Social Success in College and Beyond

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Permission and Comfort

Permission?

GRANTED

[Image of two sleeping kittens]
Two Core Features

• Cognitive/Behavioral
• Communication/Social
Other Associated Features

• Motor & sensory
• Depression & anxiety
• Self-regulation
Essentials for Successful Living

• Social communication
• Executive Functioning
• Self Regulation
Typically developing children

Children with autism

https://www.medicaldaily.com/kids-autism-have-hyperconnected-brain-areas-could-brain-imaging-one-day-diagnose-disorder-262261
Eye Tracking Studies

- Lack of eye contact is common
- Mouths vs. eyes
- Is it gaze avoidance or passive indifference?
- Lack of meaningful information & reward from eye contact
Executive Function

Regulates, controls and manages thought and actions
Self-Regulated Individuals
(see Wolf & Kaplan, 2008)

• Use strategies
• Monitor & allocate resources
• Direct own behavior
• Ask for help
• Exercise personal choice
• Believe tasks are important
• Value self imposed goals
Dys-Regulated People Do Not
(see Wolf & Kaplan, 2008)

• Direct
• Sustain
• Follow through
• Strategize
• Evaluate
• Modify
• Behave
Regulatory Functions

• 2 parallel systems:
  • Cognitive
  • Social Emotional
• Work together to achieve life tasks
Self regulation

• Self-regulation is the ability to manage your emotions and behavior in accordance with the demands of the situation. It includes being able to resist highly emotional reactions to upsetting stimuli, to calm yourself down when you get upset, to adjust to a change in expectations and to handle frustration without an outburst. It is a set of skills that enables children, as they mature, to direct their own behavior towards a goal, despite the unpredictability of the world and our own feelings.

• The Child Mind Inst. 2018
Strategies

- Proprioceptive – sense of what the muscles and joints feel
- Vestibular – sense of overall movement and gravity
- Deep Pressure,
- Deep muscle work,
- Oral
- Tactile Activities
- Sensory
- Guided Imagery
References
Living in a Social World

• What are Inter-personal, social, soft, job readiness skills?
  • Verbal
    • (small talk, maintaining conversations, gathering and sharing information)
  • Non-verbal
    • Body language, Eye contact, spatial awareness
Why are Soft Skills Important?

• **Society views/judgements** (Patrick, 2008, 42)
  - Appropriate social skills= competent and successful
  - Inappropriate social skills= inept

• **Important for**
  - Friendships
  - Relationships
  - Interviews
  - Maintaining a job

**Goal:** To be social for 2 hours/day
3 Basic Elements of Socializing (Patrick, 2008, 43)

- **Social intake**
  - Seeing and understanding: words, inflection, body language, eye contact, posture, gestures, and other cultural behaviors

- **Internal process**
  - Interpretation of social message
  - Recognizing and managing own behavior (emotions/reactions)

- **Social output**
  - How respond: words, inflection, body language, eye contact, posture, gestures, and cultural behaviors
Data from College Autism Readiness Retreat

- 11 students
  - 9 high school
  - 2 community college

- Most difficult
  - 7/11 - internal processing
  - 6/11 - social output

- Least difficult
  - 4/11 - social output
  - 3/11 social intake
Specific Inter-Personal Skills (Patrick, 2008, 44)

- Proper greetings and farewells
- Taking turns
- Being patient
- Being polite and courteous
- Being kind
- Being respectful
- Listening to others
- Waiting turn to speak
- Praising others
- Knowing what jokes to tell

- Knowing what topics of conversation are appropriate for which audiences
- Respecting personal space
- Refraining from making negative comments about people
- Refraining from being negative
- Refraining from calling other people names
- Refraining from swearing and making obscene gestures
- Using good manners
Data from College Autism Readiness Retreat

- 11 students
  - 9 high school
  - 2 community college

- Demonstrate consistently
  - 73% - being respectful
  - 45% - Small talk/maintaining and proper greetings/farewells
Data from College Autism Readiness Retreat

- **11 students**
  - 9 high school
  - 2 community college

- **Need to improve**
  - 100% - small talk/maintaining conversation
  - 36% - being kind/respectful
The 10 Unwritten Rules of Social Relationships
(Patrick, 2008, 47).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rules are not absolute. They are situation-based and people-based</th>
<th>Not everything is equally important in the grand scheme of things</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone in the world makes mistakes. It doesn’t have to ruin your day</td>
<td>Honesty is different from diplomacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being polite is appropriate in any situation</td>
<td>Not everyone who is nice to me is my friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People act differently in public than they do in private.</td>
<td>Know when you’re turning people off.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Fitting in” is often tied to looking and sounding like you fit in</td>
<td>People are responsible for their own behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do Social Skills affect me? (Patrick, 2008, 57)

• **Positive Consequences**
  • Satisfying work
  • Greater independence
  • Improved relationships with others

• **Negative Consequences**
  • Unemployment
  • Underemployment
  • Overly dependent living
  • Isolation
Do I Need to Improve my Social Skills?  
(Patrick, 2008, 58)

1. Am I having difficulties making or maintaining friendships?
2. Do I feel that I am frequently misunderstood?
3. Do I have trouble understanding the social behavior of others?
4. Am I having social problems at school/work?
5. Am I having trouble in a relationship as a result of social problems?
6. Do I think that my social behaviors are inhibiting my success or progress in any area of life?
7. Are my friends and family pestering me about my social skills?
Acquaintances vs Friends

• Acquaintances (Patrick, 2008, 60-63)
  • Casual connection
  • Largest group of people we interact with
  • Simple communication: greetings/farewells, simple requests, small talk

• Friends (Patrick, 2008, 73-76)
  • MUTUAL love, respect, trust, and unconditional acceptance
  • Supportive and cooperative with each other
  • Ask each other about well-being and listen intently
  • Help each other, even if inconvenient
  • Understand mistakes and difference of opinions
  • Loyal to each other
  • Place each other’s interest over their own
  • May have 1 friend or a group
Relationship Support Structure

(Meeks and Masterson, 2016, 70)
Would I Make a Good Friend? (Patrick, 2008,176)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Am I Cooperative?</th>
<th>Am I a good listener?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I like to talk to other people?</td>
<td>Am I helpful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I share my possessions with others?</td>
<td>Do I share my time with others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would I help a friend, even if I would rather be doing something else?</td>
<td>Do I allow my friend to have their own opinions without getting mad?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I keep secrets?</td>
<td>Can I give helpful advice, without being bossy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I take advice from a friend without getting mad?</td>
<td>Would you support a friend if they had a problem?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**What are Warning Signs that Someone May Not be a Good Friend to Me?** *(Meeks and Masterson, 2016, 49)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pressure others to do things that are wrong or illegal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Want money or access to personal accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seem too good to be true (most popular guy in fraternity wants to be friends expectantly, after ignoring you or mistreating you for months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistreats or insults others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically or verbally abusive (should seek help from family or professional if this happens)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not follow through with promises or obligations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always “takes” and rarely/never “gives”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are the social requirements at D-CAP

• 4 participation levels (more intensive to less intensive, based on skill level)

Most intensive level of support:
• 1 hour group a week
• 1 hour social gathering
• 1 hour meeting a week
How does Behavior change based on Environment
Social Gatherings

• **Set Expectations**
  • RAM

• **Activities (structured vs unstructured)**
  • Games
  • Parties
  • Hosting (host vs guest)
  • Hanging out
  • Community
    • Community involvement

• **Progress monitoring**
D-CAP Social Expectations

R.A.M

R: Ready
• On time
• Have $$ if necessary
• Dressed Appropriately
  • (If outdoor activity- sneakers)

A: Active
• Walking with the group
• Socializing with one another
• Engaged during the activity

M: Mindful
• Accepting others opinions
• Being patient when necessary
• Understanding that all activities may not be your choice
Meeting

• **Set goals**
  • Student driven
  • weekly and annual goals

• **Skill development**
  • Video modeling ([friends](#) vs Stranger things)
  • Task analysis
  • Role playing
  • Graphic organizers
  • Generalization

• **Reinforcement**
  • Attention
  • DRL

• **Progress monitoring**
  - Self assessment
  - Self-monitoring

Students with Asperger Syndrome

College Autism Spectrum 2018
Social Behavior and Self-Management

5-Point Scales for Adolescents and Adults

This award-winning tool now expanded for adults!

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Questions and Comments

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