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social standards at school

a student self-monitoring program

In a complex society such as ours, it seems an impossible task to assemble a comprehensive inventory of social skills—a social skill standard—that applies to all students. After all, “we” include people of almost every religion, race and background on the planet. How can a single set of social skill standards prove relevant for everyone?

The answer is by keeping it simple and recognizing the common need schools have to maintain fundamental standards of discipline and academic achievement!

While the social skill standards put forth in this Instructor’s Guide will require modification based on school-to-school variances, the proficiencies taught here establish a fitting standard of basic social skills that are essential for all students to acquire to succeed in school.

The purpose of this program is to help individual students attain these skills and then link them to a set of standards of behavior for your entire school. Social Standards is for all students, particularly those who struggle mastering the subtleties (and demands) of behavioral expectations. And it’s 100% inclusive. Every student should be aware of these skills and either already possess, or be in the process of acquiring them; that’s how fundamental they are.

In addition, while the 53 skill sets provided here are designed to provide classroom standards for all students K-6, they telescope in on special education students and are ideal to write to IEPs. A further advantage is that by concentrating on classroom standards for all kids, it takes the onus off singling out special needs students.

While the social skills presented here are sequenced in a rough chronology and can be followed as such, each skill is really designed to be implemented individually as needs arise among certain students. In other words, If Johnny has been getting in fights outside the cafeteria, work with him on skill set #10, Standing in Line.

The fact is that social skills are being taught (and learned) in school everyday whether you guide their instruction or not: Why not be in the driver’s seat when it comes to determining the direction that instruction takes?



one

getting ready for school

teacher guidelines

narrative

Although it could be argued that getting ready for school is more of an organizational problem than a social skill, for those children who come to school unprepared, learning can be more difficult. Sometimes these children are anxious about how they look, are hungry, or concerned about the homework that was left on the kitchen table. This skill should be taught to those who need it as a stepping stone to promote success in other skill areas at school. The aid of parents or guardians must be enlisted as needed to help monitor the morning routine.

objective

The student will follow a daily routine which includes grooming, eating a breakfast, and putting all school materials into a backpack before leaving for school.

benchmarks

1. S checks appearance in a mirror.
2. S eats breakfast.
3. S gathers school materials and puts them into a backpack.
4. S has proper outer clothing.
5. S says goodbye to family members.

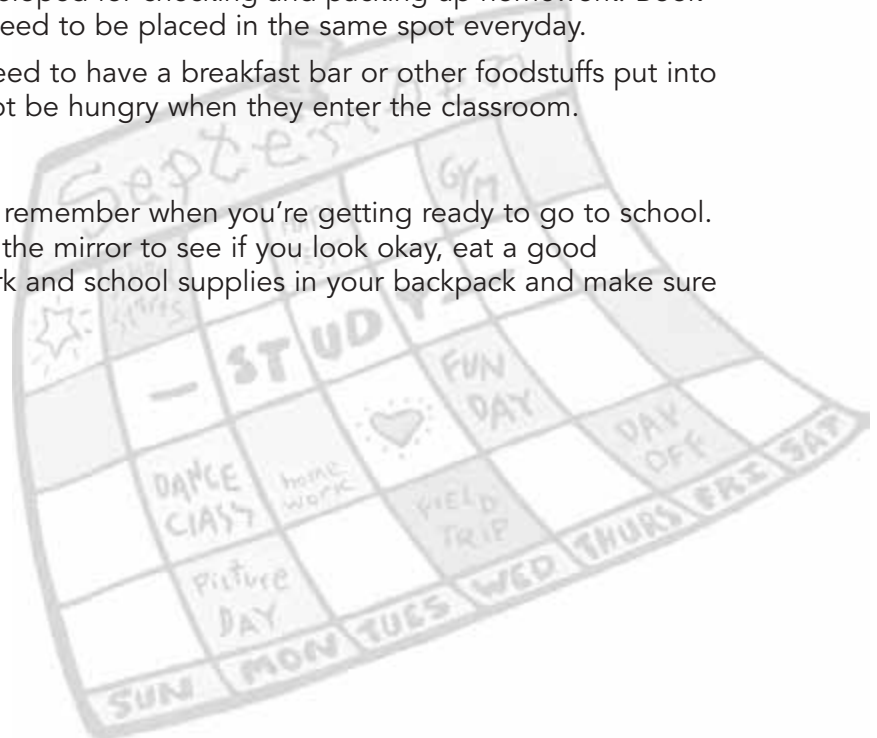
problem checklist

Getting ready for school can be less chaotic if a daily routine is established. Each of the above skills can be broken down into smaller steps: i.e., clothes to wear may have to put out at night. A checklist developed for checking and packing up homework. Book bags and outer clothing might need to be placed in the same spot everyday.

Children who get up late may need to have a breakfast bar or other foodstuffs put into the backpack so that they will not be hungry when they enter the classroom.

teacher's script

Say, "You have a lot of things to remember when you're getting ready to go to school. Make sure you check yourself in the mirror to see if you look okay, eat a good breakfast, take all your homework and school supplies in your backpack and make sure you're dressed for the weather."



getting ready for school

student page



*learn to
prepare for
school*

date _____

time _____

setting _____

teacher _____

period _____

student name _____

self-talk story

Getting ready for school in the morning is hard for me. I am sleepy and cannot always find my homework. My teacher is unhappy with me when I leave my homework at home. I need to follow a plan for getting organized and being ready for school.

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self-monitoring checklist

1. I check myself in the mirror.
2. I eat breakfast.
3. I get my homework.
4. I get the right clothes for the weather.
5. I say goodbye to my family.

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my story

two

walking to school

teacher guidelines

narrative

Walking to school can be a rewarding experience for children with strong social skills, but it can also be a difficult time for those who struggle in this area, since it largely takes place out of the realm of adult supervision. Students who walk to school need to learn the social skills of communicating with fellow students, friends and crossing guards as well as paying attention to safety issues. Talking to friends while also paying attention to signal lights and crossing guard instructions can make an enjoyable start to the school day.

objective

Will greet fellow students, friends and crossing guards appropriately while paying attention to the safety rules when walking to school.

Benchmarks

1. S will be observant of moving vehicles and other hazards.
2. S will use sidewalks, crosswalks, and obey signal lights as well as crossing guards.
3. S will greet friends along the way to school.
4. S will continue to walk without being distracted by friends or other obstacles.
5. S will avoid talking to strangers.

problem checklist

Walking to school with a group of friends can be enjoyable. Children need to be aware of potential hazards such as cars backing out of driveways or speeding on the road as well as construction sites. Other hazards can include a group of children who gather to harass those walking. Sometimes an alternative route might need to be discussed.

Safety issues such as using sidewalks have to be stressed. Younger children may benefit from walking and talking with an older group of students. Negotiating with parents about how to assist children who are not as aware of safety issues may be necessary.

Greeting and thanking a crossing guard or law enforcer is appropriate, even expected, but children need to be discouraged from becoming friendly with a person they do not know. Each one of these benchmarks can be broken into smaller segments to teach separately before a child would have to be accountable for the entire procedure.

Mastering how to greet friends and adults such as the crossing guard is a necessary social interaction for children who struggle with acknowledging other people.

teacher's script

Say, "Walking to school is fun and it's good exercise, but it's important to be careful for the sake of safety. You need to watch out for cars when you cross driveways or the street, and to be careful around construction sites. If a bully or a group of kids give you a hard time, you can change your route or tell an adult about it."

walking to school

student page



being careful walking to school

date _____

time _____

setting _____

teacher _____

period _____

student name _____

self-talk story

I walk to school everyday. I need to remember to stay on the sidewalks, watch for people in front of me and greet my friends when I see them. I have to cross where the crossing guard is so that I can be safe. The crossing guard always smiles when I thank him. I try to get to school as quickly as I can so that I am not late.

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self-monitoring checklist

1. I watch for moving cars.
2. I use sidewalks, lights and crossing guards.
3. I greet kids I know.
4. I get to school before the bell rings.
5. I avoid adults I don't know.

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my story

three

waiting for the bus

teacher guidelines

narrative

Too often children arrive at school feeling angry or sad because of interactions that happened while waiting for the school bus. Often the pick-up location is unsupervised and conflicts can arise there. Some students come to school upset over something that happened waiting for the bus, while others have problems at this time of the day because they do not understand how to have appropriate conversations. Some can be impulsive and have problems standing still or knowing how to control an over-active nervous system, and their difficult start to the school day can present problems for the classroom teacher.

objective

The student will be able to wait for and board the school bus according to school rules.

benchmarks

1. Upon arriving at the bus stop, S will wait in the designated area.
2. S will verbally greet the children who are waiting there.*
3. S will greet children who come later as they arrive.*
4. S will interact, keeping to socially appropriate topics.
5. When the bus arrives, S will wait patiently to get on the bus without pushing or crowding the other children.

problem checklist

Students may need to practice how to greet other children. Some times it is appropriate to say, "Hi!" or nod one's head. If there is a group of children not willing to reciprocate the social greeting then learning how to maintain a prudent distance from the group, to avoid future conflicts may need to be a priority.

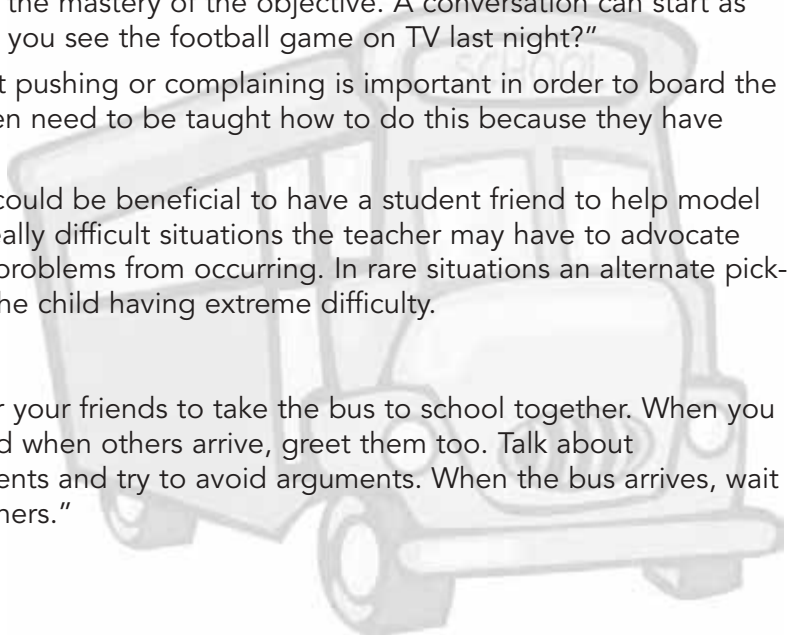
Teaching children how to begin a social conversation may need to be included in order for a child to learn the benchmarks which lead to the mastery of the objective. A conversation can start as simply as, "Hi (the person's name), did you see the football game on TV last night?"

Learning to line up and to wait without pushing or complaining is important in order to board the bus in an orderly fashion. Some children need to be taught how to do this because they have difficulty being crowded by others.

For children with a severe disability it could be beneficial to have a student friend to help model the rules for waiting for the bus. For really difficult situations the teacher may have to advocate having an adult supervisor to prevent problems from occurring. In rare situations an alternate pick-up stop may have to be assigned for the child having extreme difficulty.

teacher's script

Say, "It's fun to wait at the bus stop for your friends to take the bus to school together. When you arrive, greet the kids who are there and when others arrive, greet them too. Talk about appropriate things with the other students and try to avoid arguments. When the bus arrives, wait patiently to get on without pushing others."



waiting for the bus

student page



date _____

time _____

setting _____

teacher _____

period _____

student name _____

self-talk story

I would like to be able to wait patiently at the school bus stop and talk to the other kids who are waiting for a ride to school. I need to come up with a plan that will help me during this time so that I can get on the bus without having problems.

M	T	W	R	F	<h2>self-monitoring checklist</h2> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I find a place to wait. 2. I say hi to kids there. 3. I say hi to kids arriving. 4. I talk about okay things. 5. I wait patiently to board.
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M	T	W	R	F	<h2>my story</h2> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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four

riding the bus

teacher guidelines

narrative

The ride on the school bus can provide many opportunities for children to act out and cause conflict. The driver has to spend most of his energy concentrating on the traffic and does not have the time or resources to mediate conflicts between children. This ride can set the tone for how the school day will proceed for individual students. Those who get off of the bus angry or defiant can change the mood of the entire classroom for that day. Teaching children how to monitor their own behavior in these unsupervised situations is not an easy task.

objective

The student will ride the bus each day and comply with the rules.

benchmarks

1. S will greet the bus driver after boarding the bus.
2. S will walk to a seat and sit down. (Will buckle a seat belt on buses that have them.)
3. S will remain in the bus seat until it stops at the school.
4. S will converse with other children using appropriate topics and voice volume.
5. After the bus arrives at school, S will check for belongings and walk off the bus respecting other children's body spaces.

problem checklist

In adult working situations, coworkers who ignore others are perceived as having poor social skills or as being just plain rude. It's no different with children. In order to develop appropriate social skills students need to practice them early and repeatedly. Teaching children to make a simple greeting of adults, such as the bus driver, encourages better social interactions. For children who are shy a simple smile and nod is an adequate starting point.

Bus rides can be long. Children who have difficulty sitting still may need to learn to read a book or listen with earphones to a CD player or squeeze a small ball in their pocket to keep from jumping up and down in the seat.

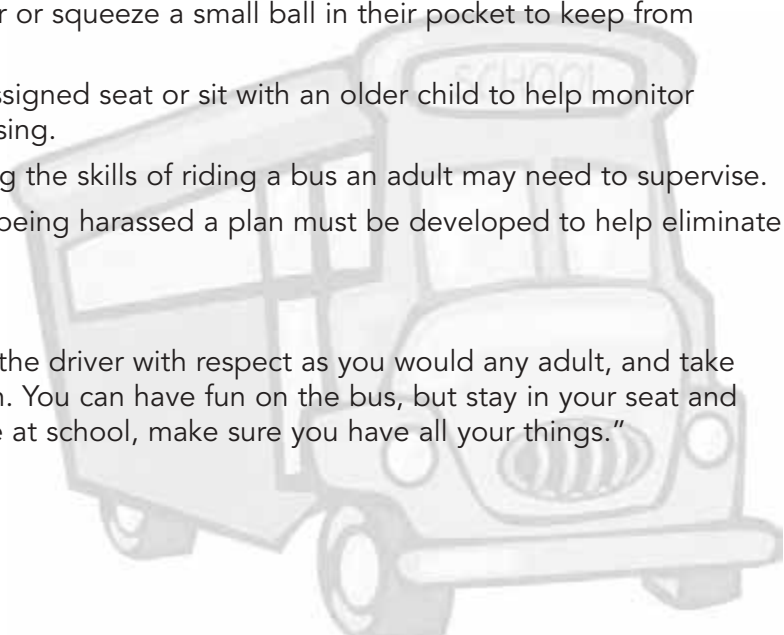
Some children may need to have an assigned seat or sit with an older child to help monitor themselves and to avoid excessive teasing.

In rare incidents while a child is learning the skills of riding a bus an adult may need to supervise.

For students who harass others or are being harassed a plan must be developed to help eliminate this behavior.

teacher's script

Say, "When you get on the bus, greet the driver with respect as you would any adult, and take your seat. If it has a seat belt, buckle in. You can have fun on the bus, but stay in your seat and talk in a normal voice. When you arrive at school, make sure you have all your things."



riding the bus

student page



date _____

time _____

setting _____

teacher _____

period _____

student name _____

self-talk story

I must get on the bus and ride it to school using rules which make it safe for everyone. I need to develop a plan and follow it so that I can ride to school safely.

M	T	W	R	F
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self-monitoring checklist

1. I greet the bus driver with respect.
2. I sit down quietly.
3. I stay in my seat.
4. I talk to friends quietly.
5. I make sure I have my stuff.

M	T	W	R	F
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

my story

five

arriving by car

teacher guidelines

narrative

Many parents drive their children to school, especially if the weather is too cold or it is raining hard. There are social rules for riding in a car as a passenger. Adherence to social rules links to safety rules. If a child is trying to switch radio stations or refuses to buckle a seat belt the driver's attention is distracted from watching the traffic.

objective

The student will ride in the car and observe the family rules for passengers.

benchmarks

1. S will sit in the seat assigned by the driver.
2. S will buckle the seat belt.
3. S will converse politely with the other people in the car.
4. S will avoid distracting the driver.
5. S will open the doors after the car has stopped and thank the driver.

problem checklist

For those children who do not have the social skills or don't wish to carry on an appropriate conversation, this time in the morning might be used to review math facts or spelling words. For the child who has difficulty starting conversations this can be a good time to practice initiating conversations such as "Hey mom, do we have plans for the weekend?"

Other children — who can be impulsive or demanding and can distract the driver by changing the radio stations or CD players, playing with the power windows or arguing — could use a plan to prevent these behaviors from occurring daily.

Sometimes it might be necessary to help the family negotiate the seating arrangement or radio station, or other appropriate adaptations to their routine.

teacher's script

Say, "When you ride to school with your parent or caregiver, or go with another family, it's important to be polite to the driver and not distract them from their driving.

Most people don't like to sit in a car in silence, so if you can think of something to say the driver will appreciate it. When we arrive at school, thank the driver."



arriving by car

student page



date _____

time _____

setting _____

teacher _____

period _____

student name _____

self-talk story

I like having a ride to school. I can use this time to practice what I have learned in school. But sitting for a long time in a car can be hard for me. I need to follow the rules and to thank the driver for bringing me to school.

M	T	W	R	F	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. I sit where I am told to sit.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. I buckle my seat belt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. I talk about okay stuff.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. I don't distract the driver.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. I thank the driver.

self-monitoring checklist

M	T	W	R	F	
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
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my story