

Autism Parenting Magazine

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SCIENCE OF SUPPLEMENTS



Social Skills

101

**Identifying
SENSORY OVERLOAD**

**Interview with
Dr. MARIA WYNNE**

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Social Skills 101

WHAT EXACTLY ARE SOCIAL SKILLS AND HOW ARE THEY AFFECTING YOUR CHILD?



Social skills are more than eye contact and body language. They are actually at the core of successful problem solving.

Some things that are considered social skills are: accepting differences, asking for help, communication, following directions and attentive listening, just to name a few. As you think about these you will see a common denominator, your child has to successfully think through these skills to obtain a positive outcome. Your child needs to be able to identify a social situation, figure out what they need to do to obtain the desired outcome, and most importantly they need to follow through. If they have any type of social skills deficit it will affect their en-

tire life from friendships and family to school and academics.

At the base of building social skills is self-esteem. Self-esteem is critical for your child to be able to begin to problem solve. They need to have enough faith in themselves to know they can find a solution.

To help your child build their self-esteem, talk to them about what makes them unique. Everyone has talents or hobbies that make them stand out from the rest of their peers. Maybe your child is great at sports or is good in school. Maybe they are a good listener or great with animals. Maybe they are knowledgeable about a particular topic or have

an awesome collection. Everyone is good at something. Help your child figure out what makes them unique. Point it out to them and compliment them on it whenever you can. This will help your child feel better about themselves and give them the self-confidence to work on other skills they may be struggling with. Pointing out what makes your child unique will not only help them with their daily social situations it will also make them smile!

Making friends is another core social skill. It can be difficult for children on the spectrum to relate to their peers. "The best way to make friends is to show sincere interest in other people. People love to have other people notice them and want to know more about them. Someone could find out things about another person by asking questions, noticing what they are doing or wearing, paying attention to skills or talents of others, and making eye contact."¹ Talk to others about their interests as well as your own. You may be surprised how easy it actually is to make a new friend!

¹ From The Timms Social Skills Program Online Introductory Class

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Lisa Timms has a Master of Science Degree from the University of Scranton. She is the author of "60 Social Situations and Discussion Starters" published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers. You can find her [book online](#). She is also the creator of The Timms Social Skills Program, an online social skills program which is offered internationally for students ages 6-18 with ADHD/ADD, Aspergers, Autism or atypical students who may be struggling with their problem solving and/or social skills.



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