

ONCE UPON A TIME

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Social Skills training is a form of behavior therapy often taught in educational settings by teachers, therapists, and psychologists to help students who may have difficulties relating to other people.

The major goals of social skills training are:

To change poor social behavior patterns that may negatively be impacting their academic experience. This is done by practicing selected behaviors that are most appropriate for the school setting, such as raising your hand quietly, remaining seated in your seat with your feet on the floor, maintaining eye contact with your teacher, and dealing with frustrations in the classroom the “right” way.

To teach children about the verbal as well as nonverbal behaviors involved in social interactions. There are many children who may be unaware of certain interpersonal skills such as making “small talk” in social settings, or the importance of good eye contact during a conversation. In addition, many children have difficulty “reading” the many subtle cues contained in social interactions, such as how to tell when someone wants to change the topic of conversation or shift to another activity.

To help children accurately interpret social signals so they can determine how to act appropriately in the company of others. Social skill training proceeds on the assumption that when children improve their social skills, their self-esteem will rise and increase the likelihood that peers will respond more favorably to them. For example, some children become unpopular with peers because they may force their way into small play groups. When a child has learned to read social signals, he or she will know that barging in is not expected by the small group and they should choose a more appropriate means for joining the activity.

To improve your child’s ability to function, in everyday social situations; such as starting or ending a conversation with a peer, how to be a good sport, dealing with minor disappointments, and comprehending facial cues and body language.