

Personal Social Skills

When playing with children, ask yourself:
“Does this activity engage a child’s personal social skills?”



Milestones for Personal Social Skills

12-15 month old babies

- Know strangers from his family, and cry when his parent goes away
- Understand the word “no”, but will not always obey

15-18 month old babies

- Begin to be helpful around the house
- Recognize herself in the mirror
- Bring things to “show” other people
- Hug and kiss parents, familiar people and pets

2 year old

- Recognize herself in the mirror or photograph and smile or make faces at herself
- Begin to say ‘no’ to bedtime and other requests
- Imitate adults’ actions and words (e.g. chores)
- Understand words and commands, and respond to them
- May play next to another child, but will not really share until 3 or 4 years of age
- Be able to play alone for a few minutes
- React to changes in daily routines
- Share a piece of food
- Start to assert independence by preferring to try do things “by myself”, without help
- Feel proud when doing things independently

3 year old

- Be assertive about what he wants, and say no to adult requests
- Start to show awareness of her own feelings and others’ feelings
- Not like change
- Want independence, but still need security of parents
- Need an ordered, predictable routine (ie: when saying good-bye to parents)
- Watch other children in play, and join them briefly
- Defend his possessions
- Begin to play “house”
- Begin to separate more easily from parents
- Begin to show empathy to other children (respond to their feelings)

Correlation

Our program helps children learn how to become pro-social community members.

4 year old

- Share toys, taking turns with help
- Initiate or join in play with other children and make up games
- Follow simple rules in games, but will always want to win
- Begin dramatic play, acting out whole scenes such as travelling or pretending to be animals
- Might be bossy and defiant
- Show more independence
- Become less egocentric
- May show attachment to one friend
- Separates from parent/s with minimal difficulty (may wave at window or blow a kiss to help manage goodbye transition)
- Shows interest in new activities

5 year old

- Show some awareness of moral reasoning, such as “fairness”, and good or bad behavior
- Develop friendships
- Express more awareness of other people’s feelings
- Enjoy imaginative play with other children, such as dress up or house
- Get better at sharing and taking turns with other children
- Enjoy playing games, but might change the rules as he goes
- Stick with a difficult task for longer period (controlling frustration or anger better)
- Show an understanding of right and wrong
- Listen while others are speaking
- Play games with simple rules
- Selects own activities with confidence and ease

Educational activities that develop personal social skills

Transitions (drop-off/pick-up, play time to meal time) and routines

Helping with chores, cleaning up after self

Positive reinforcement for pro-social behaviour (i.e. sharing) and developing independence

Help with recognition of feelings and how to acknowledge them (i.e. frustration, happiness)

Various centres for pretend play (i.e. house centre, water and sand tables, dress-up clothing)

Games with rules, turn-taking

Help with development of social mores and laws (i.e. right versus wrong)

Great variety of toys and games for individual and group choice