

DEVELOPING SOCIAL SKILLS

by Jane Remocker, Occupational Therapist.
includes a HANDBOOK and DVD

This 6 week* home-based program has been designed to teach basic social skills and be implemented by parents.

The program was developed at BC Children's Hospital and funded by a grant from Children's Miracle Network Telethon. It was tested in a pilot project, using 12 families. The children were ages 6-9 years old and all had demonstrated difficulty with social skills. The group included children with different diagnoses including ADHD and high functioning Autism. The children and their parents participated in pre-testing, prior to starting the program, using the Gresham Elliott Social Skills Student and Parent Questionnaires. At completion of the program, the questionnaires were re-administered. The parents reported that they found the program easy to use and practical. The results of the pre- and post-test scores indicated that the program was helpful to a majority of the students and worthy of further study, using a larger sample.

The handbook provides detailed instructions about how to implement the program and should be used in conjunction with the DVD. Activities include games, modeling, role-play, practice sessions and a related assignment to assist with generalization.

The program is designed for school-age children from about ages 6 to 11 years old, who are struggling with acquiring the basic social skills required to develop friendships. The children for whom it is suitable must have reasonable language skills and be capable of integration into a regular classroom.

The DVD, using typical students who are not actors, shows 6 engaging scenes, set in an elementary school. The children act out common situations seen every day in school. The social skills included are broken down into incremental steps and the children demonstrate both mistakes and solutions.

- The program can be extended up to 18 weeks as each week has 3 sections.

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