



**SOLUTIONS FOR SOCIAL
PROBLEMS OF CHILDREN
WITH LD & ADHD**

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**Biological Risk Factors for
Social Problems**

- Infant temperament- "shy" (15%); "difficult" (10%)
- Developmental disorders of childhood- language & motor delays, attention problems, oppositional behavior, & pervasive delays
- Mood and anxiety disorders
- Presence of dual diagnoses- e.g. ADHD, language disability and anxiety

**Typical Social Problems
of Children with ADHD**

- Too loud, wild, and silly
- Interrupt, blurt-out, and grab
- Dominate conversations/don't listen
- Miss or misinterpret non-verbal cues,
- Easily get upset, meltdown or internalize
- ADHD-Impulsive types are stimulation seekers, annoying others for a reaction
- ADHD-Inattentive types are more disengaged, loners, in their own world

**Typical Social Problems of Children
with Language Learning Disabilities**

- Are very literal, don't understand jokes
- Don't pick up on non-verbal cues
- Have difficulty expressing their feelings
- Are slow to process & respond to comments
- Don't know how to initiate/maintain conversations
- Talk off task
- Monologue vs. engaging in dialogue

Specific Social Skill Deficits

- Social Information Processing Issues- fail to identify cues, interpret cues, generate options, select an option, evaluate success
- Cognitive-Behavior Deficits- Acquisition deficits (haven't learned the skill) and Performance Deficits (don't consistently perform the skill)

**Outcomes of Untreated
Social Skill Problems**

- Social isolation- more often occurs with children who have internalizing personality styles and/or are ADHD-Inattentive (e.g. quiet, withdrawn, anxious, depressed)
- Socially rejection- more often occurs with children who have externalizing personality styles and/or are ADHD-Impulsive/Hyperactive (e.g. react w/o thinking, loud, wild, and may be aggressive)

Social Skills Solutions

Teaching Specific Social Skills

- Friendship Skills
- Self-Awareness & Self-Regulation Skills
- Sportsmanship Skills
- Emotion Recognition & Management Skills
- Anger Control Skills
- Assertive Skills
- Conflict Resolution Skills
- Kindness Skills
- Personal Responsibility Skills
- Reputation Rebuilding Skills

Bully Prevention

- Educating about bullies, passive victims, provocative victims, & bystanders
- Increasing self awareness about the role the child is playing
- Clarifying the different ways boys and girls bully
- Recognizing the various types of bullying: verbal, physical, cyberbullying, sexting, RA
- Learning what to do to protect yourself from becoming a bully, victim, or entrapped bystander

How to Set Up Your Young Child For Success

- Encourage friendships that are positive
- Only have one friend over at a time
- Anticipate problems & discuss solutions
- Limit the duration of the play date
- Be available for conflict resolution
- Avoid public shaming; use private cues
- Always end play dates on a positive note

How To Help Your Older Child Be Socially Successful

- Help them understand the importance of picking friends who are nice all the time
- Avoid drama- don't encourage gossip, revenge, and put downs; model good problem solving
- Encourage your teen to participate in hobbies & extracurricular activities
- Facilitate having friends over regularly
- Encourage a diversified group of friends
- Hold your teen accountable for their behavior

Strategies for Self-awareness & Self Regulation

- Help your child recognize what body speed they are in and what speed they need to be in
- Body speed zones
 - LOW SPEED: for resting/relaxing
 - MEDIUM SPEED: for listening/learning
 - HIGH SPEED: for playing outside/playing sports
 - HYPER SPEED: to be avoided/ usually results in someone getting hurt

Teaching Assertive Skills

- Help your child learn how to stand up for themselves without hurting others
- I Message: "I don't like it when you (whatever); I want you to (whatever)"
- Ignore
- Walk Away
- Ask for Help
- Stay Calm--DON'T OVER REACT--
Agree, make a joke, say "what ever"

Teaching Problem Solving Skills

- Don't solve the problem for your child; teach them how to solve problems themselves
- POPS Approach
 - P= PROBLEM
 - O=OPTIONS
 - P=PICK
 - S=SOLVE or START AGAIN

Catching & Commenting on Positive Behaviors

- The best way to help your child succeed is to build self-confidence
- Criticism, however "constructive", focuses on what the child did wrong
- It is much more effective to focus on what the child did right!
- Encourage persistence & optimism

Addressing Negative Behaviors that Interfere with Social Skills

Ways to Reduce Oppositional Behavior

- Ignore bids for negative attention
- Notice/comment on any improvement
- Set up clear rules/expectations
- Specify consequences for rude behavior e.g. privilege removal, chores, time-out
- Recognize the role all family members play in negative interactions

Strategies to Manage Anger

- Develop an anger plan
- Recognize anger "triggers"
- Use time-out for emotional de-escalation
- Teach stress management techniques-relaxation, breathing, positive thinking
- Use privileges/rewards for compliance
- Praise effort; notice any improvement
- Stay calm yourself--model self control

Ways to Reduce Sibling Rivalry

- Have clear rules & consequences for hitting/hurting, name calling/rude talk
- Discuss joint privileges/rewards kids can earn for getting along better
- Praise all efforts/any improvements
- Model respect, kindness, self-control, and apology

Principles of Behavior Change

- Rewards increase desired behaviors
- Punishments decrease undesired behavior
- Over focusing on negative behaviors is counterproductive
- Resistance to change is normal- behavior may get worse before it gets better
- Use of shaping techniques is necessary
- Remember to lead by example!

Counseling Support

When to Seek Help

- When your child complains of being sad/lonely & has no friends
- When you have tried everything you know to do and it's still not working
- When you find yourself stuck in a pattern of negative family interactions
- When parenting disagreements are negatively affecting your marriage
- When your child is at risk for getting kicked out of school
- When you child is becoming a bully or victim

Counseling Help for Social & Behavior Problems

- Individual Therapy for children, adolescents & adults- anger, anxiety, depression
- Group Therapy-social skills
- Parent Training- child behavior issues
- Biofeedback- stress management
- Family Therapy- communication, blended family
- Sibling Therapy- rivalry, aggression
- Marital Therapy- stress, conflict
- School Consultation- behavior issues, stress

Center for Social Success

- Dr. Susan Istre, LPC-S, Director
- Holly Fedro, LCSW- adolescent & marital
- Cottie Alders, LMSW- social & behavior skills
- Erin Lozano, LPC- play therapist & social skills
- Natalie Thomas, LPC, BCIA-biofeedback
- Jennifer Storm, LPC-Intern-social skills, anxiety, Saturday adolescent groups, marital
- Lindsay Hollmuller, LPC-Intern, BCIA-biofeedback, Asperger social skills groups
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