Training Manual to Improve Social Skills in Children Aged Three to Seven Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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

Social skills have a large impact on an individual. Children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can experience difficulties with social skills from a young age. The current training manual aims to assist primary caregivers in teaching social skills to children with ASD by providing them with the necessary steps and materials. The training manual is written in language that can be understood by primary caregivers and is aimed at children between the ages of three and seven diagnosed with ASD. Five core social skills are addressed to meet the developmental needs of this age group. The five core social skills are, gaining attention, requesting, saying “Hi” and “Bye”, turn taking, and being a good sport. The training manual is divided into five modules, each targeting one of the five core social skills. This template was chosen so that staff members could provide primary caregivers with specific modules based on their individual needs. Each module contains a brief summary of the skill and how to determine whether a child may be struggling with it. There are also sample activities and social stories that can be used to teach the skill.
Acknowledgments

I would like to take this time to acknowledge the little girl that inspired me to work with children diagnosed with ASD. I was her camp leader for only one summer but she left a lasting impression on me. She is bright, full of life, and so sweet. Her Nanny was so supportive and was willing to do anything to teach me about the best ways to interact with her little one. There aren’t enough words to express how grateful I am to have met this wonderful family and will forever strive to make a difference the way that her Nanny is continuing to do so.

I would also like to thank my family, placement supervisors, and mentors for pushing me to be the best that I can be.
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Chapter I: Introduction

Ingersoll and Dvortcsak (2010) state that what is learned within a child diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder’s (ASD) home is potentially the most important when compared to within a school or clinical setting. This means that the primary caregiver potentially has the largest impact on the child’s learning. The definition for ASD is outlined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5) as a neurodevelopmental disorder which can be characterized by extensive and intense impairments pertaining to three developmental areas including lacking social-emotional skills, nonverbal behaviours, and relationship skills (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

As a young child, social communication involves making requests, demands, and using words to express what is observed (Myatich, 2014). Yet, as the child matures, social communication becomes more sophisticated as the child meets new individuals and experiences new environments (Myatich, 2014). Myatich (2014) expressed that children with more developed social skills have an easier time developing relationships and making friends at school. An important aspect of developing and continuing friendships is gaining the ability to identify the needs and concerns of others within social communications (Weiss & Theodore, 2011). Children diagnosed with ASD typically become fascinated with one area of interest that they can elaborate on during a conversation rather than learning new things (Baker, 2001). This can lead to the child not engaging in typical social skills due to the focus on one topic and the lack of interest in what others wish to talk about. It can be difficult for caregivers to witness their child having difficulties with learning language (Weiss et al., 2003). Primary caregivers can comprehend that further development can be compromised within social and academic areas when a child lacks age-appropriate skills in language (Weiss et al., 2003). It is also possible that children may struggle with negotiating, within the home and educational settings, if they do not possess social communication competencies (Weiss et al., 2003).

Social Skills Training (SST) has been commonly used as an intervention for children diagnosed with ASD in order to increase their communication skills (Dekker, Nauta, Mulder, Timmerman, & de Bildt, 2014). It has been illustrated that SST is effective and also produces improvements ranging from 60% - 70% (Gooding, 2007). There are an increasing number of studies indicating that children diagnosed with ASD are faced with elevated social difficulties within their everyday lives (Dekker, Nauta, Mulder, Timmerman, & de Bildt, 2014). Leaf et al. (2016) stated that primary caregivers and clinicians encounter two main challenges. The first was determining the skills that should be taught to the child diagnosed with ASD and the second was identifying the program best suited to implement in order to teach the chosen social skills (Leaf et al., 2016).

In order to ensure that children learn social skills at an early age, it is essential that the teaching strategies and materials are made accessible to primary caregivers in a format that is easily understood. This training manual will provide a resource for staff to easily navigate a broad range of materials and for primary caregivers to be provided with the required materials to continue teaching their child within natural environments.
Overview

The thesis contains four main chapters focused on the social skills training manual for primary caregivers. The first will be the literature that will evaluate the current research and social skills strategies. The methods section will outline in detail the materials used the method of delivery, intended participants and setting, and the evaluation component. The training manual will be the majority of the results chapter. The final chapter will be the discussion. This chapter will include the changes made after editing, limitations, anticipated challenges, the contribution to the behavioural psychology field, and recommendations.
Chapter II: Literature Review

It has been supported within research that children with ASD experience difficulties with social skills (Kemp, 2015). There are three main domains in which children diagnosed with ASD typically have difficulties. The first being social interactions with others, the second being communication, and the final area is repetitive behaviours (Baker, 2001). This does not mean that all children diagnosed with ASD will be affected in all three symptom areas to the same degree. A growing number of studies are indicating that children diagnosed with ASD experience higher levels of social challenges within their day to day lives than their peers without ASD (Deckers, Muris, Roelofs, & Arntz, 2016). Social challenges could include not knowing how to start a conversation appropriately, or feeling uncomfortable around groups of people. This makes the primary caregivers responsibility even larger in teaching appropriate social skills. Individuals diagnosed with ASD can experience social impairments in a wide variety of ways including speech to interpersonal interactions and many more (White, Keonig, & Scahill, 2007). Children diagnosed with ASD can at first experience challenges with imitating appropriate behaviours with in a social setting, and may require the need to first be taught the skill of imitating before they are taught to imitate their peers (Laushey & Heflin, 2000). The development of a child’s cognitive, social, and emotional abilities is dependent on their social skills (Bellini, Peters, Benner, & Hopf, 2007). Children diagnosed with ASD need direct and detailed instructions in order to cultivate social skills which are different from typically developing children (Myatich, 2014). Children can potentially withdraw or become socially isolated in life if their lack of social skills begins to impact their ability to create social relationships that are meaningful (Bellini, Peters, Benner, & Hopf, 2007). A primary caregiver can increase the amount of intervention that their child receives by knowing how to teach them (Ingersoll & Dvortcsak, 2010). If a child needs extensive teaching in social skills, it can lead to them not fitting in with their peers even at a young age. Rowley et al. (2012) also noted that children diagnosed with ASD have a higher chance of becoming the victim of bullying due to their lack of social understanding.

It is possible that children diagnosed with ASD won’t understand social norms leading to a need for the child to learn these, in order to be accepted by their peers (Halle, 2014). As children grow older, play-based socialization alters into verbal social interactions (Halle, 2014). Halle (2014) explains that children typically start to engage with their peer groups by talking. The author further explains that this transition in social development has the potential to be difficult for children diagnosed with ASD (Halle, 2014). The children must learn new methods for social interactions and moving away from play-based socialization to which they have previously become accustomed (Halle, 2014). The goal of Social Skills Training (SST) is to assist children in developing the skills that are both severely affected and are crucial for developing relationships (Dekker, Nauta, Mulder, Timmerman, & Bildt, 2014). Social deficits cannot be explained due to an absence of social interest for many individuals diagnosed with ASD (White, Keonig, & Scahill, 2007). White, Keonig, and Scahill (2007) explain that direct teaching within a group setting is a realistic intervention for children diagnosed with ASD since there is a potential that they lack the appropriate social skills as well as the opportunities to experience positive peer interactions. Yet, after the group is done, the child typically does not receive further teaching. Once the primary caregivers are taught the skills during the group they
can then generalize the teaching skills in order to teach their child more skills within the home environment.

One of the core difficulties that children diagnosed with ASD often face is understanding what is expected of them in social situations (Baker, 2001). Whereas in the same situations the social expectations may be clear to typically developing children. As children grow and begin to walk and talk, their social environment expands as they interact with adults and other children as well experiencing both positive and negative examples of behaviour (Dereli, 2009). Some of the common problems that can arise within social situations are difficulties with beginning or responding to communicative or play activities, struggles with utilizing or responding to peer’s nonverbal cues, difficulties in maintaining eye contact, difficulties reacting to peer’s feelings, as well as repeated failures in acquiring peer relationships (Baker, 2001). These social situations can be crucial in the child’s daily life as well as in acquiring new friendships. Being able to acquire and maintain friendships can be challenging for children diagnosed with ASD since learning and applying peer etiquette needs positive peer interactions as well as a best friend to model the skills (Laugeson, Frankel, Mogil, & Dillon, 2009). The easiest way for children to learn peer etiquette is from observing models. This means watching family and other peers interacting and the consequences that arise in every situation. Gantman, Kapp, Orenski, and Laugeson (2012) stated that a lack of social skills or social interest hinders the quality of a friendship. When a child displays a lack of interest in peers, the peers are more likely to not interact with them for the same amount of time had they shown more interest. Friendships are a fundamental aspect of being a child and learning. They can provide children diagnosed with ASD opportunities to cultivate and practice prosocial behaviours (Rowley et al., 2012). Rowley et al. (2012) defined prosocial behaviours as caring for each other, as well as displaying compassion and empathy. Laushey and Heflin (2000) indicated that low social skills hinder an individual’s ability to develop positive relationships.

Stanton-Chapman and Brown (2015) conducted a study on preschool children diagnosed with ASD in hopes to increase social communication skills. In the intervention, they focused on increasing five specific social communication skills. The first was initiating a verbal interaction with a peer, then responding to a peer verbally in an appropriate manner, and using appropriate proximity when playing and speaking with peers. The second social skill was using a peer’s name in order to gain their attention, followed by appropriate turn-taking. For the intervention, Stanton-Chapman and Brown (2015) used advanced play as a component. Advanced play was defined as the children being taught the words that would be targeted, teaching the children each role for each theme, the instructor would then read a story about the theme and teach them the appropriate social skills required, and finally the children would plan their play for that specific theme. Once the conversation and reading the story was finished, the children had the opportunity to play with the themed materials. The intervention was moderately to highly successful with increasing social communication skills. The authors noted that this study was not like any others due to the fact that the children were paired up together rather than with typically developing peers. They also noted that even with the different approach both children demonstrated increases in the language skills. This is especially important information for children who do not have opportunities to engage with typically developing peers at school (Stanton-Chapman and Brown, 2015).
Gresham, Elliott, and Kettler (2010) explained that it is essential to determine whether a child diagnosed with ASD has a performance or acquisition deficit pertaining to social skills. Gresham, Elliott, and Kettler (2010) further explained that clinicians must understand the nature of the challenges in order to be able to properly implement a treatment plan that will be the most beneficial for the child. Acquisition deficits can be linked to deficits within the child’s social-cognitive abilities or challenges in the discrimination of social events (Gresham, Elliott, & Kettler, 2010). In the simplest form, acquisition deficits are defined as a social skill that the child cannot do in optimal scenarios of motivation (Gresham, Elliott, & Kettler, 2010). This means that acquisition deficits in social skills are due to incorrect instructions or learning of the appropriate behaviour (Gresham, Elliott, & Kettler, 2010). Gresham, Elliott, and Kettler (2010) defined performance deficits in social skills as behaviours that the child is capable of doing, but will not. Performance deficits are due to challenges with motivation rather than learning (Gresham, Elliott, & Kettler, 2010).

Teaching social skills at a young age can help to reduce future difficulties as well as pre-teach skills for when they get older in order to prevent further deficits in this area. Both verbal and nonverbal behaviours are considered social skills (Myatich, 2014). Laushey and Heflin (2000) discussed that there are two methods to promote social interactions encompassing multiple variations. McGinnis and Goldstein defined the first category as being adult-mediated approach which means that the adult engages with the child diagnosed with ASD in a way that increases the skills which are beneficial for peer interactions (as cited in Laushey & Heflin, 2000). Hundert and Houghton described the second method as the peer-mediated approach which used a typically developing peer to teach social interaction to children diagnosed with ASD (Laushey & Heflin, 2000). Children diagnosed with ASD may demonstrate a lack in social skills that would identify them as being at a different skill level than their peers developing at a typical rate in preschool (Rao, Beidel, & Murray, 2008). Myatich (2014) explains that there are two different ways that social skills are represented, the first being the skills that can be directly observed for example, commenting and smiling, and the second way is a larger collection of behaviours that are harder if not impossible for another individual to directly observe. Social exclusion experienced by children who lack social communication skills can be detrimental for both short and long term social development (Weiss & Theodore, 2011). This highlights the importance of learning and teaching social skills as early as possible in order to reduce the long- and short-term effects. To learn social skills, the child must focus on the situation where the skills will be the most beneficial (Weiss & Theodore, 2011). Kemp (2015) identified some of the currently effective interventions focusing on social communication behaviours such as naturalistic interventions and social skills training. Tailoring treatment programs for the individual diagnosed with ASD requires evaluating all service opportunities in order to identify the least restrictive setting for the child (Laushey & Heflin, 2000). Not all treatment plans are effective for all children. The clinician must consider the child’s learning style, where they are on the autism spectrum, and what has worked best in the past in order to create an individualized intervention tailored for the child. Once the intervention is implemented it is also important to make changes to the program so that it is perfect and the most effective for the child.

Clinicians and professionals are indicating an increase in the use of social stories as an intervention for children diagnosed with ASD to increase social skills (Ali & Frederickson, 2006). Gray (2010) defines a Social Story as a document that describes an event, skill, or concept
A Social Story can be explained as a short story which is personalized for the child that it is intended for (Ali & Frederickson, 2006). Ali and Frederickson (2006) explained that it can be created by a primary caregiver or clinician and is used as a way to teach the child diagnosed with ASD how to regulate their behaviours while engaging in a social scenario. The Social Stories are typically created for social scenarios that the child experiences difficulty in and does not understand the expectations (Ali & Frederickson, 2006). Therefore, the story describes important details about the scenario to make the situation more predictable (Ali & Frederickson, 2006). If a child diagnosed with ASD is experiencing challenges with language, Social Stories provide benefits in that they display the information through visuals pertaining to real-life social events in textual and/or picture formats (Ali & Frederickson, 2006). Many children, both with and without disabilities, can benefit from learning with visual aids that act as a backup for verbal explanations (Baker, 2001). A large number of children diagnosed with ASD are commonly unsuccessful socially (Kamps et al., 1992). Kamps et al. (1992) explained that children with ASD often enjoy time alone, rigidly follow schedules, have minimal interest in others, and are persistent with certain topics. Sansosti, Powell-Smith, and Kincaid (2004) stated that interventions using Social Stories have indicated positive affects in children diagnosed with ASD pertaining to prosocial development since the 1990s. Social Stories focused on increasing social skills are being implemented more frequently for children diagnosed with ASD (Sansosti, Powell-Smith, & Kincaid, 2004). The fundamental purpose of a Social Story is to increase a child’s knowledge of social events and assist them in developing appropriate responses which are able to be practiced in the child’s everyday life (Sansosti, Powell-Smith, & Kincaid, 2004). Sansosti, Powell-Smith, and Kincaid (2004) believed that when using Social Stories, there should be an increase of comprehension and knowledge pertaining to questions for the social situations which could be more beneficial.

As stated above, the home is where children begin learning what is and is not appropriate pertaining to social communication. As a toddler, the home setting offers the maximum amount of opportunities for learning therefore, it is deemed most logical that service delivery is provided in home (Weiss & Theadore, 2011). Dereli (2009) indicates that the individuals that are the largest part of a child’s social environment, such as primary caregivers, are the most important in the position of teaching social skills. As children get older the service delivery shifts from the home to the school setting or other environments meaning that it is possible that the primary caregivers are no longer present during the time that the child is provided treatment (Weiss & Theadore, 2011). Academic growth can be negatively impacted in the future if a child does not develop their social skills (Myatich, 2014). Weiss and Theadore (2011) explain that this transition of environments that service is provided within can make it challenging for the professionals to maximize the involvement of the primary caregivers within treatment and can limit opportunities for the professionals to teach the techniques to the primary caregivers. This gap does not allow for the strategies to be generalized to the natural environment at home (Weiss & Theadore, 2011). It is vital that primary caregivers implement interventions with positive outcomes in order to increase social skills for children diagnosed with ASD including social interactions amongst the children and their typically developing peers (Kemp, 2015). Kemp (2015) emphasized that goals should be tailored to the specific child’s needs within the environment. Children are also learning from their peers or siblings. It is imperative that the treatments available are compared in order to classify which are the most effective interventions for teaching social skills to children diagnosed with ASD (Malmberg, Charlop, & Gershfeld,
Malmberg, Charlop, and Gershfeld (2015) also indicated that the interventions to teach skills used in the natural environment, for example home and school setting as well as with peers and siblings were more successful. Combining a natural environment and age appropriate peers or siblings allows for a teaching environment that is both safe and likely to have positive outcomes. The natural environment allows the child diagnosed with ASD to feel comfortable and calm. The peers or siblings provide a model for how to use social skills but also how to react in social situations.

Children diagnosed with ASD may need extra assistance when being taught how to perform certain social skills such as imitating, modeling, or remaining socially available (Laushey & Heflin, 2000). Teaching strategies need to be implemented to provide them the benefits within an inclusive environment (Laushey & Heflin, 2000). Children with disabilities may struggle with cultivating friendships within inclusive settings (Kemp, 2015). A large portion of evidence indicates that for children diagnosed with ASD, the acquisition as well as generalization of social skills demonstrates the highest difficulties (Gantman, Kapp, Orens, & Laugeson, 2012). Myatich (2014) discussed that it is common for children diagnosed with ASD to experience difficulties with social interactions that are both successful as well as age appropriate. When learning social skills that are appropriate, it can be extremely beneficial for children diagnosed with ASD to have opportunities to interact with peers that are typically developing (Laushey & Heflin, 2000). This allows the child opportunities to learn from their peer’s verbal and nonverbal actions. It has been stated that when a child successfully interacts with a peer while playing, that the interaction can assist with the development of a friendship (Myatich, 2014).

Based on previous research, many studies to date that utilized SST interventions neglected to include strategies that enhance the generalization of the skills taught or to provide details as to how much of the skills taught were generalized outside of the clinical setting (Deckers, Muris, Roelofs, & Arntz, 2016). It is important for a child to improve their social skills but it is equally important that they generalize the skills to natural environments. It was also noted that previous research lacked verification of whether a child mastered a social skill or not (Weinberger, & Barakat, 2007). Social Stories are typically monitored by the primary caregivers of the child and are focused on changes within frequency as well as intensity of the behaviour (Karkhaneh, Clark, Ospina, Seida, Smith, & Hartling, 2010). When a child diagnosed with ASD is sheltered from typically developing peers, it can impact their understanding of peer etiquette increasingly as they grow older (Laugeson, Frankel, Mogil, & Dillon, 2009). This means that the children will continue to fall farther behind in skill level when compared to their peers. Of the interventions targeting social skills that have been implemented for this population of individuals, many lack formal testing specific to increasing social competence or creating friendships as well as not being evaluated on social functioning in any environments other than a clinical setting (Laugeson, Frankel, Mogil, & Dillon, 2009).

The training manual will be developed in order to increase the support that primary caregivers receive within the home environment. The training manual will contain information specific to the skills that are age appropriate for their children and techniques to teach the skills. The Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) and Ottawa Children’s Treatment Centre (OCTC) Autism Services have many resources and curriculum that they use to teach social skills...
to children however, there is minimal information for this age range and what is available is very difficult to navigate. Creating a training manual with all the required resources to teach appropriate social skills to this age range will benefit the staff and reduce the amount of time they were previously using to find and prepare the materials needed. Primary caregivers also have a limited amount of resources that they can use to teach their children social skills. Creating the manual will allow the instructor therapists the opportunity to focus on one main goal in sessions and allow the primary caregivers to take modules home with them to implement in the natural environment.

**Word Count: 3,173**
Chapter III: Methodology

Participants

A training manual was created and tailored to the needs of primary caregivers with children diagnosed with ASD but not excluding other developmental diagnosis. The children presented a lack of social skills and were between the ages of three to six. This does not mean that older or younger children were excluded from benefiting from this resource; however, the content was focused on targeting skills that are age developmentally appropriate for this age range. The children participated in social skills groups or individual sessions with staff from the facility (CHEO and OCTC ABA Services). Primary caregivers were provided with modules from the training manual upon request, or if the instructional therapist believed it was beneficial.

The training manual targets essential foundational skills for children diagnosed with ASD to be able to flourish as they grow older. These skills are necessary for all children to learn in order to build more advanced and sophisticated skills in the future. Without these social skills children, can experience detrimental setbacks in their lives. The training manual provides general information on each of the skills. It is important to remember that these skills can have different functions depending on the behaviours that are observed for each child therefore it is cautioned that it is at the therapist’s discretion whether a primary caregiver receives specific modules.

The treatment manual was also used primarily as a supplementary resource to support primary caregivers after Autism Services had completed. It should not be used as an alternative for the group or individual services and should not be used at the same time as the Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) Services.

Design

The manual focused on the topic of social skills training and is divided into modules. It begins with an introduction segment containing general information about ASD, SST, and a disclaimer about the best way to utilize the training manual. The modules within the training manual are focused on foundational skills for children within the specified age range. The manual is designed in a manner that each module is self-sufficient so that the target module can be removed by a clinician who wishes to target the specific skill. Individualized programs are essential within the field of ABA. Students may have deficits in one area but not another. It is important to target the areas of difficulty, in order to be efficient and to target only essential goals.

The preliminary module is on gaining attention. The skill of gaining attention must be mastered in order for the child to succeed with the following modules. The second module is focused on requesting, which is also very important for a child to acquire. Within this module, the child has the ability to gain what they want immediately as soon as they ask. The third module teaches children skills in introductions and salutations. Skills demonstrated within this module will receive natural the reinforcement of attention. If a child is unable to gain attention they will not be able to practice this skill. Once they are able to practice the skill, it is seen as the introduction to conversation skills. The fourth module is focused on learning to take turns and
wait appropriately. This is also a very important skill to learn early as it will assist the child with making friends as they are introduced into more social situations. The final module is focused on sportsmanship. This will entail information on how to win and lose appropriately and will be paired with the previous module. Each module includes a variety of modules based on the module topic. Each module includes (a) a brief introduction and explanation of the skill, (b) a description of what the skill typically looks like or what behaviours indicate a lack in the specific skill, (c) tips for primary caregivers to teach the skill, (d) activities to contrive opportunities to practice the skill, as well as (e) a social story about the specific skill. The final section consists of additional resources that the primary caregivers can access for further information on ASD and SST.

Within the training manual there is an accumulation of the already existing information available within the agency. This aspect assists with the organization of the available resources and reduces the amount of time that the therapists previously spent preparing materials.

All information is based on the best practices from multiple other social skills articles and manuals. The language within the manual is easy to understand and implement for the primary caregivers. The social stories are easily understood by children. A disclaimer is placed at the beginning of the training manual and in each module to explain to the primary caregivers that it is important to only work on one skill at a time. A social validity interview is included at the end of the manual to assist the primary caregivers in deciding how beneficial the training manual was.

Supporting Information

Additional resources were used to compile the information required for the training manual modules. Instructor Therapists, Senior Therapists, and Clinical Supervisors were consulted for their knowledge and advice pertaining to the resources and information included in the modules. This advice included continuous feedback and recommendations specific to modules and activities. It was determined that the training manual would be beneficial for staff members in order to provide information that is easily understood, and able to be sent home with primary caregivers as well as to reduce the preparation time required for sessions specific to social skills training. Additional accessible information will also be reviewed and referenced in order to collect the maximum amount of information for the training manual. Each individual was asked for permission to utilize the information they provided and no objections were expressed. The training manual will not be able to be formally evaluated during the time of implementation due to time constraints.

Procedures

The training manual (Appendix A) is intended to be implemented at the child’s home and in natural environments. All the materials required to teach each skill are included within each module. Primary caregivers are given the entire module to take with them. Primary caregivers will also be provided with an evaluation sheet when provided with a module. The evaluation sheet connected with the training manual will allow for the agency to continue improving the modules. The evaluation sheet is focused on the curriculum provided within the training manual.
and will provide the caregiver an opportunity to provide feedback regarding what can be improved or changed to make the manual more efficient.

**Measures**

It is hypothesized that with the resources provided from the training manual, primary caregivers will be able to provide support to their children within the natural environment and the child’s social skills will be increased over time with practice. A social validity measure (Appendix B) was created to allow for staff’s feedback to be incorporated into the final copy of the training manual for primary caregivers. Staff with a (two year or more) history of completing social skills training will be asked to review the manual and fill in the social validity measure. This will allow feedback to strengthen the manual and ensure the manual is tailored to the needs of the agency.
Chapter IV: Results

The Training Manual to Improve Social Skills in Children Aged Three to Seven Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder can be found in Appendix A. This training manual’s intended purpose was to be used by primary caregivers as a resource to teach their children five core social skills. Staff members were also encouraged to use the manual as a supplementary resource for children with social skills goals. The training manual consists of five separate modules which outline and teach five of the core social skills for this age group.

The Manual and The Social Validity Measures (Appendix B) were distributed to two clinicians. Due to time constraints and heavy caseloads for staff members, only two social validity measures were completed and returned. Both readers stated that they believed that the training manual will be beneficial for both staff and primary caregivers. Staff were enthusiastic about the number of examples and resources within the training manual as well as how concisely it was written. Overall, the staff members believed that the training manual would be a great resource for the agency and to provide to primary caregivers.
Chapter V: Discussion

Overview

Primary caregivers receive support during treatment with various agencies, yet there are minimal resources that clinicians can provide the primary caregivers that can be used in the natural environment. There are some resources that clinicians provide primary caregivers with that can only provide minimal information or is in language that cannot be understood by the general public. Staff are frequently asked by primary caregivers for resources to continue teaching their children at their home. Research supports that what a child diagnosed with ASD learns within their home is potentially the most important when compared to within clinical settings (Ingersoll & Dvortcsak, 2010). Therefore, it is essential that primary caregivers have resources available to them.

This training manual was created to address the gap in resources available for primary caregivers. By providing a training manual tailored to primary caregivers, there is an increased likelihood that primary caregivers will become more confident in teaching their children at home and implement the teaching strategies provided by clinicians. The training manual provides modules based on teaching five core social skills for children diagnosed with ASD. Each module contains a description of the skill and how to identify it as well as resources that primary caregivers can utilize to teach the skill to their child. These resources are activities for both primary caregivers and children, and social stories. Feedback was collected from staff members which lead to minimal changes to the overall training manual.

Strengths

A major asset of this training manual is that it was written at a grade six reading level and in the absence of behavioural language, this means that it can be easily understood by primary caregivers. The training manual is also written in a way that primary caregivers should not only be able to understand the content, but also apply the strategies provided. Another strength of the manual is variety of materials. The training manual contains resources that guide the primary caregiver through the steps of teaching each of the social skills. The agency did not have any resources of this type that could be given to primary caregivers after their treatment was completed. The training manual was designed to be provided as an additional resource with the programs already being provided by the agency.

Another strength is that the modules are self-contained allowing priority skills to be pinpointed. This allows the staff members to provide primary caregivers with specific modules from the training manual based on the child’s needs rather than the entire training manual. With this structure, primary caregivers are less likely to become overwhelmed with information, enabling them to focus on just the information that can be beneficial for their child.

Limitations

The training manual contains a small variety of social skills. Due to time constraints, the manual only focuses on five core social skills specific to the age group. This means that it will...
not be beneficial to all families in need. The training manual also is not tailored for every child. Every child learns differently and is more receptive to certain teaching strategies. Video modeling could have been included to make the training manual even more beneficial for primary caregivers. Primary caregivers are also required to invest some time in learning how to create a social story and deciding how to phrase a social story so it is most beneficial for their child.

A major limitation is that due to time constraints the training manual could not be evaluated by primary caregivers therefore, there is no data to indicate that it is effective in doing what it is intended. There was also no feedback from primary caregivers to confirm that it can be easily understood and implemented.

**Contribution to Behavioural Psychology Field**

This training manual contributes to the behavioural psychology field by providing a resource that clinicians can give to primary caregivers to allow them to continue the delivery therapy in the child’s natural environment. This training manual helps primary caregivers to become more familiar and confident with behavioural approaches to teaching behaviours. It also teaches primary caregivers that learning these skills at a young age can benefit their child immensely as they grow older. Although the training manual is not extensive, it is the structure and core social skills to the training manual that can be used for all clients focusing on improving their social skills.

**Multilevel Challenges to Service Implementation Report**

**Overview of issue.** This report aims to discuss the challenges that families encounter while receiving services, as well as those that staff must navigate when providing services. These issues have an impact on the quality of service that is provided as well as the satisfaction that families experience. Families with high expectations and strict guidelines set by the Ministry may pose as barriers to service delivery and treatment programs.

**Client level.** Services should be individualized for every child to ensure that they are receiving appropriate and adequate services based on their needs. The different aspects of service delivery that should be customized for each child are the length of the session and the amount of sessions available. Due to the high demand of services, the Ministry only allows for therapists to provide a strict time frame to provide services and a small amount of sessions. This means that the service delivery is similar for all children but not ideal depending on a child’s individual needs.

**Program level.** Applied Behavioural Analysis programs are focused on providing primary caregivers with the teaching strategies to teach and change their child’s behaviours on their own. Due to the short time of service delivery, some primary caregivers may not believe the programs are working and not follow through after services are complete. This could lead to primary caregivers becoming frustrated and come by the next time they are offered service, they may still be working on the same goal. Depending on the goal and the skill level of the primary caregivers, this can impact their experience immensely.
**Organization level.** Families wait long duration of time between being placed on the wait list, intake, and service delivery. Families’ schedules and availability can change rapidly depending on multiple factors in their lives. Therapists are provided with the availability of the family at the time of intake and schedule when they can provide services accordingly. Therapists can provide limited flexibility to when they can provide services and have multiple rules they must follow when booking a family for service delivery. This makes it difficult for some families to accept the services they have waited so long to receive.

**Societal level.** Although society has come a long way, there is still a stigma around the diagnosis of ASD, as well as receiving therapy. Primary caregivers are faced with the tough decision of receiving services for assistance, or trying to learn the skills to teach their children on their own. Due to the many challenges that families face when their child is diagnosed with ASD, it is possible that they will not want others to know the diagnosis of their child so that the child remains treated equally. Primary caregivers should not be made to feel this pressure from society but rather should be encouraged to find ways to increase their child’s quality of life.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

In the future, it would be beneficial to expand the training manual to include more social skills. Five core social skills are addressed, however, there are many more advances social skills that could be included such as starting a conversation or accepting ‘no.’ This would allow for a larger population of primary caregivers to benefit from the use the training manual. Along with expanding the content, it is recommended to test the training manual. Social validity measures should be collected by primary caregivers based on their experience using the training manual, as well as incorporating the feedback to make the training manual even more tailored to primary caregivers. As stated in the limitations section, the addition of video modeling would also provide primary caregivers with more resources.

**Word Count: 6527**
References


Appendix A: Training Manual
Training Manual to Improve Social Skills in Children Aged Three to Seven Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Jessica Bass
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INTRODUCTION

It has been stated that what is learned within a child diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder’s (ASD) home is potentially the most important when compared to within a school or clinical setting\textsuperscript{1}. This means that the primary caregiver potentially has the largest impact on their child’s learning.

As a young child, social communication involves making requests, demands, and using words to express what is observed\textsuperscript{2}. Yet, as the child grows older, social communication also becomes more sophisticated as the child meets new individuals and experiences new environments\textsuperscript{2}. Children who have more developed social skills have an easier time developing relationships and making friends at school\textsuperscript{2}. An important aspect of developing and continuing friendships is gaining the ability to identify the needs and concerns of others in social interactions\textsuperscript{3}. Children diagnosed with ASD typically become fascinated with one area of interest that they can elaborate on during a conversation rather than learning new things\textsuperscript{4}. This can lead to the child not engaging in typical social skills due to the focus on one topic and the lack of interest in what others wish to talk about.

Social Skills Training (SST) has been commonly used as an intervention for children diagnosed with ASD in order to increase their communication skills\textsuperscript{5}. It has been demonstrated that SST is effective and also produces improvements ranging from 60\% - 70\%\textsuperscript{6}. There are an increasing amount of studies indicating that children diagnosed with ASD are faced with elevated social difficulties within their everyday lives\textsuperscript{5}.

In order to ensure that children learn social skills at an early age, it is essential that the teaching strategies and materials are made accessible to primary caregivers in a format that is easily understood. This training manual will provide a resource for staff to easily navigate a broad range of materials, and for primary caregivers to be provided with the necessary materials to continue teaching their child within natural environments.

In Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) prompting is a vital aspect to teaching a child a new skill. There are multiple different types of prompts. When teaching a new behaviour or skill it is recommended that the primary caregiver uses most to least prompting. This is because you want the child to be as successful as possible. In general, once they are successful with the prompts then the prompts can begin to be faded. The goal is to fade any prompts while ensuring the child is successful with the skill or behaviour and that the child then receives the natural reinforcement associated with the behaviour. Natural reinforcement is something that occurs immediately after the behaviour happens. For example, you want a toy, you ask for a turn, and then you get the toy. The natural reinforcement for asking for a toy is getting the toy.
PLEASE REMEMBER

It is very important to remember that your child is still a kid. They need time to play, relax, and do what they enjoy. These resources are not intended to all be taught at the same time or while your child is receiving services from Autism Services. Please be patient when working with your child. These skills are difficult to learn and your child will need your support to master them. It is recommended that you choose one skill that will be beneficial to your child but will not be extremely difficult. These are general teaching strategies to learn the skills but are not individualized to your child. You may need to adapt the teaching strategies as you see fit. These skills are focused on the age range of 3 to 6. This means that they are skills that children are expected to learn within this time. This does not mean that there is something wrong if your child is older and just learning these skills. It can be used for children of any age as long as it is appropriate for their developmental level. It is also important to know that these skills are not specifically designed for children diagnosed with ASD; they can be applied to all children.
MONDULE I: GAINING ATTENTION

Introduction

Children are required to gain the attention of others for any social interaction they want to have. This means that it is a fundamental skill to learn as early as possible to be able to practice other skills. A child needs to learn gaining attention before they can begin to practice more advanced social skills. If a child progresses before mastering this skill, it is not possible for them for fully learn the next skills or receive the proper natural reinforcement for performing the skill properly. The natural reinforcement for gaining attention of someone is simply getting that attention. It is more preferred to use natural reinforcement because it does not require any effort from others and it is immediate.

This way the situations are not too contrived and the child can practice the skills as they would in other environments. Following is information to identify the skill, tips and tricks, activities, and social stories.

What does it Look Like?

Below is a chart of questions to help identify whether your child is experiencing difficulties with this skill or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does your child:</th>
<th>YES / NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yell or make loud noises when they want someone’s attention?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you know that your child wants to talk to you but your back is turned, will they get your attention appropriately?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in inappropriate behaviours until you give them attention and then they stop?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to get someone’s attention but then start talking before they have the person’s attention?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below describes what this skill should look like typically.

**Gaining attention appropriately is:**

- Saying the person’s name before they start talking.
- Waiting for the person to look at them before they start talking.
- Touching a person on the shoulder or arm if their back is turned to the child.
- Speaking with an appropriate tone of voice (not yelling or whispering).

**Tips & Tricks**

- Do not give attention when your child engages in inappropriate behaviours.
- Give your child lots of attention when they get your attention appropriately.
- Model for your child how to get other’s attention appropriately.
- If they try to get your attention in an inappropriate manner, prompt them to get your attention in an appropriate way without giving them your attention.
  - **Example:** you have your back turned to your child. Your child starts yelling to get your attention. Without giving them eye contact, verbally prompt them to say your name or ‘excuse me’. Once they have done this appropriately, you can then give them your attention.
    - This can be very difficult and is not always possible in all situations. The important thing to remember is that if you stop giving your child attention when they engage in problem behaviour, and reinforce them when they try to gain your attention in an appropriate way, the inappropriate behaviour will decrease and they will learn the appropriate skill.

**How to Prompt**

This skill can be difficult to prompt depending on the expectation. If your child is verbally trying to get your attention, verbally prompt them. You want to match the prompt with the behaviour they are exhibiting. Also, if they are physically trying to get your attention, you will want to physically prompt them. Remember to prompt most to least when teaching the skill and then switch to least to most once they have learned it.
With physical prompts this order would be from least to most: gestural, model, partial, and then physical prompt. A diagram can be found below.

**Activities**

There are many steps to teaching a new skill. Outlined below are the recommended steps to teaching a new skill. It should be noted that all children learn differently, therefore not all of the activities may be appropriate for your child. They are simply ideas to use or adapt to best suit your child.

First it is recommended to explain what you are going to be teaching them as well as what the expectations are going to be. If they understand the skill, then your child may be more willing to practice. Make sure that you make the skill sound fun and important. Your child is not going to want to work, but if you make it sound more like a game they may be more willing to.

After explaining the expectations and details of the specific skill, you should then model the skill for your child before expecting them to begin practicing it. Modelling is a very important step. This allows your child to see what is expected of them. Your role as the primary caregiver is to pick an appropriate scenario to model and to find others to
help model the skill. You can use other adults, family members, or peers to help you model. When teaching a new skill, you should start with explaining the skill and the steps involved, role-playing and modelling the skill, and providing your child with corrective feedback.

These steps should be repeated multiple times until your child can perform the skill in natural environments without any prompting. Once your child is consistently performing the skill in one environment such as the home, begin teaching it in other environments or with other people to encourage generalization. Begin generalizing the skill slowly. Make sure that you also explain when the skill is expected in other environments other than the home.

- Create opportunities for your child to have to gain your attention for highly motivating activities or items.
  - **Example:** hold your child’s favourite snack or toy and play with it near them but do not look at them and be slightly turned away from them. This way they will have to get your attention in order to get what they want.
- Create opportunities for your child to see you gain others attention - modelling.
  - Have another adult pretend to be busy. You want to talk to this adult. Make sure that your child is near so they can be watching and listening. Get the other adult’s attention in an exaggerated but appropriate manner. Make it very obvious to your child what is and is not appropriate.
Suggested Activities for Getting Attention in Positive Ways

1. Sometimes it is wise to focus on only one example of positive and negative attention. If your child has a problem with getting other’s attention in negative ways, focus on what your child does (e.g., being too silly all the time) and one thing he/she could do instead (e.g., asking to play what the other children like to play).

2. After you teach the skill through explanation, use a game show approach to review the situations described in the skill. A favoured game show format is “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?” Have your child take turns answering questions that require them to describe ways to get attention and maintain friendships. Suggested questions are detailed below.
   a. Does getting attention mean that others will like you? (No, getting attention in negative ways will push people away).
   b. Will being silly all the time make people like you more? (No, if people tell you to stop being silly, you should do so to prevent them from getting annoyed with you).
   c. Name and show one positive way to get attention.
   d. Show a negative way to get attention and then tell what you could do instead to get attention in a positive way.
   e. Show another positive way to get attention and tell what you did.

3. Role-play the positive and negative ways to get attention. Your child can take turns acting out the different positive and negative ways while you guess what they are doing. This can be facilitated by drawing pictures of each negative and positive way to get attention on separate slips of paper. Your child can select a slip of paper and then enact what it shows to do.

4. Redirect negative ways to get attention to appropriate ways to maintain friendships.

5. Provide rewards for getting attention in positive ways or avoiding negative ways to get attention.
   a. Give verbal praise to your child when they get attention positively or avoid too much silliness.
   b. Give tokens, pennies, or points for periods in which your child got attention positively or avoided too much silliness. When he/she gets an agreed-upon number of tokens, give a special reward (e.g., snack, stickers, and privileges to play special game or watch special show). Remember that this should be something that they really like.
Steps to Getting Attention in Positive Ways

1. Attention is when people look at and listen to you.

   a. Positive attention is when people look at and listens to you and like what you are doing. Using positive ways to get attention helps you make and keep friends,

   b. Negative attention is when people look at and listens to you but do not like what you are doing. Negative ways to get attention can cause you to lose friends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Ways</th>
<th>Negative Ways</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen to others and ask questions about what they are discussing.</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 interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliment others.</td>
<td>Don’t insult others or bring up sensitive topics (topics that make others uncomfortable).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask to play something another person wants to do.</td>
<td>Don’t tell everyone what they should play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask to get together. If the person you ask says no, ask someone else.</td>
<td>Don’t get mad at others if they do not want to talk or get together with you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only tell a joke if others want to hear it. Say, “Do you want to hear a joke?”</td>
<td>Don’t say silly jokes over and over again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell the truth.</td>
<td>Don’t make up any stories that are not true. Don’t try to get others’ sympathy by pretending to be hurt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity Work Sheet

**Purpose:** This work sheet is designed to be used as a template for planning when to implement the teaching strategies and for recording how the child does.

**Date:** ________________________ **Targeted Skill:** ______________________________

Who did you practice with?
__________________________________________________________

Where did you practice?
__________________________________________________________

How did practice go?
__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

What will you do differently next time?
__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Was any progress made?
__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
Social Story

Following are the social stories that are recommended for this specific skill. Remember to read the social story with your child. If they are comfortable with it, you can have them follow along with their finger. Read the social stories with your child daily or directly before practicing the specific skill. You should read the social story with your child repeatedly in hopes that your child will overlearn the information. You also want to read them with your child before a tough situation where they can use the skill. Remember to also have your child practice the skill when you are reading or you can model it for them.

For this specific skill, it is recommended to practice every morning or when you know that your child will have to gain someone’s attention. This way the information is fresh in their mind and will act as a prompt for the appropriate behaviour. Reading the story consistently each day can ensure that your child knows what is expected of them.

It is important to remember that every child is individual. The social stories provided are excellent examples for the skill but may need to be adapted to best meet the needs of your child. Below are the steps to creating a social story that is customized for your child.

How to Make a Social Story

1. Make sure that your child will be able to read or understand the story.
2. It should be in first person.
3. Keep it concise. You don’t want to provide too much information.
4. Make sure it is positive and happy.
5. Keep it short. Either one page with large font or a slide show with one sentence on each page.
6. Get straight to the point of how to perform the skill.
7. Add pictures but make sure that they are not too distracting. The pictures should also be relevant to what the social story is referring to.
8. For more information, you can look at some examples and further instructions at http://carolgraysocialstories.com/
Getting my Friend’s Attention
If I want to say hello, but my friend is not looking at me. I need to get their attention.
If I want to get someone’s attention, I can:
1. Look at the person
2. Say their name
3. Move towards them
3. Tap them on the shoulder, and/or
4. Say “excuse me”
When getting someone’s attention, I should remember to give them their personal space.
After I try to get their attention, I should wait for them to look at me before I say “hi” or start to talk with them. I know I have their attention when they are looking at me.
Getting other’s Attention

My name is ____________ and I love playing with toys.

Sometimes I have a hard time getting other’s attention. This makes me angry. When I feel angry, I can squeeze my hands or take a deep breath. To get someone’s attention I can say their name, tap them on the shoulder, or wait until they are looking at me.

When I get someone’s attention in a positive way they will want to listen to me and will be so happy with me. My family and friends will be so proud of me when I get someone’s attention in a nice way.
MODULE II: REQUESTING

Introduction

Requesting is a foundational part of verbal communication. As adults, we request items multiple times a day. If a child wants something but does not have the appropriate skills to request for it, some problem behaviours may be observed. Therefore, it is important to teach your child how to request appropriately in order to ensure that they can get what they want in a timely manner. Following is information to identify the skill, tips and tricks, activities, and social stories. When your child learns to request appropriately, it will make them much less frustrated when they are trying to ask for something they need or want.

What does it Look Like?

Below is a chart of questions to help identify whether your child is experiencing difficulties with this skill or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does your child:</th>
<th>YES / NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take things from others?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yell or scream when they want something they don’t have?</td>
<td>YES / NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you give your child something they want when they yell or scream for it?</td>
<td>YES / NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request for things over and over again?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below describes what this skill should look like typically.

**Requesting appropriately is:**

- Using words to ask for what they want.
- Pointing to what they want.
Tips & Tricks

• If your child asks appropriately, make sure they get what they want immediately.
• Freebies are very important.
  o A freebie is giving your child what they want for free without them having to ask for it.
  o Remember it is unrealistic to expect your child to request for everything they want.
  o If you want to get them interested in something, first give them a few freebies, play with them and make the activity fun, and then begin requiring them to request.
• Focus on only a few requests at a time.
  o These should be for your child’s favourite things.
• Start with items, activities, and actions that your child enjoys the most and then introduce more requests slowly.
  o The more they like something, the more motivation they will have to get it.

How to Prompt

This skill can be difficult to prompt depending on the expectation. If your child is verbally trying to request for something, verbally prompt them. You want to match the prompt with the behaviour they are exhibiting. Also, if they are physically trying to request for something (pointing), you will want to physically prompt them. Remember to prompt most to least when teaching the skill and then switch to least to most once they have learned it. With physical prompts this order would be from least to most: gestural, model, partial, and then physical prompt. A diagram can be found below.
There are many steps to teaching a new skill. Outlined below are the recommended steps to teaching a new skill. It should be noted that all children learn differently, therefore not all of the activities may be appropriate for your child. They are simply ideas to use or adapt to best suit your child.

First it is recommended to explain what you are going to be teaching them as well as what the expectations are going to be. If they understand the skill, then your child may be more willing to practice. Make sure that you make the skill sound fun and important. Your child is not going to want to work, but if you make it sound more like a game they may be more willing to.

After explaining the expectations and details of the specific skill, you should then model the skill for your child before expecting them to begin practicing it. Modelling is a very important step. This allows your child to see what is expected of them. Your role as the primary caregiver is to pick an appropriate scenario to model and to find others to help model the skill. You can use other adults, family members, or peers to help you model. When teaching a new skill, you should start with explaining the skill and the
steps involved, role-playing and modelling the skill, and providing your child with corrective feedback. These steps should be repeated multiple times until your child can perform the skill in natural environments without any prompting. Once your child is consistently performing the skill in one environment such as the home, begin teaching it in other environments or with other people to encourage generalization. Begin generalizing the skill slowly. Make sure that you also explain when the skill is expected in other environments other than the home.

- It is important to begin teaching your child how to request by starting with items or activities that your child really enjoys. Below is a list to complete with items that would be the easiest to start teaching requesting with.

  **Example:** you know your child loves to play with blocks, give your child a few blocks and then keep the rest of them with you.

  1. Start by giving your child the blocks and repeating “block” as you hand them to your child. This gives them the verbal phrase that you expect them to say.
  2. When they reach for more blocks, hold the block out of their reach and say “block” in hopes that your child will echo you. If they echo you, give them a couple blocks and a lot of praise. This increases their knowledge of what you are asking for and they will be more likely to request again.
  3. Once they are echoing you, hold the block out of reach, pause, and wait for them to say the request independently. If they say the request independently, give them a few blocks and lots of praise again.
     a. If the child does not request, move down a step to make the request easier. Remember, you want them to be successful.
  4. Once your child is consistently requesting for the blocks, you can begin to introduce more items to request for.
Choosing Requests

* Remember to choose things that your child really enjoys.

1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________
4. __________________________________________
**Suggested Activities for Requesting**

1. Sometimes it is wise to focus on only using one word to request for something even if when your child speaks they can form small sentences. Start with one word and as they experience success, then increase the difficulty by expecting more words.

2. Bait the skill.
   a. Play with your child’s favourite toys. Only give him/her a few of the toys and you play with the rest. If they reach for one of the toys that you are playing with, prompt him/her to ask for it.
   b. Make your child’s favourite snack. Only give him/her a little bit of the snack. They will have to request for more.
   c. Find an action that your child enjoys (e.g., blowing bubbles, spinning, tickling, etc.). Start playing with your child doing the action and then pause so that they have to request to keep playing.

3. Correct inappropriate requests. Some children will be resistant to having to verbally request for something they have previously received with little effort. If this is experienced, provide more prompts and freebies so that they are successful and then increase the difficulty slowly.

4. Provide rewards for appropriate requesting.
   a. Give verbal praise for correct or partially correct requesting and give them the object or action they want immediately.
   b. For appropriate requests, allow your child more time with the preferred item they are requesting for before making them request again. Remember that this should be something that they really like.
Activity Work Sheet

**Purpose:** This work sheet is designed to be used as a template for planning when to implement the teaching strategies and for recording how the child does.

**Date:** ______________________  **Targeted Skill:** __________________________

Who did you practice with?
____________________________________________________________________

Where did you practice?
____________________________________________________________________

How did practice go?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

What will you do differently next time?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Was any progress made?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
Social Story

Following are the social stories that are recommended for this specific skill. Remember to read the social story with your child. If they are comfortable with it, you can have them follow along with their finger. Read the social stories with your child daily or directly before practicing the specific skill. You should read the social story with your child repeatedly in hopes that your child will overlearn the information. You also want to read them with your child before a tough situation where they can use the skill. Remember to also have your child practice the skill when you are reading or you can model it for them.

It is recommended that you read this social story with your child at the same time every day or when you know that your child will have to request for something. This way the information is fresh in their mind and will act as a prompt for the appropriate behaviour. Reading the story consistently each day can ensure that your child knows what is expected of them.

It is important to remember that every child is individual. The social stories provided are excellent examples for the skill but may need to be adapted to best meet the needs of your child. Below are the steps to creating a social story that is customized for your child.

How to Make a Social Story

1. Make sure that your child will be able to read or understand the story.
2. It should be in first person.
3. Keep it concise. You don’t want to provide too much information.
4. Make sure it is positive and happy.
5. Keep it short. Either one page with large font or a slide show with one sentence on each page.
6. Get straight to the point of how to perform the skill.
7. Add pictures but make sure that they are not too distracting. The pictures should also be relevant to what the social story is referring to.
8. For more information, you can look at some examples and further instructions at [http://carolgraysocialstories.com/](http://carolgraysocialstories.com/)
USING MY WORDS

A SOCIAL STORY BY: TOUCH AUTISM APPS
Sometimes I feel hungry or tired, or sometimes I want to play or take a break.
It's OK to feel whatever I am feeling, I just need to remember to use my words to tell someone.
IF I use my words and tell someone what I want, then they will be able to help me and I will feel better!
When I want to eat I say “I want to eat.”

I want to eat.
When I want to drink I say “I want to drink.”

I want to drink
When I want a book I say
“I want a book.”

I want a book
When I want some help I say “I want help.”

Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) & Ottawa Children’s Treatment Center (OCTC), retrieved in November, 2016.
When I want to use the bathroom I say “I want bathroom.”

I want bathroom
When I want some more I say “I want some more.”
When I want a break I say “I want a break.”

2 + 14 =

I want a break
When I’m all done I say “I’m all done.”

I’m all done
When I use my words it is easy to get what I need!

I want a toy

Here you go
Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) & Ottawa Children’s Treatment Center (OCTC), retrieved in November, 2016.
Asking

My name is ___________ and I love talking. If I use my words I can get what I want quickly.

Sometimes I forget to use my words to ask for things that I want. If I am hungry or want to play with a toy I have to remember to ask for them. I can ask by saying what it is, saying “Can I have that”, or pointing. I have to remember to stay calm if someone doesn’t hear me or if I am not allowed to have what I want.

My friends and family will be so happy and proud with me if I remember to ask for things that I want and stay calm.
MODULE III: SAYING “HI” OR “BYE”

Introduction

One social norm in society is greeting others when you see them, introducing yourself, and saying goodbye when someone leaves. It is seen as polite and is an expectation. Therefore, your child is also expected to follow these expectations. Learning these skills can be viewed as the introduction to conversation with others. When an individual greets another, they open the communication line for further communication with that individual. Teaching these skills can help your child with furthering their communication with others. Following is information to identify the skill, tips and tricks, activities, and social stories.

What does it Look Like?

Below is a chart of questions to help identify whether your child is experiencing difficulties with this skill or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does your child:</th>
<th>YES / NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Say “hi” when they see someone familiar?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If someone says “hi” to your child, will they say “hi” back?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignore others when they say “hi” to them?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave the room without letting anyone know?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below describes what this skill should look like typically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saying “Hi” or “Bye” appropriately is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Saying “hi” or “bye” soon after you see a person for the first time that day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Look at the person and smile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Orient your body towards the person.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• If they cannot hear you, wave to the person and smile.
• Introducing yourself by saying your name.
• Saying “Good bye when you leave a place or when you see someone leaving.

Some thoughtful information on greetings:
• It is both friendly as well as polite to greet someone in some form when you see a person familiar in the day.
• Say “Good morning” when you see someone for the first time in the morning.
• Say “Hi” if you walk past someone.
• Say “Good bye” in some form if you see someone leaving.

Some thoughtful information on introducing yourself:
• When you are in a situation where you must meet someone new, is the time to introduce yourself.
• Remember to make eye contact.
• Say your name as well as ask what their name is.

Tips & Tricks
• Remind your child to say “hi” or “bye” before they have the opportunity to.
• Let them know the benefits of saying “Hi” and “Bye” to other.
  o Example: for safety reasons in case of a fire alarm, it is polite, it makes others happy, you can make new friends, etc.
• Remind them to introduce themselves.

How to Prompt
This skill can be difficult to prompt depending on the expectation. If your child is verbally greeting someone, verbally prompt them. You want to match the prompt with the behaviour they are exhibiting. Also, if they are physically trying to greet someone, you will want to physically prompt them. Remember to prompt most to least when teaching the skill and then switch to least to most once they have learned it. With
physical prompts this order would be from least to most: gestural, model, partial, and then physical prompt. A diagram can be found below.

Activities

There are many steps to teaching a new skill. Outlined below are the recommended steps to teaching a new skill. It should be noted that all children learn differently, therefore not all of the activities may be appropriate for your child. They are simply ideas to use or adapt to best suit your child.

First it is recommended to explain what you are going to be teaching them as well as what the expectations are going to be. If they understand the skill, then your child may be more willing to practice. Make sure that you make the skill sound fun and important. Your child is not going to want to work, but if you make it sound more like a game they may be more willing to.

After explaining the expectations and details of the specific skill, you should then model the skill for your child before expecting them to begin practicing it. Modelling is a very important step. This allows your child to see what is expected of them. Your role as the primary caregiver is to pick an appropriate scenario to model and to find others to
help model the skill. You can use other adults, family members, or peers to help you model. When teaching a new skill, you should start with explaining the skill and the steps involved, role-playing and modelling the skill, and providing your child with corrective feedback.

These steps should be repeated multiple times until your child can perform the skill in natural environments without any prompting. Once your child is consistently performing the skill in one environment such as the home, begin teaching it in other environments or with other people to encourage generalization. Begin generalizing the skill slowly. Make sure that you also explain when the skill is expected in other environments other than the home.

- Make a point to greet people when they enter a room and say “Good bye” when they leave. Add extra enthusiasm so that your child recognizes what you are doing and is more likely to copy.

**Example:** sit with your child in the living room of your house. Invite guests to your house or have family members come to the door. After you have let them in and have greeted them in front of your child, pause to see if your child greets them or not. If they do not, verbally prompt them to say “hello”.
Suggested Activities for Greetings

1. Model and role-play the skill using the following situations.
   a. Pretend it is the first time your child sees his/her teacher and friends in the morning. Role-play the correct way in which you say hello and good morning. Point out the wrong way in which you either do not say hello or say it over and over to the same person.
   b. Pretend to pass someone in the hallway. Practice saying, “hello” or waving hello.
   c. Pretend it is the end of the school day or guests at your house are leaving. Role-play the correct way in which you say goodbye. Point out the wrong way in which you either do not say goodbye or you say it over and over to the same person.

2. Bait the skill. Purposefully walk close to your child first thing in the morning and do not say anything, waiting for them to say hello first. Do the same thing when your child is leaving for the day and it is appropriate to say goodbye. If nothing is said, make the greeting and wait for them to respond. If nothing is said again, prompt them to make the greeting.

3. Provide corrective feedback when your child does not make a greeting.

4. Provide rewards for appropriate greetings.
   a. Give verbal praise for correct or partially correct greetings.
   b. Give tokens, pennies, or points every time your child makes an appropriate greeting. When he/she gets an agreed-upon number of tokens (e.g., five tokens), give a special reward (e.g., snack, stickers, or privileges to play a special game). Remember that this should be something that they really like.
Suggested Activities for Introducing Yourself and Others

1. Role-play the steps for introductions. Suggested role-plays involve the following scenarios:
   a. Have your child pretend to introduce themselves to new children in class or to children the meet in the park.
   b. Have your child pretend to meet adult friends of their parents, teachers, or community leaders.
   c. Have your child pretend to introduce their friends to their parents and vice versa.
   d. Have your child pretend to introduce their old friends to new friends.

2. Prompt your child to introduce themselves to any new individual in class or at home. Prompt your child to refrain from introducing themselves to the same people more than once, or to strangers with whom they will have no continuing relationship or no basis for friendship.

3. Bait the use if the skill. Have new people purposefully come to the classroom or home, and then prompt the use of the skill.

4. Provide rewards for appropriate introductions.
   a. Give verbal praise for correct or partially correct introductions.
   b. Give tokens, pennies, or points for instances in which your child appropriately introduces him/herself. When he/she gets an agreed-upon number of tokens, give a special reward (e.g., snack, stickers, and privileges to play special game or watch special show). Remember that this should be something that they really like.
Activity Work Sheet

**Purpose:** This work sheet is designed to be used as a template for planning when to implement the teaching strategies and for recording how the child does.

**Date:** ______________________  **Targeted Skill:** ______________________________

Who did you practice with?
____________________________________________________________________

Where did you practice?
____________________________________________________________________

How did practice go?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

What will you do differently next time?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Was any progress made?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
Social Story

Following are the social stories that are recommended for this specific skill. Remember to read the social story with your child. If they are comfortable with it, you can have them follow along with their finger. Read the social stories with your child daily or directly before practicing the specific skill. You should read the social story with your child repeatedly in hopes that your child will overlearn the information. You also want to read them with your child before a tough situation where they can use the skill. Remember to also have your child practice the skill when you are reading or you can model it for them.

It is recommended that you read this social story with your child in the morning before they will have the opportunity to greet anyone but also before they leave somewhere before they have the opportunity to say goodbye. This way the information is fresh in their mind and will act as a prompt for the appropriate behaviour. Reading the story consistently each day can ensure that your child knows what is expected of them.

It is important to remember that every child is individual. The social stories provided are excellent examples for the skill but may need to be adapted to best meet the needs of your child. Below are the steps to creating a social story that is customized for your child.

How to Make a Social Story

1. Make sure that your child will be able to read or understand the story.
2. It should be in first person.
3. Keep it concise. You don’t want to provide too much information.
4. Make sure it is positive and happy.
5. Keep it short. Either one page with large font or a slide show with one sentence on each page.
6. Get straight to the point of how to perform the skill.
7. Add pictures but make sure that they are not too distracting. The pictures should also be relevant to what the social story is referring to.
8. For more information, you can look at some examples and further instructions at http://carolgraysocialstories.com/
Greetings my Friends
When I see someone for the first time:
I can say “Hi”!!
If someone says “Hi” to me, I can say, “Hi” back and smile.
If I am interested in talking to the person, I can say, "Hey, how are you"?
If someone says “How are you?” to me, this means they want to talk.
I can continue talking by saying, “I’m fine, how are you?”
SAYING “HELLO”/GREETINGS

A SOCIAL STORY BY: TOUCH AUTISM APPS
People like it when I greet them. Greeting someone is saying “hi”, “hello” or “good morning.”
There are lots of times during the day when I can greet people.
I can say “good morning” to my family when I get up in the morning.
I can say “hi” to my bus driver.
I can say “hello” to my Friends and teachers when I get to school.
I can even say “hi” to people I see in the hallway.
I can say “hello” to new people that I meet.
It makes people happy when you say “hi” “hello” or “good morning” to them. I will try to greet the people I see during the day.
Greetings
By Jed Baker
In the morning, the first time you see someone you should say, "Good morning."

Right Way
The first time the student sees her teacher in the morning, she says, "Good morning."

Wrong Way
The first time the girl sees her teacher in the morning, she says nothing.

HINT
Smile and make eye contact when you greet the person.
When you pass someone in the hall, say, "Hi."

Right Way
They pass by each other and say, "Hi."

Wrong Way
They pass by each other and do not say, "Hi."

HINT
Smile and make eye contact when you greet the person. It's okay to add a brief wave of your hand too.

When someone is leaving for the day, you should say, “Goodbye”, “Bye” or “See you later.”

**Right Way**

The girl is leaving, so she says, “Goodbye.”

**Wrong Way**

The girl is leaving, but she forgets to say anything to her teacher.

When someone is leaving for the day, you should say, "Goodbye", "Bye" or "See you later."

**Right Way**
Dr. Baker is leaving, so the students say, "Bye" and "See you later."

**Wrong Way**
Dr. Baker is leaving, but the students ignore him. No one says goodbye.

**HINT**
Make eye contact with the person leaving and smile.

Introducing Yourself
By Jed Baker
Walk up to the person, stand about an arm’s length away, and make good eye contact.

**Right Way**

The boy walked up to the other boy, stood about an arm’s length away, and looked at him.

**Wrong Way**

The boy did not look at the other boy.

**HINT**

Smiling at the other person will make him feel more welcomed.
Say, "My name is _______. What's your name?" Wait for his response.

HINT
Remember to keep eye contact while you're introducing yourself.
Say, "It’s nice to meet you" and shake hands.

**Right Way**
The boy is about an arm's length away, shakes his hand, and says "It’s nice to meet you."

**Wrong Way**
The boy gets too close to the person he just met and hugs him instead of offering to shake his hand.

**HINT**
Shake hands with your right hand. Don’t shake too hard or too long. About 3 shakes is appropriate. Hugging someone you don’t know, even a person your own age, is not appropriate behavior.

Saying “Hi”

My name is ______________ and I have lots of friends. I can make more friends when I say “Hi” to new people that I meet.

Sometimes I forget to say “Hi” to my friends when I see them. I also have to remember that I should only say “Hi” to my friends once as soon as I see them. When I say “Hi” I should smile and look at my friend. Sometimes my friends will say “Hi” to me first and that is okay. When someone says “Hi” to me I could say “Hello”, “Hi”, or “Hey.” If my friend is far away I can wave.

My friends will be so happy when I say “Hi” to them. Sometimes they will want to talk to me and that’s okay too. My family will be so proud of me if I remember to say “Hi” to my friends.

Saying “Bye”

My name is ____________ and I have lots of friends. I can make more friends when I say “Bye” to new people that I meet.

Sometimes I forget to say “Bye” to my friends when they leave. I also have to remember that I should only say “Bye” to my friends once when they are leaving or I am leaving.

When I say “Bye” I should smile and look at my friend. Sometimes my friends will say “Bye” to me first and that is okay. When someone says “Bye” to me I could say “Bye”, “Good bye”, or “See you later.” If my friend is far away I can wave.

My friends will be so happy when I say “Bye” to them. My family will be so proud of me if I remember to say “Bye” to my friends.
Introducing Myself

My name is _________ and I love talking. When I introduce myself I can make new friends.

Sometimes I meet new people. When I do, I have to introduce myself. This is important so I can learn what their name is. I can introduce myself by saying my name by saying “My name is ______.” After I say my name I can ask what their name is by asking “What is your name?” sometimes they will introduce themselves first. Then I only have to say what my name is.

My family will be so proud of me if I introduce myself. I can make lots of new friends when I introduce myself.
MODULE IV: TURN TAKING

Introduction

Once your child begins playing with other children they will also be expected to take turns with other children. Turn taking allows your child to make new friends if they can share appropriately. If a child can take turns and share with other children, the other children are more likely to play with your child again. Following is information to identify the skill, tips and tricks, activities, and social stories. This skill is important to learn early because it will be used for the rest of their life. Even as an adult, it is expected to take turns for a number of different things on a daily basis. This skill also involves waiting. Waiting is an extremely important skill to learn for many reasons.

What does it Look Like?

Below is a chart of questions to help identify whether your child is experiencing difficulties with this skill or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does your child:</th>
<th>YES / NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does your child take more than one turn at a time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your child skip others turn so that they can go?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your child have trouble waiting to take their turn?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below describes what this skill should look like typically.

**Taking your turn appropriately is:**

- Waiting for the other person to complete their turn entirely.
- Staying calm.
- Playing the game by the rules.
- Not skipping anyone’s turn.
Some thoughtful information on sharing:

- Remember why you are sharing.
- If there is an opportunity to share, you should offer to.
- If you are asked to share, you should share.

Some thoughtful information on taking turns:

- Other people can play when you are waiting.
- Remember that if you wait you will get another turn.
- You make others feel happy and want to play with you when you wait.

Tips & Tricks

- Remind your child that they will get the object back.
- Remind your child whose turn it is.
- Praise and encourage your child when they wait appropriately for their turn.
- Encourage your child to share with their friends.
- Let them know that they will get the item back.
- Let them know they can make friends by sharing/taking turns nicely.

How to Prompt

This skill can be difficult to prompt depending on the expectation and what aspect of the skill they experience difficulties with. If your child experiences difficulties with accepting turn taking, sharing, or waiting, you can verbally prompt them to say appropriate phrases such as “Good move” or “Thanks for sharing.” You want to match the prompt with the behaviour they are exhibiting. Also, if they are physically engaging in problem behaviour, you will want to physically prompt them. This could mean that they are grabbing from the other child or not taking their turn appropriately. Remember to prompt most to least when teaching the skill and then switch to least to most once they have learned it. With physical prompts this order would be from least to most: gestural, model, partial, and then physical prompt. A diagram can be found below.
Activities

There are many steps to teaching a new skill. Outlined below are the recommended steps to teaching a new skill. It should be noted that all children learn differently, therefore not all of the activities may be appropriate for your child. They are simply ideas to use or adapt to best suit your child.

First it is recommended to explain what you are going to be teaching them as well as what the expectations are going to be. If they understand the skill, then your child may be more willing to practice. Make sure that you make the skill sound fun and important. Your child is not going to want to work, but if you make it sound more like a game they may be more willing to.

After explaining the expectations and details of the specific skill, you should then model the skill for your child before expecting them to begin practicing it. Modelling is a very important step. This allows your child to see what is expected of them. Your role as the primary caregiver is to pick an appropriate scenario to model and to find others to help model the skill. You can use other adults, family members, or peers to help you model. When teaching a new skill, you should start with explaining the skill and the
steps involved, role-playing and modelling the skill, and providing your child with corrective feedback.  

These steps should be repeated multiple times until your child can perform the skill in natural environments without any prompting. Once your child is consistently performing the skill in one environment such as the home, begin teaching it in other environments or with other people to encourage generalization. Begin generalizing the skill slowly. Make sure that you also explain when the skill is expected in other environments other than the home.

- It is suggested that you practice this skill with other children and preferably close to the same age so it is as natural as possible.
Suggested Activities for Sharing

2. Role-play the steps for sharing. Suggested role-plays involves the following scenarios:
   a. Two children (peers or siblings) both want to play with the same set of building blocks or some other toy in the classroom or at home.
   b. One child wants to play with a game that the other child owns at home or in school.
   c. Children (or siblings) do an art project without having separate materials so that they much share.
   d. During snack time, one child has nothing to eat.

3. Bait the skill.
   a. Have children (or siblings) do an art project without giving separate materials to each. Have only one set of markers, one bottle of glue, etc., so that they must share.
   b. Give out snacks and pretend to run out, forcing children to share with each other. In case they do not share, have enough snacks on hand after all.

4. Correct unwillingness to share. Some children more readily share materials or toys when they are told that it is temporary – that they will get the materials right back again.

5. Provide rewards for appropriate sharing.
   a. Give verbal praise for correct or partially correct sharing.
   b. Give tokens, pennies, or points every time your child shares. When he/she gets an agreed-upon number of tokens (e.g., five tokens), give a special reward (e.g., snack, stickers, or privileges to play special game). Remember that this should be something that they really like.
Suggested Activities for Taking Turns

1. Role-play the steps for taking turns. Children can decide to let others go first or use a fair way to decide. Suggested role-plays involve the following scenarios:
   a. Two or more children want to use the one computer available at home or in school.
   b. Two or more children want to use some playground equipment that only one person can go on at a time.
   c. Children need to decide who will go first in a board game, then they need to decide what colour or game piece they want, using a fair way to decide.
   d. Role-play the same items as above, but pretend it is another day and that the person who went first the previous day should now go second or last.

2. Bait the skill. Say you want something you see that your child is about to ask for so that you must take turns. Say you want to go first or demand the special game piece that your child wants so you will have to use a fair means to decide.

3. Correct those who don’t give others a turn. Remind them that giving others a turn is temporary; they will be able to play again, or go first the next time.

4. Provide rewards for appropriate turn-taking.
   a. Give verbal praise for correct or partially correct turn-taking.
   b. Give tokens, pennies, or points every time your child takes turns. When he/she gets an agreed-upon number of tokens (e.g., five tokens), give a special reward (e.g., snack, stickers, or privileges to play a special game). Remember that this should be something that they really like.

Adapted from Social Skills Training: For children and adolescents with Asperger syndrome and social-communication problems by Jed Baker, page 133.
Activity Work Sheet

**Purpose:** This work sheet is designed to be used as a template for planning when to implement the teaching strategies and for recording how the child does.

**Date:** ____________________ **Targeted Skill:** ____________________

Who did you practice with?

____________________________________________________________________

Where did you practice?

____________________________________________________________________

How did practice go?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

What will you do differently next time?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Was any progress made?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Social Story

Following are the social stories that are recommended for this specific skill. Remember to read the social story with your child. If they are comfortable with it, you can have them follow along with their finger. Read the social stories with your child daily or directly before practicing the specific skill. You should read the social story with your child repeatedly in hopes that your child will overlearn the information. You also want to read them with your child before a tough situation where they can use the skill. Remember to also have your child practice the skill when you are reading or you can model it for them.

It is recommended that you read the social stories with your child before playing a game where you know that your child will have to share or take turns. This way the information is fresh in their mind and will act as a prompt for the appropriate behaviour. Reading the story consistently each day can ensure that your child knows what is expected of them.

It is important to remember that every child is individual. The social stories provided are excellent examples for the skill but may need to be adapted to best meet the needs of your child. Below are the steps to creating a social story that is customized for your child.

How to Make a Social Story

1. Make sure that your child will be able to read or understand the story.
2. It should be in first person.
3. Keep it concise. You don’t want to provide too much information.
4. Make sure it is positive and happy.
5. Keep it short. Either one page with large font or a slide show with one sentence on each page.
6. Get straight to the point of how to perform the skill.
7. Add pictures but make sure that they are not too distracting. The pictures should also be relevant to what the social story is referring to.
8. For more information, you can look at some examples and further instructions at http://carolgraysocialstories.com/
Taking turns
Everyone likes to have a turn
I like when it is my turn to be first in line.
I like when it is my turn to be the helper.
I like when it’s my turn to play in a game

like a board game or ... an outdoor game.
Sometimes it is not my turn. That is okay.
When it's not my turn, I need to wait.

I can sit quietly with my hands to myself.

wait

I can take 3 deep breaths.
Only one person gets picked.

All the boys and girls need to wait until it's their turn.
When another boy or girl gets their turn, that is okay.

When I wait quietly while others have their turn, my friends will like playing with me.
WAITING

A SOCIAL STORY BY: TOUCH AUTISM APPS
Sometimes I need to wait for something that I want.
I may have to wait for my turn to talk, for the bus, or to go somewhere that I want to go.
It can be hard to wait!
I may feel angry or frustrated when I want something NOW, but I have to WAIT.
It's ok to feel angry, but being angry will not help the waiting go any faster.
I can take a deep breath, and watch my waiting timer. When the timer is all done, it is time to do what I want!
IF I wait with a quiet mouth and a calm body then I know I did a good job and my teachers and family will be proud of me!
Sharing
By Jed Baker
Offer to share something you have.

Right Way
The teacher offered the girl a pretzel.

Wrong Way
The teacher did not share any pretzels.
If someone asks you to share something that you have, share it with her.

**Right Way**

The girl let the other girl see her toy.

**Wrong Way**

The girl did not share her toy.
Taking Turns
By Jed Baker
Think to yourself, “If I wait, then I will get a turn, too.”

**Right Way**
The boys think that if they wait, they will get a turn at bat.

**Wrong Way**
The boys don’t wait their turn. They try to take the bat away.

---

When you wait, others will feel happy and want to give you a turn.

**Right Way**
Sam waited, and now it is his turn.

**Wrong Way**
The boys did not wait, so they will not get a turn.
Now Sam gets a turn to bat while the other boys wait.

The two boys are waiting while Sam has a turn at bat.
Think to yourself, “If I wait, then I will get a turn, too.”

**Right Way**
The boys think that if they wait, they will get a turn at bat.

**Wrong Way**
Adam doesn’t wait his turn. He tries to take the bat away.
When you wait, others will feel happy and want to give you a turn.

**Right Way**

Adam waited, and now it is his turn.

**Wrong Way**

Adam did not wait. Now he will not get a turn.

---

Now Adam gets a turn to play while the other boys wait.

Adam

Paul and Sam

The two boys are waiting while Adam has a turn at bat.
The boys are happy because everyone waited for their turn.

They shake hands at the end of the game because they are friends.

HINT Instead of shaking hands, everyone might give a “high five” to each other, or say, “That was fun!”

Sharing

My name is ____________ and I love playing with my friends.

Sometimes my friends will want to play with the same toy as me. If this happens, that is okay! I can share with my friends. My friend might say “Can I have a turn?” I can say “Yes, here you go” or “In five minutes.” It is okay to not want to share but sometimes I have to.

It makes my friends so happy when I share with them. My friends will want to play with me again when I share nicely. My parents will also be so proud of me.
Waiting

My name is __________ and I love playing with my friends.

Sometimes when I am playing with my friends I have to wait for my turn. This is okay. If I wait nicely I will get to take my turn. I can wait nicely by sitting quietly and paying attention to the game. I have to remember not to touch the game when it’s my friend’s turn.

It makes my friends so happy when I wait for them to take their turn. My friends will want to play with me again when I wait nicely. My parents will also be so proud of me.
Taking Turns

My name is _________ and I love playing with my friends. When I take turns with my friends we have a lot of fun.

Sometimes I may not want to take turns. This might make me angry. When I feel angry I can squeeze my hands or take a deep breath. It is important to take turns with my friends. If I am taking turns I have to remember to give up the toy when it is my friend’s turn.

My friends will be so happy with me if I take turns with them. I will even be able to make new friends. My family will be so proud with me if I take turns with my friends.
MODULE V: BEING A GOOD SPORT

Introduction

As children grow older they will be interested in creating friendships. If a child is focused on always winning and never losing, they will experience difficulties with making lasting friendships. Children should be more focused on making friends than being the winner of a game. Therefore, it is pertinent that children learn to be a good sport at an early age in order to make meaningful friendships. Following is information to identify the skill, tips and tricks, activities, and social stories.

What does it Look Like?

Below is a chart of questions to help identify whether your child is experiencing difficulties with this skill or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does your child:</th>
<th>YES / NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does your child cry or have a tantrum when they lose?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your child cheat during games?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your child celebrate and put others down when they win?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always talk about winning and losing during a game?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below describes what this skill should look like typically.

**Being a good sport looks like:**

- Saying “Good job” or “Congratulations” whether you win or lose.
- Not cheating.
- Making others feel better if they lose.
- Not making a big deal of winning.
Some thoughtful information on dealing with losing:

- Remind yourself that it is only a game.
- When you are okay with losing, you can keep a friend.
- Remember to congratulate the other players.

Tips & Tricks

- Do not encourage winning or losing.
- Explain to your child that they can make friends if they are a good sport.
- Stay calm when you win or lose to be a model for your child.
- Praise and encourage your child if they stay calm when they win or lose.

How to Prompt

This skill can be difficult to prompt depending on the expectation and what aspect of the skill they experience difficulties with. If your child experiences difficulties with accepting winning or losing and verbally engages in problem behaviours, you can verbally prompt them to say appropriate phrases such as “Good game” or “Thanks for playing with me.” You want to match the prompt with the behaviour they are exhibiting. Also, if they are physically engaging in problem behaviour, you will want to physically prompt them. This could mean that they are hitting the table or throwing the pieces of the game. Remember to prompt most to least when teaching the skill and then switch to least to most once they have learned it. With physical prompts this order would be from least to most: gestural, model, partial, and then physical prompt. A diagram can be found below.
Activities

There are many steps to teaching a new skill. Outlined below are the recommended steps to teaching a new skill. It should be noted that all children learn differently, therefore not all of the activities may be appropriate for your child. They are simply ideas to use or adapt to best suit your child.

First it is recommended to explain what you are going to be teaching them as well as what the expectations are going to be. If they understand the skill, then your child may be more willing to practice. Make sure that you make the skill sound fun and important. Your child is not going to want to work, but if you make it sound more like a game they may be more willing to.

After explaining the expectations and details of the specific skill, you should then model the skill for your child before expecting them to begin practicing it. Modelling is a very important step. This allows your child to see what is expected of them. Your role as the primary caregiver is to pick an appropriate scenario to model and to find others to help model the skill. You can use other adults, family members, or peers to help you model. When teaching a new skill, you should start with explaining the skill and the
steps involved, role-playing and modelling the skill, and providing your child with corrective feedback.  

These steps should be repeated multiple times until your child can perform the skill in natural environments without any prompting. Once your child is consistently performing the skill in one environment such as the home, begin teaching it in other environments or with other people to encourage generalization. Begin generalizing the skill slowly. Make sure that you also explain when the skill is expected in other environments other than the home.

- A way to practice appropriate sportsmanship is to set up a short game and manipulate the game so your child either wins or loses. Throughout the game, coach your child on when they take their turn appropriately, and continuously remind them that whether they win or lose is not important. Before the end of the game, make sure that you are ready to ignore inappropriate behaviours and model appropriate behaviours. You want your child to be successful. Therefore, before they engage in problem behaviour, provide them with the appropriate behaviour. If your child accepts winning or losing, give them a lot of praise and reinforcement.
Suggested Activities for Dealing with Losing

1. To teach this skill, primary caregivers may need to temporarily exaggerate the idea that losing calmly is great and that winning a game is not that important. Adults should remind children just before they play a game that they are more interested in how the children deal with losing than whether they win the game. As the game is played, the adult can anticipate which child is losing and remind him that if he does not get mad, he will win a friend and may receive a reward for staying calm. The adult should show little enthusiasm when someone wins, and also show great enthusiasm when someone deals well with losing.

2. Role-play the steps for dealing with losing. Suggested role-plays involve short games so that the skill can be practiced without waiting for a long game to end:
   a. Use a coin toss (heads or tails) to decide who will go first. Whoever loses should be coached through the steps of dealing with losing. The one who lost is applauded for staying calm.
   b. “Tic-tac-toe” is another quick game that is good for practicing this skill. As a two-person game, it can be used for students to role-play in front of a larger group. It is imperative to applaud the child who loses and stays calm before she has a chance to get upset.
   c. “Musical chairs” and “Simon says” are ideal quick group games. As children lose and are reminded to go through each step of dealing with losing, they may be applauded as they sit out to wait the next game. For the child who gets very upset, try to distract him rather than use reason. Repetition of the experience will eventually reduce the outbursts.

3. Bait the skill by doing something that requires your child to deal with losing. For example, say, “I am going to try to beat you at this game to see if you can deal with losing. It is much harder to deal with losing than to win this game. Let’s see if you can do it.”

4. Redirect expressions of anger to the dealing with losing steps when your child gets upset after losing. If your child continues to remain angry or becomes more upset, use a distraction (e.g., walk away from the game and engage him in something new).

5. Provide rewards for appropriate dealing with losing.
   a. Give verbal praise for efforts to stay calm when your child is about to or has lost.
   b. Give tokens, pennies, or points every time your child deals appropriately with losing. When he/she gets an agreed-upon number of tokens (e.g., five tokens), give a special reward (e.g., snack, stickers, or privileges to play special game). Remember that this should be something that they really like.
Steps to Dealing with Losing

1. Say to yourself: “It’s only a game, there will be other games.”

2. Remember, although you lost the game, you can win a friendship (which is more important) if you show good sportsmanship.

3. To show good sportsmanship, you should tell the other person:
   a. “Congratulations”
   b. “Good game”
   c. “You played a good game”

4. Shake the other person’s hand and help him put away the game or materials.
Suggested Activities for Dealing with Winning

1. Just as in dealing with losing, we need to remind children that the goal is not to win the game, but to win a friend. Highlight that we are interested in their ability to win friends as they play.

2. Role-play the steps for dealing with winning. These suggested role-plays are the same as for dealing with losing, and both skills should be role-played simultaneously. Use short games so that the skill can be practiced without waiting for a long game to end.
   a. Use a coin toss (heads or tails) to decide who will go first. Whoever loses should be coached through the steps of dealing with losing while the other is coached through the steps of dealing with winning. Both are applauded and praised for staying friends by not getting mad or bragging. No one is applauded for their skills in the game, as the game play itself is secondary to friendship skills.
   b. “Tic-tac-toe” is another quick game that is good for practicing this skill. As a two-person game, it can be used for children to role-play in front of a larger group. Again, both are applauded and praised for staying friends by not getting mad or bragging.
   c. “Musical chairs” and “Simon says” are ideal quick group games.

3. Bait the skill by doing something that requires students to deal with winning in a gracious way. For example, as you lose a game, say, “You are so much better than I am. You are the greatest ever. I am terrible.” See if your child can try to cheer you up rather than gloat over the victory. (This may be difficult for some children and is not yet a required skill.)

4. Provide rewards for appropriate dealing with winning.
   a. Give verbal praise for efforts to deal with winning.
   b. Give tokens, pennies, or points for every time your child deals appropriately with winning. When he/she gets an agreed-upon number of tokens (e.g., five tokens), give a special reward (e.g., snack, stickers, or privileges to play special games). Remember that this should be something that they really like.
Steps for Dealing with Winning

1. If you win a game, you can also win a friend if you show good sportsmanship.

2. “Sportsmanship” means:
   a. Do not brag or show off that you won. This makes others feel bad.
   b. Say, “Good game.”

3. If the others are upset because they lost, remind them that it is only a game and they might win next time.

Adapted from Social Skills Training: For children and adolescents with Asperger syndrome and social-communication problems by Jed Baker, page 138.
Activity Work Sheet

**Purpose:** This work sheet is designed to be used as a template for planning when to implement the teaching strategies and for recording how the child does.

**Date:** ______________________  **Targeted Skill:** ______________________________

Who did you practice with?
__________________________________________________________________

Where did you practice?
__________________________________________________________________

How did practice go?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

What will you do differently next time?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Was any progress made?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Social Story

Following are the social stories that are recommended for this specific skill. Remember to read the social story with your child. If they are comfortable with it, you can have them follow along with their finger. Read the social stories with your child daily or directly before practicing the specific skill. You should read the social story with your child repeatedly in hopes that your child will overlearn the information. You also want to read them with your child before a tough situation where they can use the skill. Remember to also have your child practice the skill when you are reading or you can model it for them.

It is recommended that you practice reading this social story with your child before you know that they will be playing a game that they will either win or lose. This way the information is fresh in their mind and will act as a prompt for the appropriate behaviour. Reading the story consistently each day can ensure that your child knows what is expected of them.

It is important to remember that every child is individual. The social stories provided are excellent examples for the skill but may need to be adapted to best meet the needs of your child. Below are the steps to creating a social story that is customized for your child.

How to Make a Social Story

1. Make sure that your child will be able to read or understand the story.
2. It should be in first person.
3. Keep it concise. You don’t want to provide too much information.
4. Make sure it is positive and happy.
5. Keep it short. Either one page with large font or a slide show with one sentence on each page.
6. Get straight to the point of how to perform the skill.
7. Add pictures but make sure that they are not too distracting. The pictures should also be relevant to what the social story is referring to.
8. For more information, you can look at some examples and further instructions at

http://carolgraysocialstories.com/
Being a Good Sport

1. Keep a friendly face and voice.

2. Take a deep breath to stay calm.

3. Think: “I’m disappointed, but I can handle this.”

4. Make a plan:
   a. Congratulate the other players.
   b. Say, “Good game.”
   c. Think “Maybe next time.”
Dealing with Losing
By Jed Baker
John loses the game to Phil.

I lost the game. I feel sad and angry.

I win!

John

Phil

Think to yourself, “It’s only a game. There will be other games.”

**Right Way**
John realizes that it’s only a game, and he will get to try again.

**Wrong Way**
John does not realize that he can try again, so he stays angry and sad.

**HINT**
To help John calm down so he doesn’t stay mad, see Keeping Calm, page 135.

Think, “Even if I lose the game, I can keep or win a friend if I do not get mad.

**Right Way**

John realizes that he will win a friend if he does not get mad.

**Wrong Way**

John stays mad and angry.
Say, “Good game!”

**Right Way**

John did not get mad and says, “Good game, Phil.”

**Wrong Way**

John is still angry and may lose a friend.

**HINT**

To help John calm down so he doesn’t stay mad, see Keeping Calm, page 133.

Phil and John will stay friends and play together again, if John stays calm and does not get mad.

**Right Way**

Phil wants to play with John again because John did not get mad.

**Wrong Way**

Phil does not want to play with John again because John got mad when he lost.
Being a Good Sport

My name is ______ and I love playing games with my friends.

When playing with my friends I have to remember to be a good sport. Being a good sport is really important. When I win a game I need to remember not to make my friends feel bad and if I lose I need to remember to say “Good game.” Sometimes I may get angry but that is okay. When I feel angry I can take a deep breath or squeeze my hands.

When I am a good sport my friends will be so happy and want to play with me again. If I am a good sport, my parents will be so proud of me.
Winning

My name is ______ and I love playing games with my friends.

When playing with my friends, sometimes I win. This is really exciting. I have to remember not to make my friends feel sad. When I win I can say “Good game”, “Nice job”, or give my friend a high five. This will make them feel really happy.

My parents will be so proud of me if I am nice to my friends when I win. My friends will be so happy with me and will want to play with me again.
Losing

My name is ______ and I love playing games with my friends.

When playing with my friends, sometimes I lose. This makes me feel sad and angry. When I feel sad and angry I can squeeze my hands or take a deep breath. I have to remember to stay calm. When I am calm I can say “Good game”, “Nice job”, or give my friend a high five. When I am calm when I lose my friends will be so happy.

My parents will be so proud of me if I am calm when I lose. My friends will be so happy with me and will want to play with me again.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Links for Parents

- [https://www.autism.net/#](https://www.autism.net/#)
- [http://www.jedbaker.com/](http://www.jedbaker.com/)

Materials for Parents

- Superflex: A Superhero Social Thinking Curriculum by Stephanie Madrigal & Michelle Garcia Winner, 2008 (Ages 4-10)
- The Model Me Kids Video Series for Modeling Social Skills DVDs
- Be a Friend: Songs For Social Skills Training by Jed Baker & Jeffrey Friedberg
- Super Skills: A Social Skills Group Program for Children with Asperger Syndrome, High-Functioning Autism and Related Challenges by Judith Coucouvanis

Children’s Books

- Should I Share My Ice Cream? by Mo Willems
- Llama Llama Time to Share by Anna Dewdney
- How Do Dinosaurs Play with Their Friends? by Jane Yolen
- How Do Dinosaurs Say I'M MAD? by Jane Yolen
- How Do Dinosaurs Stay Friends? by Jane Yolen
- How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight? by Jane Yolen
- Elmer by David McKee
- Quinn at School: Relating, Connecting and Responding at School, a Book for Children Ages 3-7. Rick Warren
REFERENCES


Appendix B: Social Validity Measure
Social Validity Measure – Social Skills Training Manual for Primary Caregivers

Name: _______________________________ Date: _______________________________

Instructions: Please read through the training manual and make any corrects that you find. A portion of the thesis is also connected so that you have a better understanding of what the intended purpose of the training manual is. Once you are finished, please complete the short questionnaire and leave your suggestions and feedback.

1. Do you think that the training manual will be beneficial for staff? YES / NO

2. Do you think that the training manual will be beneficial for primary caregivers? YES / NO

3. Would you provide the manuals as they are to primary caregivers? YES / NO

4. If no, why not? __________________________________________

5. What do you like about the training manual? ____________________________

6. What would you change about the training manual? ____________________________

7. What would you add to the training manual? ____________________________

Feedback & Suggestions: ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Thank you very much for your time. Your feedback is very valuable.