

# Developing and Teaching Social Skills Lessons

## When to Teach Social Lessons

- Teach lessons routinely throughout the day. Plan for specific lessons on social topics. Pre-teach social skills before activities so that children know the behavioral expectations.
- Designate a specific time of the schedule for social skills lessons. Put particular picture icon on the schedule to remind them that a social lesson/activity is planned.
- Make the lessons fun and short. Start with an activity that is enticing for them. The length and complexity of the sessions can be extended as time goes on.
- Provide ample time for guided practice. Bring the children's attention to the skill they are learning, for example say "Wow Sam, you are sharing really well with me today". Support them to learn new skills and gradually reduce your support so they can do the skill independently.
- Although children might require redirection during times they engage in inappropriate behaviors, times of stress are not the best times to teach social skills lessons. Teaching of social skills is best done pro-actively.

## Generalization of Social Skills

- Social Skills are Embedded in Life and Enable Us to Participate and Interact
- Real-life situations have multiple social skills occurring at once and not in isolation.
- In order for social training to be effective and functional it must generalize to multiple settings.
- Effective social lessons teach and provide practice in correct skills, and minimize opportunities to repeat incorrect behaviors.
- Once the lesson has been taught, provide opportunities for practice and engraining the skill.
- Adult interaction within activities to specifically model and practice skill building.

## Planning, Teaching, Reinforcing

1. Select the skill you will target for a lesson. Refer to Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for skills and suggestions. Consider specific needs of your class.
2. Teach the skill with direct instruction.
3. Provide guided practice, role play, modeling.
4. Extend the lessons (songs, classroom books, photos of the students)
5. Display visuals in centers or areas of the room where the focus skill is practiced.
6. Refer to the visuals regularly when needed for re-teaching and redirection.
7. Reinforce when children use the skills.
8. Re-teach and provide additional guided practice.

## Example: Step-by-Step Lesson on Sharing



### 1. Select the skill you will target for a lesson (Example: Sharing)

Refer to **Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards** for skills and suggestions. Consider specific needs of your class.

FELD Standards addressed when teaching a lesson on Sharing:

#### **Self-Regulation**

- Begins to recognize then manage and regulate positive and negative emotions with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.
- Follows simple rules, agreements, and routines with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

#### **Relationships**

- Interacts with and develops positive relationships with peers.
- Shows care and concern for others.

#### **Social Problem Solving**

- Shows developing ability to solve social problems with support from familiar adults



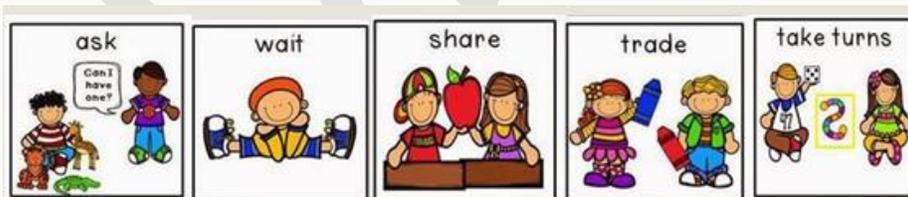
### 2. Teach the Rules for Sharing

Put simple rules for playing on posters and display in centers:

- Ask when you want to use something.
- Wait until someone is finished before you start using something.
- Help each other.

**Provide examples, models, visuals, books and other resources to illustrate the skills you are teaching:**

- Introduce these rules by using puppets, dolls, or cartoon characters.
- Use photos of the children in the class on your rules posters.
- Provide guided practice in centers. Praise and reinforce



### 3. Plan an Activity and Provide Guided Practice

- Review the rules for sharing along with the visual for sharing. Place the visual reminder of the rules in the area of the activity.
- Provide each child with a paper plate to decorate. Place decorative craft materials on several small plates for the children to share. Needed materials can be placed in between the children.
- Providing only one of a particular material such as one glue bottle, or a limited amount of scissors also creates a situation where children need to wait to use the item. It also provides an opportunity for the children to ask each other for the item when another child is using it.

**4. Reinforce and praise during guided activity. Re-teach and provide additional practice if needed for some students.**

**5. Repeat lesson about sharing and provide practice during other activities, such as center play.**