

WHO / WHAT / WHY

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL SKILLS



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WHY ARE SOCIAL SKILLS IMPORTANT?



Individuals who are socially isolated or have low social competency will face a large number of barriers in life, such as an increased chance of mood disorders, bullying and low self-esteem.



Difficulty socialising can affect your ability to learn new things at school, live independently, find a suitable occupation, maintain your support system, make new friends or even engage in romantic relationships later in life.

Overall, difficulties having positive social interactions can undermine a good quality of life.

Social Skills groups can overcome these barriers by helping individuals to find and build relationships with like-minded peers.

Having meaningful relationships and consistent positive interactions with peers has an immediate effect on self-esteem and increases in happiness. Furthermore, social skills training could provide an opportunity to practice strategies for dealing with bullies or even interacting with potential employers.

WHAT ARE SOCIAL SKILLS?



Social skills are the behaviours, verbal and non-verbal, that we use in order to communicate effectively with other people.

Social skills training should be sensitive to differences across culture's, beliefs and attitudes. Social Skills also continuously change and develop throughout our lives.

Somebody that uses social skills to effectively interact with friends, family, workmates and strangers is said to have social competence.

Social Skills range from very simple to very complex:

SIMPLE

- Waiting for your turn
- Greetings
- Making on topic comments
- Using an appropriate tone and volume of voice
- Reading facial expressions
- Having open body language
- Active listening and questioning
- Rhetorical Questions
- Understanding Sarcasm
- Assertiveness
- Flirting
- Debating

COMPLEX

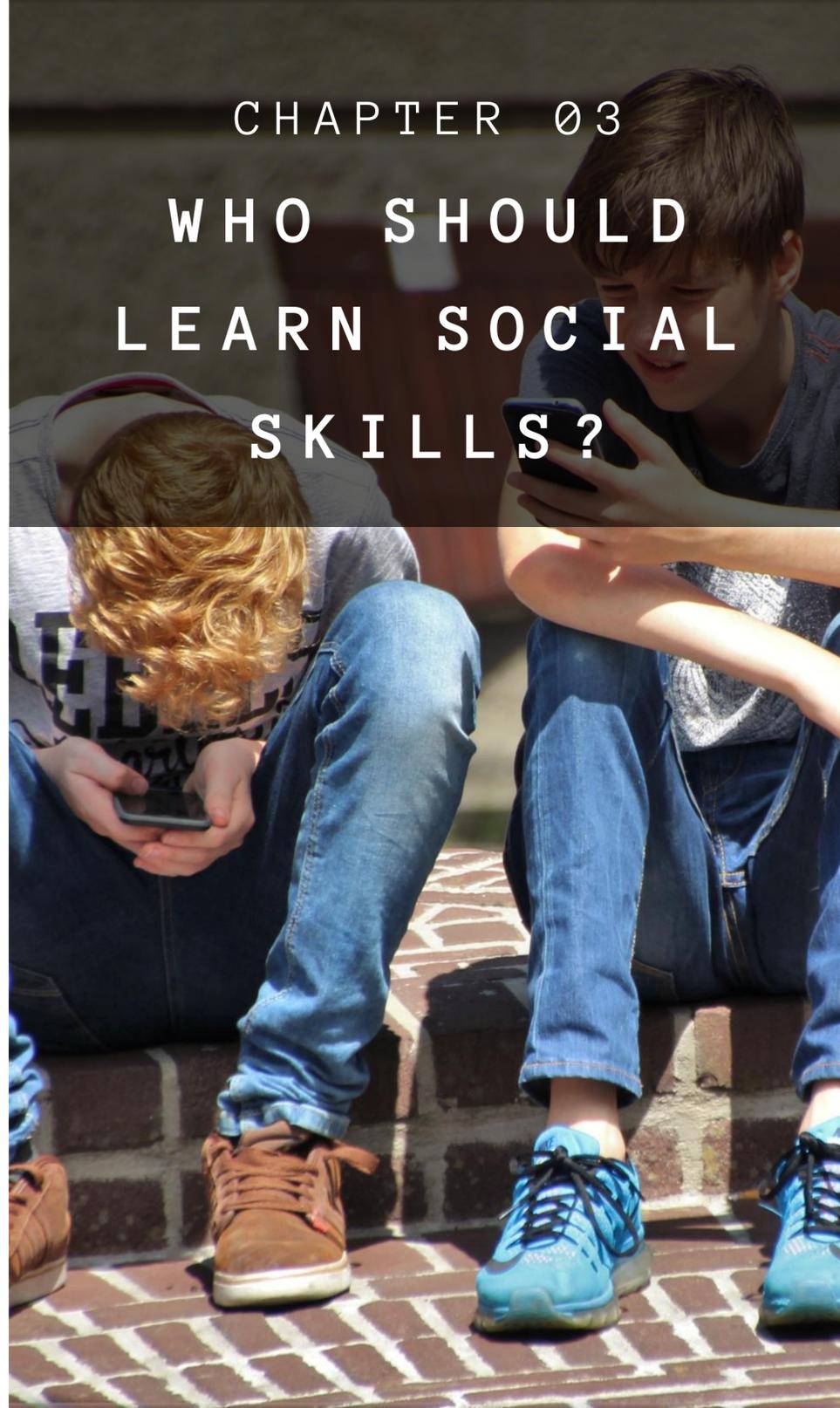


■ WHO CAN BENEFIT?

Social Skills Training is primarily of benefit to individuals who are struggling to have positive interactions with their peers, build and maintain friendships and communicate effectively.

Individuals who may benefit from Social Skills Training and Social Skills Groups include those with Autism Spectrum Disorder or other related disorders and/or those with psychological disorders such as social anxiety or social phobias.

CHAPTER 03 WHO SHOULD LEARN SOCIAL SKILLS?



Social Skills Training can also be for anyone and everyone who wants to improve their social confidence and social skills.



CAN SOCIAL SKILLS BE LEARNT?



Social Skills can be thought of as a skill or an art, which means it can be taught and improved upon.

For example, you can tell when it's somebody first day on the job versus a smooth salesman or someone with refined customer service skills. Smooth talkers and social butterflies love to socialise all the time and in doing so, have become adept at reading social cues and speaking with fluency and charisma. I'm sure we can all relate to saying something awkward, stumbling over our words, expressing a controversial opinion, or making a joke at the wrong time.

We learn from these awkward encounters and change our behaviour accordingly.

For individuals who don't have the pre-requisite skills to easily adapt their behaviour after unsuccessful social interactions, social skills training provides a supportive environment through which important friendship and social interaction skills can be learnt.

*"Every student can learn,
just not on the same day,
or the same way."*

- George Evans



WHAT IS SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING?



Primarily, Social Skills groups provide a safe, non-judgemental, supported environment, to practice important social skills and build positive relationships.

Social Skills groups rely on evidence based teaching procedures such as direct instruction, feedback, reinforcement, modelling and natural exposure.

Fun is an essential component of Social Skills groups, socialising with friends is meant to be fun and relaxing and often occurs in the context of games, or conversation about similar interests.

Social Skills groups are run by trained professional who can confidently assist in the development of socialisation and communication skills.

Importantly, Social Skills training doesn't aim to change who you are at the core. Everyone has a unique personality and unique interests that should be celebrated and encouraged. Social Skills groups must aim to give individuals the skills to form and maintain mutual and long-lasting friendships with individuals that will fully accept them and respect them as they are.

