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 3: Feelings
- Mood Menu
- Recognizing Your Feelings
- Showing Understanding for Others’ Feelings
- Anger Facts Sheet

Chapter 4: Coping With Anger
- Understanding Anger
- Dealing With Other People’s Anger: Tips Sheet
- Keeping Calm

Chapter 5: Problem Solving & Conflict Resolution
- The 7 Steps to Problem Solving S.A.F.E. S.I.D’s Way
- Asserting Yourself
- Giving Feedback
- Accepting Feedback
- Having a Respectful Attitude

Three Watch Out for Roadblocks & Speedbumps!
- An Overview of Anxiety
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)
- Diaphragmatic Breathing (Belly Breathing)
- Positive Activities: The Big Brainstorm
- Community Resources

Four Going, Going, Gone: Keeping up the Progress
- The Why’s & How’s of Maintenance & Generalization
- Tips on How to Encourage Maintenance & Generalization of Your Teen’s New & Improved Social Skills

Five It’s a Wrap!
- Closing Statements

Section 2: The Current Study

A survey was created to evaluate the manual’s layout and helpfulness to its users.

Participants. A parent-friendly manual was designed for parents of youth aged 12-18 displaying antisocial behaviours, with the focus of the manual being on the development of appropriate social skills, potential barriers to the successful development of positive social skills, and methods of overcoming such barriers. The manual was made available to parents of both male and female adolescents. The exact number of individuals who were to utilize the manual was not pre-determined; however, it was hoped that as many individuals as possible who fit the inclusion criteria (see next paragraph) would be provided with and use the manual. Inclusion criteria were that the youth and their family were receiving MST services and the youth had displayed a need during clinical assessment for the development or improvement of social skills or positive peer involvement. The MST therapist working with the family determined ultimate inclusion.
**Measure.** A satisfaction feedback survey (see Appendix A) was included at the back of the manual that was designed to provide the agency with information regarding the manual’s overall helpfulness to the user(s), as well as to ensure that the manual was serving its intended purposes. This provided information for improving the manual and increasing its effectiveness. The form rated the user’s satisfaction on elements such as layout of the manual, readability, whether it was visually pleasing, and whether it contained relevant information that spoke to the needs of the intended population. It also rated the user’s perceived helpfulness of the techniques within the manual with regards to their ability to assist in improving the user’s social skills, as well as how easy the techniques included were to understand, learn, and implement. Therapists, as well as parents, were given the opportunity to fill out the survey and provide feedback after using the manual, as it was considered important to gather feedback from both a clinical and practical perspective. A consent form (see Appendix B) was developed to ensure the user’s clear understanding of the satisfaction survey’s purpose, to provide information regarding the user’s rights to confidentiality and voluntary participation, and to describe potential benefits and discomforts of filling out the survey. The consent form was included in the manual prior to the satisfaction survey. Participants completing the survey were not required to do so at any particular time over the course of treatment; however they must have used at least one section of the manual in order for feedback to be given via the survey. Both the completed consent form and completed satisfaction survey were placed in an envelope that was also included in the manual, and the envelope was then given to the therapist to be returned to the researcher for analysis.

**Procedures.** The current agency consent forms were provided prior to the initiation of MST services. In addition, the MST therapist providing services to the family receiving the manual was required to attain verbal assent from the family that they were willing to utilize the manual as a tool to assist in the treatment process. Within the manual, there was information discussing its potential benefits, limitations, and barriers in order to ensure that its potential usefulness was clear to the caregiver and youth who were utilizing it. The manual was targeted for approximately a grade 6 reading level in order to ensure it was comprehensible to both the parent and the youth who were using it.

The manual was comprised of information about the importance of social skills, including a compilation of techniques that had been shown to be successful in building and/or improving positive social skills in youth displaying antisocial behaviours. The techniques that the MST therapist believed to be most beneficial were discussed during session. The adolescent and their parent were able to practice and administer these skills while in the home with family and when out in the community with teachers and peers. Best practices included in the manual were parental monitoring, modeling, role-playing and example scenarios or scripts (e.g., a phone call to invite a friend over), and social problem solving, including examples of conflict friends may encounter and the steps to negotiating a positive solution. These techniques were presented separately with instructions on how the youth could utilize and practice each technique, either with a parent, sibling, or friend. Possible barriers to treatment effectiveness were included as short subsections, as well as ways in which parents or youth could overcome these issues (e.g., anxiety as the barrier and steps to progressive muscle relaxation as the method to overcome anxiety) within each subsection.
Upon meeting the inclusion criteria, families were given the manual by their MST therapist, and at that time the therapist explained the manual’s purpose and potential usefulness as a maintenance and generalization tool. The MST therapist encouraged use of the manual following treatment termination in order to continue movement toward the goal of building or improving social skills. The MST therapist also introduced the satisfaction survey and the corresponding consent form included at the back of the manual. The therapist encouraged that following their use of the manual, parents take the time to read through the consent form which thoroughly described the survey and its purposes, and to consider completing the survey in order to help the MST team and this researcher evaluate the manual’s usefulness, as well as to gather feedback regarding the manual’s strengths and suggestions for the manual’s improvement.
CHAPTER IV: Results

Part A: Manual Overview

A social skill building manual was designed for parents of youth displaying antisocial conduct and for use by multi-systemic therapists with the clients and families with whom they work. The manual was created by incorporating best-practice strategies into social skill building techniques. This was done by breaking each social skill down into steps and following each set of steps with suggestions for practicing the skill and implementing the best-practice strategies. The manual was designed to be used in conjunction with the MST services that the family using the manual would already be receiving and be implemented as part of the MST treatment process.

In order to create the manual, the present researcher gathered and organized resources used by the MST therapists at Children’s Mental Health of Leeds’ and Grenville, as well as incorporated valid materials from various other resources such as books and the Internet. The topics included in the manual were organized into categories: basic communication, applying the basics to real-life, feelings, coping with anger, problem solving and conflict resolution, potential barriers to success, and maintenance and generalization tips. The manual consisted of hands-on tools that could either be the assigned as weekly homework by the MST therapist or used independently by the parent by choice. The researcher presented the manual section by section to the MST team and provided instruction on how the therapist might go about introducing and using the materials in the manual. The “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping Your Teen Build Social Skills” manual can be found in Appendix D, and a Table summarizing the content in the method section of this report (pp. 8-9).

Part B: Survey Results

Results were collected and analyzed from six completed satisfaction surveys. The satisfaction survey was used to measure parental and therapist satisfaction on “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping Your Teen Build Social Skills”. A total of 15 questions were developed and included in the survey with the purpose of examining parental satisfaction with the manual and to determine if it was a valuable resource for them to use. A raw data table can be found in Appendix C displaying individual participant’s responses to each survey question. Below, Table 2 presents a summary of the frequency of participants’ responses to each individual question.

Table 2.
Satisfaction Survey Sections 1 and 2: Frequency of Responses per Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The manual looks nice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The manual is easy use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The manual is easy to use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pictures, tools, and charts in the manual are interesting</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sections in the manual are easy to find and flip to</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The information included in the manual meets the needs of my family and my youth*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The methods in the manual are easy to learn</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The methods in the manual are easy to apply and practice in “real life” situations</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The methods in the manual help me to reach my treatment goals discussed with my therapist*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The manual helps me to continue to use the skills talked about in sessions with my therapist in “real life” situations*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Questions noted with an asterisk (*) are those that were unanswered by some therapists, as not all questions on the survey were applicable to both parents and therapists.
One hundred percent of participants who completed the satisfaction survey had positive reviews of the manual, measured by the number of participants who answered either “agree” or “strongly agree” divided by the total number of participants. Figure 1 displays participants’ responses to questions from Sections 1 and 2 of the survey. Overall, participants found the manual to be visually appealing, easy to navigate, clear and concise, and easy to understand. Participants also found the manual to be useful in assisting their families to reach the treatment goals set with their MST therapist and to maintain and generalize the skills outlined in the manual into “real life” settings.

Figure 1. Number of Participant Responses per Response Category in Sections 1 and 2 of the Satisfaction Survey.
Table 3 below provides the frequency of participant use of each section of the manual. Overall, 83% of participants used section 1 and 3, 100% used section 2, 67% used section 4, and 50% used section 5.

Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Total Number of “Yes” Responses</th>
<th>Total Number of “No” Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you use the “Why Do Social Skills Matter?” section?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you use the “Ways to Guide Your Teen Out Toward Better Social Skills” section?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you use the “Watch Out for Roadblocks &amp; Speedbumps” section?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you use the “Going, Going, Gone: Keeping up the Progress” section?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you use the “It’s A Wrap” section?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One participant felt that there might be improvements made on the “Watch Out for Roadblocks & Speedbumps” section of the “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” manual. This participant commented that it might be useful to identify other ways a parent can engage their youth in the process of developing their social skills if the youth is resistant. Additional comments and suggestions discussed by participants can be found in Table 4 below. It is important to note that participants who were clinicians were unable to answer the questions related to client needs or skill use with the youth as those questions pertained only to parents/clients of MST. As a result, the clinician participants responded with “N/A”, which was not an option included on the scale of the survey. This data was noted in Table 2 and included in Figure 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section of Manual</th>
<th>Positive Comments</th>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Why Do Social Skills Matter?</td>
<td>- Clear and easy to understand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Well written and informative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ways to Guide Your Teen Out Toward Better Social Skills</td>
<td>- Well organized</td>
<td>Might have been useful to identify other ways a parent can engage their youth in this process if the youth is resistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Relevant topics for age group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lots of tips and guidelines, also well done</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Seems to cover most topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Liked the “real life” example situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Exercises are relevant and accessible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Very good graphic support to increase comprehension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Good approach to identifying specific social skills to develop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Watch Out for Roadblocks &amp; Speedbumps</td>
<td>- Very helpful info</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Going, Going, Gone: Keeping up the Progress</td>
<td>- Like how tips to maintain progress were provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Encouraging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It’s A Wrap</td>
<td>- Awesome to have included list of formal and informal supports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Overall, nicely put together, clear, and concise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Manual is very well laid out and follows a “building block” model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Great resource</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V: Discussion

Overview

Antisocial behaviour in children and youth has been a serious concern for mental health practitioners for many years (Bullis, Walker, & Sprague, 2001), but recent events such as teen suicides as a result of severe bullying, and such violent events as school shootings, have stimulated this concern further to become a part of public awareness and national agendas (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [U.S. DHHS], 2001). The purpose of the present study was to construct a parent-friendly social skill building manual for youth displaying antisocial conduct and for use by multi-systemic therapists with the clients and families with whom they work. A manual such as this could assist in raising parental awareness as well as provide education about and access to methods that have been shown to be effective at building the types of social abilities this population of youth often lack. This in turn may promote more positive peer relationships and reduce the risk of long term negative consequences of antisocial behaviour such as involvement with negative peer groups, increased potential for criminal activity, and possibly incarceration.

The manual was created by reviewing and synthesizing from the literature the interventions and techniques demonstrated to be most efficacious and incorporating these best-practice strategies into social skill building techniques. In addition, a satisfaction survey was developed to evaluate user satisfaction in the areas of aesthetics and readability, and to ensure that the manual was serving its intended purpose. The survey evaluated satisfaction on topics including clarity of writing style, relevance of included information, and recommendations for improvement. It was hypothesized that the manual would improve parent and therapist accessibility to useful techniques and tools for improving the social skills of youth with antisocial behaviours, as well as assist in the maintenance and generalization of the skills learned during the MST process. Overall, the survey revealed high user satisfaction with the manual, demonstrated by the participant’s answers of “agree” or “strongly agree” on most questions. Specifically, all users answered either “agree” or “strongly agree” to all questions in the Information/Methods section of the survey (Section 2), which inquired about the user’s satisfaction with the content and techniques outlined within the manual. The survey also allowed for participants to suggest improvements that they believe might be made to the manual, and one suggestion was given for section 3 of the manual, titled “Watch Out for Roadblocks & Speedbumps”, as noted in the Results section.

Strengths

The “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” manual was found by both therapists and caregivers to be a helpful resource to assist them in improving their client’s/youth’s positive social skills. The manual improved client accessibility to concrete tools that supported them in moving towards their treatment goals, and in doing so, assisted families to maintain and generalize treatment gains made with their MST therapists. Additionally, the manual eased accessibility of evidence-based information and resources for MST therapists.
The manual also encouraged and supported client independence in learning about and initiating positive, evidence-based interventions. This is significant in that client independence is an important goal when implementing therapeutic interventions so that the client successfully may maintain and generalize the skills they learn in the therapeutic setting to various settings in their everyday lives.

Limitations

Limitations to the current study include that, due to time constraints, the research reviewed a restricted number of studies in order to draw conclusions regarding best practices in the area of social skill building with youth. Future reviews of these treatment methods should consider a wider range of research in order to allow for broader comparisons and inferences to be made. In addition, future research may include analyses of characteristics that are common among best practice methods for teaching social skills to this population of youth, or to determine what characteristics of each treatment method contribute to its efficacy.

Limitations directly related to the manual may include the time-frame of services provided by MST therapists (3-5 months), since this made it difficult for sufficient numbers of user satisfaction questionnaires to be collected by this author before the study concluded. This information may still be gathered by the agency and used to improve the manual in the future; however, for the purposes of this study, insufficient data may be a significant barrier to reporting the manual’s usefulness. Also, the measures proposed by this study to determine the manual’s proficiency may be improved upon if direct treatment outcomes of participants could be measured (e.g., have them track the frequency of their use of the techniques outlined in the manual, their own perceived improvements in social skill development of their youth, etc.).

With regards to the measure used in the study to evaluate the manual’s usefulness, it is possible that participant’s experiences may have influenced their scores on the satisfaction survey (e.g., if anxious that their therapist would see results or that the author of manual would be hurt by negative feedback) or that participants may not have read or used the manual and filled the survey out anyway. Participants also may have rushed to complete the survey without taking the time to provide thoughtful and honest feedback/recommendations. It is suggested that further research be conducted with a larger number of participants in a longer time-frame to allow sufficient time for participants to read and utilize the techniques outlined in the manual. This would allow for conclusions to be drawn from a more representative sample.

Contribution to the Behavioural Psychology Field

The current study and its results provide further evidence of the potential usefulness of manuals in all phases of treatment, including intervention, maintenance, and generalization. Additionally, this study assists in encouraging parental responsibility and involvement while also validating the significance of their role as parent, all extremely important factors to consider for the successful treatment of youth who are still so largely impacted by their caregivers’ daily decisions and behaviours. In reviewing the literature, it became apparent that there was limited research on both the effectiveness of manaulized treatments, as well as on social skill development with juvenile delinquents. The “Growing Out” manual is therefore, to the best of
this author’s knowledge, an original contribution to the field with regard to this specific population, because such a document was not located during empirical review. Much of the literature found on social skill development with youth was concerned with autism spectrum disorder and Asperger’s syndrome, thus if a similar document existed, it would not have been applied with the juvenile delinquent population.

**Multilevel Challenges**

The client level challenges to developing and evaluating an applied thesis are numerous, and often beyond the researcher’s control. Such challenges included participant’s lack of participation in the use of the manual, despite therapist encouragement and expectation, and also failure to return satisfaction surveys so that the manual could be evaluated and improved. This relates directly to the issue of collecting surveys that are completed with thought and honesty, which cannot be accomplished if the client does not participate and is not motivated to practice any of the suggested techniques outlined within the manual. Additionally, client experiences in their everyday lives may have influenced their answers on the survey. Other challenges included developing the manual at a reading level appropriate for the range in users’ literacy skills. As the clients served by the agency ranged widely in income, education level, and mental capacity, this proved a very difficult task. In addition, therapist and researcher communication with regards to timelines of manual use and expected return dates for completed surveys was also a challenge.

Program level challenges that arose included limited availability of clients who were deemed appropriate candidates to receive the manual. As well, availability of time for clients to work with the manual might have been an issue if the therapist introduced it nearer the conclusion of the study. It was also the therapist’s responsibility to encourage and reinforce the client’s use of the manual, and if this was not something the therapist emphasized, client may have viewed the manual as unimportant.

At the organizational level, service providers at the mental health agency whose work is outside of MST are skeptical of techniques which are new or different from those they already practice; thus, the manual did not receive as much recognition from the organization and its staff as the manual was designed with and for use in MST therapeutic settings, even though the techniques within the manual are easily generalizable to other various therapeutic settings.

Finally, the societal level plays many roles in challenging the development and evaluation of the “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” manual. For example, there is an apparent lack of research on the effectiveness of manualized treatment for all variety of patient populations, and specifically on effective social skills programs for juvenile delinquents. In addition, issues of stigma and labeling are present, which often create preconceived notions about the risks of working with a client population like delinquent youth, especially when this applies to female mental health workers. This leads to the societal level challenge of community and specifically therapist safety when working with high risk clients like at-risk (and often male) youth.
**Recommendations for Future Research**

In conclusion, results from this study indicate high user satisfaction with the “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” manual. However, future research might benefit from a larger number of participants and a lengthened time frame for client and therapist use of the manual to allow for more conclusive results. In addition, the measures proposed by this study to determine the manual’s proficiency may be improved upon if direct treatment outcomes of participants could be measured through behavioural data. Further study of the effectiveness of best practice methods for encouraging pro-social development within MST treatments, may benefit the future of mental-health programming for today’s youth who are displaying antisocial behaviours or conduct related disorders.

By allowing professionals and caregivers access to best-practice methods and instruction on how to implement the techniques, it may allow increased ease in the treatment process by encouraging independent learning and decreasing the likelihood of client dependence on the therapist. In addition, giving parents direct access to these best practice strategies broken down into easy to understand and implement formats might encourage higher levels of parental involvement and increased parental understanding of their child’s needs, allowing opportunity for improved family relationships and appropriate modeling of the behaviours and skills that are so important to the child’s adjustment and well-being. The manual and the satisfaction survey are only the initial components to the “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” manual. The first steps have been made in providing evidence for both the efficacy of manualized treatment and further support for the importance of caregiver involvement in the successful treatment of youth with behavioural difficulties and social skill deficits. Next steps that would further contribute to those already taken might be to review a wider range of literature in order to allow for broader comparisons to be made regarding most efficacious treatment methods. In addition, future research might include analyses of characteristics that are common among best practice methods for teaching social skills to this population of youth, or to determine what characteristics of each treatment method contribute to its efficacy. Also, as previously stated, the measures proposed by this study to determine the manual’s proficiency may be improved upon if direct treatment outcomes of participants could be measured. For example, the effectiveness and frequency of use of the strategies within the manual might be evaluated, and it might be beneficial to compare the parents and youth who used “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills” to a control group. In conclusion, the high satisfaction of the participants with the current study’s manual is promising, and leaves many doors open for further development.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix A: Satisfaction Survey

Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills

Before filling in this survey, please make sure you have read and understood the Consent Form on the previous page. If you complete this survey but haven’t signed the consent form, we will decide that you HAVE agreed to do it, even though you didn’t fill in the form.

The items on this survey ask you to let us know what you thought about different parts of this manual. The survey has three short sections. The first one looks at the manual itself and asks about how you thought the manual looked (for example, was it laid out well, was it easy to read and understand); the second section looks at how useful you thought the methods in the manual were. The third section looks at which sections of the manual you used and if you have any suggestions for improving the sections of the manual you used.

All information collected from this survey will be kept confidential. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME ON THIS SURVEY. It should take about 15-20 minutes to complete. When you are done, please put the survey in the envelope given to you, seal it, and return the envelope to your therapist. If you are a therapist giving feedback about the manual, please seal the survey in the envelope and return it to your immediate supervisor. Thank you for taking the time to fill this form out carefully and honestly. Your answers and comments will help to make changes to this manual for people who will be using it in the future.

Date: ____________________________  Sex:  Male____ Female____

Who you are: Parent/Guardian____  Therapist____

How long (in months) you have been getting (___) or giving (___) MST services to this family:

1___  2___  3___  4___  5___  6___  7___  8___  9___  10___ 11___  A year or more ___

*Therapist only: How many manuals have you provided to families over the past 6 months?

______________________________________________________________________________

Please use the following ratings to complete the survey questions in sections 1 and 2:

1  2  3  4  5
Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree
Section 1. How the manual looks (if you glanced at the manual and flipped through it)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1 Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 Neutral</th>
<th>4 Agree</th>
<th>5 Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The manual looks nice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The manual is easy use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The manual is easy to read and understand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The pictures, tools, and charts in the manual are interesting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 2. Information/Methods (once you have read and used the manual...)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1 Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 Neutral</th>
<th>4 Agree</th>
<th>5 Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The sections in the manual are easy to find and flip to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The information included in the manual meets the needs of my family and my youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The methods in the manual are easy to learn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The methods in the manual are easy to apply and practice in “real life” situations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The methods in the manual help me to reach my treatment goals discussed with my therapist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The manual helps me to continue to use the skills talked about in sessions with my therapist in “real life” situations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3. Section Use & Feedback for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Comments &amp; Suggested Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did you use the “Why Do Social Skills Matter?” section?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please circle one: (Yes) (No)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, would you make any changes in this section? Please use the box to the right to fill in your answer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you use the “Ways to Guide Your Teen Out Toward Better Social Skills” section?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please circle one: (Yes) (No)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, would you make any changes in this section? Please use the box to the right to fill in your answer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you use the “Watch Out for Roadblocks &amp; Speedbumps” section?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please circle one: (Yes) (No)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, would you make any changes in this section? Please use the box to the right to fill in your answer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Did you use the “Going, Going, Gone: Keeping up the Progress” section?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Please circle one: (Yes) (No)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please circle one: (Yes) (No)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, would you make any changes in this section? Please use the box to the right to fill in your answer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have any additional comments, please turn to the following page where you can write your comments and feedback.
Comments and Suggestions for Improving the Manual

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Your survey is done!
Thank-you very much for your time.
Title: Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills

Student: Tara McGivern

College Supervisor: Dr. Susan Meyers

Dear Participant & Family,

My name is Tara McGivern, and I am a student in the Bachelor’s Degree Behavioural Psychology program at St. Lawrence College. This four-year degree program teaches students skills that have been shown to work well with many different types of people. Right now, I am placed as a student at Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville in Brockville, ON and will be working on a project that I will write up in a special report called a “thesis”. My supervisor from St. Lawrence College, Susan Meyers, and the Multi-Systemic Therapy team at Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville will help me create the project. The information in this form is to help you understand my project so that you can decide if you want to take part in it. Please read the information carefully and ask your therapist all the questions you might have before you decide to take part or not.

My project, “Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills,” will be a parent-friendly manual including information on methods that have been shown through research to help develop positive social skills in youth with problem behaviours. These methods will be presented with step-by-step instructions on how the parent or youth can practice. Possible problems that might slow successful learning will be presented, as well as ways in which parents or youth may overcome them (for example, if feeling anxious is the problem, steps will be given to learn to relax). The manual will be used along with your regular services from your MST therapist to help you keep using the skills discussed in sessions. Your therapist will have to ask you to agree to use the manual.

A satisfaction survey will be included at the back of the manual which will give the agency and me information about how helpful the manual was to you and let us know if the manual is doing what it was made to do. The form will rate if you like how the manual looks (e.g., layout, easy to read), if the information and methods included were easy to understand and use, and how helpful the manual was in helping you reach your treatment goals.
Doing the satisfaction survey gives you the chance to give helpful feedback on areas that might need changes or areas that were more useful. This will let us know how we can improve the manual, which can make it more helpful to future users. Giving your honest feedback is very important when filling out the survey. Risks to doing the satisfaction survey may include feeling bored or frustrated, as well as worrying about giving feedback that will be read by the agency supervisor or myself.

I would like you to agree to do the satisfaction survey. All that you tell us on the survey will be private. This form and the survey you give us will be kept in a locked cabinet in the filing room at Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville and kept for 7-years time; after that, it will be shredded.

The surveys won’t have your name on them so we won’t be able to know who filled them out. The information from them will be used to help us make the manuals better. I will also use some of the information for my project. That information will be kept on a computer and will be protected by a password. People who will be able to see the information will include me, my college supervisor, and the manager of the MST team at Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville. We will be happy to let you know what we found out; just ask us.

Doing the survey for us is up to you. You decide if you want to do it or not. If you decide to do it and then change your mind, that is ok. You can decide not to do it at any time. If you decide to do the survey, please fill in the form on the next page and give it to your MST therapist as soon as you can. We will make a copy of it for you to keep. I really thank you for your help. If you want more information about the project or have more questions or are worried about anything to do with this project, please contact my College Supervisor, Dr. Susan Meyers, at (613) 329-1046, or smeyers@kos.net.

Sincerely,

Tara McGivern, St. Lawrence College Student
CONSENT

By signing this, I agree that:

- The survey has been explained to me.
- All of my questions were answered.
- Likely discomforts and likely benefits of this survey have been explained to me.
- I understand that I can decide not to do the survey or can stop at any time.
- I can ask questions about the survey at any time.
- I have been told that my personal information will be kept private.
- I understand that no information that would identify me will be released or printed without asking me first.
- I understand that I will get a copy of this consent form, signed by me and the St. Lawrence College Student.

I agree to give feedback on the manual, “Increasing Pro-social Peer Relationships for Youth Displaying Antisocial Conduct: A Social Skill Building Manual”.

Please print your name: ______________________________________________________

Signature: ___________________________ Date: _____________________________

St. Lawrence College Student Printed Name: ______________________________________

St. Lawrence College Student Signature: ___________________________ Date: __________
Appendix C: Raw Data Table

Section 1. How the manual looks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Subject 1</th>
<th>Subject 2</th>
<th>Subject 3</th>
<th>Subject 4</th>
<th>Subject 5</th>
<th>Subject 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The manual looks nice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The manual is easy use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The manual is easy to read and understand</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The pictures, tools, and charts in the manual are interesting</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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*Note. 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree;

Section 2. Information/Methods

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Subject 1</th>
<th>Subject 2</th>
<th>Subject 3</th>
<th>Subject 4</th>
<th>Subject 5</th>
<th>Subject 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The sections in the manual are easy to find and flip to</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The information included in the manual meets the needs of my family and my youth</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A: Clinician</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The methods in the manual are easy to learn</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The methods in the manual are easy to apply and practice in “real life” situations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The methods in the manual help me to reach my treatment goals discussed with my therapist</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A: Clinician</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>N/A: Clinician</td>
<td>N/A: Clinician</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The manual helps me to continue to use the skills talked about in sessions with my therapist in “real life” situations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>N/A: Clinician</td>
<td>N/A: Clinician</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree;
### Section 3. Section Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<th>Subject 2</th>
<th>Subject 3</th>
<th>Subject 4</th>
<th>Subject 5</th>
<th>Subject 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did you use the “Why Do Social Skills Matter?” section?</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you use the “Ways to Guide Your Teen Out Toward Better Social Skills” section?</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you use the “Watch Out for Roadblocks &amp; Speedbumps” section?</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Did you use the “Going, Going, Gone: Keeping up the Progress” section?</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Did you use the “It’s A Wrap” section?</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Y=Yes; N=No*

### Section 3. Comments and Suggested Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section Title</th>
<th>Subject 1</th>
<th>Subject 2</th>
<th>Subject 3</th>
<th>Subject 4</th>
<th>Subject 5</th>
<th>Subject 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “Why Do Social Skills Matter?”</td>
<td>Great introduction. Very clear and easy to understand.</td>
<td>This section was well written and informative. No suggested changes.</td>
<td>None.</td>
<td>None.</td>
<td>None.</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “Ways to Guide Your Teen Out Toward Better Social Skills”</td>
<td>I like how this section is organized and how you’ve identified</td>
<td>Lots of tips and guidelines. Also well done.</td>
<td>None.</td>
<td>Liked the “real life” situations that are noted for families.</td>
<td>Exercises are relevant and accessible with very good</td>
<td>Good approach to identifying specific social skills to develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “Watch Out for Roadblocks &amp; Speedbumps”</td>
<td>topics that are relevant to this age group.</td>
<td>graphic support to increase comprehension</td>
<td>It may have been worthwhile to identify if the youth is resistant to participating with the parent other ways they can be engaged in the process.</td>
<td>Very helpful information.</td>
<td>None.</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “Going, Going, Gone: Keeping up the Progress”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This is a great piece to have included. I like how you provide tips to maintain progress.</td>
<td>Encouraging.</td>
<td>None.</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. “It’s A Wrap”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging the use of formal and informal supports is awesome to have included.</td>
<td>None.</td>
<td>None.</td>
<td>Overall, nicely put together, clear, and concise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Growing Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping your Teen Build Social Skills

Created by: Tara McGivern
In Consultation with the Multi-Systemic Therapy Team, Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville
Written By: Tara McGivern
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Section One
Why do Social Skills Matter?
Why do Social Skills Matter?

This parent-friendly manual has been made to help you as a supportive parent to help in the positive social growth of your teen. Sometimes teenagers can have a hard time expressing their thoughts and emotions clearly or appropriately, making it hard to understand and communicate with them. This lack of clear communication can cause conflict and misunderstanding in their personal relationships, and can result in them having fewer friendships or positive social supports. The tools and activities in this manual have been shown by research to be helpful in improving social skills in youth. This manual may offer some new ways for you and your teen to work together to build their social skills and better prepare them for success in their personal relationships.

Before using this manual, it is important to understand what is meant by the term “social skills”. Good social interactions include skills like clear verbal speech and non-verbal body language to send and receive messages to and from another person. Verbal communication includes more than just words. It also involves tone of voice. For example, a positive message such as “great job!” can be confused as sounding sarcastic if it is said in a tone of voice that sounds angry. Non-verbal body language includes things like eye contact, facial expressions, and position of arms and legs. It is also important to remember that good social interaction is reciprocal, meaning it goes both ways between two people, and is not one-sided. This involves the ability to take another person’s feelings and perspective into consideration, and also to understand conversation as something that happens back and forth between two people.

Social skills are a very important and complicated part of our daily lives, and play into everything from making friends, to dating, to getting and keeping a job. Based on the value of these skills in our every-day lives, it is important that we are helping our children and teenagers learn and practice effective social skills so that they can feel confident in their abilities to listen and be heard by others in a positive way.
*Note: Please do not feel that you HAVE to complete this section or that there are “right” or “wrong” answers. This will not be graded in any way, but is just to review the most important points! You may talk about this with your therapist if you have any questions.

Good social interaction involves some important skills. Can you name some?

- Example: Clear verbal speech
- ________________________________________________
- ____________________________

Social skills are important because...

- They increase comfort, confidence, and self-esteem in social situations
- They help boost success in job interviews and help us keep a job

Why else might having good social skills matter for your teen?

- ________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________
Section Two

Ways to Guide Your Teen "Out" Toward Better Social Skills
Ways to Guide Your Teen "Out"
Toward Better Social Skills

For most of the skills included in this section, there are two parts. First, the skill is broken down into steps that you can discuss one at a time with your teen. Second, there are some suggested activities that you might use with your teen to practice the skill you just discussed. There is also a section after each skill breakdown sheet that gives your teen a place to plan and review their practice sessions. See the example below.

---

**Steps to this Skill**

1. 

2. 

3. 

**Practice Makes Perfect**

Who could I practice this with? ________________________________

When could I practice? ________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ________________________

**Suggested Activities for ______ Skill**

- Role-Play
- Correct mistakes/give feedback
- Praise/Reward

Pointers

“What WE SAY, HOW SAID, and WHAT WE DO” Pointers

- Eye Contact
- Expression on our Face
- Tone & Volume of our Voice
- Body Language
- Things we Say

Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? ______________________________________________________

When could I practice? ______________________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ______________________________________________
Suggested Activities for Back to Basics: “What We Say, How Said, and What We Do” Pointers

**Role-play** each step of this skill separately:

- **Eye Contact**: First, make eye contact with your teen. Second, ask your teen to try making eye contact with a sibling or friend while talking to them. Third, practice making eye contact when saying hello and goodbye to others.

- **Facial Expression**: Practice different facial expressions, and show your teen what it looks like to look happy, angry, sad, worried etc. Choose a facial expression, and without telling your teen which one, ask them to guess what you might be trying to show.

- **Voice Tone & Volume**: Consider using a recording of your teen’s voice so that they can hear themselves trying each of the following types of voice: "Outside" or high volume voice rather than "inside" or low volume voice, angry rather than happy tone of voice, fast or slow pace of speech rather than even or normal.

- **Body Language**:
  - Practice the appropriate distance to be from someone when having a conversation. Try getting too close and too far from each other, and ask your teen to say “that’s good” when you are a good distance apart, and say “too close” or “too far” when you are too close or too far.
  - Show your teen what it looks like to look “interested” vs. looking “bored”, for example: sitting up, leaning forward, eye-contact, gestures like nodding, verbal cues such as “uh-huh...” or “I see...” would show the speaker that the listener is interested, and slumping in your seat, crossing arms over chest, looking away, and a lack of verbal cues might show the speaker that the listener is bored.

- **Things we Say**: Role-play greetings such as "Hi, how are you", and ask your teen to say "Hi. I'm good thanks, how are you?" back. Role play conversation starters such as "How was your weekend?", and prompt your teen to ask back. Tell a story about what you are going to do after school/work or on the weekend and prompt your teen to ask back. Practice taking turns talking so that there is not one person doing all the talking.

- **Apply the skill**: This means doing something that requires your teen to use the skill and show that they understand. For example, have a conversation with them over dinner and watch for their use of the different parts of this skill. If you notice that they are not doing something at all or are doing in incorrectly, tell them what you noticed and explain how to improve.

- **Always give praise or reward** in some manner for your teen’s use of the skill. Suggestions for how to do this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g. "You did a great job looking interested when I was speaking!") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward.

### b. Respecting Personal Boundaries

#### Steps to This Skill

1. People have the right to be alone or to keep things to themselves. If you respect others' space and belongings, they are more likely to respect yours.

2. Respecting others' space means:
   - Keeping about an arm's length away in physical distance from others unless invited to come closer.
   - Allowing others to have time by themselves.
   - Letting others talk and do things with other people. Don't push them to talk and do things only with you.
   - Not asking them to talk about private information that they say they do not want to discuss.

3. Respecting others' belongings means:
   - Not touching others' belongings unless they give you permission to do so.
   - Not taking or borrowing others' belongings without permission.
   - Keeping others' belongings clean and in good condition if you do borrow it.

---

**Practice Makes Perfect!**

Who could I practice this with? __________________________

When could I practice? __________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? __________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Suggested Activities for Respecting Personal Boundaries

✔ After talking about the skill and explaining it to your teen, you can use a question format or a game approach to practice situations described in the skill. Siblings or friends may join in too and points can be rewarded for correct responses to make it more like a game. The game option may be more interesting to teens aged 12-14 than those 15-18. Some example questions have been included below to get you started!

- How far should people be from each other when talking or doing an activity together?
- If friends want to do something alone when you want to get together with them, what should you do and why?
- If you ask your friend to get together and they say they can't because they have plans with other friends, what should you do or say and why?
- If you ask your friend why they never talk about certain things (e.g., their parents, where they used to go to school, why they don't change in the locker room), and they say they do not want to talk about it, what should you do or say and why?
- If you see one of your friend's belongings that you'd really like to use or borrow, what should you do or say and why?
- Is it ok to borrow something from a friend without asking them? Why or why not?
- If you borrow something from a friend (e.g., an iPod or MP3 player) and it breaks, what should you do and why?

✔ Make sure that you correct any answers that are violations of others’ boundaries, and explain your corrected answer.

✔ Give praise (e.g. “You did a great job respecting my boundaries by calling me to ask to watch T.V. in my room while I was out. Thanks!” or use points that can be earned over the week towards a reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later) for good respect for others’ boundaries.
c. Facts Vs. Opinions

Steps to This Skill

1. Definitions:
   - Facts: Ideas that are agreed upon by everyone. If one person disagrees, then the idea is an opinion, not a fact.
   - Opinions: Ideas that are not agreed upon by everyone. People have different opinions and that is okay.

2. Getting along well with others means:
   - State your ideas as opinions, not facts.
   - Respect others' right to have their own opinion (e.g. "well, that is your opinion, mine is different").
   - Try to be flexible by doing things other people's way sometimes.

Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? ____________________________________________

When could I practice? ____________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________
Suggested Activities for Facts Vs. Opinions

✓ **Role-play** each step of this skill separately. Suggested role-plays are offered below.

- Discuss your teen's preferences for food, T.V. shows, and video games, and then discuss you own, or a sibling’s. As they discover each person's different preferences, tell them to respect other's preferences by saying "I respect your opinion/preference". You might also role-play insulting others' preferences or opinions (only the parent should do this to keep it from causing conflict). For example, you might say something like "Your favourite team stinks" or "I don't know why you like that video game, it's for babies" to show them how it's hurtful and not respectful to say these things.

- Next, share an opinion that you know your teen will disagree with, like that a food they dislike is delicious, and then practice having your teen say "I respect your right to your opinion, even if I disagree with it". You can make this even more challenging by asking your teen to say they love a certain food that they actually dislike, or that they enjoy watching a team play that they are not fans of. This helps your teen be more flexible.

✓ **Apply the skill:** This means doing something that makes the learner to use the skill and show that they understand. For example, share opinions that you know your teen disagrees with and prompt them to show respect before they disagree.

✓ **Correct** your teen when they demand that others agree with their opinion or that their way is the only way to do something.

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggestions for how to do this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g. "Thank-you for hearing and respecting my opinion. That means a lot to me") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., play a video game, or stay up/out with friends later).
d. Getting Attention in Positive Ways

Steps to This Skill

1. Attention is when people look at and listen to you.
   - Positive attention is when people look at and listen to you and like what you are doing. Using positive ways to get attention helps you make and keep friends.
   - Negative attention is when people look at and listen to you but do not like what you are doing. Negative ways to get attention can cause you to lose friends.

2. Look at the examples in the chart below of the Do's and Don'ts of getting attention from others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>+Do's+</th>
<th>- Don'ts -</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen to others and ask questions about what they are doing or talking about.</td>
<td>Don't do all the talking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start a conversation about somebody else's interests.</td>
<td>Don't just talk about your own interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliment others.</td>
<td>Don't insult others or bring up topics that make other people uncomfortable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do an activity that another person wants to do, even if you might not want to do it.</td>
<td>Don't tell everyone what they should or shouldn't do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask friends to get together, and if the person you ask says no, ask someone else.</td>
<td>Don't get mad at other people if they do not want to talk with you or get together with you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only tell jokes if other people want to hear them. Say “Do you want to hear a joke?”</td>
<td>Don't say rude or silly jokes over and over again, especially when someone has asked you to stop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell the truth.</td>
<td>Don't make up stories that aren't true.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? ________________________________

When could I practice? _________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ________________________
Suggested Activities for Getting Attention in Positive Ways

✓ Talking about this skill is a good way to review and practice behaviours that help teenagers to make and keep positive friendships.

✓ **Role-play** the different positive and negative ways to get attention. Your teenager can act out the way of getting attention while you try to guess which one they are doing, and then switch roles. You can also do this with siblings or friends of your teen and have them choose slips of paper with either a positive or negative way of getting attention written on it and having them act out the one they chose.

✓ **Correct** negative ways of getting attention to positive ways to maintain friendships. Sometimes, it is helpful to use a points or warning system with your teen where they can receive a certain number of warnings or lose so many points until a privilege is removed or they are sent to "chill out" in their rooms. Please see Section 5, "It's a Wrap", under "What Else is in Your Tool Belt?" for an explanation of the process of redirecting if you would like more clarification.

✓ **Apply the skill:** This means doing something that makes the learner to use the skill and show that they understand. For example, asking them to "please listen" and then talk about something you like or are interested in that they might not be. Also, simply stating "please stop" in a firm and clear voice when they are being rude or silly, reminding them that if they stop it will help them keep good friendships, and if they do not, they may lose friends.

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggestions for how to do this include verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g. "I really liked how mature you were when your friend was being rude/silly and you asked them to please stop rather than joining in") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V. or play a video game).
### Applying the Basics to Real-Life

#### a. Making Personal Appointments Over the Telephone

**Steps to This Skill**

1. Say hello and give your name. “Hello, this is ________ calling”

2. Ask for the person you want to talk to. “Is ________ there please?” or “Could I please talk to ________?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If the person you are calling is there</th>
<th>If the person you are calling is not there, or you get the answering machine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Say, “Hi, how are you?”</td>
<td>If someone answers, but the person you’d like to speak to is not available say, “Can I please leave a message?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Say why you called:</td>
<td>If the person says you can leave a message, give your name and phone number and any message you want to leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I wanted to know if I could book an appointment with ________, on (date) at (time).”</td>
<td>If you get the answering machine, leave your name, phone number, and the reason you were calling, and ask them to please call you back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I was wondering if ________ was available for (purpose of meeting) sometime on (date).”</td>
<td>Your message could be: “This is (your name) calling. Please have (the person’s name you’d like to speak to) call me back at (your number).” If you’d like to say why you called to the person who takes your message or on the answering machine, you may do so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State why you are calling:</td>
<td>Say, “Thank you. Bye.” Or “Thanks for your time, see you (day).”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’m calling to book an appointment with you to talk about (reason). Are you free on (date and time) OR Is there a date and time that works for you?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Practice Makes Perfect!**

Who could I practice this with? __________________________________________________________

When could I practice? __________________________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? __________________________________________________________________
Suggested Activities for Making Personal Phone Calls

- **Role-play** the steps to this skill separately. Suggested role-plays for your teen to try are offered below.
  - You are asking someone for help with a homework assignment, and they start to talk about their plans for the weekend.
  - You call a friend just to talk and see what they are doing.
  - You call a friend to ask to borrow a video game or movie.
  - You call a friend to ask to borrow a video game or movie but your friend isn’t home, only their parents are.

- Your teen may be **nervous** about using the phone to call friends or make calls to make or cancel appointments. They can start by first practicing by writing a text or e-mail if possible, then calling you on the phone and role-playing using a situation like the ones above. The next step will be to actually call a friend or to make or cancel an appointment and practice in the real situation.

- **Apply the skill:** This means doing something that requires your teen to use the skill and show that they understand. For example, tell your teen to make a decision about what they might like to have for supper, and to call you at work when they get home from school to tell you their decision.

- **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggestions for how to do this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g., "You did a really good job making that phone call to your friend. I liked how polite you were.") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later).
b. Asking Someone on a Date

**This may be a skill you do not feel comfortable talking about with your teen or they may not be comfortable talking about it with you. Ask them how they feel about talking about this skill before you start to practice. If they would rather look at it on their own that is ok! You can always read this over and give ideas or help if your teen chooses to talk to you about it/asks questions.**

**Steps to This Skill**

1. **Start a conversation**

   - Introduce yourself if they do not know you. You could say, “Hi, my name is _______. What’s your name?”
   - Think about what you have in common with the person to get ideas for some conversation topics and questions to ask. You could say something like “I noticed we both ______ (e.g., like a certain sport, class, or after school group, have a friend in common). What do you think about ______ (keep this related to the topic you asked about before)?”
   - Ask questions and make on-topic comments (try thinking about who, what, when, and where they are talking about or why they might be talking about something).

2. **Have 2-4 conversations before you ask the person out. Get to know each other a little bit and get more comfortable talking with each other. During these conversations, try to find out without asking directly if the person is available. For example, you could ask something like “When you go _____/do ______, do you do that with family, friends, a boyfriend?”. Also use these conversations as way to find out if the person is interested in talking with you again. Look for signs that they are interested: does the person start conversations with you, or try to make excuses to leave the conversation?

3. **During the 3-4th conversation, ask if the person would like to get together with you sometime or do something together. Make sure to ask the person to go to a place that they would like to go, like a restaurant, movie, park or any other place they might like. Offer to pick the person up/plan to meet them on a certain day/time.

4. **Pay for the meal, movie, or activity unless your date insists on paying for themselves.**

5. **During the date, you can compliment your date by telling them they look nice, and ask about things the person likes to do, where they grew up, work or school, family (do they have brothers or sisters?). Talk about your own interests too, but let them do more of the talking and show interest by asking lots of questions.**
Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? _____________________________________

When could I practice? _____________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ___________________________________________________________________

Suggested Activities for Asking Someone on a Date

✓ Many youth are nervous about dating, and making some improvements in their social skills can help give them better chances at success when dating. It can be helpful to first make a list of who suitable candidates are to ask out. Examples of who one should and should not ask have been given below:

- It is not ok to keep asking someone out who has already said no/is not interested.

- It is ok to ask out someone in a group or activity you are part of, especially because you might have similar interests

- It is not ok to ask someone out who is already dating someone else

- Sometimes it helps to chat to someone online first before talking face-to-face, but you need to be very careful about the possible dangers of meeting strangers on the Internet. This is when parents can help supervise or make plans to meet with people in the safest way possible.

✓ Make a list of what NOT to do when dating someone, and create some consequences for these rules not being followed. There is always risk in dating for behaviour that is not safe or healthy, such as stalking and violence, when youth do not understand what is and is not acceptable when dating. Be clear that it is not ok to ask someone out repeatedly after they have said no, and they should not follow someone around or write notes if the person has shown that they are not interested.

✓ If possible, have groups of youth to social gatherings, including both boys and girls. In this situation, it allows for parents to supervise and gives youth a chance to interact and meet new people. Chances for dating may be better in this situation than in the school environment.
c. Peer Pressure: Tips for Parents

Peer pressure is a challenge that almost every teen will face. Many youth do not realize the dangers of peer pressure, or the harm that can be caused when they follow a friend by engaging in a dangerous or unlawful activity with them. It is important to have open communication about this issue with your teen. You can help to teach them the difference between good and bad pressure, and you can monitor your teen’s friends and activities to help make sure they are safe. On the next three pages, you will find worksheets that help you to keep track of your teen. A way of making sure that your teen is doing what is best for themselves and others is to monitor who their friends are, as well as where your teen is, what they are doing and with whom, and when they will be home. The included monitoring sheets should help you accomplish these important goals. Also included in this chapter is a Peer Pressure Questionnaire that your teen can fill out. This will help both you and your teen learn more about their tendencies (or not) to be affected by pressure.
## KNOWING YOUR CHILD’S FRIENDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRIEND</th>
<th>Is he/she in school?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does she/he attend regularly?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is youth involved in activities? (i.e., Sports, hobbies, etc.)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are the activities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does youth avoid drug use?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is youth polite / respectful?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is youth close in age to my child?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does youth work at a job?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARENT</th>
<th>Does the parent know where his/her child is?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the parent polite to me?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the parent have rules?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the parent express concern about their child and mine?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the parent agree to contact me with information about my child?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the parent agree to send my child home at my request?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does this parent follow through with agreements?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Provided by the Multisystemic Therapy Team, Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville
Parental Monitoring Sheet

**Note: You can post this on your fridge or in another place where you and your teen can easily access it so that you can communicate clearly and easily.**

Please Let Me Know Where You Are!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Who? I am going to be with:</th>
<th>What? I will be doing:</th>
<th>Where? I will be:</th>
<th>When? Time I Will Be Home</th>
<th>Phone Number I can be reached at</th>
<th>Signature/Initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Provided by the Multisystemic Therapy Team, Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville
# Peer Pressure Questionnaire

**Peer Pressure**

This set of questions is about how much you go along with your friends.

*Tick one answer for each question.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>maybe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I think it's more important to be myself than to fit in with the crowd.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I would do something that I know is wrong just to stay on my friend's good side.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I sometimes go along with my friends just to keep them happy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>It's pretty hard for my friends to get me to change my mind.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I would break the law if my friends said that they would.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I always give my true opinion in front of my friends, even if I think they might make fun of me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I take more risks when I'm with my friends than I do when I'm alone.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I act the same way when I am alone as I do when I'm with my friends.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I sometimes say things I don't really believe because I think it will make my friends respect me more.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**d. Handling Peer Pressure**

**Steps to This Skill**

1. Sometimes other teenagers will ask or pressure your teen to do things that may or may not be helpful. Help your teen learn to decide what good or bad peer pressure is.

   - Good peer pressure is: When your friends ask you to do something that might help you or others such as asking you to include new friends in your social group, asking you to do or help with homework, or asking you to play a sport/do a hobby.
   - Bad peer pressure is: When friends ask you to do something that will get you in trouble, hurt others, or when they tell you they will only be your friend if you do it. Examples of this are playing a mean trick on someone, trying a drug, or doing something dangerous or that is against the rules/law like bullying or stealing.

2. If you are dealing with bad peer pressure:
   - Look at the person, make eye-contact, and use a strong voice
   - Say no and that you refuse to do it
   - Explain why, for example because you disagree with it or think that it is wrong
   - Walk away

3. If you are not sure whether someone is telling you to do something that is good or bad, ask a person you trust for advice.

---

**Practice Makes Perfect!**

Who could I practice this with? ________________________________

When could I practice? ________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ________________________________

____________________________________________

____________________________________________
Suggested Activities for Handling Peer Pressure

✓ Many youth do not realize when a peer or friend is pressuring them, or cannot tell what good or bad pressure is. Sometimes wanting to fit in, or be popular and liked can lead them to follow others or be influenced by bad peer pressure, even when they might know it is wrong.

- Parents can help their teen by having them make a list of friends or teachers they can trust to give helpful advice if they need it. The people on this list should be the people the student wants to go to when someone tries to pressure them into doing something they aren’t sure is okay to do.

- Parents can help their teen make another list of people who like and care about them. These should be people who do not pressure your teen into doing dangerous or harmful things.

- Parents can also help their teen to make a list of the teen’s friends, and ask their teen to put down what makes each friend a “good friend”, and what are some behaviours that each friend does that might be harmful or dangerous. Explain to your teen that the people who try to get them involved in dangerous or harmful activities might have some good qualities as friends, but that some of their behaviour puts themselves and others into unhelpful situations, which is not something that a very good friend would want to do to people they care about.

✓ **Role-play or discuss** situations that are examples of good and bad peer pressure, and ask the student what they do if they aren’t sure. Some ideas for example situations are given below:

- Peer asks you to help him steal from a store and says that everyone does it (BAD)
- Peer asks you to finish work you need to do so that you can go out with friends (GOOD)
- Peer asks you to leave work you haven’t finished so that you can go out with friends (BAD)
- Peer says they will be your friend if you pay them or buy them something (BAD)
- A group of peers says you need to be tough and break a school rule if you want to be part of their social group (BAD)
- Peer tells you that a girl/guy wants to go out with you and that you should ask them out (UNCLEAR – Ask someone you trust)
- Peer tells you that another person is mean and to avoid being friends with them (UNCLEAR – Ask someone you trust)

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggestions for how to do this include giving them verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g. "I like how assertive you were when you said “no” to your brother/sister when they asked you to take money from my purse. Thank-you for doing the right thing") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, extra time to watch T.V. or stay up/out with friends later).
e. Dealing with Rumours

Steps to This Skill

1. Sometimes people say mean things about you or other people that are not true. Sometimes people will say these mean things directly to the person, or behind their back.

2. Do not believe mean rumours about someone.

- If you are not sure whether something is true about someone, you can ask someone you trust, like a parent or close friend.

3. Do not spread a rumour by telling other people. It is hurtful and makes others upset.

Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? __________________________

When could I practice? __________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? __________________________

_____________________________________________________________
Suggested Activities for Dealing with Rumours

✓ Many youth do not realize the hurt that rumours can cause to others, or do not know whether to believe a rumour, and so they may need the advice of a parent of trusted friend to help them deal with it. Parents can help their teen by having them make a list of friends or adults they can trust to give helpful advice if they need it.

✓ **Role-play or discuss** situations that are examples of different types of rumours. If possible, use situations in your teen’s lives when they were not sure if the rumour was true or when they may have spread a rumour. For each situation, talk about how they might feel if the rumour was told about them. Some ideas of possible situations are given below:

- Peer tells you that someone tried to hurt themselves by cutting their wrists
- Peer tells someone else that you still wet the bed
- Peer tells you that your teacher does drugs
- Peer tells your girlfriend or boyfriend that they saw you with someone else on a date
- Peer tells someone that a terrorist attack is going to occur in the school tomorrow
- Peer tells someone who wasn’t in English class yesterday that there is a test today

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggestions for how to do this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g., "Thank-you for coming to me to tell me about this rumour and asking if is true. That is very mature of you.") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later).

---

**Practice Makes Perfect!**

Who could I practice this with? ______________________________________

When could I practice? _____________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ____________________________

______________________________________________________________
f. Dealing with Family Problems

Steps to This Skill

1. Typical family problems include:
   - Parents arguing/fighting, yelling, or criticizing
   - Brothers and sisters bothering each other, picking on each other, or taking/wrecking each other’s stuff without asking
   - Less attention or time for parents to spend with you because of work, divorce/separation, illness, or death

2. Ways of confronting family problems:
   - Good ways include:
     - Asserting yourself by using an “I” message so that you don’t cause more conflict
     - Talking to another adult who you trust who can talk to the person who is upsetting you or help you find another solution
     - Ignore any teasing by siblings so that you avoid a fight
     - Using your sense of humour to calm a family member down
   - Bad ways include:
     - Fighting, yelling, or criticizing back, because this causes more problems
     - Taking it out on other people by teasing, criticizing or hurting others
     - Keeping things bottled up inside and not talking about it with your family or someone you trust

3. Ways to escape or take a break from the problem
   - Good ways include:
     - Calling a friend to get together
     - Listening to music or watching T.V. in your room away from others
     - Taking a walk (but make sure to let people know where you are going)
     - Playing a video game or doing an activity to get your mind off of the problem
   - Bad ways include:
     - Running away (this causes more stress and worry for the people who care about you)
     - Trying or threatening to hurt yourself (this causes more stress and worry for the people who care about you)
Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? _________________________________________

When could I practice? __________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? __________________________________

Suggested Activities for Dealing with Family Problems

✓ This is a skill that can be helpful for adolescence through to adulthood. You may choose to role-play any of the situations listed under step 1 of the skill breakdown, but it sometimes is more useful to have your teen identify what problems they might be dealing with, and then help them create a plan to deal with the problems they identify. Then you can role-play the use of their plan for each problem they identified.

- Give your teen a piece of paper with three headings: Problem, Ways to Confront the Problem, and Ways to Escape the Problem
- Have your teen identify some family problems that they might deal with, and write these under the “Problem” heading
- Have your teen think about positive ways (examples in Step 2 of the skill breakdown) that might help them deal with the problem, and have them write this under the “Ways to Confront the Problem” heading
- Next, have your teen identify which positive strategies might help them escape the problem and have them write these under the “Ways to Escape the Problem” heading
- Now, take turns role-playing some of your teen’s problem situations and their plan to deal with them.

✓ Redirect Inappropriate Behaviour. If your teen uses inappropriate behaviour to deal with a problem, suggest a more positive way they might handle the problem.

✓ Always give praise or reward in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g., "That was great how you went to your room and listened to music while your mom/dad and I were arguing. That is a positive way to help get your mind off of things that bother you and make you feel better.") and points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., play a video game, or stay up/out with friends later) are ideas.
This Mood Menu gives examples of some of the different words we use to describe how we feel. It is very important to be able to understand how we and others around us are feeling, because this is a way we communicate with each other. The words in the above Feeling Menu are some of the most common words we use to explain our emotions/moods, and can be a guide when you get stuck and need ideas to describe how you are feeling.
b. Recognizing Your Feelings

*Journal Page*: Please have your teen fill this out.

**Steps to This Skill**

1. Date ________________________________

2. What happened (draw or write)?
   Example: During a group assignment in class a peer was calling me names and said that no one likes me and that I’m dumb OR My friends surprised me and took me for lunch today because it is my birthday.

3. What I felt when this happened (draw or write)?
   Example: This made me feel really crappy about myself, and I felt angry at the person for being so rude to me OR I felt happy and a little embarrassed

4. What I thought when this happened:
   Example thoughts about others: They didn’t mean it/it was on purpose OR they like me/they don’t like me
   Example thoughts about me: I am ok/something is wrong with me OR I am successful/I am a failure

5. How I tried to deal with this feeling
   Examples: I tried to talk to a friend. I tried to talk to the person bothering me. I did something I enjoy to make myself feel better. I tried to change my thoughts.
Suggested Activities for Recognizing Your Feelings

✓ Some youth have a hard time recognizing how they feel and labeling the feeling (“anger”, or “happiness”). They may also have difficulty recognizing other people’s facial expression, tone of voice, and situations that may be related to different feelings or moods. For these youth, explaining emotions and practicing the facial expressions and tones of voice that are related to different emotions is very important so that they can learn to communicate more clearly, and understand how others might feel.

✓ Look at the Mood Menu on the previous page, or cut pictures of people’s faces out of magazines that are showing different emotions (happy, sad, mad, scared).

   - Look at these pictures one at a time with your teen. Point out the different shapes of people’s mouths, eyes, eyebrows, and body positions, and explain what each person might be feeling.

✓ Role-play the different feelings in the pictures with your teen by choosing a picture, acting out the emotion, and having your teen guess how you are feeling. Switch roles and let your teen practice showing the emotions while you guess. This should be done without talking/using words.

   - Once your teen has a good understanding of basic emotions, introduce some of the less obvious emotions like feeling proud, guilty, confused, disgusted etc. and role-play these.

   - Try watching clips of favourite movies with your teen, and pausing when there is a clear emotion that you can discuss. Ask your teen if they noticed how the actor might be feeling, and why they might be feeling that way.

   - Another way might be to watch a TV show with your teen with the sound off and have them guess what the characters are feeling.

   - Try going to the mall and watching other people in the food court and have them guess what the people might be feeling, or create a story about what the people are saying to one another, concentrating on the feelings they are having.
c. Showing Understanding for Others’ Feelings

Steps to This Skill

1. Look for signs that the other person is feeling a certain emotion (e.g. angry, sad, excited, nervous)

2. Think about your choices:
   - Ask the person if they are ok, or if there is something they want to talk about
   - Ask what happened
   - Share a time when you felt something similar or were in a similar situation
     "I know how you feel, because something like this happened to me …"
   - Validate the other person’s feelings: this means letting them know that it’s normal for them to feel that way in their situation.
     "I would be ______ too if that happened to me.”
     "It makes sense that you feel this way given what you are dealing with”
   - If they have been given negative/hurtful information, tell them that they shouldn’t listen to others who are trying to bully them or make them feel bad.
   - If they feel as if they will never feel better, reassure them that they will.
     "You will feel better about it soon”
   - Ask the person if they’d like to do something fun to get their mind off of the problem or ask if you can help in any way. If the person is feeling very happy or excited, ask them if they’d like to do something fun to celebrate.

3. Do not laugh at the person or make fun of them. That will only make them more upset.

Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? __________________________________________

When could I practice? _________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ________________________________
Suggested Activities for Understanding Others’ Feelings

✓ **Role-play or discuss** the steps from the skill breakdown. Some ideas of possible situations are given below:

- Pretend someone is upset because they just got caught at school with drugs or alcohol. What could you do/say?
- Pretend someone gets bullied in front of their locker before classes start, and is sitting with their head down when the bell rings. What could you say/do?
- Pretend someone has lost something, and is upset and wants help finding it.
- Pretend someone is having a hard time with a school assignment and looks upset. Offer to help the student with their work.
- Pretend someone is upset because a friend said something rude about them. What should you say/do to try to make the person feel better?
- Pretend someone is upset because they are having family problems, and is getting yelled at by a parent as they get dropped off for school.

✓ **Apply the skill.** This means doing something to get your teen to practice the skill and show that they understand. For example, purposely look upset or lose something. Ask your teen or wait for them to ask if you are ok and if they can help.

✓ **Correct** inappropriate ways of showing understanding, like if your teen does not notice that someone is obviously upset, or tries too hard to help when the other person doesn’t want it.

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggestions for ways to do this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g. "I really liked how you asked your brother/sister what was wrong and offered to play with them to make them feel better. That was kind of you.") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later).
d. Anger  Facts Sheet

**Anger is a normal and healthy human emotion.**
Anger can be expressed verbally (e.g., yelling or swearing) and physically (e.g., smashing/breaking things). In some cases, anger might be shown in less obvious ways such as silence and withdrawal. Controlled anger can sometimes be helpful, by motivating us to make positive changes. But when anger is very extreme or very chronic, it can be harmful to our minds and our bodies.

**What Causes Anger?**
It is important to remember that anger is usually a secondary emotion. This means that some other emotion comes first, such as rejection, fear, guilt, shame, frustration, or sadness. Sometimes poor communication and misunderstandings can cause us to feel angry. These feelings that come before we get angry are called primary feelings. We always feel something else first before we get angry. Often, people find it hard to express these primary feelings, so the anger is all that is shown.

**What are the Signs of Anger?**
Our body gives us signs or body cues that we are getting angry. These can be physical signs like feeling your heart pound or getting red in the face, or external body language such as closed posture (shoulders slumped down, arms crossed, head down), frowning, and clenched fists. Recognizing these signs can be useful, because if you notice a body cue that you are beginning to feel angry, you then have the opportunity to do something to help you relax or calm down.

**Problems Associated With Anger**
Uncontrolled and chronic anger can cause many problems. It can lead to problems at school or work, in your personal relationships, with the law, and in the overall quality of your life. Some people who have frequent anger have low self-esteem, anxiety, or depression. There are also physical side effects of chronic anger, such as headaches, stomach aches, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

**Managing Your Anger**
The goal of anger management is to reduce both your emotional feelings and the physiological symptoms that anger causes. You can't get rid of, or avoid, the things or the people that enrage you, nor can you change them, but you can learn to control your reactions.

Created by Tara McGivern with assistance from Rose Cooney
Center for Clinical Interventions (CCI), 2008 referenced for some content
Graphics: Microsoft Office Clip Art
Coping With Anger

a. Understanding Anger

Steps to This Skill

1. What makes us angry?

   - **Trigger/Situation:** Something that happens to us or around us.
     *Example: being teased/bullied, making a mistake, waiting too long in a line*

   - **Thoughts:** How we understand what happened.
     *Example: if someone bumps into us, we might think it was on purpose, or we could think it was by accident.*

2. Create an “anger plan” to help you deal with things that trigger your anger.

   - **Make a list** of trigger situations so that you can prepare for them

   - **Try to change your thoughts** by thinking of positive ways you could understand the situation
     *Example: Maybe the other person is trying to help, did not mean it, or is just trying to get attention.*

   - **Distract yourself** from the trigger situations, and **calm yourself down**
     *Example: Remove yourself from the situation, count to 10, take three deep breaths, talk to a friend, listen to music, play a video game, or watch T.V.*

   - **Assert your feelings.** Tell the person how you feel using an “I” message.

     I feel __________________________________________________________
     (feeling word)

     When you ________________________________________________________,
     (What did the person do that bothered you? Be respectful)

     Because ________________________________________________________.
     (Describe why you feel that way)

     What I want you to do instead is _________________________________.

Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? _________________________________________

When could I practice? ________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ________________________________

Suggested Activities for Understanding Anger

✓ **Role-play or discuss** the steps from the skill breakdown. Some ideas of possible situations are topic ideas are listed below:

- Describe a trigger that makes you angry
- How are thoughts and feelings related?
- How can changing your thoughts change your feelings?
- If you made a mistake and got angry, how could you change your thoughts to alter your anger?
- How can you distract yourself when you are really angry (give three)?

✓ **Apply the skill.** This means doing something to get your teen to practice the skill and show that they understand. For example, say something that might bother your teen (nothing that will make them very hurt or angry), and ask them to use part of the skill (changing their thoughts, distraction, calming, or assertion).

✓ **Correct** inappropriate ways of controlling anger, and prompt your teen to use a distraction (e.g., music) or calming (e.g., counting with deep breathing) technique.

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen’s use of the skill. Verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g. "I really liked how you managed your anger when your little brother was teasing you. Good job distracting yourself by listening to your iPod") and points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later) are ideas.
b. Dealing With Other People’s Anger

Dealing With Other People’s Anger

What do you do?

➢ Don’t fuel their anger. Try not to say or do anything that will make the person angrier. If you lose your temper as well, this can make things worse.

➢ Empathize. Try to put yourself “in the other person’s shoes” and understand where their anger might be coming from. Try not to judge or blame the person for their anger.

➢ Remember that you are not to blame for the other person's anger. It is up to everyone to take responsibility for the way they choose to deal with their anger.

➢ Know when to back off. You can't change the way someone deals with his or her anger. Sometimes it is better to give them time alone to cool down.

➢ Don’t encourage or ignore destructive behaviour. If someone starts talking about hurting someone, destroying things, or venting their anger in destructive ways, don’t go along with it. Let them know you don’t support this behaviour. Get help from a trusted adult if you are worried that they may hurt themselves or someone else.

➢ Let the person know how you feel. Talk to the person about how their anger affects you. Use “I” messages. Discuss some anger management strategies that they could try.

➢ Hold the Person Responsible for their Behaviour. This does not mean that you do/say anything direct to the person to cause conflict, however there are natural and logical consequences when you are a victim of someone else’s anger (e.g., you may not want to spend time with this person or may not talk to them as often). The person should experience the consequences of their behaviour in order to prevent further aggression.
c. Keeping Calm

Steps to This Skill

1. Stop and count to 10.
   1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

2. Take three deep breaths
   1 2 3

3. Tell someone how you feel, using an “I” message (see p.30: “Coping With Anger”)

4. Do something to distract yourself or calm yourself down. (see p.30: “Coping With Anger”)

Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? ___________________________________________

When could I practice? _________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
Suggested Activities for Keeping Calm

✓ It is important to note the difference between KEEPING CALM before getting upset by dealing with the triggers that cause upset, and CALMING down when already upset. It is helpful to combine these approaches to give your teen both ways to prevent getting upset as well as ways to calm themselves down once they’ve already gotten upset, because getting upset cannot always be avoided.

✓ **Role-play or discuss** the steps from the skill breakdown. Some ideas of possible situations are topic ideas are listed below:

- Pretend you aren’t getting something you wanted (e.g., you wanted to go to a party, or out with friends for dinner or a movie, and your parents are saying “Not tonight, because…”)
- Pretend you are being asked to stop engaging in a favoured activity (e.g., playing a video game, listening to your iPod or MP3 player, or to get off of the Internet/Facebook) to come to dinner
- Pretend you lost something important to you (your iPod/MP3 player, your cell phone, your memory stick with an assignment that is due tomorrow)

✓ **Correct** inappropriate ways of controlling anger, and prompt your teen to use a distraction (music) or calming (counting with deep breathing) technique.

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggestions for ways to do this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g., "I really liked how you calmed yourself down after you got angry when you realized you’d lost your ____. I saw you take some deep breaths, and thought that was great. ") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later).
Problem Solving & Conflict Resolution

a. The 7 Steps to Problem Solving S.A.F.E. S.I.D.’s Way

1. **Specify the problem:**
   This involves clearly stating what the problem is

2. **Analyze the problem:**
   This involves learning as much about the problem as possible

3. **Formulate possible solutions:**
   This involves brainstorming a list of all of the possible ways you could solve the problem. Don’t be afraid to get creative!

4. **Evaluate possible solutions:**
   What are the pros and cons of each solution on your brainstorm list?

5. **Select a solution:**
   Choose the solution that you like best and that is the most practical

6. **Implement:**
   Put the solution you chose into action!

7. **Determine result:**
   After you have taken action and tried a solution, think about how it went. Is the problem solved? Did the solution work well? Would you change anything now about how you chose to solve the problem?

*Repeat steps as many times as needed to come to a good solution!*

Created by Tara McGivern
Graphics: Microsoft Office Clip Art
Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? _________________________________

When could I practice? ____________________________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? _________________________________

Suggested Activities for The 7 Steps to Problem Solving S.A.F.E S.I.D.’s Way

- **Role-play or discuss** the steps from the skill breakdown. Some ideas of possible problem situations are topic ideas are listed below:
  - A friend borrows some money and does not pay you back when they said they would.
  - You were out for dinner with your family and saw your boy/girlfriend out at the restaurant with another girl/guy.
  - You did an assignment for school, and then on the day it is due you forget it at home.
  - Your parents ask you to do them a favour and drive your little brother/sister to work for them on a night that you’ve already made plans (you can practice this one as if the parents knew about the plans, and as if they didn’t, and see if there might be different outcomes).

- **Apply the skill.** This means doing something to get your teen to practice the skill and show that they understand. For example, try actually asking your teen to do something for you on a night when you know they have plans (as in the role-play above), and wait for them or prompt them to use the problem solving steps to discuss this scheduling conflict with you. You may also wait until your teen comes to you to discuss a problem they are having, and sit down with them to practice the steps, writing it down on paper as you go.

- **Correct** inappropriate ways of expressing frustration like aggressive or passive responses, and redirect to be assertive.

- **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen’s use of the skill. Suggestions for ways to do this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g., "You did a great job of discussing that problem with me. I liked how you went through the steps out loud and came to a solution you were happy with.") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later).
a. Asserting Yourself

Steps to This Skill

1. Assertive: You try to get what you want without hurting others or being aggressive.

Aggressive: You try to get what you want in a way that is usually inappropriate and always hurts the other person.

Passive: You do not express your honest feelings, thoughts and beliefs, or you express them in an apologetic way, therefore you don’t usually get what you want.

2. Decide if you need to be assertive.

- Is someone asking you to do something dangerous or makes you look or feel bad?
- Do you want or need someone to do something?

3. Tell the other person what you want in an assertive way.

- Use a firm but friendly voice (not too quiet or too loud), make eye-contact, and show good posture (sit or stand up tall and straight, shoulders back and relaxed)
- Use an “I” statement:

  I feel _________________________________________________________________.

  When you ____________________________________________________________

  Because _____________________________________________________________.

  What I want you to do is _______________________________________________.

______________________________________________________________________
Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? _______________________________________

When could I practice? ________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ________________________________

Suggested Activities for Asserting Yourself

✓ **Role-play or discuss** the steps from the skill breakdown. Some ideas of possible situations are topic ideas are listed below:

- Someone borrows some money and does not pay you back when they said they would.
- Someone demands to do an activity that you do not want to do.
- You are doing a group project in school and no one is listening to your ideas.
- You are trying to get a job done at work/home and someone keeps interrupting you.

✓ **Apply the skill.** This means doing something to get your teen to practice the skill and show that they understand. For example, interrupt your teen a few times while they are doing their homework or cleaning their room, until they make an assertive statement asking you to stop. If they fail to do so after 5 interruptions, ask them to make the assertive “I” statement and remind them why this is important.

✓ **Correct** inappropriate ways of expressing frustration like aggressive or passive responses, and redirect to be assertive.

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggested ways for doing this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g. "I thought that was a very good assertive “I” statement you gave me when I was talking to you while you were trying to do your homework.") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later).
b. Giving Feedback

Steps to This Skill

1. Remember that nobody likes to be criticized or receive negative feedback.

2. If the person is able to change what they are doing, say something like:
   - “Can I make a suggestion?”
   If they say yes, then tell them in a respectful way what you want them to do differently,
   
   OR
   
   - Make an “I” statement.
   
   *I feel __________ when you __________, because __________. What I want you to do is/Why don’t you try _________ instead.*

3. If the person CANNOT change what they are doing, do not say anything.
   IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING POSITIVE TO SUGGEST, DON'T SAY ANYTHING AT ALL.
   - Try to cope with whatever it is that is bothering you by ignoring it, distracting yourself, or suggesting a solution that does not involve the other person.

Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? ____________________________________________

When could I practice? ___________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? _________________________________
Suggested Activities for Giving Feedback

✓ **Role-play or discuss** the steps from the skill breakdown. Discuss/practice situations where it would be appropriate to give feedback to another person and situations where it would not be appropriate. Some ideas of possible situations are topic ideas are listed below:

- A student in your class is asked to read/present and they do this very slowly which begins to annoy you. What should you do? *(Do not say anything, but quietly read ahead if you cannot wait)*
- A peer is in a wheelchair on a trip to a museum, and you are annoyed that they are slowing everyone down. *(Do not criticize, but maybe ask if they can go ahead with a staff member and meet up with the rest of the group later)*
- A peer keeps interrupting when someone else is talking. *(Use an “I” message to express annoyance at the interruptions)*
- A peer is bullying another student in front of the school at the end of the day. *(Use an “I” message)*

✓ **Apply the skill.** This means doing something to get your teen to practice the skill and show that they understand. For example, interrupt your teen several times when they are trying to talk to you or another family member. Wait or ask for them to use an “I” statement.

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g. "I thought that was great the way you used an “I” statement to tell your little brother to stop yelling at your sister.") and points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later) are ideas.
c. Accepting Feedback

Steps to This Skill

1. Remember to keep calm and try not to get angry. Try to listen to what the other person is saying, and remember that no one is ever perfect. We all make mistakes, and this is how we learn.

2. Decide if the feedback is constructive, or hurtful.

   - **Constructive Feedback:** Points out what you did wrong but focuses on what you can do to improve.

   - **Hurtful Feedback:** Only points out what you did wrong and offers no idea of how to improve.

3. If the feedback is constructive, say, “Okay, thank-you, I’ll think about that.”

4. If it is hurtful feedback, treat it like bullying and try to ignore it.

Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? ___________________________________

When could I practice? _____________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ___________________________

______________________________________________________________
Suggested Activities for Accepting Feedback

✓ **Role-play or discuss** the steps from the skill breakdown. Discuss/practice situations where your teen should accept feedback or correction, and discuss situations in which they should try to ignore the feedback or criticism.

- You are asked to stop interrupting during a conversation between your parents or two staff members at the school.
- You are asked to stop biting your fingernails to prevent getting an infection.
- You are asked to correct an assignment before you go out with friends.
- You are told that you draw/sing/dance badly (this should be treated as an insult and ignored or responded to as it were bullying).

✓ **Apply the skill.** This means doing something to get your teen to practice the skill and show that they understand. For example, ask your teen to correct their academic work, stating clearly what it is that could be corrected and how, and then ask them if they think this is constructive or hurtful. Discuss why it might be important to accept the feedback.

✓ **Correct** inappropriate reactions to feedback. Ask your teen if they thought it was constructive or hurtful and review why it might be important to accept the feedback.

✓ **Always give praise or reward** in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggested ways for doing this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g., "I thought that was a very good the way you accepted my feedback about your homework assignment improvements.") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later).
d. Having a Respectful Attitude

Steps to This Skill

**Respect means:** Having positive feelings for or good opinions about a person, place or thing (such as a parent or teacher, a city or country, or a sports team), and also specific actions and that show these positive feelings or good opinions. Respect can be a specific feeling of value for the actual qualities of a person (e.g., "I have respect for her ability to manage her emotions in tough situations"). It can also be behaviours that are looked upon positively (e.g., saying please, and thank-you, or listening when someone else is speaking). Rude behaviour is usually considered to show *disrespect.*

The chart below gives examples of some of the Do’s and Don’ts when trying to have a respectful attitude.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>+Do’s+</th>
<th>- Don’ts -</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respect personal distance: Keep an arm’s length away</td>
<td>Do <strong>NOT</strong> touch other people. There is no reason to get any closer than an arm’s length away unless sharing affection with family members or close friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use “request” words: “May I...?” “Could I...?” “Would it be okay if...?”</td>
<td>Do not use “demand” words: “Do ____ now!” “I will not...” “You should...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise or accommodate others</td>
<td>Do not demand to have it all your way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask permission before borrowing or using other people’s belongings</td>
<td>Do not touch other people’s belongings without permission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you are upset, ask to talk about how you feel with a trusted adult or friend</td>
<td>Do not act out your feelings by using a disrespectful tone of voice or rude words.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practice Makes Perfect!

Who could I practice this with? _________________________________________

When could I practice? _________________________________________________

What happened the first time I practiced? ________________________________

Suggested Activities for Having a Respectful Attitude

✓ Some teenagers who display antisocial behaviour understand how to be respectful, but choose not to because of chronic anger, depression, or ADHD. In these cases, it might be helpful to talk to your therapist in order to determine your teen’s needs more fully. For teens with occasional disrespectful attitudes and negative behaviours, or for those who might not fully understand how they are impacting others, this skill lesson can be useful.

✓ Role-play/discuss each of the skills outlined in “Having a Respectful Attitude”.

✓ Correct displays of disrespect. Explain to your teen what it was that they did that you found to be disrespectful by using an “I” statement, and give constructive feedback on how to improve. This may also be an opportunity for your teen to practice receiving constructive feedback, so make sure to acknowledge if they take the feedback in a positive way.

✓ Always give praise or reward in some way for your teen's use of the skill. Suggestions for ways to do this include giving verbal praise specific to what they did well (e.g., "You showed a very respectful attitude when you asked if you could have snack when you came home today, and didn’t just go digging around in the cupboards. I appreciate that.") and giving them points towards an end of the week reward (a movie or video game rental or purchase, or extra time to watch T.V., or stay up/out with friends later).
Section Three:

Watch Out for Roadblocks and Speed Bumps!
Anxiety can be a roadblock or a barrier to success when attempting to learn or improve any new skill, including social skills. Everyone experiences some form of anxiety at some time in their lives, and is a normal or common feeling to experience. However, when you are feeling very strong anxiety on a regular basis, it can become a problem in many areas of your life such as in your personal relationships, at work or school. Anxiety can come in different forms, such as a fear of an object or situation, or can be an overestimate of danger or underestimate of your ability to cope with the feared object or situation. Often, anxiety is dealt with by avoidance of the object or situation which causes fear, but this is not the most helpful way of managing anxiety and can, in fact, be more damaging than productive.

Social anxiety is used to describe anxiety that occurs in response to social situations, whether only thinking about a social situation or actually being in one. Often, people who experience social anxiety are worried about being embarrassed or humiliated in some way or that they will be evaluated negatively or criticized by others. When the fear of social situations causes you to avoid the situations altogether, this can cause lost friendships, jobs, or problems with family. Social skill building is extremely important for those who feel their social skills may not be as well developed as they’d like or for those who are not comfortable in social situations. There are also some methods that can be taught and used that can help decrease feelings of anxiety related to social situations.

The next two handouts outline methods (Progressive Muscle Relaxation and Diaphragmatic Breathing) that have been shown through research to be helpful in reducing anxious feelings when used properly and regularly. These methods have been broken down into step-by-step directions. It would be helpful to practice daily if possible in order to make sure that you are able to use the skill so that when you are confronted with a social situation that makes you uncomfortable, you can be ready to use the methods on the spot to help you cope. These methods may also be effective at reducing stress.

Note* You can also go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFwCKKa--18 to practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation with a video guide. This takes about 10 minutes.
STEPS TO PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION (PMR) EXERCISE

Progressive muscle relaxation exercises are relaxation techniques that involve progressively tensing and then relaxing muscles or muscle groups. You can read and record this relaxation script to record your own relaxation CD or learn to relax your body.

By tightening a muscle and then releasing, you can feel the difference between tense and relaxed. Actively engaging in progressive muscle relaxation exercises effectively loosens and relaxes the muscles.

Make sure not to do any movements that cause pain. If any of these exercises causes discomfort, ease up or stop to ensure that you do not cause muscle cramping or injury.

Start reading the guided PMR exercise script here:

Begin by finding a comfortable position sitting, standing, or lying down. You can change positions any time as needed during the progressive muscle relaxation exercises to make yourself more comfortable.

The first progressive muscle relaxation exercise is breathing. Breathe in forcefully and deeply, and hold this breath. Hold it...and now release. Let all the air go out slowly, and release all the tension. Take another deep breath in. Hold it.... and then exhale slowly, allowing the tension to leave your body with the air.

Now breathe even more slowly and gently... breathe in....hold....out......breathe in...hold...out...Continue to breathe slowly and gently. Allow your breathing to relax you.

The next progressive muscle relaxation exercise focuses on relaxing the muscles of your body.

Start with the large muscles of your legs. Tighten all the muscles of your legs. Tense the muscles further. Hold onto this tension. Feel how tight and tensed the muscles in your legs are right now. Squeeze the muscles harder, tighter... Continue to hold this tension. Feel the muscles wanting to give up this tension. Hold it for a few moments more.... and now relax. Let all the tension go. Feel the muscles in your legs going limp, loose, and relaxed. Notice how relaxed the muscles feel now. Feel the difference between tension and relaxation. Enjoy the pleasant feeling of relaxation in your legs.
Now focus on the muscles in your arms. Tighten your shoulders, upper arms, lower arms, and hands. Squeeze your hands into tight fists. Tense the muscles in your arms and hands as tightly as you can. Squeeze harder.... hold the tension in your arms, shoulders, and hands. Feel the tension in these muscles. Hold it for a few moments more.... and now release. Let the muscles of your shoulders, arms, and hands relax and go limp. Feel the relaxation as your shoulders lower into a comfortable position and your hands relax at your sides. Allow the muscles in your arms to relax completely.

Focus again on your breathing. Slow, even, regular breaths. Breathe in relaxation.... and breathe out tension..... in relaxation....and out tension.... Continue to breathe slowly and rhythmically.

Now focus on the muscles of your buttocks. Tighten these muscles as much as you can. Hold this tension..... and then release. Relax your muscles.

Tighten the muscles of your back now. Feel your back tightening, pulling your shoulders back and tensing the muscles along your spine. Arch your back slightly as you tighten these muscles. Hold.... and relax. Let all the tension go. Feel your back comfortably relaxing into a good and healthy posture.

Turn your attention now to the muscles of your chest and stomach. Tighten and tense these muscles. Tighten them further...hold this tension.... and release. Relax the muscles of your trunk.

Finally, tighten the muscles of your face. Scrunch your eyes shut tightly, wrinkle your nose, and tighten your cheeks and chin. Hold this tension in your face.... and relax. Release all the tension. Feel how relaxed your face is.

Notice all of the muscles in your body.... notice how relaxed your muscles fee l. Allow any last bits of tension to drain away. Enjoy the relaxation you are experiencing. Notice your calm breathing.... your relaxed muscles.... Enjoy the relaxation for a few moments....

When you are ready to return to your usual level of alertness and awareness, slowly begin to re-awaken your body. Wiggle your toes and fingers. Swing your arms gently. Shrug your shoulders. Stretch if you like.

You may now end this progressive muscle relaxation exercise feeling calm and refreshed.

Used with permission from: http://www.innerhealthstudio.com/progressive-muscle-relaxation-exercise.html
STEPS TO DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING EXERCISE

Stress, poor posture, and habit are some of the reasons we might not be breathing properly. Belly breathing, also called diaphragmatic breathing, is a simple deep breathing technique that teaches you how to use your diaphragm, a sheet of muscle at the bottom of your lungs and the most important muscle for breathing. It is often used as a complementary therapy for anxiety disorders and may also help to boost energy and stamina. The goal should be to breathe this way all of the time.

**Step 1: Calm Your Mind**

*How to do it:*
1. Sit in a chair, stand, or lie on your back.
2. Try to calm your mind. Forget about what you’re going to make for dinner tonight, and the emails you still have to respond to. Don’t force it, just let go of any thought that pops in your mind.

**Step 2: Improve Your Posture**

*How to do it:*
1. Sit up straight, imagining a string lifting up your chest.
2. As you try to improve your posture, you may find your muscles tensing up. Consciously try to release any tension from your body.

**Step 3: Breathe In Through Your Nose**

*How to do it:*
1. Place one hand flat against the abdomen.
2. Breathe in through your nose at an even rate.
3. Allow your abdomen to expand, rather than your upper chest. You should feel the hand on your abdomen being pushed away from your body as your abdomen rises.
4. Count silently starting from "one".

**Step 4: Breathe Out Through Your Mouth**

*How to do it:*
1. Breathe out slowly and evenly through your mouth.
2. Again, count silently. Exhalation should take about twice as long as inhalation. So if you counted to three when you inhaled, strive to count to six when you exhale, but don't force it.

**Step 5: Repeat Twice**

*How to do it:*
1. Repeat this sequence two more times.
2. If you feel light-headed at any time, you may be breathing too quickly. If you are standing, try practicing while sitting down.

Used with permission from:
http://altmedicine.about.com/od/optimumhealthessentials/ss/Belly_Breathing_5.htm
Positive Activities: The Big Brainstorm

To help your teen improve their social skills as well as to encourage them to build positive relationships with other teens, it is helpful for them to get involved in pro-social activities such as after school activities and groups, or community programs. The brainstorm below gives some ideas about what sorts of activities or programs you could consider as options for your teen.

Art or Cooking Classes

YMCA

Boys & Girls Club

Girl/Boy Scouts

Libraries

Museums

Churches

Academic enrichment programs

Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Volunteer positions in community

Community sports teams

Part-time job

Internship

After school sports/club

Created by Tara McGivern with Assistance from Rose Cooney
Community Resources

**Funding**

There are many resources within your community that can provide funding assistance for the costs of involving your teen in positive extracurricular activities. Also, some organizations offer their own financial assistance by reducing fees or waiving late fees, so if you aren’t sure about whether assistance is available it is always helpful to ask.

- **Making Play Possible**: 779 Chelsea St., Brockville, ON., K6V 6J8  
  613-498-4844 ext. 3022  
  OR 1-800-809-2494, ext. 3022

- **Positive Opportunity Partnerships**: 600 King St. East, Gananoque, ON., K7G 1H3  
  613-382-2248  
  Contact Person: Sue Smith

- **Champions for Kids**: Upper Canada District School Board: Contact the principle of the school your child attends for service.

- **Jump Start**: Contact your nearest Canadian Tire store for service

- **Summer Camp Subsidy**: If receiving O.D.S.P. or O.W. contact your worker.

  Community and Social Services:  
  Brockville: 613-342-3840 OR 1-800-267-8146  
  Gananoque: 613-382-8220 OR 1-866-880-8284  
  Prescott: 613-925-0001 OR 1800-406-0420

- **If your annual income is $40,000 or less, and you are not receiving O.W. or O.D.S.P., contact Making Play Possible.**
Community Organizations/Activities

- Brockville YMCA
  Address: 345 Park Street, Brockville, ON., K6V 5Y7
  Tel: (613) 342-7961
  Fax: (613) 342-8223
  Website: http://www.brockville.com/news-events.htm

- Brockville Public Library
  Address: 23 Buell St.; Box 100, Brockville, ON., K6V 5T7
  Tel: 613-342-3936
  Fax: 613-342-9598
  Website: http://www.brockvillelibrary.ca/index.htm

- Woodcock Youth Center – Cedarhaven
  Address: 3923 County Rd 26, Brockville, ON., K6V 5T2
  Tel: 613-498-3925
  Contact Person: Aliza Woodcock
  Website: http://www.woodcockyouthcentre.com/

- Gananoque Youth Center
  Address: 66 King St E., Gananoque, ON., K7G 2T6
  Tel: 613-382-6792
  Fax: 613-382-6792

- Gananoque Teen Choir & Band
  Tel: 613-382-3886
  Contact Person: Jay Mitler

- Gananoque Skate Park
  Address: 600 King St. E., Gananoque, ON.
  Tel: 613-382-2248

- Leo Boivin Community Center
  Address: 444 Prince Street, Prescott, ON.
  Tel: 613-925-2343
The Internet is a great resource for information. The following websites are resources that you may find beneficial, and if there are other topics you are interested in, you can search for them using search engines such as Google.ca, Ask.ca, or Yahoo.ca

- http://www.pitt.edu/~groups/main2.htm
- http://www.innerhealthstudio.com
- http://altmedicine.about.com/od/optimumhealthessentials/10_Basic_Steps_to_Wellness.htm
- http://www.ementalhealth.ca/leedsgrenville/en/_Mental_Health_Library_a44_b0.html
- http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca/parents/resources_parents.php
- http://mindyourmind.ca/
Section Four: Keeping up the Progress

Gone
Going,
Going,

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The Why’s & How’s of Maintenance & Generalization

Once you have taught your teen some of the skills in Section Two, and you have role-played and given feedback, praise, and rewarded your teen for their use of their new or improved skills, it might be important to think about how you are going to keep up the progress. How do you make sure that they maintain their positive gains, and generalize their skills to real-life situations? These are all great things to consider, and this section will help to explain why. There is also a tips sheet on the next page that outlines some ways you as the parent can help in keeping your teen’s progress going, or, in other words, keep them “growing out”, towards better social skills and, hopefully, as a result higher quality relationships with others.

Maintenance and Generalization Defined...

Maintenance is defined as keeping a new skill or behaviour going over time. For example, if you learned how to skate and then took the summer off, you might not maintain that new skill (you might be wobbly and need a few weeks practice to feel confident on your skates again) as well as if you had practiced over the summer at an indoor rink. The more you practice and use a skill that you have recently learned or want to improve, the better you will become at the skill, and the longer the positive results will last.

Generalization is when a new skill or behaviour is shown in different environments, with different people, or at different times from the one it was taught in. For example, if you learn to use polite manners at school such as saying “please” and “thank-you”, but you go home and make demands or requests without using these manners, this is not showing good generalization of your manner skills; however, if you used these manners in most environments such as home, school/work, the grocery store, etc. you are showing good generalization of your manner skills.

Why Maintenance and Generalization Matter...

Maintenance and generalization are important because they show that a skill or behaviour is well learned, and that the person is capable of repeating the skill or behaviour in most situations. It can be concerning, and even dangerous to maintain and generalize antisocial behaviours and attitudes, whereas maintenance and generalization of age-appropriate, pro-social, and often times expected (by communities/society) behaviours and skills is a positive goal in order to improve an individual’s quality of life, even if it is just one small skill at a time.
Tips on How to Encourage Maintenance & Generalization of Your Teen’s New & Improved Social Skills

✓ Practice, practice, practice. Continue to guide your teen through the skill, giving feedback on ways to improve (if needed). Look for opportunities to practice in real-life situations that might pop up in your home with family members or friends.

✓ Praise for good skill use. See examples of praise included in each “Suggested Activities” page in Section Two. Remember to be specific about what it is that they did that was well done.

✓ Reward. Let them earn their way to something a little more special or exciting than just verbal praise for the skills they find more challenging.
  - Each time they use the skill you’ve recently taught, you could give them a point for that day.
  - Keep track using a white board or chart somewhere they can see it, like the fridge.
  - When they reach 5 points (one a day for one school/work week) you could provide a small reward. *Keep in mind this should be affordable and realistic*
  - It may be best to focus on one skill at a time, and choose skills that they are having a more difficult time with to provide rewards for, as this shows them that earning the reward takes a certain amount of work or effort on their part.
  - See examples of possible rewards included in each “Suggested Activities” page in Section Two.

✓ It is also important to think about how to fade these rewards out or make them harder to earn, in order to help your teen start to use the skill without the need for a reward at the end of it.

  - Start by bumping up the number of points required to earn the reward (e.g., 10 points, or 2 a day for 5 days), meaning you are asking for the skill to occur more often. Continue to do this until you’ve reached a point where you only reward once every month or so, which is a more natural time frame.

✓ When you’ve seen your teen use a skill independently outside of the teaching situation, this is a sign that they understand the skill and have begun to generalize it to new environments or people! This is a sign of SUCCESS!
Section Five: It’s A Wrap!
What Else is in Your Tool Belt?

Now that you have come to the final section of this manual, it is time to consider what other “tools” you have available to you to help continue your teen’s movement towards “growing out”. Some things to think about when planning for continued maintenance of the gains your teen has made are:

- **Their support network**: Who is part of their group of friends or social acquaintances that is a positive influence? You can encourage further involvement with peers that fit this description.

- **Your support network**: Who is part of your life that can be used as a source of guidance, encouragement, or just an ear to listen?

- **School as a Resource**: Your teen’s school can be a great resource for assistance and support. Working with your teen’s school can help create a collaborative relationship between the home and school environments, which helps add more consistency to your teen’s rules, expectations, and routines.

- **Community Resources**: See the list provided in Section 4 for ideas for help with financial assistance, as well as resources for information from the Internet. Also, feel free to ask your current mental health provider about other resources in your community that you are not sure about.

**Conclusion**

As a final statement, it is important to thank-you for taking the time and making the effort to teach, practice with, and guide your teen “out” towards better social skills and more positive peer involvement. It is incredibly important that teens have this support and guidance throughout their adolescence and even into early adulthood in order to ensure their successful growth and development, and to prepare them to the best of your ability for the world that awaits them. Using any part of this manual was a deliberate step towards that goal, and you deserve to be appreciated for every step you take with your family towards positive changes. Thank-you for your participation, and it is hoped that you found this information and the methods included helpful.
References

Images (in order of appearance)

Title page: http://www.preschools4all.com/preschool-language-activities.html

All other images: Microsoft Word Clip Art

Books/Manuals


Web References


