

## Social skills to cultivate in your kids

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Once a child is born, the stages of development begin. These include physical, emotional, mental and ultimately social skills. These developments are the epitome of the personality we will get out of a human being. Eventually, the environment that we put one through in their early childhood development will seed what we call social skills. According to Behavioral Sciences 2019 publication ([Social Skills in Children at Home and Preschool](#)), the most critical age for social skills development is the 3 – 8 years period. What the children get exposed to during this period has the most significant effect on who a child will become in terms of personality.

### What Social Skills Are

Social skills are an integral part of fitting in the society. These are the skills we use to communicate and interact with each other, both verbally and non-verbally, through gestures, body language and personal appearance. Being conscious of how we communicate with others, the messages we send and can be modified to make communication more efficient and successful.

Healthy children are the foundation of any society's future. As a result, it is necessary to pay attention to their physical and mental health development. Social skills development is an essential aspect of mental health. Social skills are taught actions that enable people to engage correctly with others in society.

Verbal language and how we use it, tone of voice, the volume of speech, and the words we choose and more subtle messages like body language, gestures, and other non-verbal communication methods, impact what is said.

According to [Educational PlayCare](#), children development stages resemble as follows:

2- to 3-year-olds: able to seek attention from others, initiate social contact with others both verbally (saying “Hi” and “Bye”) and physically, look at a person who's talking, have the ability to take turns talking, and laugh at silly objects and events.

3- to 4-year-olds: can take turns playing games, play with a doll or stuffed animal, and initiate verbal communication with actual words.

4- to 5-year-olds: can show more cooperation with children, use direct requests (like “Stop”), are more prone to chatting, and pretend play.

5- to 6-year-olds: can please their friends, say “I’m sorry,” “Please,” and “Thank you,” are more strategic in bargaining, play competitive games, and understand the fair play and good sportsmanship.

## **Characteristics of Social Skills**

1. Goal-directed.
2. They are interrelated as one person may simultaneously use more than one kind of behaviour for the same goal.
3. They should be appropriate to the situation of communication.
4. Can be identified as certain types of behaviour by which an individual can be assessed on how socially skilled they are.
5. They can be taught, practised and learned.
6. They should be under the individual's cognitive control; learning them entails knowing when to employ specific behaviours and what behaviours to use, and how to use them.

## **The Importance of Social Skills in Your Kid**

Despite where and how social skills are learnt, that is, in school, at home or by a professional behavioural analyst, they all have the same impact on your kid's future.

## **Communicate effectively**

The development of social skills gives way to the development of 4 primary language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

## **Build self-esteem**

The training effect of social skills on several personality characteristics has been studied. According to Pasha & Gorjian, 2010, irritable and aggressive children have a low self-perception, communicate

infrequently, and frequently require social skills instruction. The findings reveal that social skills training considerably increases social growth, self-esteem, personal adequacy, adaptability and reduces inappropriate actions like hostility and violence.

## **Advancing Career Prospects**

Advancing any career will involve interaction with people. That is, prospects and colleagues will need you to interact with them now and then. Excellent social skills will be a driver for any career.

## **Strengthen learning skills**

Many experts feel that having good interactions with peers assists for adaptability to diverse educational environments and challenges and the impact social development can have on general communication abilities. According to studies, children who have difficulty getting along with their classmates as early as in preschool are more likely to have academic challenges later in life.

## **Resolve conflicts**

High self-esteem and better communication skills can ultimately lead to better conflict resolution skills. According to Conflict Expert, people with low self-esteem often resolve to violence in solving conflicts, while those with high self-esteem often resolve to peaceful resolutions as they are high in confidence.

## **Establish positive attitude**

A positive mindset leads to stronger interpersonal connections and increased self-confidence. That is definitely what good social skills will provide to one.

## **The Parental Role**

According to studies, a child's developing social skills set is heavily influenced by their daily interactions with parents. A child's initial opportunity to form a relationship, communicate, and engage come from their parents. Every day, you model for your child how to interact with the people around you as a parent.

## **What Skills To Cultivate**

### **Two Months – One Year**

1. Two-Way Communication
2. Exploration
3. Communicating Needs/Self-Advocacy
4. Emotion Regulation
5. Expressing Emotions

### **One - Four years**

1. Sharing and cooperating
2. Following Directions
3. Use of good manners
4. Appropriate communicating of needs
5. Respect for personal space

### **Five Years And Above**

1. Self-control
2. Resolution of conflicts
3. Patience
4. Good hygiene
5. Being a good sportsman

### **Things To Do**

1. Teach empathy by having your child act out different scenarios and asking them how they think other people might feel when certain things happen.
2. Explain personal space to your child, emphasizing the importance of feeling comfortable and modelling appropriate ways to engage with others during playtime.
3. Teach kids how to start a discussion, gain someone's attention, or join a group of kids who are already playing together by practising social overtures. These scenarios can be discussed and pondered over dinner or in the car on the way to school or activities.
4. Explain what it means to wait, take turns, and share by sitting with your child for at least an hour a day and playing with him.

It is key to note that these steps are key to developing the 15 skills that have been listed at the different age groups.

## Conclusion

Your children must develop and practise the social skills that society considers proper for them to fit in society and form satisfying human interactions. It is critical to teach kids how to behave to allow them to form relationships with others. As children get older, they interact with more people in contexts where direct parental monitoring is impossible. Children make friends within their peer group and quickly learn more about socializing, hopefully refining their social abilities as they grow and mature, drawing on what they have learnt at home and school about socializing.

*"Teach a child to choose the right path, and when he is older, he will remain upon it." Proverbs 22:6*

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