



Social Skills
Programs
&
Strategies

Compiled by Cindy Schneider

Social Skills Training

By
Jed Baker

Jed Baker's Approach

- Measures need and develops objectives through Social Skills Menu.
- Measures conversational skills, cooperative play skills, friendship management, self-regulation and conflict management.
- Selects 10-12 areas of need.

Baker's Perspective

- Teach necessary skills using explicit steps for what to say and do.
- Provide motivation to socialize making interactions fun. Avoid overload.
- Target peer acceptance.
- Utilize incidental teaching but focus on formal training.

Baker's Lesson Format

- Assess receptive and attention skills to decide individual vs. group therapy and method of presentation.
- Groups of 5 or 6 students identified with Asperger's Syndrome or High-Functioning Autism.
- Social Skill Picture Book (ind./group)
- Cognitive-Picture Rehearsal (ind.)
- Social Stories (ind.)
- Structured Learning (ind./groups)
Explain, Model, Role Play, Probe

Baker's Skill Lessons

- Whole class format: skill lesson early in the week and practice daily.
- Small group and pairs format: Talk time, skill time, playtime, reward.
- Individual time to cover attending skills or emotion management skills.
- 12 week cycles

Monitoring Progress

- Baker utilizes individual and group behavior charts on a daily bases.
- Focuses on following class rules, doing classwork and the social skill of the week.
- Connected to earning basic and special privileges.
- Considers baseline data first.

Achieving Generalization

- Baker establishes high repetition in real situations (music analogy). Role-plays need to resemble reality.
- Completion of practice sheets yield rewards.
- Involve teachers and parents.
- 24 hour disability.
- Teach sensitivity and kindness.

Why It Doesn't Work...

- Poor receptive skills. Better concept ability yields better generalization. Some learn variations of scripts.
- Some need other methods to control anxiety and impulsivity.

Baker example: Staying on Topic

- #6 on Social Skills Menu
- ABLLS Objective: The student will be able to maintain a conversation on a single topic for at least 5 verbal exchanges.
- ABLLS Criteria: 5 exchanges on at least 5 different topics.

Baker's Method

- Use the "staying on topic" chart
 - Be concrete at first
 - Use flash cards
 - Give rewards
 - Correct off-topic comments with "that's off-topic"
 - Collect data during the session
 - Give practice assignment
 - Have teacher/parent/aid fill-out individual daily behavior chart

Impressions

- Explicit, direct teaching of skills
- Sequential "menu" of skills; can be used as assessment tool
- Concrete lessons provided
- Picture book very explicit and meaningful
- Group work and individual lessons

Social Thinking Approach

By Michelle Garcia Winner

- **Social Thinking is demonstrated by:**
 - Effective communication/conversations
 - Effective problem solving and organizational skills.
 - Social skills vs. social thinking
 - Eye contact vs. looking for information.
 - I LAUGH Approach

ILAUGH Framework*

- **I**nitiation of Language
- **L**istening with eyes and brain
- **A**bstract and inferential language
- **U**nderstanding perspective
- **G**estalt
- **H**umor and human relatedness

*developed by Winner

I LAUGH Program

- **Initiation:**
 - Create expectation (help cards)
 - Build into routines
 - Concrete guidelines when needed
 - Teach with Social Stories and Scripts
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- **Listening:** depends on gathering information visually from the environment.
 - Utilize visual strengths-Use notes and pictures.
 - Check comprehension frequently-Ask for oral or written feedback.
 - **Abstractness of Communication:**
 - Facial expression, body language, tone and inflection of voice.
 - Messages disappear.

- Short response time.
- Need for simultaneous processing

➤ **Gestalt:** Getting the big picture

- Islands without bridges.
- Don't see the whole picture.
- Don't utilize contextual cues.
- Don't relate specific directions to other directions.
- Can't prioritize/organize.

➤ **Humor:**

- Explore what makes people laugh
- Appropriate use and timing of humor.
- Use goofy props to teach a social skill.

I LAUGH Program

- **Perspective Taking:** is the ability to consider your own and other people's thoughts and emotions, motives and intentions, prior knowledge/experiences, beliefs and personality.
- Level of perspective taking relates to potential for future independence.

Perspective Taking Steps

- I think about you.
- I think about **WHY** you are near me? What is your intent?
- You think about what I am thinking about you.
- I monitor you and modify my behavior to keep you thinking about me the way I want you to think about me

Impressions

- Looks at underlying social deficits, not just surface social "skills"
- Analyzes perspective taking and has specific lessons for working on that
- Provides a checklist and other concrete tools
- Provides for explicit teaching in deficit areas
- Talks about things like "eye contact" e.g. as looking for information rather than a stand alone skill
- Many useful tool and specific activities are provided

Navigating the Social World

by Jeanette MacAfee

- Written so that readers with limited experience can understand and apply
- Provides in-depth teaching and reinforcement through repetition and skill-building
- Uses a team approach
- Has a scaffolding approach
 - small incremental steps
 - allows for success for learners who have had many failures in social experiences
- Has sample and reproducible forms/visual tools
- Provides student handouts in a basic and an advanced version
- Uses role play and use of videotaping
- Promotes a great deal of repetition
- Provides structure for generalization

Sample Skill: "Topic Maintenance"

- Skill is found in section called "Conversational Manners."
- Components:
 - turn taking
 - making interjections
 - staying on topic and topic transitions
 - using appropriate tone of voice and volume control
- Prerequisite items in section should be mastered before moving on

Steps

- 1) Introduce the concept: Tennis game analogy

 - B. Stay on topic until the other person has had time to finish
 - C. Why important
 - 1) Other person can't switch quickly enough
 - 2) Other person feel you are not interested
- 2) Observe other people
 - A. Role play with adult or student aide
 1. Conversations that stay on topic
 2. Conversations that do not stay on topic
 3. Use exaggerated tone of voice and non-verbal cues initially
 - B. Stop conversation at points and ask what the speaker might be thinking and

reasons

- C. Decrease help and cues until student can answer questions consistently
- D. Videos/Movies
 - 1. Use good and bad examples of topic maintenance
 - 2. Freeze the tapes and discuss what the characters do well or not so well
 - 3. Analyze feelings emotions of characters
 - 4. Cue student to use non-verbal clues previously learned to predict characters' feelings and thoughts.
 - 5. Repeat until consistently successful.

3) Practice

- A. In practice conversations
 - 1) Set up conversation between student and helper
 - 2) Explain purpose is to practice staying on topic
 - 3) Initially use conversation used in previous programs
 - 4) Move from explicit to more subtle verbal/visual prompts
 - 5) When comfortable, videotape conversation and review with student.
- B. In naturally occurring conversations
 - 1) Teach individuals working with student to watch for specific skill
 - 2) Reinforce use
 - 3) Give feedback
 - 4) Prompt as needed

Preview of next skill

➤ Topic Transitions

- 1) Introduce Concept
- 2) Observe other people
 - A. Role plays
 - B. Videos
- 3) Practice

 - A. Practice conversations
 - B. Naturally occurring conversations

Impressions

- Stresses practice in isolation
- Stresses need for explicit teaching of generalization
- Can be done individually or in group
- Activities vary but structure is the same
- Uses typical peers as part of instruction and modeling
- Has reproducible concrete tools

SOCCSS

Situation – Options – Consequences – Choices – Strategies – Simulation

SITUATION

WHO?	
WHEN?	
WHAT?	
WHY?	

OPTIONS	CONSEQUENCES	CHOICE

STRATEGY – PLAN OF ACTION

SIMULATION

(How and when to practice skill)

The Incredible Five Point Scale

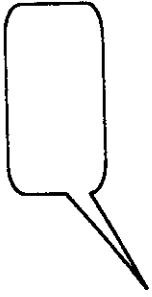
Rating

Looks like

Feel like

I can try to

5			
4			
3			
2			
1			



COMIC STRIP CONVERSATION SAMPLE



How else could you have handled this?

That was a good try, Mary.

Thanks, Bob. You're so good at math!

What happened, Bob?

That's a STUPID answer!!!

Well, you're a big WERDO!

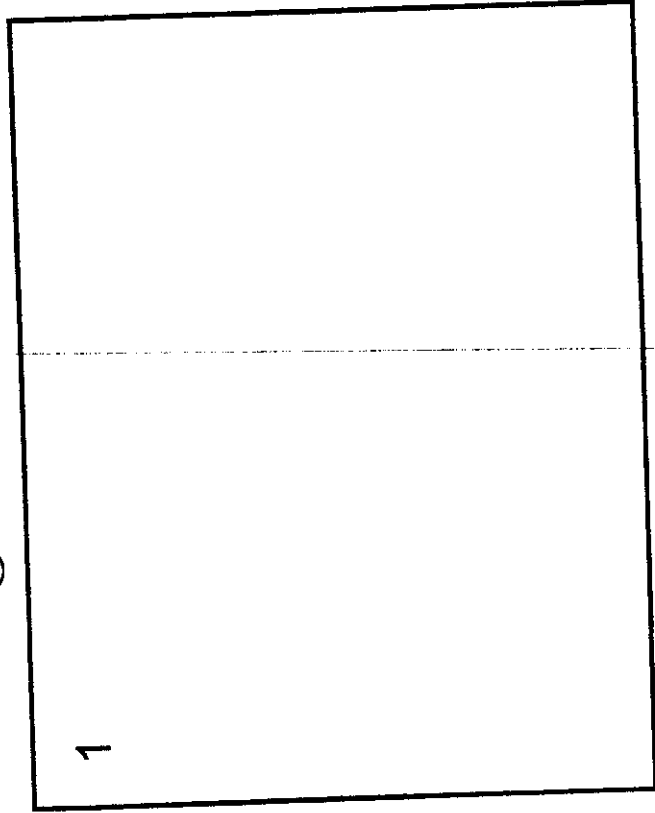
Why would he embarrass me like that? I feel stupid.



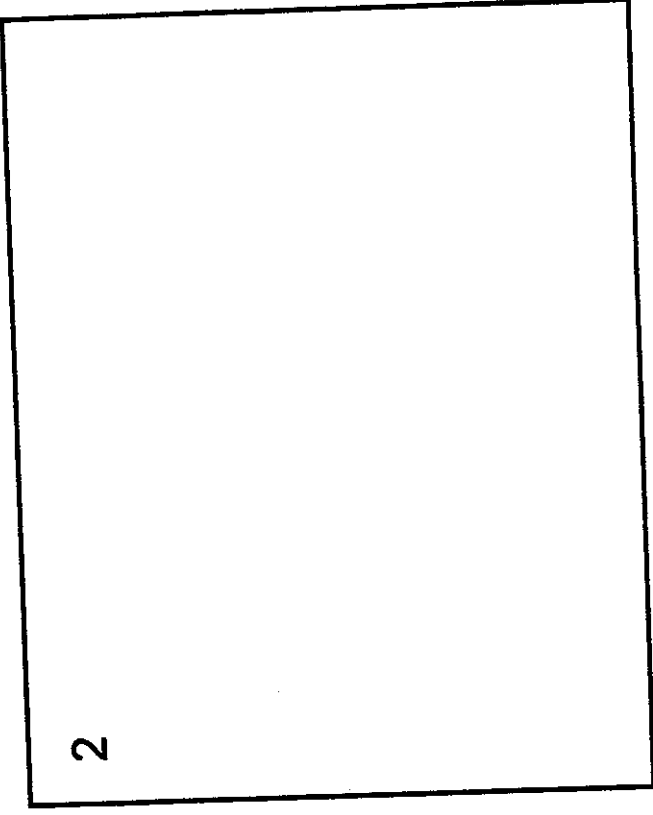
COMIC STRIP CONVERSATION



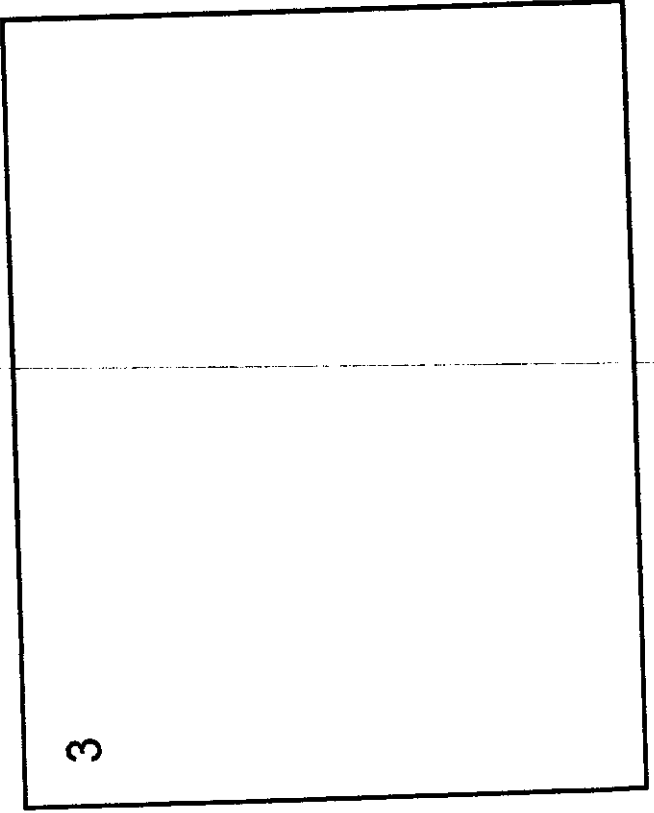
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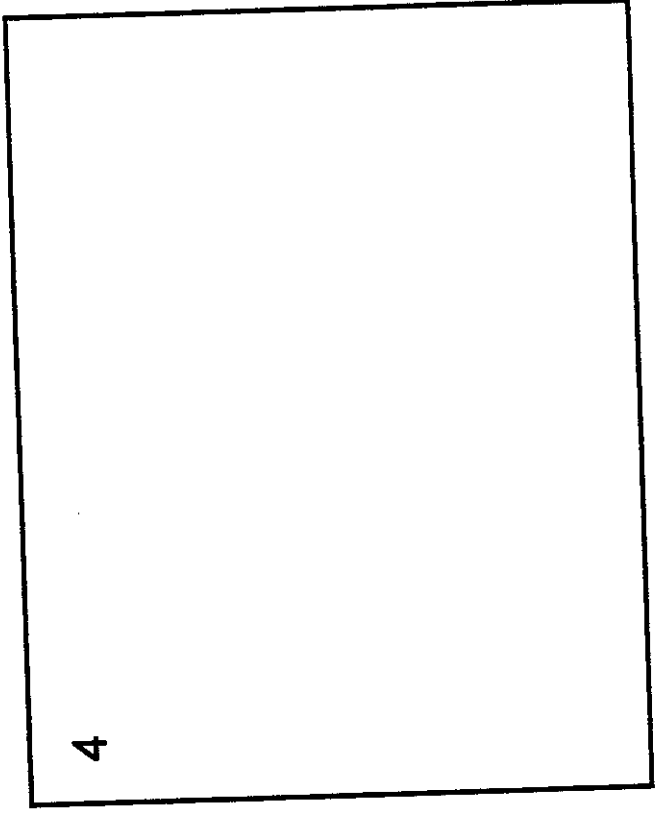
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3



4



Power Card

Script about _____

Tips _____ wants you to remember.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

