

# **Linking Assessment to Intervention: An Instructional Approach Through Social Skills Training**

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# **Students with EBD**

## **A definition**

**TOO....**

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**They do....**

**Too much or too little of particular behaviors,**

**To often,**

**With too many different kinds of problems,**

**In too many places,**

**With too many people,**

**For too long a period of time,**

**Requiring too many interventions,**

**Resulting in too little change.**

# **ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCE**

**A. GOLDSTEIN**

## **Assessment Provides:**

- **Basis For Individually Prescriptive Use Of Curriculum (Identifies Skill Deficiencies)**
- **Basis For Evaluating Student Progress (Skill Enhancement)**
- **Basis For Curriculum Evaluation**

## **Types of Assessment Data:**

- **Standardized Inventories**
- **Behavioral Observation In Natural Setting**
- **Behavioral Observation In Role Play**
- **Structured Interviews**
- **Self-Monitoring**
- **Evaluation By Significant Others**
- **Community Functioning Indices**

## **Assessment Principles:**

- **Multimodal Assessment Battery**
- **Proximal Measures (Acquisition Effects)**
- **Distal Measures (Transfer & Maintenance Effects)**

## **Assessing Positive Relations With Others**

**D. Haager & S. Vaughn**

## **DIMENSIONS:**

**Context- type & structure of social interactions**

**Conflict- interpretation & negotiation of events & behaviors across settings**

**Coordination- how one interacts & responds to others**

## **TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS: use multiple factors, reporters, settings and contexts**

**Observation**

**Checklists**

**Peer Reports**

**Self-reports**

**Interviews**

**Rating Scales**

**Questionnaires**

**Sociometry**

## **DOMAINS**

**Peer Acceptance- likeability**

**Social Status- popularity**

**Friendship Qualities- nature, pattern & quantity of friendships**

## **INTERVENTION**

**THERAPY = LEARNING SKILLS**

**NEEDS = CURRICULUM**

**TREATMENT PLAN = STRATEGIES & TACTICS = EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION**

**GOALS = TRANSFER & MAINTENANCE**

## **PERSONAL SKILLS**

**COMPETENCY = MASTERY = PROFICIENCY**

**FUNCTIONAL = MEETS A NEED = CAN BE DONE**

**RELEVANT = PERSONALLY MEANINGFUL**

**STRENGTH-BASED = SUCCESS BUILDING**

**DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE = AGE = ABILITY = INTEREST**

**GENERALIZABLE = TO SETTINGS = TO CONDITIONS**

## **THE CURRICULUM**

- ⇒ **BASIC ACADEMICS**
- ⇒ **SOCIAL SCIENCES**
- ⇒ **CAREER-VOCATIONAL**
- ⇒ **ARTS**
- ⇒ **RECREATION**
- ⇒ **PERSONAL CARE**
- ⇒ **INTERPERSONAL**
- ⇒ **INTRAPERSONAL**

## **INTRAPERSONAL SKILLS**

- ⇒ **ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS**
- ⇒ **STUDY SKILLS**
- ⇒ **PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS**
- ⇒ **GOAL SETTING SKILLS**
- ⇒ **ANGER CONTROL SKILLS**
- ⇒ **SELF-CONTROL SKILLS**
- ⇒ **STRESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS**
- ⇒ **MORAL REASONING SKILLS**
- ⇒ **SELF-ACCEPTANCE**

## **INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**

**A. GOLDSTEIN**

- ⇒ **SOCIAL SKILL TRAINING**
- ⇒ **SITUATIONAL PERCEPTION TRAINING**
- ⇒ **EMPATHY TRAINING**
- ⇒ **COOPERATION TRAINING**
- ⇒ **BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION TRAINING**
- ⇒ **RECRUITING SUPPORTIVE MODELS**
- ⇒ **UNDERSTANDING & USING GROUPS**

# Teaching Social Skills

## **Getting Ready**

- Assess and/or Develop Personal Training Skills
- Get Support from Building Principal and Colleagues
- Communicate with and Get Support from Parents
- Select Co-trainer
- Select Curriculum and Support Materials
- Plan and Schedule
- Plan for Behavior Management

## **Implementing**

- Assessment-Students' Strengths and Deficits
- Decide Grouping
- Select Lesson
- Teach Lessons
- Transfer and Maintenance

## **Teaching Steps**

- Define the Skill
- Model the Skill
- Discuss Students' Need for the Skill
- Select Role Play Actors
- Conduct Role Plays
- Provide Feedback
- Assign Homework

## **Follow-up**

- Monitor and Evaluate Your Program
- Feedback to Students
- Report to Principal & Colleagues
- Report to Parents
- Be Patient

# **SKILLSTREAMING**

## **MODELING**

**(Skill Demonstration by Trainers)**

+

## **ROLE PLAYING**

**(Skill Rehearsal by Youth)**

+

## **PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK**

**(By Trainers and All Youth in Group)**

+

## **GENERALIZATION TRAINING**

**(To Increase both Transfer and Maintenance)**

## **SKILLSTREAMING PROCEDURES**

- 1. Define the skill**
- 2. Model the skill**
- 3. Discuss the trainee's current need for the skill**
- 4. Select role player (main actor)**
- 5. Set up role play (co-actor, set "stage")**
- 6. Conduct role play**
- 7. Provide feedback**
- 8. Assign homework**
- 9. Select next role player**

## Ways to Promote Generalization

- Observe environment for desirable behaviors.
- Choose behaviors likely to be heavily reinforced.
- Teach students to recruit reinforcers in the environment.
- Teach students to recognize reinforcement when it is given.

## Techniques for Assessing and Training for Generalization

- Train and Hope
- Sequentially Modify
- Introduce to Natural Maintaining Contingencies
- Train Sufficient Exemplars
- Train Loosely
- Use Indiscriminable Contingencies
- Program Common Stimuli
- Mediate Generalization
- Train to Generalize

## **TYPES OF GROUP MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS**

- I. Inactivity
  - 1. Minimal participation
  - 2. Apathy
  - 3. Falling asleep
  
- II. Active Resistance
  - 4. Participation, but not as instructed
  - 5. Passive-aggressive isolation
  - 6. Negativism
  - 7. Disruptiveness
  
- III. Hyperactivity
  - 8. Digression
  - 9. Monopolizing
  - 10. Interruption
  - 11. Excessive restlessness
  
- IV. Cognitive Inadequacies & Emotional Disturbance
  - 12. Inability to pay attention
  - 13. Inability to understand
  - 14. Inability to remember
  - 15. Bizarre behavior
  
- V. Aggression
  - 16. Sarcasm, put-downs
  - 17. Bullying, intimidation
  - 18. Use of threats
  - 19. Assaultiveness

## **METHODS FOR REDUCING GROUP MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS**

- I. Simplification Methods
  - 1. Reward minimal trainee accomplishment
  - 2. Shorten the role play
  - 3. Have trainer “feed” sentences to the trainee
  - 4. Have trainee read a prepared script portraying the behavioral step
  - 5. Have trainee play co-actor role first
  
- II. Elicitation of Response Methods
  - 6. Call for volunteers
  - 7. Introduce topics for discussion
  - 8. Call on a specific trainee
  - 9. Reinstruct trainees by means of prompting or coaching
  
- III. Threat Reduction Methods
  - 10. Employ additional live modeling by trainers
  - 11. Postpone trainee’s role play until last in sequence
  - 12. Provide reassurance to the trainee
  - 13. Provide empathic encouragement to the trainee
  - 14. Clarify aspects of the trainee’s task which are experienced as threatening
  - 15. Restructure aspects of the task which are experienced as threatening
  
- IV. Termination of Response Methods
  - 16. Interrupt ongoing trainee behavior
  - 17. Ignore ongoing trainee behavior
  - 18. Discontinue contact and turn to another trainee
  - 19. Remove trainee from group participation

## DEVELOPING AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

TRAINER: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL/AGENCY \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. WHO NEEDS TO KNOW AND HOW WILL THEY BE INFORMED?

MEETING      LETTER      PHONE

STUDENTS-TRAINEES  
PARENTS  
ADMINISTRATORS  
COLLEAGUES  
OTHER AGENCIES  
STUDENT PEERS  
OTHER

### 2. SELECT CO-TRAINER(S)

COLLEAGUE AT WORK SITE  
COLLABORATIVE AGENCY  
OTHER

### 3. HOW WILL TRAINEES BE SELECTED AND ASSESSED?

WHO SHOULD/WILL BE IN THE GROUP(S)?  
WHO SHOULD/WILL NOT BE IN THE GROUP(S)?  
WHAT DATA WILL BE INCLUDED IN ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR INITIAL SKILL LEVEL ASSESSMENT?

### 4. SELECT THE LOCATION AND TRAINING SCHEDULE

WHERE?  
WHEN?  
HOW OFTEN?

### 5. PREPARE CURRICULUM AND SUPPORT MATERIALS

FLIP CHART, BLACKBOARD OR OVERHEAD PROJECTOR  
SKILL CARDS, BOOKS OR POSTERS  
HOMEWORK SHEETS  
SELECT LESSONS

### 6. PLAN FOR BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

### 7. PLAN FOR TRANSFER AND MAINTENANCE

AT HOME  
WITHIN SCHOOL  
WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

### 8. BARRIERS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED

### 9. PLAN TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE THE PROGRAM

WHAT DATA WILL BE COLLECTED?  
HOW OFTEN?  
HOW WILL IT BE ANALYZED OR SUMMARIZED?  
FEEDBACK TO TRAINEES  
REPORT TO PARENTS  
REPORT TO ADMINISTRATORS  
REPORT TO INVOLVED AGENCIES

## TIPS FOR PREVENTING PROBLEMS

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### Do's

Be a good example  
Be alert  
Be appreciative  
Be benevolent  
Be calm  
Be careful  
Be cheerful  
Be clear  
Be confident  
Be consistent  
Be constructive  
Be courteous  
Be decisive  
Be diligent  
Be direct  
Be encouraging  
Be fair  
Be firm  
Be forgiving  
Be friendly  
Be genuine  
Be helpful  
Be honest  
Be instructive  
Be just  
Be kind  
Be a listener  
Be optimistic  
Be patient  
Be pleasant  
Be polite  
Be positive  
Be prepared  
Be prompt  
Be reasonable  
Be respectful  
Be responsible  
Be sincere  
Be structured  
Be supportive

Be thoughtful  
Be understanding  
Be vigilant  
Be watchful  
Be zestful  
  
Post rules  
Explain rules  
Document violations  
Report violations  
Enforce rules

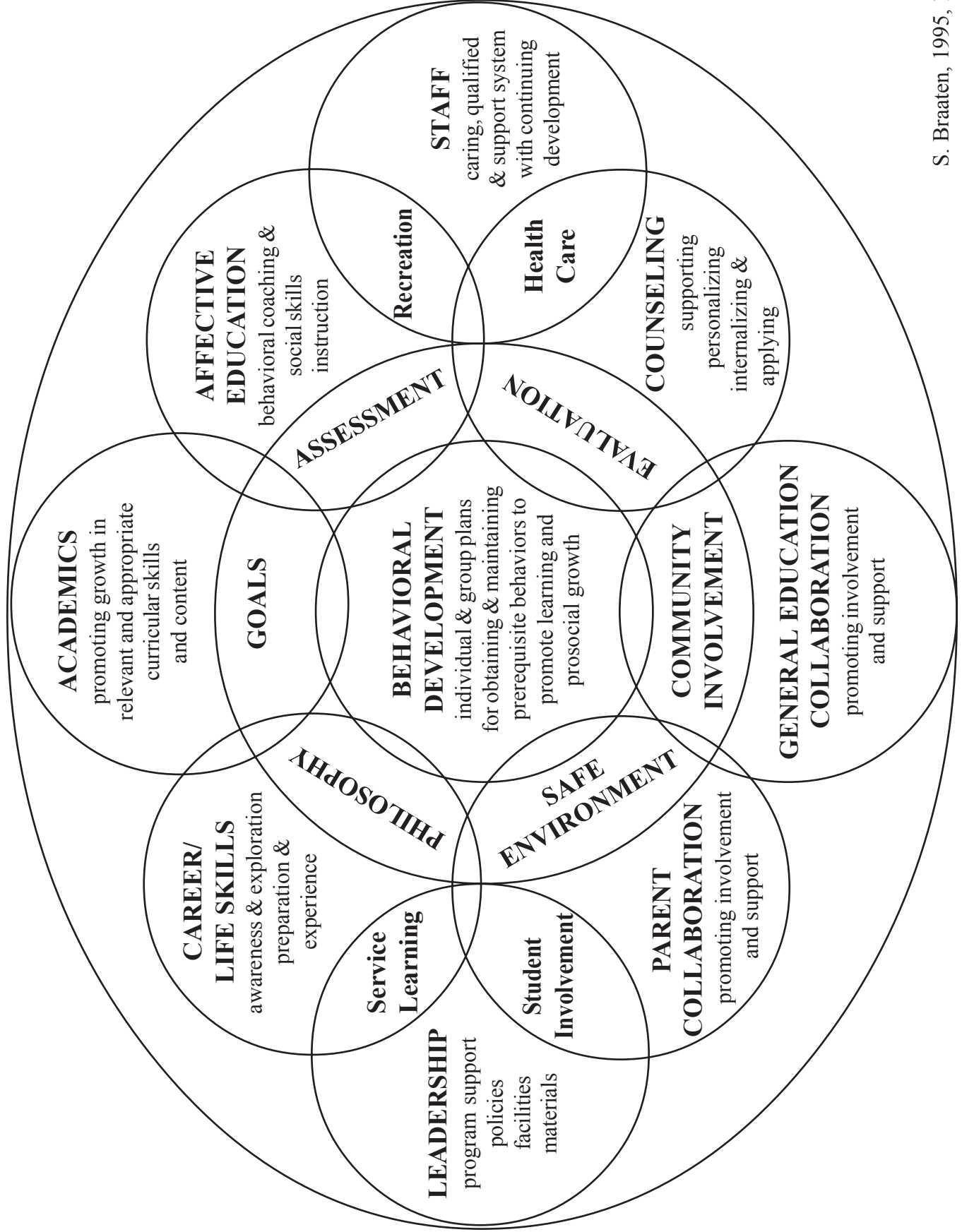
### Don'ts

Assume  
Argue  
Beg  
Belittle  
Embarrass  
False promises  
Guilt  
Harass  
Ignore  
Lie  
Nag  
Power struggles  
Provoke  
Revenge  
Ridicule  
Strike a student  
Tease  
Threaten  
Use profanity  
Use put-downs  
Use sarcasm  
Yell  
Be afraid to apologize

Know and address students by their names.  
Treat each day as a new day.

**Maintain a good sense of humor.**

# EBD PROGRAMMING COMPONENTS



**Skillstreaming Skill Checklist  
(Sample)**

Trainer: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Listed below you will find a number of skills that students are more or less proficient in using. This checklist will help you to evaluate how well each student **uses the various skills**. You can then use this information in grouping students into Skillstreaming classes. The information can also be used to decide which skills to teach to a given group of students. Rate each student's based on your observation of his or her behavior.

- Circle 1 if the student is never good at using the skill
- Circle 2 if the student is seldom good at using the skill
- Circle 3 if the student is sometimes good at using the skill
- Circle 4 if the student is often good at using the skill
- Circle 5 if the student is always good at using the skill

Rate the student on all skills listed. If you know a situation in which the student has particular difficulty in using the skill well, please note it briefly in the space marked "Problem situation."

1. **Listening:** Does the student pay attention to someone who is talking and make an effort to understand what is being said?

1 2 3 4 5

Problem situation: \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Starting a conversation:** Does the student talk to others about light topics and then lead into more serious topics?

1 2 3 4 5

Problem situation: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Skillstreaming Curriculum for Elementary Students

### *Group I: Classroom Survival Skills*

1. Listening
2. Asking for Help
3. Saying Thank You
4. Bringing Materials to Class
5. Following Instructions
6. Completing Assignments
7. Contributing to Discussions
8. Offering Help to an Adult
9. Asking a Question
10. Ignoring Distractions
11. Making Corrections
12. Deciding on Something to Do
13. Setting a Goal

### *Group II: Friendship-Making Skills*

14. Introducing Yourself
15. Beginning a Conversation
16. Ending a Conversation
17. Joining In
18. Playing a Game
19. Asking a Favor
20. Offering Help to a Classmate
21. Giving a Compliment
22. Accepting a Compliment
23. Suggesting an Activity
24. Sharing
25. Apologizing

### *Group III: Skills for Dealing with Feelings*

26. Knowing Your Feelings
27. Expressing Your Feelings
28. Recognizing Another's Feelings
29. Showing Understanding of Another's Feelings
30. Expressing Concern for Another
31. Dealing with Your Anger

32. Dealing with Another's Anger
33. Expressing Affection
34. Dealing with Fear
35. Rewarding Yourself

### *Group IV: Skill Alternatives to Aggression*

36. Using Self-Control
37. Asking Permission
38. Responding to Teasing
39. Avoiding Trouble
40. Staying Out of Fights
41. Problem Solving
42. Accepting Consequences
43. Dealing with an Accusation
44. Negotiating

### *Group V: Skills for Dealing with Stress*

45. Dealing with Boredom
46. Deciding What Caused a Problem
47. Making a Complaint
48. Answering a Complaint
49. Dealing with Losing
50. Being a Good Sport
51. Dealing with Being Left Out
52. Dealing with Embarrassment
53. Reacting to failure
54. Accepting No
55. Saying No
56. Relaxing
57. Dealing with Group Pressure
58. Dealing with Wanting Something That Isn't Yours
59. Making a Decision
60. Being Honest

McGinnis, E. & Goldstein, A. P. (1997). Skillstreaming the elementary child. rev. ed. Research Press.

# Behavioral Objective Sequence

Sheldon Braaten, Ph.D.

## Abstract

Accurate assessment of behavioral skills is essential in developing effective intervention programs for students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Assessment is the foundation for determining individually relevant intervention goals, objectives and plans, as well as for monitoring intervention outcomes. Several criteria for effective assessment have been identified in the literature. Among them are use of multiple sources (i.e., teachers and other professionals, parents, and students themselves) as well as use of culturally appropriate types of measurement instruments (intellectual, achievement and behavioral) and procedures (observations and interviews). Behavioral assessment traditionally focuses on identifying problem behaviors; however, it is important to determine students' existing strengths upon which new prosocial skills can be built. Few instruments focus upon student strengths.

Recently there has been an increasing emphasis on strength-based or competency-based assessment (Epstein, 1999). Some benefits of competency-based assessments are that they (a) yield information that can actually be used for individualized education program (IEP) planning; (b) provide a positive view of the student by specifying student strengths, and (c) delineate prosocial behaviors not yet mastered that require instruction and differential reinforcement. Epstein's Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS), Gresham and Elliott's Social Skills Rating System (SSRS), and the Walker-McConnell Scale are examples of other strength-based rating scales. DuPaul and Eckerts' (1994) review of seven studies of social skills training programs found that efficacious curricula emphasize student competencies as opposed to performance deficits.

Behavioral assessment instruments should present prosocial skills within an appropriate developmental sequence. Youth will have behavioral difficulties and skills that vary according to their progression through the developmental levels (Vernon, 1993). A delicate task of assessment is to distinguish between problems of children and youth that are considered "normal" at various developmental levels and problems outside of the "normal" range, and to determine intervention goals that are developmentally relevant rather than simply satisfying adults' expectations.

One instrument that is both strength-based and developmentally sequenced is the *Behavioral Objective Sequence* (Braaten, 1998). While it was developed and refined over a 20 year period and has been used for several years, little research has been conducted to investigate the validity of BOS ratings for students with EBD (Bloomberg & Braaten, 1989). The *Behavioral Objective Sequence* (BOS) consists of 233 developmentally sequenced and measurable social competencies that may be assessed through structured observation and/or by ratings of multiple sources. The BOS is a skill or strength-based tool rather than a problem or deficit-based instrument. Further, it provides goals and objectives for the development and implementation of intervention curriculum derived directly from a current performance assessment

Braaten, S. (1998). *Behavioral Objective Sequence*. Champaign, IL: Research Press

**Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) is a method of evaluating treatments or interventions that is**

- 1. Individualized,**
- 2. Criterion-referenced,**
- 3. Atheoretical,**
- 4. Time efficient, and**
- 5. Based on rating scale technology.**

**“Three Big Ideas” about the utility of Goal Attainment Scales ratings  
as an assessment strategy**

**Shinn and Bamonto (1998) provide a framework for considering the utility of GAS as an Assessment method.**

- 1. GAS ratings can serve as dynamic measures of students’ skills.**
- 2. The primary purpose of GAS is formative evaluation.**
- 3. GAS ratings are acceptable and useful measures for instructional decision making.**

Student’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Target Behavior: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**+ 2** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**+ 1** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**0** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**-1** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**- 2** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Social Skills Rating System (SSRS)**  
(Gresham and Elliot)

SSRS Scales and Subscales across Forms, by Level

Scale and Subscale	Teacher Form			Parent Form			Student Form	
	Preschool Level	Elementary Level	Secondary Level	Preschool Level	Elementary Level	Secondary Level	Elementary Level	Secondary Level
<b>Social Skills</b>								
Cooperation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Assertion	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Responsibility	-	-	-	X	X	X	-	-
Empathy	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X
Self-Control	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Problem Behaviors</b>								
Externalizing	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	-
Internalizing	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	-
Hyperactivity	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-
<b>Academic Competence</b> (No subscales)								
	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-

**Social Skills Intervention Program**  
Social Skills by Subscales, Preschool Level

**Cooperation**  
 Puts away toys  
 Keeps room clean  
 Helps with tasks  
 Attempts household tasks  
 Completes tasks  
 Volunteers help  
 Communicates problems  
 Congratulates family  
 Follows rules  
 Uses free time

**Responsibility**  
 Questions unfair rules  
 Invites others home  
 Attends to speakers  
 Asks clerks for assistance  
 Asks to use others' property  
 Answers phone appropriately  
 Refuses unreasonable requests  
 Congratulates family members  
 Compliments friends  
 Compromises in conflict situations

**Assertion**  
 Makes friends  
 Shows interest in things  
 Is self-confident  
 Is liked by others  
 Starts conversation  
 Joins group activities  
 Receives criticism well  
 Introduces self  
 Expresses feelings when wronged  
 Participates in activities

**Self-Control**  
 Controls temper with you  
 Ends disagreements calmly  
 Controls temper with children  
 Attends to instructions  
 Follows game rules  
 Waits turn in games  
 Follows instructions  
 Avoids trouble situations  
 Speaks in appropriate voice  
 Responds appropriately when hit

# ***Assessing Young Children's Social Competence***

Diane E. McClellan and Lilian G. Katz

During the past two decades, a convincing body of evidence has accumulated to indicate that unless children achieve minimal social competence by about the age of 6 years, they have a high probability of being at risk into adulthood in several ways (Ladd, 2000; Parker & Asher, 1987). Recent research (Hartup & Moore, 1990; Kinsey, 2000; Ladd & Profilet, 1996; McClellan & Kinsey, 1999; Parker & Asher, 1987; Rogoff, 1990) suggests that a child's long-term social and emotional adaptation, academic and cognitive development, and citizenship are enhanced by frequent opportunities to strengthen social competence during childhood.

Hartup (1992) notes that peer relationships in particular contribute a great deal to both social and cognitive development and to the effectiveness with which we function as adults. He states that "the single best childhood predictor of adult adaptation is not school grades, and not classroom behavior, but rather, the adequacy with which the child gets along with other children. Children who are generally disliked, who are aggressive and disruptive, who are unable to sustain close relationships with other children, and who cannot establish a place for themselves in the peer culture are seriously at risk" (Hartup, 1992, p. 1). The risks are many: poor mental health, dropping out of school, low achievement and other school difficulties, and poor employment history (Katz & McClellan, 1997).

Because social development begins at birth and progresses rapidly during the preschool years, it is clear that early childhood programs should include regular opportunities for spontaneous child-initiated social play. Berk and Winsler (1995) suggest that it is through symbolic/pretend play that young children are most likely to develop both socially and intellectually. Thus, periodic assessment of children's progress in the acquisition of social competence is appropriate.

The set of items presented below is based on research on elements of social competence in young children and on studies in which the behavior of well-liked children has been compared with that of less-liked children (Katz & McClellan, 1997; Ladd & Profilet, 1996; McClellan & Kinsey, 1999).

## **The Social Attributes Checklist**

The checklist provided in this Digest includes attributes of a child's social behavior that teachers are encouraged to examine every three or four months. Consultations with parents and other caregivers help to provide a validity check. In using the checklist, teachers are advised to note whether the attributes are typical of the child. Any child can have a few really bad days, for a variety of reasons; if assessments are to be reasonably reliable, judgments of the overall pattern of functioning over a period of at least three or four weeks are required. The checklist is intended as one of a variety of ways the social well-being of children can be assessed.

How children act toward and are treated by their classmates (cooperatively or aggressively, helpfully or demandingly, etc.) appears to have a substantial impact on the relationships they develop (Ladd, 2000). However, healthy social development does not require that a child be a "social butterfly." The most important index to note is the quality rather than the quantity of a child's friendships. Children (even rejected children) who develop a close friend increase the degree to which they feel positively about school over time (Ladd, 1999). There is evidence (Rothbart & Bates, 1998; Kagan, 1992) that some children are simply more shy or more inhibited than others, and it may be counterproductive to push such children into social relations that make them uncomfortable (Katz & McClellan, 1997). Furthermore, unless that shyness is severe enough to prevent a child from enjoying most of the "good things of life," such as birthday parties, picnics, and family outings, it is reasonable to assume that, when handled sensitively, the shyness will be spontaneously outgrown.

Many of the attributes listed in the checklist below indicate adequate social growth if they characterize the child's usual behavior. This qualifier is included to ensure that occasional fluctuations do not lead to over-interpretation of children's temporary difficulties. On the basis of frequent direct contact with the child, observation in a variety of situations, and information obtained from parents and other caregivers, a teacher or caregiver can use the checklist as an informal research-based means of assessing each child's social and emotional well-being. It is intended to provide a guideline for teachers and parents and is based on several teacher rating scales (all demonstrating high internal reliability) used by researchers to measure children's social behavior. Most of these scales (Ladd, 2000;

Ladd & Profilet, 1996; McClellan & Kinsey, 1999) have also been replicated on more than one occasion and have demonstrated high reliability over time.

Teachers can observe and monitor interactions among children and let children who rarely have difficulties attempt to solve conflicts by themselves before intervening. If a child appears to be doing well on most of the attributes and characteristics in the checklist, then it is reasonable to assume that occasional social difficulties will be outgrown without intervention. It is also reasonable to assume that children will strengthen their social skills, confidence, and independence by being entrusted to solve their social difficulties without adult assistance. However, if a child seems to be doing poorly on many of the items listed, the responsible adults can implement strategies that will help the child to overcome and outgrow the social difficulties. The checklist is not a prescription for "correct social behavior"; rather it is an aid to help teachers observe, understand, and support children as they grow in social skillfulness. If a child seems to be doing poorly on many of the items on the list, strategies can be implemented to help the child to establish more satisfying relationships with other children (Katz & McClellan, 1997).

Children's current and long-term social-emotional development, as well as cognitive and academic (Kinsey, 2000) development, are clearly affected by the child's social experiences with peers and adults. It is important to keep in mind that children vary in social behavior for a variety of reasons. Research indicates that children have distinct personalities and temperaments from birth (Rothbart & Bates, 1998; Kagan, 1992). In addition, nuclear and extended family relationships and cultural contexts also affect social behavior. What is appropriate or effective social behavior in one culture may not be in another. Many children thus may need help in bridging their differences and in finding ways to learn from and enjoy the company of one another. Teachers have a responsibility to be proactive in creating a classroom community that accepts and supports all children.

## **THE SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES CHECKLIST**

### **I. Individual Attributes**

The child:

1. Is **usually** in a positive mood.
2. Is not **excessively** dependent on adults.
3. **Usually** comes to the program willingly.
4. **Usually** copes with rebuffs adequately.
5. Shows the capacity to empathize.
6. Has positive relationships with one or two peers; shows the capacity to really care about them and miss them if they are absent.
7. Displays the capacity for humor.
8. Does not seem to be acutely lonely.

### **II. Social Skills Attributes**

The child usually:

1. Approaches others positively.
2. Expresses wishes and preferences clearly; gives reasons for actions and positions.
3. Asserts own rights and needs appropriately.
4. Is not easily intimidated by bullies.
5. Expresses frustrations and anger effectively and without escalating disagreements or harming others.
6. Gains access to ongoing groups at play and work.
7. Enters ongoing discussion on the subject; makes relevant contributions to ongoing activities.
8. Takes turns fairly easily.
9. Shows interest in others; exchanges information with and requests information from others appropriately.
10. Negotiates and compromises with others appropriately.
11. Does not draw inappropriate attention to self.
12. Accepts and enjoys peers and adults of ethnic groups other than his or her own.
13. Interacts nonverbally with other children with smiles, waves, nods, etc.

### III. Peer Relationship Attributes

The child:

1. Is usually accepted versus neglected or rejected by other children.
2. Is sometimes invited by other children to join them in play, friendship, and work.
3. Is named by other children as someone they are friends with or like to play and work with.

#### For More Information

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