

THE CITY SPEAKS

A PARENT NEWSLETTER BY DISTRICT 75 SPEECH-LANGUAGE PROVIDERS

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"May is Better Hearing and Speech Month (BHSM)"

The American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) has declared the month of May to celebrate better hearing and speech. This is a great time to consult with your child's speech and language therapist.

For additional information/ideas for "BHSM" go to <http://www.asha.org/bhsm/>

In this edition of, "The City Speaks" we will address social skills.

What are Social Skills?

Social skills are all the behaviors we use when we interact with people--things we SAY and DO. Social skills are needed throughout the day and in most situations. Social skills may include: getting attention, responding to questions, understanding personal space, taking turns, asking for help, speaking at an appropriate volume, waiting, following simple directions, reading other people's emotions, and remembering to say hello and goodbye--to name just a few!

Why are Social Skills Important?

Good social skills often result in better responses from others. Our goal is to help students become more successful in building relationships with peers over time. Social competence may increase overall confidence and self-esteem, which can positively impact the ability to learn and ultimately improve a student's school experience.

How Can Parents/Caregivers Support the Development of Social Skills?

To guide your child toward better social skills, begin by contacting your child's speech provider to find out how to support already identified social skill objectives from his/her IEP. A speech therapist can provide you with strategies/techniques to help your child understand social expectations. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends including the "4 P's" when helping children develop social skills.

- 1) Tell your speech provider about the social skills that you feel are important in your child's daily life at home.
- 2) **Point out** and model the appropriate behavior in a real or created situation.
- 3) **Practice** the specific skill, for example, saying "thanks!" with different people and in different situations.
- 4) Role play for more practice – allow your child to take turns, for example saying, "thanks" and "you're welcome."
- 5) **Prompt** (gently remind) your child when to use a developing skill, for example you may say, "Now would be a good time to wait and say 'excuse me'." Such reminders can be verbal or nonverbal (gestures or visuals).
- 6) **Praise** and reinforce all positive interactions and attempts; teach him that better social skills can make others feel good. Social skill practice can be hard work for our students. Parents/caregivers make great cheerleaders!

Resources to Support Social Skill Development

The New Social Story Book: Illustrated Edition by Carol Gray www.thegraycenter.org

This book includes social stories that cover a wide range of topics: greeting others, sharing, getting ready for school, and going to a restaurant. Social stories describe what is happening, why and how people feel and think in a situation. The story is read with the child often, and may include pictures if needed.

Example: ***"How to Pick Up Toys"***

"When I am done playing with my toys, I put them away. I pick up my toys and make my room look clean. Sometimes I have many toys to put away. Sometimes I have a few toys to put away. Mom likes it when my toys are put away."

See also: www.sandbox-learning.com to create personalized social stories.

Social Skills Picture Book by Dr. Jed Baker

The Social Skills Picture Book for High School and Beyond by Dr. Jed Baker

These books use actual photographs to demonstrate appropriate behaviors in real life situations: respecting each other's space, working as part of a group, asking someone out on a date, interviewing for a job, asking for help, making mistakes, and being able to interrupt a conversation appropriately.

Model Me Kids® Videos www.modelmekids.com

These videos demonstrate social skills by modeling peer behavior at school, on a play date, at a birthday party, on the playground, at a library, restaurant, and more. Real children model and narrate each skill. Designed as a teaching tool for children, adolescents, and teenagers with Autism, Aspergers, developmental delays, and Down syndrome. Parents, teachers and therapists can use these videos.

Dear CITY SPEAKS,

My son is 8 years old and is a very picky eater. He eats pizza, fries, chips, and cheerios. He only drinks apple juice and soda, and will take milk but only on his cereal. He likes cookies and sweets for dessert. He does not eat fruit and vegetables. I am very concerned that my child is not getting the vitamins he needs from these foods. What can I do to get him to try new foods?

Help!

Dear HELP!

Children of all ages can be picky eaters. First, check with your child’s speech and occupational therapists to determine if your child has adequate oral and motor function to manage the food he does eat.

Picky eaters then must get acquainted with new foods before they can eat them. Start by exposing your child to new foods in their simplest and most unprocessed forms, for example, an apple instead of applesauce or apple pie. Allow your child at least 10 exposures to the new food without the expectation that he must eat it. Let him touch and explore it—cut, spear, mash, stir, smell, and talk about the food (use words like: apple, red, round, pits, etc.). You can taste the food as you conduct the “get acquainted” game, and give your child your enthusiastic recommendation (words like: cold, yummy, juicy, crunchy). Encourage your child to experience the food with his senses. After a few sessions encourage your child to try licking/smelling the fork, spoon, or plate that may have some of the food on it. When he is comfortable processing the food outside his mouth, then try small bites or bits inside the mouth. Keep the spirit of the interaction fun, and don’t forget to make the environment peaceful with quiet or relaxing music.

Remember to include your child in mealtime at home. Food preparation is a great opportunity to explore new foods. Mealtime is often a great opportunity for socialization with parents, siblings and peers. This will provide your child with appropriate models of mealtime behaviors. During family mealtime, you can offer your child the meal the family is eating, but do not force your child to eat it if he or she is not ready. Try to make this experience fun.

Good luck!

Check out www.new-vis.com/ for tips and inspiration.



Joke Time

Jokes are a fun way to practice language skills. Jokes provide a script for children with limited language as well as opportunities to interact with their peers, practice figurative language, develop vocabulary & support language processing, retention and recall skills. For non-speaking individuals, voice output communication devices can be programmed with jokes.

Q. What flowers grow on faces? 

A. Tulips (two-lips) 

Q. How is the letter A like a flower?

A. A bee (B) comes after it  

Q. What season is it when you are on a trampoline?

A. Spring time! 

Let’s Play Games



Board games provide opportunities for practicing social interactions with one person or a group. Many games also involve other skills such as counting, sequencing, problem solving and reading.

Paper and pen games such as Tic-Tac-Toe and Hangman encourage turn taking, waiting, letter knowledge, spelling and strategic planning.

Word searches help to develop scanning skills that are important for good reading skills.

PLAN AHEAD FOR SUMMER

There are several options available for your child:

Chapter 683 for D75 programs begins July 6th and ends August 14th.

There are also a variety of summer camps available for children with special needs. Summer camp programs provide opportunities for socializing and making new friends, increasing self-confidence, engaging in new situations, learning new skills, participating in organized sports and play activities, improving social and emotional development and of course, getting to be outdoors!

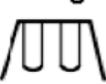
Contact your school’s parent coordinator &/or guidance counselor for more information on local camps.

To find additional listings for a day or sleep away camp that meets your child’s specific needs, refer to:

Resources for Children with Special Needs
www.resourcesnycdatabase.org
(212)-677-4650.

If you have any questions or topics that you would like us to address, please send an e-mail to: Msantos4@schools.nyc.gov or BMandel16@schools.nyc.gov

Communication Board: Playground

<p>hello</p> 	<p>Do you want to play</p> 	<p>see-saw</p> 
<p>my name is</p> 	<p>my turn</p> 	<p>swings</p> 
<p>what’s your name?</p> 	<p>your turn</p> 	<p>monkey bars</p> 