

## Chapter 7

### Teaching Appropriate Social Behavior: Social Skills

#### Introduction

There is some debate among professionals about what is meant by social skill. We will use a general definition of social skill developed by Libet and Lewinsohn (1973). In their definition, social skill is the ability to exhibit behaviors that are either positively or negatively reinforced and to avoid exhibiting behaviors that are extinguished or punished by others.

An extensive review of the research literature led Cartledge and Milburn (1978) to conclude social behavior is clearly related to achievement and school success. They found evidence teachers respond differently to students depending on the students' social behaviors. Cartledge and Milburn argue the most effective place to teach social skills is in the classroom. In another review of the research literature, Gresham (1982) concludes the success of mainstreaming efforts depends largely on peer acceptance of students with disabilities. Peer acceptance, in turn, depends on the level of a student's social competence. Cartledge and Milburn (1978) would probably add not only is peer acceptance critical but also teacher acceptance. Teacher acceptance is, in part, also related to a student's level of social skill.

Ogilvy (1994) reviewed the effectiveness research on social skills training with children and youth and concluded that social skills training is probably a necessary ingredient in a program to improve social competence but probably is not sufficient by itself. There has been a growing discontent with the results of most efforts to teach social skills. Forness and Kavale (1996) conducted a meta-analysis of social skills interventions with learning disabled students and concluded that social skills deficits appear to be prevalent in that population but also seem to be very difficult to correct. In a meta-analysis of studies involving EBD students, Kavale, Mathur, Forness, Rutherford, and Quinn (1997) found that only a little better than half of the EBD students showed an improvement relative to controls. While not greatly better, another meta-analysis of social skills training outcomes (Beelman, Pflingstgen, & Losel, 1994) found a 68% positive response relative to controls. One factor contributing to a positive outcome for social skills training is amount of training. A review of studies with learning disabled students (McIntosh, Vaughn, & Zaragoza, 1991) and students with behavior disorders (Zaragoza, Vaughn, and McIntosh, 1991) found that studies showing a positive effect conducted, on average, three times as much training as those not obtaining a positive effect.

Gresham (1997) in an overview of social skills training and research during the past three decades, suggests that to become truly effective social skills training needs to move in new directions. First, Gresham suggests that there needs to be a more careful analysis of the nature of a student's social skills problem. Problems related to social skills can fall into three broad categories that he labels *acquisition deficits*, *performance deficits* and *competing behavior*. In the case of acquisition deficits a student either doesn't know how to perform a skill or is unable to perform some part of

it. Formal skill training is probably the best intervention approach for this type of problem. Formal skill training is based on the *social modeling* strategy described in this chapter. When a performance deficit exists, the problem is that the contingencies in a student's environment do not facilitate use of a particular skill or skills. Informal skill training is recommended for intervening into performance deficits and is very similar to the *opportunistic teaching* strategy that will be described in this chapter. Finally, when a competing behavior is the problem the difficulty may be related to either the consequences or antecedents or both for the competing behavior. In the case of antecedents, there may be a particularly strong antecedent for the competing behavior in specific environments. In the case of consequences, the competing behavior probably achieves the desired outcome more quickly, consistently, or efficiently than does the alternative social skill. In such cases, the best intervention will probably be some type of reductive strategy applied to the competing behavior such as those described in earlier chapters in this text.

It has also been suggested that to be effective social skills training must take into consideration developmental considerations (Berman & Montminy, 1993). Social behavior changes considerably across the developmental span. In early childhood (3-5), children are learning to get along with one another and interactions tend to be brief with frequent conflict. At this age, negative behavior is tolerated by peers to a greater extent than at any other time. During middle childhood (6-12), play becomes more complex and requires greater social skill. Socially competent children are those seen by peers as friendly, cooperative and self-controlled. This period also marks the beginnings of stable friendships. With adolescence (13-17), there is a shift in focus from play to other shared activities, e.g., hobbies or sports. Communication and relationship skills become much more important, e.g., conversation skills and trust. Adolescents are still concerned with the social competence of their peers but become increasingly concerned with what kind of person a peer is, i.e., what kind of character a peer has. We will discuss character in greater detail in the next chapter. Finally, in adolescence, peers who have continued to engage in negative, coercive behaviors and those who socially withdraw are rejected and socially isolated by the social cliques that emerge during this period. Such youth become prime candidates for deviant peer groups that often promote and support antisocial and aggressive behaviors.

Selman (1980) conducted research into social reasoning in children and adolescents. His research, indicates that younger children's reasoning about social situations tends to be egocentric, concrete, and focused in the present. In middle childhood, social reasoning becomes more complex and begins to include comparisons across individuals and across time. Their reasoning about social situations becomes less egocentric and focuses more on social expectations, affect, and reciprocity in relationships. The greater ability for abstraction and generalizations in adolescence makes possible much more complex social reasoning. Adolescents that develop complex social reasoning can anticipate social effects, consider multiple perspectives, and be more flexible and their social relations. On the other hand, this greater ability to form generalizations may make it more difficult to change an adolescent's perception of a peer's character or of themselves. Thus, an improvement in social skills in an adolescent may have less effect on how that adolescent is perceived by peers or on his or her self-perception than it might at a younger age (Berman & Montminy, 1993). One training

practice that may have some potential for moderating such effects is to engage a student with improved social skills in cooperative activities with peers. The jigsaw lesson approach to cooperative activity discussed in an earlier chapter would be one way of promoting cooperative interaction and exposure to the improved skills of a peer.

Students who are low on the E trait, discussed in Chapter One, are often characterized as shy. Shy children are often assumed to have social skill deficits because of their low level of social participation. Frequently, these children have acquired social skills comparable to their peers, but look deficient because of a performance deficit. That is, they don't use their skills or seldom use them, particularly for peer interaction. Students who are high on the P trait are predisposed to a low level of social conformity. These students will generally be less susceptible socialization efforts than students lower on the P trait. They are probably more disposed to developing and using behaviors that compete with the performance of social skills that they do possess.

### Social Learning Theory

Many social skills interventions are based on the principles of social learning, which along with operant learning approaches have been found to be the most effective approaches (Elliot, & Gresham, 1993). The development of social learning theory was the result of the cumulative efforts of several psychologists (Miller & Dollard, 1941; Rotter, 1954; Bandura & Walters, 1963; Bandura, 1971, 1977; Statts, 1975). My discussion of this theory will follow the presentations of Bandura (1971, 1977). Social learning theory largely accepts the operant learning theory model of how behavior is acquired. It does differ in one important respect. In social learning theory social behavior can be acquired not only through direct experience but also through vicarious experience or observation. The theory suggests observation is an important additional consideration in human learning. Observational learning is considered important for understanding how people acquire behavior. It is important because people have cognitive abilities superior to those of other members of the animal kingdom.

In social learning theory, a person demonstrating behavior is called a model. Models influence learning in observers through their ability to convey information. The observer acquires information from a model through perceptual processes. However, the critical factor is what the observer does with information once it is perceived. Because of the cognitive abilities in human observers, the observer can develop a symbolic representation of what is observed. From this symbolic representation, a person can retrieve information at any time and use it to guide behavior.

Social learning theory describes several processes that regulate observational learning. First, *attention* to the model is necessary. Attention to the model is influenced by several things. The observer's judgment about the functional value of the model's behavior will be important. You do not attend carefully to behavior you see no need for in yourself. Various characteristics of the model will also influence attention. You will attend more to a model you see as similar to yourself than to one you cannot identify with. Bandura identified several important model characteristics. Briefly, they are

as follows:

1. Similarity of the model. Models an observer can identify with are more effective.
  - a. The age of the model. Similarity in age is particularly important with children.
  - b. Sex of the model. Same-sex models are more effective than opposite-sex models.
2. Likability of the model. Models that are personable are more effective.
3. Skill of the model. Perceived competence of the model is important.
4. Status of the model. Models with high social status are more effective.

An observer will also attend more carefully to a model whose behavior results in an outcome seen as desirable by the observer. That is, you will attend carefully to behavior in a model that produces a consequence you would like for yourself. *Vicarious consequences* have an effect similar to but less potent than those of directly experienced consequences. Reinforcing consequences delivered to a model will *facilitate* learning in observers. In social skills training, the best reinforcing effect will be the natural consequences produced by the model's use of a skill. Thus, it is important that modeling demonstrations go smoothly and produce good results. Extrinsic reinforcement may be used if it is necessary to get students to engage in the instruction, but there should also be clear reinforcing outcomes intrinsic to skill use in demonstrations and role-play simulations. This is particularly important with older students because teachers are seldom in a position to reinforce their use of social skills in natural settings and older students are less receptive to reinforcement arising from adults.

Punitive consequences delivered to a model will *inhibit* learning in observers. The absence of consequences for a model, which are anticipated or expected by the observer, will also affect behavior. When a model exhibits a behavior that the observer recognizes as a prohibited behavior and is not punished, the observer's behavior is *disinhibited*. That is, the observer becomes more likely to engage in the same behavior. Likewise, when a model performs a behavior that an observer recognizes as a sanctioned behavior and is either not reinforced or is punished, the observer's behavior is inhibited. That is, the observer becomes less likely to engage in the same behavior. Thus, the lack of consequences for behavior performed by a model appears to be just as important as the type of consequence delivered. While vicarious consequences will influence attention, the greatest effect is on retention and reproduction.

The second process regulating social learning is *retention*. Retention means long-term memory. It is at this point that the higher cognitive abilities mentioned earlier become very important. Memory in people is greatly aided by the ability to *encode* information using symbol systems. Primarily, we use two methods of coding information. One way we represent information symbolically is through *visual images*. You can, no doubt, recall information you have stored in memory using images. For example, you can visualize the appearance of various traffic control signs that you must respond to when you see them.

Another way we represent information symbolically is through *linguistic symbols* or words.

You can, no doubt, also recall information that you have stored in memory using words. For example, you can recall verbal directions on how to make something. Another aid to memory our higher cognitive abilities make possible is *rehearsal*. Rehearsal means cognitively reviewing information. You have also, no doubt, done this. For example, silently rehearsing a number of times a poem you must recite to your teacher and other students. Rehearsal helps one better establish an observed model in memory and thereby makes it easier to recall and use as a guide to behavior at a later time.

The third process regulating social learning is reproduction or *imitation*. Before you can exhibit behavior that has been acquired observationally, you must be able to produce responses corresponding to the behavior you have observed. Reproduction will, of course, be limited by the accuracy of the symbolic representation you have stored in memory. Accurate reproduction may also be limited by physical factors. For example, you may have an accurate memory of the behavior observed but simply not have the physical ability to perform it due to your size, strength, or coordination.

There are two types of imitative response. The first type of imitation is a *matching response*. For example, you are shown how to operate a combination lock. If your imitation is not a perfect match to the demonstration, it will be unsuccessful. A more complex type of imitation is a *rule-governed response*. Rule-governed imitation doesn't require a perfect matching response to the stored model. It requires a match with the form or rule implicit in the model. For example, you learned the form for a simple sentence from samples provided by models, probably your parents. At first you made simple imitative responses to the model sentences. Once you recognized the rule controlling the construction of simple sentences, you were able to generate sentences you had never heard before. Even though these sentences were not exact matching responses to samples, they did correspond to the rule you had learned.

There is little doubt social behavior can also be taught using operant principles. This is done by direct reinforcement of a target behavior or approximations of it. The latter operation is called *shaping*. Under naturalistic conditions the application of operant principles tends to be unsystematic, inconsistent, and inefficient. When the principles are applied systematically and consistently, they are highly effective or *powerful* but time consuming. The systematic use of social learning principles for teaching, with most children, is more *efficient*, that is, less time consuming than the use of shaping. The one exception is severely disturbed children who aren't responsive to social stimuli. In such children, shaping may be the only instructional strategy that can be successfully employed, at least initially.

### Assessment

Before you can begin planning social skills instruction, you need to assess students' skills. Otherwise, the instruction process will be haphazard and may waste time on skills that don't need to be taught. The developmental considerations discussed earlier suggest that the kinds of social skills that are important during early childhood lend themselves well to observation and teacher ratings.

However, as students begin moving through middle childhood the kinds of skills that are important become somewhat more complex and are rooted in peer interactions not as easily observed by adults. Thus, observation and teacher ratings begin to decline in usefulness. By adolescence, the nature of important social skills and the context for those skills is such that observation and teacher ratings are of little value. Self-report and peer ratings are more likely to obtain useful information on students in this age group.

The interview approach to social skills assessment relies on data supplied by the person being evaluated. Since there can be a great deal of variation from one interviewer to the next about what is asked and how responses are interpreted, the interview approach should be structured. A structured interview should standardize for an interviewer what behaviors to ask about and what information to ask for related to time, place, and conditions affecting performance of the behaviors. The usefulness of a structured interview with a student is greatest in adolescence.

Another way to structure information collection from older students is to have them use rating scales to evaluate themselves on a set of statements describing social skills. Students are asked to use a numeric rating to estimate how often they exhibit the behavior or how well they perform the skill. The rating scale may also use labels to help students select the most accurate numeric rating. Sometimes only the labels are supplied and numeric ratings are assigned by the assessor later (see Figure 7.1). An alternative to the skill statement approach is to supply descriptions of various social situations. Students are asked to select from a set of choices provided under each item. At least one choice would represent a socially skillful response to the situation described. A student's choice, hopefully, represents the most likely action by the student in a similar situation. This type of scale resembles a multiple-choice test. An example of this type of item is illustrated in Figure 7.2.

There are several concerns about self-rating scales. First, they can only be used with students who have sufficient reading skill to complete the scale independently. Of course, you could use a self-rating scale like a structured interview with students who can't read or don't read well. However, if you do, the efficiency of a self-rating scale is lost. Second, self-ratings are often biased by social desirability and tend to yield lower deficiency estimates.

Several approaches use informants to obtain data on students rather than using the students themselves. One technique is the informant interview. The earlier discussion of interviewing applies to this approach as well. You need only keep in mind an informant is being interviewed rather than a student. The informant should be someone who is knowledgeable about the student. This often means one or both parents, though other types of informants can be used. As stated earlier, a structured interview is probably the best approach. A well known informant-based, structured interview teachers are familiar with is the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (Sparrow, Balla, & Cicciagtti, 1984).

Another informant-based procedure is a rating scale completed by a knowledgeable person like a teacher. The informant is usually given a list of specific social skills and asked to rate a student

**Numeric Rating Scale**

1. The student can appropriately initiate a conversation.

Much less skillfully than peers 0 1 2 3 4 Much more skillfully than peers

**Labeled Rating Scale**

1. The student can appropriately initiate a conversation.

\_\_\_ much less skillfully than peers

\_\_\_ less skillfully than peers

\_\_\_ about as skillfully as peers

\_\_\_ more skillfully than peers

\_\_\_ much more skillfully than peers

**Labeled and Numeric Rating Scale**

1. The student can appropriately initiate a conversation.

0 much less skillfully than peers

1 less skillfully than peers

2 about as skillfully as peers

3 more skillfully than peers

4 much more skillfully than peers

Figure 7.1. Examples of the use of numerals and labels on social skills rating scales.

1. What would you do in each of the following situations?
  - A. You are being teased by another student in your class.
    1. Say, "I'm warning you, if you don't stop I'm going to slug you."
    2. Say, "Stop, or I'm going to report you to the teacher."
    3. Ignore the student and say nothing.
  - B. Your friend wants you to leave the school grounds with him or her.
    1. Go with your friend.
    2. Say, "I'm sorry but I don't want to do that." and walk away.
    3. Report your friend to the teacher.
  - C. Another student accuses you of taking something from his desk.
    1. Ask the student why he thinks you're the person who took the item.
    2. Deny that you did it.
    3. Tell the student to "shut-up."

Figure 7.2. An example of a situation-specific social skills assessment scale using a multiple-choice format.

on each one. The ratings are usually done using a bipolar scale for each item. An example of this type of scale is the Social Interaction Rating Scale (SIRS) that accompanies this text (see Figure 7.3). A major advantage of this approach is that a large number of social skills can be assessed in a short time. Even with a well-constructed instrument, the quality of the data obtained depends on how accurate an informant's knowledge is of the student being rated. Teacher rating scales are widely used and many examples can be found. Virtually all the commercially available social skills training programs are accompanied by this type of instrument.

It is important to keep in mind that adult informants, e.g., parents and teachers are most likely to supply valid information about younger children. As students reach middle childhood and adolescence, adult informants are increasingly less likely to have valid information about the critical skills. Peers are much better sources of information about the social competencies of older students.

Whether or not one uses a student interview, a self-report scale or an informant report scale or informant interview, the results should only be considered as an initial screening. You usually cannot tell from such data whether the ability to perform a skill is actually present. In the case of student interviews and self-report scales, there exist the possibility of *impression management*, that is, respondents telling you what they think you want them to say rather than what they can or actually do. One way to minimize impression management in interviews is ask students what they would do in a hypothetical situation in which a specific social skill would be the appropriate response. If a student answers correctly, follow-up by asking for a description of how he or she would actually perform the skill named. With informant data, there is the possibility that when an informant reports that a student can't or doesn't perform a skill what the informant is actually reporting is that he or she has never observed the student perform a skill. This is not necessarily the same thing as a student being unable to perform a skill. The informant may not have ever observed the student in a situation where the skill in question would be an appropriate response. On the other hand, a student may not know how to perform the skill or the student may be employing some competing behavior in situations appropriate for using the skill.

One approach to skill assessment that you might consider is to use both self-report and informant report scales for the same set of skills (see the SIRS assessments at the end of this chapter). Next, look for agreements and disagreements between the two reports. If there is agreement about a deficit, mark that skill as a potential target skill. If there is disagreement about possession of a skill, mark that skill for follow-up evaluation. If a subject says a skill is possessed and an informant says the skill is deficit, ask the subject to either verbally describe or demonstrate how he or she would perform the skill in a hypothetical situation. If a subject cannot adequately demonstrate possession of the skill in question, consider this skill as a potential target skill. When a subject demonstrates possession of a skill but an informant denies possession of the skill, it is likely that the informant may never have seen the skill performed because of a competing behavior. In such cases, you should attempt to observe a subject's response in situations where use of the social skill in question would be appropriate. If the skill is not used, the response that is employed in the situation is probably a competing behavior.

1. The student can appropriately express concern for others' problems or misfortune.  
Not skillfully 0 1 3 4 5 Very skillfully
2. The student can employ tact when dealing with others.  
Not skillfully 0 1 3 4 5 Very skillfully
3. The student can respond to humor, including innocent jokes directed at him or herself.  
Not skillfully 0 1 3 4 5 Very skillfully
4. The student can admit to mistakes or errors and apologize if necessary.  
Not skillfully 0 1 3 4 5 Very skillfully
5. The student can respond to false rumors or accusations.  
Not skillfully 0 1 3 4 5 Very skillfully

Figure 7.3. Some sample items for a social skills rating scale using a bipolar scale.

Direct observation, in a natural setting, is a widely used approach to behavioral assessment of children and youth (Alberto & Troutman, 1998). In this approach a specific behavior is assessed as it actually occurs in a natural setting. Naturalistic observation of social skills is more likely to be an option with younger children. The behavior assessed must be operationally defined, continuously observed, and each occurrence individually recorded. It is a time-consuming approach that requires rigorous training, but if done correctly it provides accurate data. Direct observation can be more efficient if you use a set of behaviors in combination with a coded observation system. In this way, a number of behaviors can be assessed concurrently. In addition to use in naturalistic settings, direct

observation can also be done in analogue settings. Analogue settings are contrived situations like role plays and may be the only way to have an opportunity to observe some social skills in older students. An analogue setting is often used to help ensure the behavior of interest will occur at a suitable time. That is, instead of waiting for the behavior to occur under natural circumstances, a situation is contrived to stimulate its occurrence. While this is a more convenient approach than naturalistic observation, there is some question about its use. The major question raised is whether or not the observed behavior in the analogue settings correlates well with actual behavior in natural settings (Bailiwick, Hersen, & Lamparski, 1979).

One combination of the rating scale and direct observation approaches is the observational rating scale. Such a scale is based on the rating of the performance components in a social skill based on current observation. This compromise between the two approaches is possibly the best way to do a follow-up evaluation of a performance demonstration of a skill that is in question. This will allow the identification of either a general deficit in the skill or a deficit in some specific component of the skill. An observational rating scale is also a good way to evaluate mastery of a skill that has been taught to a student. An example of an observational rating scale for use in evaluating a social skill is included in the Prosocial Interaction Training (PIT) curriculum materials at the end of this chapter.

Another approach that might prove useful in social skill assessment would be to conduct a *situational analysis* rather than a skills analysis. In a situational analysis, a student is asked to identify problem situations that he or she doesn't feel competent to handle. The situations identified as problem situations can then be cross referenced with social skills that appear to have potential for use in such situations. Those social skills can then be evaluated employing methods already discussed. The Prosocial Interaction Training (PIT) curriculum included with this text includes a self-report scale that can be used for conducting a situational analysis.

### Curriculum

Curriculum is what is taught in a social skills training program. You can either develop your own curriculum or use a commercial program. In either case, you need some knowledge about what should go into a social skills curriculum. At the beginning of this chapter, there was a general definition of social skill by Libet and Lewinsohn (1973). a more comprehensive definition was given

by Argle (1980) in a discussion of social competence. The definition includes nine components:

1. Accurate perception of others.
2. Ability to take the role of others.
3. Non-verbal communication of attitudes and emotions.
4. Non-verbal support of speech.
5. Emitting behavior rewarding to others.
6. Planning behavior and responding to feedback.
7. Appropriate self-presentation.
8. Understanding of situations and their rules.
9. Appropriate sequencing of behavior during interaction.

Gresham (1982) reviewed the research literature on social skills and successful mainstreaming of children with disabilities. Gresham identified six types of social skills critical for the social integration of children with disabilities:

1. Cooperative skills.
2. Positive interaction skills.
3. Sharing skills.
4. Skill in greeting others.
5. Skill in asking for and giving information.
6. Conversation skills.

Gresham's review suggested children with disabilities who were deficit in these skill areas could not be successfully mainstreamed into regular classrooms. This appeared to be true even if the children had the academic skills needed to function successfully in the regular classroom.

Finally, in a survey of teacher perceptions of social behavior in elementary and secondary school students, Center and Wascom (1986, 1987) identified prosocial behaviors seen as deficit in behavior disordered and learning disabled students. The results of this study have been used to create the social skills curriculum, Prosocial Interaction Training (PIT), that accompanies this text. The skills are divided into three groups:

1. Interpersonal skills, e.g., expressing a compliment.
2. Conversation skills, e.g., self-introduction.
3. Group skills, e.g., delegate and accept responsibility.

### Social Skills Training Programs

There are several social skills training programs available for use by teachers. The skills included in these programs are usually research based. The skills included in the programs, however, do vary. McGinnis and Goldstein (1990, 1997) and Goldstein and McGinnis (1997) developed

programs for teaching prosocial behaviors to preschool age children, elementary school children and adolescents. While there is some overlap between the three *skillstreaming* programs, they aren't identical. The early childhood *skillstreaming* program includes 40 skills divided into six categories:

1. Beginning social skills, e.g., asking for help.
2. School-related skills, e.g., following directions.
3. Friendship-making skills, e.g., joining in.
4. Dealing with feelings, e.g., feeling left out.
5. Alternatives to aggression, e.g., solving a problem.
6. Dealing with stress, e.g., being honest.

The child *skillstreaming* program includes 60 skills divided into five categories.

1. Classroom Survival Skills, e.g., asking for help.
2. Friendship Making Skills, e.g., beginning a conversation.
3. Skills for Dealing with Feelings, e.g., dealing with your anger.
4. Skill Alternatives to Aggression, e.g., responding to teasing.
5. Skills for Dealing with Stress, e.g., reacting to failure.

The adolescent *skillstreaming* program includes 50 prosocial skills divided into six categories.

1. Beginning social skills, e.g., introducing yourself.
2. Advanced social skills, e.g., apologizing.
3. Skills for Dealing with Feelings, e.g., expressing affection.
4. Skill Alternatives to Aggression, e.g., using self-control.
5. Skills for Dealing with Stress, e.g., dealing with group pressure.
6. Planning skills, e.g., setting a goal.

The Boys Town social skills training program (Dowd & Tierney, 1992) is a social skills program that has been promoted in recent years. This program, which has its origins in the Achievement Place (Phillips, Phillips, Fixen, & Wolf, 1972 ) model developed at the University of Kansas, consists of 182 skills divided into four categories.

1. Basic skills, e.g., accepting “no” for an answer.
2. Intermediate skills, e.g., asking for clarification.
3. Advanced skills, e.g., compromising with others.
4. Complex skills, clarifying values and beliefs.

The programs described are representative of those available. The actual skills covered by each program vary in both number and focus. There is, however, a good bit of agreement between the programs concerning the kinds of skills that student need. In order to get a better understanding of the curriculum content of these programs, you should inspect the manual that accompanies each

program.

Commercial curricula have several advantages. First, each program has selected a set of social skills for you. Often these skills will also have been analyzed into a sequence of skill components. Second, most of these programs include some form of assessment based on the curriculum, usually a rating scale. Finally, these programs will include lesson plans for each skill with suggestions for teaching activities. However, in selecting and using a commercial curriculum, you need to carefully consider whether or not the skills included meet the needs of your students. In short, as with any curriculum decision, you must ask if the program has *content validity*.

You should also recognize that even if the curriculum covers the skills your students need, you may need to do a significant amount of adaptation. You may need to apply task analysis to the skills to modify the sequence of task components provided in the program. The sequence of components provided may use steps that are either too small or too large for your students. The lessons will probably be generic and not designed with students like yours specifically in mind. You may need to make modifications so that role-play scenarios and verbal components in the skill are better suited to your students. You will probably also need to introduce variations on the generic lessons to cover diversity issues relating to age, gender, class, and culture (Cartledge, 1996). There are differences in the way some skills are performed between persons of the same age and between younger persons and adults. Likewise some skills will be performed differently when done with someone of the same sex or with someone of the opposite sex. Finally, class and culture issues must be considered in the performance of social skills both in terms of differences in the way a skill might be performed but also in being able to recognize when to perform a skill one way and when to do it differently. In most cases, selecting a commercial curriculum is not the end of a process but rather the beginning.

An alternative to using a commercial social skills curriculum is to develop a local curriculum. You can develop a curriculum that is specific to your classroom and its students, specific to the school in which your classroom is located or specific to the school system of which your school is a part. In many cases, the best choice is a school-based curriculum that has been cooperatively developed by the teachers in the school who will use it. A system-based curriculum is most workable when the school system is, to a great extent, homogeneous. Even when there is homogeneity within a school or school system, the needs of students in different age ranges may require two or more versions of a curriculum. The more diversity there is across a system, the less likely it is that a valid curriculum can be developed for the entire system. Generally, the larger a school system is the more diversity there will be in class, culture, and ethnicity.

If you decide to develop a local curriculum, there are several basic steps that should be followed. First, you need to identify the skill needs of your students. This should be done by analyzing the environments in which they must function and identify the skills needed to be successful in those environments. This will certainly include, at minimum, the local school environment, including both classroom and non-classroom settings. It might also include the local community

environment and even various recreational or work environments within the local community. Your analysis should also identify skills needed in social situations that students report finding difficult or uncomfortable to deal with. Second, once you have identified the skill needs, you should group the skills into categories, usually related to what the skills are used for, e.g., communication skills and problem-solving skills. Third, generate a rating scale or checklist from the skills list that can be used as a screening instrument. Fourth, develop objective statements for the skills. One approach to objective development is to use categories to generate long-term objectives and the skills themselves for short-term objectives. Fifth, create lesson plans for the skills. The first step in creating a lesson plan is to state an instructional objective for the lesson. A variety of instructional objectives may be generated from a short-term social skill objective. For example, each skill may require a different lesson plan to address age, gender and cultural variations (Cartledge, 1996; Dygdon, 1993). Further, the teaching of each skill or skill variation may be broken up into lessons dealing with different aspects of the instructional process. For example, there may be a separate lesson plan for setting the stage for the skill, demonstration and cognitive rehearsal, and behavioral rehearsal.

The PIT curriculum, which accompanies this text, illustrates in whole or part some of the steps described above in creating a social skills curriculum. PIT divides social skills into three categories:

1. Interpersonal skills
2. Conversational skills
3. Group skills

Skills were placed into the category where they seemed to be most focused but may still have applicability to another category. There are a total of 30 skills in this curriculum. The interpersonal category has 15 skills; the conversational category has eight skills; and the group category has seven skills (see Table 7.1).

The skills in PIT can be assessed with the SIRS rating scales discussed in the assessment section. The skills in this curriculum can be used as target behaviors in differential reinforcement of other behavior (DRO) interventions (see Chapter Four) for social behavior problems identified through the use of the Index of Negative Student Behavior (INSB) in the Appendices to this text. The PIT skills can also be taught as responses to common social problem situations that concern students. Table 7.2 is a list of problem situations adapted from research on student-identified problem situations reported by Neel, Meadows, and Scott (1990).

### Instruction

The most efficient instructional strategy for social skills training is social modeling. The social modeling strategy is the best approach for teaching deficit skills. This is the strategy used in most of the commercially prepared social skills training programs. When we use modeling as our instructional strategy, we have two choices about the type of models to use. The first type is called a *mastery*

**Table 7.1.** a list of the skills comprising the Prosocial Interaction Training curriculum accompanying this text.

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**I. Individual Interaction Skills:**

The student can appropriately:

1. express a compliment or appreciation.
2. accept criticism or negative consequences.
3. express feelings, e.g., affection or anger.
4. read non-verbal cues in others.
5. express concern for others' problems or misfortune.
6. employ tact when dealing with others.
7. respond to humor, including innocent jokes directed at him or herself.
8. admit to mistakes or errors and apologize if necessary.
9. respond to false rumors or accusations.
10. discuss his or her accomplishments.
11. respond to someone who has broken a promise or commitment.
12. respond to pressure to do something s/he doesn't want to do.
13. respond to ridicule, malicious teasing or provocation
14. assert his or her rights when treated unfairly or improperly.
15. request assistance or support when in difficulty.

**II. Conversation Skills:**

The student can appropriately:

1. initiate a conversation.
2. engage in social amenities, e.g., taking turns and observing social forms such as greetings and leave-taking.
3. use non-verbal cues, e.g., facial expressions and body language to communicate.
4. interject him or herself into an ongoing conversation.
5. use reflection and questions to show interest in and attentiveness to others.
6. introduce variety into his or her conversational topics with others.
7. use humor, examples, and personal experiences to create interest.
8. show respect for someone's ideas, feelings, and interests when talking to them.

**III. Group Skills:**

The student can appropriately:

1. cooperate with others.
2. negotiate and make compromises.
3. delegate and accept responsibility.
4. express interest in and support for group goals and activities.
5. interject him or herself into an ongoing activity.
6. give and accept direction.
7. comply with social rules.

**Table 7.2.** a list of social problem situations identified by students as being of particular concern to them. Adapted from Neel, Meadows, & Scott (1990).

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Elementary Level:

1. Being blamed for something.
2. Being ignored by others.
3. Being provoked by someone, e.g., teased, called names, pushed, etc.
4. Being rejected by others.
5. Being ridiculed or humiliated.
6. Disagreement (conflict) with someone.
7. Dealing with someone who is inflexible.
8. Having personal property taken.
9. Physical attack, being hurt.
10. Pressure or encouragement to do the wrong thing.

Secondary Level:

1. Asking someone for help.
2. Being discriminated against.
3. Being offered drugs or alcohol.
4. Dealing with criticism.
5. Dealing with false rumors.
6. Dealing with immature behavior in others.
7. Dealing with inappropriate expectations in others.
8. Dealing with poor hygiene in others.
9. Dealing with sexual advances (verbal or physical)
10. Dealing with someone who is angry.
11. Destruction of one's personal property.
12. Expressing feelings (when and how).
13. Feeling anxious or insecure in social situations.
14. Having a trust betrayed.
15. Having one's personal space invaded.

*model*. The mastery model is what most of us first think of when we hear the term modeling. The mastery model is a model who has mastered the skill to be taught and provides a flawless demonstration of it. For example, if the skill is how to initiate a telephone conversation, the mastery model will demonstrate exactly how this skill is performed without any errors or mistakes. The second type is called a *coping model*. The coping model is a model who, like the mastery model, has mastered the skill to be taught and could deliver a flawless demonstration of the skill. However, when we use the coping model, we do not want the model to provide an error-free demonstration. A coping model makes deliberate mistakes during the demonstration for instructional purposes.

We would only use a coping model for a skill we have experience teaching. This would also be a skill students find difficult to acquire from a mastery model. From our teaching experience with this skill, we would have identified a particular component or components of a skill students typically find difficult. These would be points we often have to go back over and provide additional instruction on. The purpose of the coping model is to incorporate this additional instruction into the initial modeling performance. You should not use this approach to modeling until you have some experience teaching social skills.

When setting up a demonstration using a coping model, we would teach the model where the difficult components are located in the skill sequence. The coping model is taught to deliberately make mistakes at those points where students frequently err. The coping model is also taught to stop after those mistakes and correct the error. The model would:

- a. Point out what the error was,
- b. Why it was made,
- c. Provide instruction on how to avoid the error, and
- d. Demonstrate the coping strategy used to avoid the mistake.

The coping model has several advantages. First, it alerts students to difficult components and focuses their attention on these difficult points. Second, it reduces errors by providing instruction on how to deal with the difficult components. Finally, it saves time, in the long run, because it reduces the amount of time spent re-teaching a skill.

Using the skill *initiating a telephone conversation*, let's take a look at how this approach might be used. Suppose you have noticed students frequently failing to initially identify themselves when imitating the demonstration of the skill. Below is a partial illustration of what was modeled, using a mastery model, the flawed imitation, and how a coping model's demonstration might go.

**Mastery Model Demonstration:**

1. Dials phone number and waits for an answer.
2. Call is answered with "Hello."
3. Model says, "Hello, this is Andy Anxious. May I speak to Denise?"

**Student Imitation:**

1. Dials phone number and waits for an answer.
2. Call is answered with "Hello."
3. Student says, "May I speak to Denise?"

**Coping Model Demonstration:**

1. Dials phone number and waits for an answer.
2. Call is answered with "Hello."
3. Model says, "May I speak to Denise?"
4. Model tells observers, "No! That isn't correct. I goofed. I have to remember the person on the line can't see me, so they don't know who is speaking. Many people find it irritating to talk with an unidentified person on the phone. They may also have doubts about what information they should give out to an unidentified caller. I should have identified myself first, before asking to speak to Denise!"

Model repeats the demonstration:

1. Dials phone number and waits for an answer.
2. Call is answered with "Hello."
3. Model says, "Hello, this is Andy Anxious. May I speak to Denise?"

Remember, you would only want to use a coping model to demonstrate skills you have good reason to believe will give students problems. To use this approach when it isn't necessary will waste valuable instruction time.

Another decision you may have to make about the use of modeling is whether to use *live* or *representational* modeling. A live model is a model performing the demonstration for the students in a classroom or other setting. A representational model is a model delivering a demonstration through some type of media. This will usually be either a filmed model or a videotaped model. Both types of presentation can be effective demonstrations. The live model has the major advantage of giving you control over the demonstration, which gives you instructional flexibility. This instructional flexibility is particularly important when you need to use a coping model or are working with a very diverse group of students. A major disadvantage is the problem of locating appropriate models who can demonstrate the skills you need to teach. The representational model's major advantage is convenience. Its major disadvantage is that you are limited to the model characteristics, modeling style, and skills available on the film or videotape.

A final consideration when using modeling is the characteristics of the model. You may recall that one factor contributing to the effectiveness of modeling is how closely an observer identifies with the model. Identification with the model will affect attention to and recall of what is modeled.

Identification with the model will be affected by the similarity of the model's characteristics to those of the observer. Such characteristics as the age, sex, social status, and ethnicity of the model will influence an observer's identification with the model. Evidence also suggests modeling effects will be enhanced if the observer and the model have had cooperative experiences with one another in the past. Modeling effects may also be enhanced if the model has previously imitated the observer. When selecting a model, whether for live or representational presentations, these factors should be taken into consideration. For example, you would not want to select a filmed model that is very different from your students or from very many of them.

### Teaching Strategies: Social Modeling

With the exception of shaping, there are two basic approaches to teaching social skills. The first of these is a group teaching strategy based on *social modeling*. This approach is the strategy of choice if you want to conduct a social skills class to teach deficit skills. It is also the strategy of choice if you want to teach skills that are not commonly used in school settings, or if commonly used in school settings, in settings that you as a teacher would not normally be present.

You will find some variation among different explanations of the social modeling strategy. Nearly all descriptions will include most of the steps below. Some descriptions will add or delete a step for various reasons. You should find the sequence below a satisfactory way to begin teaching social skills. In practice you may want to experiment some with the strategy and possibly modify it according to your needs or situation.

1. **Setting the stage.** Prior to instruction, it is a good practice to introduce the skill to be taught. This introduction can be done through discussion, stories, films, or tapes. The purpose, regardless of the method used, is to communicate to students what the nature of the skill is, that is, why it is the preferred way of handling certain types of situations, and how it can be useful to students in their everyday lives. This last point is particularly important because it will help motivate your students to learn the skill. All of us are more motivated to learn when we can see the personal relevance of what is to be taught.

For example, let's look at an assertiveness skill, saying "No!" to an invitation to engage in inappropriate behavior. You might introduce this skill by using a story or episode in a recent television program or movie illustrating the difficulties a student got into when invited by friends to do something inappropriate, e.g., skip school with them. You would point out how these difficulties could have been avoided if the student had said "No!" You would also make it clear this is the preferred way of handling such situations because it puts the student in control. Such control allows a person to act in his or her best interest rather than following the interests of others. Finally, you would discuss with the students how the skill might be personally relevant to their everyday lives. One way of doing this is to ask students to provide examples of similar situations they have recently experienced. These should be things they have been asked to do that they knew were wrong or didn't want to do but went along with anyway. How these situations might have worked out better if the

student involved had been more assertive and said "No!" should be discussed.

2. **Specifying the skill components.** Before exposing students to the modeling demonstration of a skill, you should specify the specific components in the skill. This will work like an advance organizer for observing the demonstration and help focus attention on the critical components in a skill. The components of a skill are also critical for evaluation. If you are developing your own curriculum, you will have to work out the specific components for each skill. This can be accomplished using task analysis procedures (Moyer & Dardig, 1978). Even if you are using a commercially prepared curriculum, you may find it necessary, at times, to do a components analysis for yourself.

As an example, let's continue with the assertiveness skill used above. What are the specific components you might want to include in the skill of saying "No!" to something a student shouldn't or might not want to do? The following is one possible sequence:

1. Look directly at the person and make eye contact.
2. In a calm, normal voice say, "No! I don't want to do that."
3. Suggest an appropriate alternative.
4. If the alternative is declined, and the inappropriate suggestion is repeated,
5. In a calm, normal voice say, "No! I don't want to do that."
6. If the No statement is still not accepted,
7. In a calm, normal voice say, "I'm sorry. I've got to go now. I'll see you later."
8. Walk away.

3. **Model the skill.** You are now ready to demonstrate the skill for the students. You should already have selected your model and modeling type. The model should have previously been through the modeling strategy with you so that everything is clear. You will also need to have a role playing situation to provide a context for the demonstration. You should have more than one role playing situation ready so the demonstration can be repeated if necessary. You will also need some role playing situations to use with observers to rehearse the modeled skill. The situations selected should be realistic for the students who will be observing the demonstration. Be sure there is a reinforcing outcome for the model's use of the skill in the demonstration sequence. You may also use extrinsic reinforcement for the model if it will be needed later to motivate participation by the observing students.

Let's continue with our example and illustrate the modeling phase of the teaching strategy. The role playing situation will be a conversation between Chuck and his friend Lisa in the hallway between first and second periods at school.

Lisa is standing at her locker and Chuck walks up to her.

Chuck: "Hi Lisa. How goes it?"

Lisa: "Great! How about you?"

Chuck: "Not so good. I'm really sweating that sixth period math test."

Lisa: "Oh, I don't think it will be very hard."

Chuck: "Well maybe not for you. You're good at that stuff. Listen. How about helping a friend out. I could sit beside you during the test and you could kind of help me out with a few hints. O.K.?"

Lisa looks directly at Chuck and makes eye contact and then calmly and in a normal tone of voice speaks.

Lisa: "No! I won't do that Chuck. I'll tell you what, why don't you meet me at lunch and we'll go over the problems you're having trouble with."

Chuck: "I don't have time for that Lisa. I've got to meet Mel at lunch time to talk about this movie I saw last night. Come on. It won't hurt you to give me a few hints during the test."

Lisa looks directly at Chuck and makes eye contact and then calmly and in a normal tone of voice speaks.

Lisa: "No! I won't do that Chuck."

Chuck: "Come on Lisa. Give me a break. All I want is a few hints. That's not much to ask."

Lisa looks directly at Chuck and makes eye contact and then calmly and in a normal tone of voice speaks.

Lisa: "I'm sorry, Chuck. I've got to go now. It's almost time for the bell. I'll see you later."

Lisa turns and walks away from Chuck.

Teacher: "Good! That was very well done, Lisa. You handled that just right. Thank you."

4. **Cognitive rehearsal.** In this phase, you will have each student verbally rehearse the modeled skill. This description should follow the components provided in Step Two above that introduced the modeling demonstration. If the student makes errors in the verbal description or the sequence, go back over the components with the student, referring to the demonstration for illustrative purposes. When you give feedback on the cognitive rehearsal, use the *sandwich technique*. Begin by reinforcing something that was correct. Next, discuss the error or errors the student made. Close by reinforcing something that was correct. The presentation of both positive and negative feedback should clearly specify what was done and why it was correct or incorrect. The positive feedback should be worded so it includes social reinforcement. For some students social reinforcement may

not be sufficiently motivating. In those cases, you should plan for an alternative form of reinforcement that can be combined with the social reinforcement. Each student should continue cognitive rehearsal until the component sequence can be stated without any errors or prompting from you. Once this phase is successfully completed, a student is ready to imitate what has been observed.

5. **Behavioral rehearsal.** In this phase, each student is asked to perform the skill in a situation identified as being a likely situation in his or her life requiring the skill. If a student can't or won't provide such a situation for the role-play, give the student a role-playing scenario that you have selected or developed in which to practice the skill. You may, if you wish, use the same role-playing situation used for the modeling phase for the first behavioral rehearsal. The student should, however, get practice with different scenarios, preferably self-selected, before the behavioral rehearsal phase is over. During this phase, you should give each student feedback on his or her performance. If you have criticisms of the performance, present them using the *sandwich technique*.

The following example will illustrate the use of the *sandwich technique* described earlier.

Positive Feedback: "You did an excellent job in the first step, Marie. You looked right at Shawn, had good eye contact, and spoke very calmly. Good work!"

Critical Feedback: "Marie, you had a bit of a problem with the No statement. You should not have followed the No statement with an excuse for why you wouldn't do what Shawn asked. You don't need to make excuses or explain yourself. When you do that you are opening up the possibility for an argument or debate about your reasons. That you don't want to do it is sufficient. Remember how Lisa phrased her statement to Chuck? She kept her statement simple and directly to the point and did not try to explain herself to Chuck.

Positive Feedback: "I liked your alternative suggestion. It was very appropriate and a good alternative to what Shawn asked you to do. Marie, that was well done!"

If a student has made errors, you should give additional practice opportunities, so you can use feedback to correct mistakes. If the mistakes were serious enough, repeat the modeling phase before giving additional practice. Even if a student performs correctly the first time, additional practice will help firmly establish the skill. Don't forget to use different role-playing scenarios during practice. This will keep the practice interesting and aid generalization of the skill.

Another possibility for providing feedback is to use videotaping equipment. If this equipment is available, it can be helpful. You can tape a student's practice of a skill and then replay the sequence for the student. During this replay, you can enhance your feedback by stopping at various places, making your point, and then backing up and replaying the part related to your feedback. If the initial modeling sequence has been taped, you can also use it to go back over points with a student during feedback. Such a tape can also be used in future instruction to model the skill during Step Three.

6. **Evaluation of performance.** Student evaluation begins during cognitive rehearsal and continues through behavioral rehearsal. After a student has been introduced to a skill and has observed a modeling demonstration of the skill, evaluation becomes a part of the teaching process. You should use the components making up the skill as a basis for the evaluation. During cognitive rehearsal use the skill components as a checklist. During behavioral rehearsal use the skill components to create an observational rating scale (see Figure 7.4). The rating scale is used to evaluate a student's performance of a skill in each role-play demonstration. As you observe the performance, complete the rating scale. If a student meets the criteria that you have set for mastery of a skill, the student is ready to move on to a new skill. If a student does not meet your mastery criteria, you should provide additional instruction and practice until the evaluation criteria have been met.

7. **Generalization.** This is the last phase in the social modeling strategy. Often, it is also the most difficult to arrange. It should not be omitted, however, since it is a critical phase. In this phase, you want each student to actually gain experience using a skill in real situations that arise in the student's life. You should negotiate a contract with each student in which it is agreed the skill will be tried out, as a homework assignment, in a real situation. If necessary, the contract should provide for an extrinsic reward for the student if the skill is successfully used (see Figure 7.5).

The most difficult aspect of the contract is monitoring it. Sometimes the skill will be one you, another teacher, a parent, or some other adult will have an opportunity to observe. If this is the case, monitoring should not be a great problem. If another person is going to be involved, you will need to explain what to look for and how to judge the adequacy of the performance. Your observational rating scale can be useful for this task. If you have been able to videotape the modeling phase or if you have used a commercial film or tape, this can be useful also. If the skill is one a responsible adult will not have an opportunity to observe, you will have to rely on student self-report data. Often you can get a fairly good idea about whether or not the skill was used by requiring a detailed verbal report of the situation the skill was used in and how it was used. This is the least desirable way to monitor, but often it is your only choice.

### Teaching Strategies: Opportunistic Teaching

The second strategy is used within a classroom group but is applied to students on an individual basis. We will call this approach *opportunistic teaching* of social skills. The opportunistic strategy should be used for classroom social skills that should be used daily by all students. This is the approach of choice for common social skills for which many students have a performance deficit. If there is a skill acquisition deficit in any of the classroom skills that you plan to use in your program, they can be taught using the social modeling strategy.

You can select skills for your opportunistic curriculum from any of the commercial social skill curricula that include classroom skills or task-related skills. The skills selected should reflect classroom expectations for appropriate social behavior. The skills should also be behaviors for which

**A skill checklist for use during cognitive rehearsal.**

**NO    YES**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1.      Look directly at the person and make eye contact.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2.      In a calm, normal voice say, "No! I don't want to do that."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3.      Suggest an appropriate alternative.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4.      If the alternative is declined, and the original suggestion is repeated,
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5.      In a calm, normal voice say, "No! I don't want to do that."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6.      If the No statement is still not accepted,
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7.      In a calm voice say, "I'm sorry. I've got to go now. I'll see you later."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8.      Walk away.

**Observational rating scale for use during behavioral rehearsal.**

Observe each student's performance, of the items below, in the context of a role play scenario.

Rate the observed performance using the following rating scale.

**1 = Not or poorly done      2 = Acceptable      3 = Well done**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1.      Look directly at the person and make eye contact.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2.      In a calm, normal voice say, "No! I don't want to do that."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3.      Suggest an appropriate alternative.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4.      If the alternative is declined, and the original suggestion is repeated,
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5.      In a calm, normal voice say, "No! I don't want to do that."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6.      If the No statement is still not accepted,
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7.      In a calm, normal voice say, "I'm sorry. I've got to go now. I'll see you later."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8.      Walk away.

Criteria: a student must receive a rating of at least two (2) on all items appropriate to the demonstration in three consecutive role play scenarios.

**Figure 7.4.** A skill checklist for use in evaluating cognitive rehearsal and an observational rating scale for use in evaluating student performance during behavioral rehearsal.

**Contract**

**When**  Lisa Lightfoot   **completes**   three uses of the social assertiveness skill of saying,  
 “No! I don’t want to do that” when actually asked by someone to do something she shouldn’t do  
 or doesn’t want to do and does this by   May 30   **she will be allowed to**   take home three  
 CD’s of her choice.

_____	_____
Student signature	Date
_____	_____
Teacher signature	Date
_____	_____
Witness signature	Date

Figure 7.5. An example of a teacher-made contract with a student to apply a newly learned social skill as a homework assignment.

your students need regular practice opportunities in order to improve their performance. While you may have as many skills as you like in your curriculum, it is probably best if you limit your active curriculum list to about five skills at any one time. The following is an example of ten skills that might be appropriate for an opportunistic curriculum.

1. Entering a classroom.
2. Sitting in your desk.
3. Listening to a speaker.
4. Seeking recognition.
5. Complying with requests or instructions.
6. Accepting consequences.
7. Disagreeing.
8. Sharing materials or equipment.
9. Work cooperatively on a task.
10. Negotiate a compromise.

The performance components for each skill in your curriculum may be taken from a breakdown provided in a commercial curriculum or determined by a task analysis. Moyer and Dardig (1978) discuss how to apply task analysis to breakdown skills like those above into their component parts. They recommend working in a group when analyzing skills from the affective domain. You can, however, work alone while doing such task analyses if necessary. The process begins by generating a list of the possible components. One suggestion is for the persons working on the analysis to try to identify, from personal experience, someone who can competently perform the skill under analysis and recall what that person does. Another possibility is to have someone who is competent with the skill perform the skill and note down what he or she does. The second step is to review the list of skill components and to ask of each component, “is this component necessary for acceptable performance?” If the answer is no, either by consensus or majority vote, for any component, eliminate that component from the list. Third, of the remaining components ask, are these components sufficient for an acceptable performance?” If the answer is no, go back to the first step and generate some additional components. Finally, after the list has been refined, organize the components into a logical sequence of steps for performance.

After you have worked out your curriculum, select the set of skills that you want to begin with. Use this set of skills as your rules or expectations for good classroom behavior. Either publicly post this set of skills with their associated components or provide an individual copy to each student. Always introduce the skills by discussing and demonstrating your expectations for how each one should be performed. This process should be repeated whenever you make a change in the list or whenever a new student is placed in your classroom.

Use of the skills by your students should be regularly reinforced. It is important that you deliver reinforcement only for appropriate behavior and deliver reinforcement consistently. Even if you are using primary reinforcers, e.g., peanuts or reinforcement mediators, e.g., points, you should

pair these reinforcers with social reinforcement to strengthen the reinforcing properties of social reinforcers and to establish a more “natural” reinforcer that can be used to maintain behavior in the future. When you deliver social praise, you must sound sincere if it is to be effective. You should employ “you” statements rather than “I” statements in the praise because this puts the focus on student behavior rather than teacher satisfaction. When you deliver social praise, you should be specific and descriptive so there is no doubt what is being attended to. Finally, you should monitor your use of praise relative to admonitions to ensure that you are keeping the focus of your behavior management on appropriate behavior in your classroom. a reasonable goal is to have a ratio of ten praise statements to each admonition. Here is an illustrative praise statement.  
“John, you did an excellent job of following directions. You put your materials away quickly, and you put them on the correct shelf. Good following directions.”

Opportunistic teaching depends upon the idea that the best time to teach something is at a *teachable moment*. A teachable moment is anytime that an opportunity to use a skill occurs and it isn’t used. Use of this type of teaching interaction to teach social skills was pioneered in the Achievement Place program developed at the University of Kansas (Phillips, et al., 1972). This is the same approach used in the Boys Town social skills program (Dowd, & Tierney, 1992). In this approach, when a student has the opportunity to employ a social skill and fails to do so, an instructional intervention begins immediately. The procedure used for this intervention, as described by Phillips, et al. (1972), follows:

1. **Make a positive approach.** You should move toward the student in a non-threatening manner and speak in a pleasant tone of voice. For example, you might say, “John, I’d like to speak to you for a moment.”
2. **Describe and praise.** Tell the student what he or she just did that was appropriate and praise that behavior. For example, you might say, “Just now, when you wanted to be recognized, you held up your hand and you faced the front. You did that very well.”
3. **Describe incorrect behavior.** Tell the student what he or she just did that was not appropriate. For example, you might say, “However, you also called out my name several times.”
4. **Seek knowledge of correct behavior.** Ask the student to tell you what the proper way to seek recognition from the teacher is. For example, you might ask, “Can you tell me what the correct steps are in seeking recognition?” If the student responds correctly, you might say, “That’s right. You raise your hand, you face the front, and you wait quietly.” If the student makes an error or doesn’t know, review the steps and ask the student to repeat them. Give positive feedback for correct rehearsal. For example, you might say, “Very good, you correctly stated all the steps in correct order. Thank you.”
5. **Give a rationale for correct behavior.** Tell the student why use of the correct behavior is important. Try to employ a student’s value perspective in your rationale, that is, try to include a

reason that will appeal to the student. For example, you might say, “John, when you seek recognition appropriately, I will be able to help you with your problem quicker, you’ll get your work finished sooner, and you won’t disturb your classmates.”

5. **Seek acknowledgment from the student.** Ask the student to acknowledge that he or she has heard the rationale. It is not necessary that a student agree with the rationale. For example, you might ask, “Did you hear what I said?” When a student acknowledges that he or she has heard what you’ve said, respond with “good” or “OK.”

6. **Require practice of correct behavior.** The next step is to have the student demonstrate the correct behaviors making up the skill being taught. For example, you might say, “Let’s try it again. I’ll go back over by the desk and you correctly seek my recognition.” You would then go back to your desk and let the student demonstrate.

7. **Give feedback and reinforcement for practice.** After the student correctly performs the skill, go to the student and deliver positive feedback and reinforcement. For example, you might say, “John, you raised your hand, you faced the front and you waited quietly. You did that just right. Now, what can I do for you?”

You may have students who will resist or refuse to cooperate in an intervention. You need to pre-plan what your response will be to such behavior at each step in the intervention sequence. You certainly don’t want to get into a time-consuming confrontation unless you have the necessary support systems for such interactions. However, you can employ consequences such as fines, loss of privileges, reports to parents or being sent to the office. If you have a student who is likely to physically act-out when a consequence is delivered, you should have a contingency plan in place for responding to such behavior.

You may be in a situation where you don’t think you can effectively employ each and every teachable moment that occurs. For example, you might be in a self-contained class without an aid to attend to the other students while the intervention is carried out. You might be in a resource class where you don’t have the students for a long enough period of time to justify responding to every opportunity or be in an inclusion class where very many such interventions would disrupt the instructional program at the expense of a majority of the students. In such cases, you might consider narrowing your focus to one skill per week or being selective about which opportunities you respond to. You should always be alert for and respond to opportunities to reinforce good skill models as a way to facilitate good skill use in other students.

In conclusion, helping students develop social competence is an important and difficult component in an affective curriculum. A comprehensive program will employ both the social modeling strategy and the opportunistic teaching strategy. It will also contain other components like the ones to be discussed in subsequent chapters.

### Activities

1. Administer and score a social skills inventory such as the SIRS and write objectives for the student based on the problems identified that appear to be in most need of intervention.
2. Administer both a student report and an informant report social skills inventory such as the SIRS and compare the two results for agreements and disagreements. What follow-up questions would you want to ask about disagreements?
3. Conduct a social skills situational analysis using the PSI and determine what social skills might be appropriate to teach based on the results of your analysis.
4. Match social behavior problems with social skills either from SIRS or a commercial curriculum that could be used as the target behavior in a DRO intervention for the problem social behavior.
5. List your five most common classroom **social behavior problems** (not instructional problems) and then select five (5) skills from SIRS or from a commercial curriculum that could be used as countering expectations for classroom **prosocial behaviors** and that are suitable for opportunistic teaching, i.e., they would have frequent opportunities to occur and be observed by you.
6. Select one (1) skill from the list of classroom prosocial behaviors and work-out the performance components for that prosocial behavior.
7. Demonstrate a teaching interaction on the prosocial behavior for which the performance components were worked out. Possible roles during demonstration: Teacher, student(s) and trainer or coach.
8. Select a skill for the SIRS instrument or from a commercial curriculum that would **NOT** be very well suited to opportunistic teaching but could be taught through role plays using social modeling. Work-out the components for this skill and plan a lesson to teach it, using the lesson planning form provided (hand-out), including an evaluation scale.

What would an IEP long- and short-term objectives for this skill look like?

9. Demonstrate teaching the prosocial behavior for which the lesson plan was written. Possible roles during demonstration: Teacher, model(s), student(s) and trainer or coach.
  - a. List performance components on the board before beginning.
  - b. Provide context scenario for the modeling demonstration.
  - c. Demonstrate cognitive and behavioral rehearsal in the demonstration.

**Prosocial Interaction Training (PIT):  
A Curriculum Guide**

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The PIT curriculum is adapted from research conducted by Center and Wascom (1986 & 1987):

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## PIT Curriculum Goals and Objectives

### Introduction

In the following goals and objectives the term **appropriate** means in a manner that maximizes the probability of a positive response in an interaction and in a manner judged similar to how a student's socially normal, developmental peers would perform.

It is also important, for instructional purposes, that each objective's basic format, as expressed below, be **restated** in several forms. Instructional objectives should reflect any differences that would be important relative to age or sex, e.g., adults vs. peers, and males vs. females; and differences important relative to cultural appropriateness, e.g., mainstream culture, community culture, or peer culture.

### **For Example:**

The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately express compliments or appreciation might be **restated** as follows.

- a. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately *express compliments* to adults, of either sex in the context of the mainstream culture.
- b. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately *express compliments* to peers, of either sex in the context of the mainstream culture.
- c. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately *express compliments* to adults, of either sex in the context of the Chinese/American sub-culture.
- d. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately *express compliments* to peers, of either sex in the context of the Chinese/American sub-culture.

In the above restatements of the basic objective on *compliments and appreciation*, only *compliments* are addressed. The restatements could be repeated substituting *appreciation* for compliments. This would result in eight instructional objectives.

The instructional objectives, in the above example, could be further broken down into smaller objectives related to the instructional process. Each objective could be addressed in terms of modeling and cognitive rehearsal, and behavioral rehearsal. This would increase the total number of objectives derived from the basic form to sixteen.

**For Example:**

The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately express compliments to adults, of either sex in the context of the mainstream culture might be **restated** as follows.

1. The student will observe modeling demonstrations of *expressing a compliment* to a male adult and to a female adult, in the context of the mainstream culture, and demonstrate an ability to verbally describe, in proper sequence, the skill steps demonstrated.
2. The student will, in the context of role plays, demonstration *expressing a compliment* to a male adult and to a female adult, in the context of the mainstream culture.

The curriculum that follows is expressed as three broad or long-term goals with several associated basic or short-term objectives for each goal. Each of the short-term objectives can be massaged into a number of additional lower level instructional objectives as illustrated above. Remember that the term *appropriate* in each objective statement was defined earlier to mean in a manner that maximizes the probability of a positive response in an interaction and in a manner judged similar to how a student's socially normal, developmental peers would perform..

Goals and Objectives

**I. Individual Interaction Skills**

- a. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately use **individual interaction skills**.
  1. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately express a **compliment or appreciation**.
  2. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately accept **criticism or negative consequences**.
  3. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **express feelings**, e.g., affection or anger.
  4. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **read non-verbal** cues in others.
  5. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately express **concern for others'** problems or misfortune.
  6. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **employ tact** when dealing with others.

7. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **respond to humor**, including innocent jokes directed at him or herself.
8. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **admit to mistakes or errors and apologize** if necessary.
9. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **respond to false rumors or accusations**.
10. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **discuss his or her accomplishments**.
11. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **respond to someone who has broken a promise or commitment**.
12. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **respond to pressure** to do something s/he doesn't want to do.
13. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **respond to ridicule, malicious teasing or provocation**.
14. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **assert his or her rights** when treated unfairly or improperly.
15. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **request assistance or support** when in difficulty.

## **II. Conversation Skills**

- a. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately use **conversation skills**.
  1. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **initiate a conversation**.
  2. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **engage in social amenities**, e.g., taking turns and observing social forms such as greetings and leave-taking.
  3. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **use non-verbal cues**, e.g., facial expressions and body language to communicate.
  4. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **interject him or herself into an ongoing conversation**.

5. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **use reflection and questions** to show interest in and attentiveness to others.
6. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **introduce variety into his or her conversational topics** with others.
7. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **use humor, examples, and personal experiences** to create interest.
8. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **show respect** for someone's ideas, feelings, and interests when talking to them.

### III. Group Skills

- a. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately use **group skills**, when working or playing.
  1. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **cooperate with others**.
  2. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **negotiate and make compromises**.
  3. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **delegate and accept responsibility**.
  4. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **express interest in and support for** group goals and activities.
  5. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **interject him or herself into an ongoing activity**.
  6. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **give and accept direction**.
  7. The student will demonstrate an ability to appropriately **comply with social rules**.

### **PIT Teaching Strategy: Social Modeling**

- a. Social skills instruction.
  - 1. Set the stage for instruction by discussing the relevance of the skill to the student(s).
  - 2. Specify the skill's components to focus attention.
  - 3. Model the skill through a role-play scenario.
  - 4. Cognitively rehearse the skill with each student and provide performance feedback, reinforcement for correct components and review for weak components.

Evaluation is done using the components specified in Step Two (2) above (see example of component checklist to follow).

- 5. Have each student behaviorally rehearse the skill, within a role-play scenario followed by performance feedback, reinforcement for correct components and review for weak components.

Evaluation is done using the components specified in Step Two (2) above (see example of observational rating scale to follow).

- 6. Promote generalization of the skill through reinforcement for real applications of the skill in the classroom and through behavioral contracts with the student to apply the skill in settings outside the classroom.

### **PIT Skill Lesson Planning Form**

1. Objectives for the social skill:
  - a. Annual Goal:
  - b. Short-term Objective:
  - c. Instructional Objective:

Use each of the following components as appropriate for the instructional objective.

2. Method and procedures to be used for setting the stage for the lesson:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Specify the skill's components (see note at end of form):
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Type of modeling to be used:
  - a. If coping model is to be used:
    1. Specify the components in which coping will be used:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
    2. Specify the coping instruction that will be provided for each component to be used:

5. Model characteristics are to be used:
  
6. Role-play scenarios to be used:
  - a. For the modeling demonstration:
  
  - b. For behavioral rehearsal and evaluation:
    - 1.
  
    - 2.
  
    - 3.
  
7. Extrinsic reinforcement to be used, if necessary:
  - a. With the model: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. During cognitive rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. During behavioral rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Method of evaluation and criteria:
  
9. Generalization plan for the skill:

### Sample PIT Skill Lesson Plan 1

1. Instructional objective for the social skill:  
**I.8.1** Each student will participate in a discussion of the skill of **apologizing** to someone who has been wronged.
2. Method and procedures to be used for setting the stage for **apologizing**.  
a discussion of students' experiences will be begun by asking students to:
  - a. Describe a situation where they were treated badly,
  - b. Describe their feelings about the person who wronged them,  
Follow this up by asking if the person who wronged them apologized and then ask:
    - c. Did the apology change your initial feelings about the person, OR
    - c. How an apology might have helped modify those feelings.
3. Extrinsic reinforcement to be used, if necessary:  
During the discussion social reinforcement will be delivered for participation. At the end of the discussion period, each student's participation will be rated and token reinforcers awarded, based on the rating received. At the end of the day, the tokens can be exchanged for activities.
4. Method of evaluation and criteria:  
Evaluation will be done following the discussion by rating each student's participation on the following scale: 1) Poor, 2) Good or 3) Excellent. Each student should get a rating of at least 2 during the discussion.

### Sample PIT Skill Lesson Plan 2

1. Instructional objective for the social skill:
  - I.8.2** Following a modeling demonstration, each student will demonstrate the ability to verbally describe how to **apologize** to an adult.
2. Specify the skill's components:
  1. Select an appropriate time for the apology.
  2. Greet the individual in a friendly manner.
  3. Recall the situation at issue.
  4. Admit making an inappropriate response in the situation.
  5. Express regret for the error.
3. Type of modeling to be used: Coping
  - a. If coping model is to be used:
    1. Specify the components in which coping will be used:
      - (1) Selecting an appropriate time.
    2. Specify the coping instruction that will be provided for each component to be used:

An appropriate time will be one where the approach and apology will not be intrusive. That is, it will not interfere with anything the individual to receive the apology might be doing.
4. Model characteristics are to be used:

The model will be similar to the students the lesson is directed at in terms of sex, age, and race. If possible, a model known to have social status with the target students will be used.
5. Role-play scenarios to be used:
  - a. For the modeling demonstration:

William asks his mother to prepare supper early so he can eat before he has to leave to go to a ball game. When his mother asks him to help out by preparing the beverages, he gets angry because he's trying to watch something on TV. An argument follows during which his mother becomes very upset.

6. Extrinsic reinforcement to be used, if necessary:
  - a. With the model: Social reinforcement and token reinforcers that can later be exchanged for activities.
  - b. During cognitive rehearsal: Social reinforcement and token reinforcers that can later be exchanged for activities.
8. Method of evaluation and criteria:

Evaluation will be done during cognitive rehearsals using a checklist composed of the five components in the skill. a component will be checked off only if it is adequately described and described in the proper sequence. Each student must be checked off on all five components within the same rehearsal session before moving on to behavioral rehearsal.

### **Sample PIT Skill Components Checklist**

Evaluate a student's cognitive rehearsal by checking off each component below if it is accurately described and given in the proper sequence.

- \_\_\_\_\_1. Student selects an appropriate time for making the apology.
- \_\_\_\_\_2. Student greets the individual in a friendly manner.
- \_\_\_\_\_3. Student recalls the situation at issue for the individual being apologized to.
- \_\_\_\_\_4. The student admits making an inappropriate response in the situation.
- \_\_\_\_\_5. The student express regret for the error.

### Sample PIT Skill Lesson Plan 3

1. Instructional objective for the social skill:

**I.8.3** Following a modeling demonstration and successful cognitive rehearsal, each student will demonstrate the ability to **apologize** to an adult who has been wronged in a manner appropriate for the student's socially normal, developmental peers.

2. Role-play scenarios to be used:

a. For behavioral rehearsal:

1. Bill can't find his new magazine and accuses his friend Sam of stealing the magazine while he was visiting the previous day. Bill finds the magazine later in his book bag.
2. John tells Glenn that Mark said Glenn was the worst hitter on the baseball team. Later when Glenn sees Mark he calls Mark a jerk that wouldn't know one end of a baseball bat from another. Mark is both puzzled and angered by Glenn's remark. It later turns out that John was misrepresenting a remark made by Mark.
3. Dan is the project leader for a group science project. He criticizes Jim for not having done the work that has been assigned to him. Jim gets upset with Dan and claims that he was supposed to do another part that was due later. Dan later finds a note where he had listed the individual assignments for the group and discovers that Jim was correct.

3. Extrinsic reinforcement to be used, if necessary:

a. During behavioral rehearsal: Social reinforcement and token reinforcers that can later be exchanged for activities.

4. Method of evaluation and criteria:

The evaluation will be done using an observation rating scale composed of the five components in the skill. Each component will be rated 1) Poor 2) Good or 3) Excellent. a student must have a rating of at least 2 for each component in three different role-play scenarios.

5. Generalization plan for the skill:

Appropriate opportunities for use of the skill will be watched for in situations in the school setting. If use of the skill is observed it will be reinforced. If use of the skill is not observed in a

situation appropriate for its use, use of the skill will be prompted and then reinforced.

a contract will also be negotiated with the student(s) to make use of the skill in a situation arising with one of their parents. After the student has reported that the skill has been used, confirmation will be sought from the parent and the parent will be asked to describe what took place. Evaluation of appropriate use will be determined from the description.

### **Sample PIT Observational Rating Scale**

Observe each student's performance, of the items below, in the context of a role-play scenario. Rate the observed performance using the following rating scale.

1 = Not or poorly done

2 = Acceptable

3 = Well done

- \_\_\_\_\_1. Student selects an appropriate time for making the apology.
- \_\_\_\_\_2. Student greets the individual in a friendly manner.
- \_\_\_\_\_3. Student recalls the situation at issue for the individual being apologized to.
- \_\_\_\_\_4. The student admits making an inappropriate response in the situation.
- \_\_\_\_\_5. The student express regret for the error.

Criteria: a student must receive a rating of at least two (2) on all items appropriate to the demonstration in three consecutive role-play scenarios.

### Problem Situations Inventory (PSI)\*

The PSI should be either given to a student to rate after being given verbal directions or used as a structured interview with a student and conducted by his or her teacher. The latter use should be made whenever there is reason to believe a student will not be able to read and fully understand the items.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Rate how well you can handle each situation below using the following scale:

**0 = I can't handle this.      1 = I can handle this sometimes.      2 = I can handle this.**

All Students:

- \_\_\_\_ 1. Being blamed for something.
- \_\_\_\_ 2. Being ignored by others.
- \_\_\_\_ 3. Being provoked by someone, e.g., teased, called names, pushed, etc.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Being rejected by others.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. Being ridiculed or humiliated.
- \_\_\_\_ 6. Disagreement (conflict) with someone.
- \_\_\_\_ 7. Dealing with someone who is hard headed.
- \_\_\_\_ 8. Having personal property stolen.
- \_\_\_\_ 9. Physical attack, being hurt.
- \_\_\_\_ 10. Pressure to do the wrong thing.

Older Students:

- \_\_\_\_1. Asking someone for help.
- \_\_\_\_2. Being discriminated against.
- \_\_\_\_3. Being offered drugs or alcohol.
- \_\_\_\_4. Dealing with criticism.
- \_\_\_\_5. Dealing with false rumors.
- \_\_\_\_6. Dealing with immature behavior in others.
- \_\_\_\_7. Dealing with other people's unrealistic expectations for me.
- \_\_\_\_8. Dealing with poor hygiene in others.
- \_\_\_\_9. Dealing with sexual advances (verbal or physical)
- \_\_\_\_10. Dealing with someone who is angry.
- \_\_\_\_11. Destruction of one's personal property.
- \_\_\_\_12. Expressing feelings (when and how).
- \_\_\_\_13. Feeling anxious or insecure in social situations.
- \_\_\_\_14. Having a trust betrayed.
- \_\_\_\_15. Having one's personal space invaded.

\* Adapted from research on student-identified social problem situations reported by Neel, R., Meadows, N., & Scott, C. Paper presented at Council for Exceptional Children conference; Toronto, Canada (1990).

**Social Interaction Rating Scale (SIRS)\***

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\* This scale is adapted from research conducted by Center and Wascom (1986 & 1987) and is intended for use with PIT Curriculum.

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### Social Interaction Rating Scale: Informant

David B. Center, Ph.D.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
School: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rater: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Directions

This survey is a measure of prosocial behavior. This assessment involves rating how well a student performs the behaviors described in the survey. Rate how well the student demonstrates the behaviors in those situations where they should occur. For example, the item "expresses concern for others' problems or misfortune" refers only to situations where expressions of concern should occur; it does not imply that a student should express concern over every problem others might experience. Be sure to rate how well each behavior is actually demonstrated, not what you think the response should be. When rating a given item, you should try to recall particular situations where the student has demonstrated the behavior. Rate only students you have known at least 60 days.

Rate the student using his or her normal peers (same age, sex, and race), as a frame of reference, **using the following scale:**

- 0 = much less skillfully than peers
- 1 = less skillfully than peers
- 2 = about as skillfully as peers
- 3 = more skillfully than peers
- 4 = much more skillfully than peers

## Social Interaction Rating Scale: Informant

David B. Center, Ph.D.

### I. Individual Interaction Skills

Rating:            The student can appropriately:

- 1. give a compliment or show appreciation.
- 2. handle criticism or negative consequences.
- 3. show feelings, e.g., affection or anger appropriately.
- 4. read non-verbal cues in others, for example, facial expressions.
- 5. show concern for others' problems or misfortune.
- 6. use tact when dealing with others.
- 7. handle innocent jokes directed at him or her.
- 8. admit to mistakes or errors and apologize if necessary.
- 9. handle false rumors or accusations.
- 10. discuss his or her accomplishments without bragging.
- 11. deal with someone who has broken a promise.
- 12. handle pressure to do something he or she doesn't want to do.
- 13. handle ridicule, malicious teasing or provoking
- 14. assert his or her rights when treated unfairly or wrongly.
- 15. request help when in difficulty.

           **Individual Interaction Total Score**

           **Individual Interaction Average Score**

## II. Conversation Skills

Rating: The student can appropriately:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. start a conversation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. use good manners, for example, take turns and introduce self.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. use facial expressions and body language to communicate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. join an ongoing conversation without being rude.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. use restatement and questions to show interest in and attention to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. use variety in his or her conversations with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. use humor, examples, and personal experiences to create interest in what he or she says.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. show respect for someone's ideas, feelings, and interests when talking to them.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Conversational Skills Total Score**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Conversational Skills Average Score**

## III. Group Skills

Rating: The student can appropriately:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. cooperate with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. negotiate and make compromises.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. give and take responsibility.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. show interest in and support for group goals and activities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. join an ongoing activity without being pushy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. give and take directions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. comply with social rules.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Group Skills Total Score**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Group Skills Average Score**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total Score for SIT**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Average Score for SIT**

### Social Interaction Rating Scale: Student

David B. Center, Ph.D.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**Teachers' Note: If you don't think a student can read this and understand it, you can use it like a structured interview form with the student.**

#### Directions

This is a measure of your social behaviors. Rate how well you think you can do the behaviors when they are called for. For example, the item *expresses concern for others' problems or misfortune* refers only to situations where expressions of concern should occur; it does not imply that you should express concern over every problem others might experience. **Be sure** to rate how well you can actually do each behavior, **not** what you think the answer should be. When rating an item, you should try to remember situations where you have used the behavior. **Using the following scale:**

0 = I can't do it

1 = I sort of know how to do it

2 = I do it alright

3 = I do it better than many of my friends

4 = I do it better than almost anyone I know

**If you don't understand something, feel free to ask as many questions as you want to or ask your teacher read this to you.**

## Social Interaction Rating Scale: Student

David B. Center, Ph.D.

### I. Individual Interaction Skills

Rating:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. give a compliment or show appreciation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. handle criticism or negative consequences.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. show feelings, e.g., affection or anger appropriately.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. read non-verbal cues in others, for example, facial expressions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. show concern for others' problems or misfortune.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. use tact when dealing with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. handle innocent jokes directed at me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. admit to mistakes or errors and apologize if necessary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. handle false rumors or accusations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. discuss my accomplishments without bragging.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. deal with someone who has broken a promise.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. handle pressure to do something I don't want to do.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. handle ridicule, malicious teasing or provoking
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. assert my rights when treated unfairly or wrongly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. request help when in difficulty.

### II. Conversation Skills

Rating:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. start a conversation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. use good manners, for example, taking turns and introducing myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. use facial expressions and body language to communicate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. join an ongoing conversation without being rude.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. use restatement and questions to show interest in and attention to others.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. use variety in my conversations with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. use humor, examples, and personal experiences to create interest in what I say.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. show respect for someone's ideas, feelings, and interests when talking to them.

### **III. Group Skills**

Rating:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. cooperate with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. negotiate and make compromises.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. give and take responsibility.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. show interest in and support for group goals and activities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. join an ongoing activity without being pushy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. give and take directions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. comply with social rules.

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