***Social*** ***Skills* to Build Lagging Skills (Adolescent Version – Grades 5-12)**

**Priority Points:**

1. **Discrete steps are clearly written on a piece of paper or cardstock (large font).**
2. **Key steps are illustrated (graphics).**
3. **Adjust discrete steps to specify HOW to do the skill (so that the student can do them without creating a separate problem behavior).**

*Examples to include in discrete steps*: silently, with your lips closed, take a deep breath through your nose, glue your eyes on the teacher as you, with your hands in your pockets, look at the ceiling, etc.)

1. **There is a SECRET SIGNAL to cue the student to use the skill that is SILENT, PRIVATE, and UNIQUE (something teachers don’t typically do without thinking).**

*Examples*: Pulling ear, tapping head, winking, OK sign, tapping heart

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| **Skill** | **Discrete Steps to Execute Skill** | **What to keep in mind** |
| **Taking a Break** | * 1. Decide if my body is telling me that I'm getting anxious, worried, or uncomfortable.   2. Tell myself, "I can walk away from this."   3. Look at the teacher and show him/her the “I need a break” signal.   4. Wait for the teacher to give me a thumbs up.   5. Go to my designated break area. | * Specify how many minutes the student can stay in the break area and how many breaks he/she can take. * Be clear that, if the student stays longer in the break area, he/she will lose the privilege to take breaks. |
| **Asking for Help** | * 1. Decide what the problem is   \*\*\* Be specific: who and what are contributing to the problem; what is its effect on you?   * 1. Decide if you want help to solve your problem.   2. Think about different people who might help you and pick one.   3. Tell someone about the problem and ask that person to help you. | * Make sure to define a problem. * A problem is anything a person needs help with and cannot complete alone. * Discuss appropriate people who can help solve a problem and people who should not help solve a problem. * Good examples are trusted friends, adults, parents. * Not good examples are friends who don’t have your best interests at heart. |
| **Following Directions** | * 1. Lock your eyes on the person giving directions.   2. Listen carefully while you are being told what to do.   3. (OPTIONAL STEP) Raise your hand to ask questions about anything you don't understand.   4. Repeat the instructions to yourself.   5. (Optional Step for 11th and 12th grade) Write the directions down.   6. Decide that you will follow the directions.   7. Follow the directions. | * This skill involves listening to others and complying with their requests. |
| **Apologizing** | * 1. Decide if it would be best for you to apologize for something you did.   2. Think of the different ways you could apologize.   + Say something (“I apologize for …”)   + Do something (smile apologetically)   + Write something (write an apology note   3. Choose which way you will apologize.  4. Choose the best time and place to apologize.  HINT: Do it privately and as quickly as possible after creating the problem.  5. Make your apology. | * Discuss how tone, volume and body language help portray sincerity. * Discuss the importance of owning mistakes. * Discuss how you feel when someone apologizes to you. |
| **Knowing your Feelings** | * 1. Tune into what is going on in your body that helps you know what you are feeling   + Cues are blushing, sweaty balms, butterflies in stomach, tight muscles, clenching teeth, shaking, blinking   2. Decide what happened to make you feel that way.  3. Decide what you could call the feeling. | * Use a feelings chart to help label and name emotions. * Add nuanced feelings to the chart over time. |
| **Expressing your Feelings** | * 1. Tune in to what is going on in your body.   2. Decide what happened to make you feel that way   3. Decide what you are feeling.   4. Think about the different ways to express your feeling.   + Say something (“I feel …”)   + Use an expression (grin)   + Write something (write down how you feel)   1. Pick the best one for the situation.   2. Express your feeling. | * Master the skill of knowing your feelings prior to beginning the skill of expressing your feelings. * Ensure scholars take into account time and place for expressing his or her feelings, as well as the audience. |
| **Asking Permission** | * 1. Decide what you need permission for.   2. Decide whom you have to ask for permission.   3. Decide how to ask for permission.      + Ask out loud      + Ask privately      + Ask in writing   4. Pick the right time and place.   5. Ask for permission. | * When teaching this skill, brainstorm examples and non-examples of when a scholar may need to ask for permission. |
| **Using Self-Control** | * 1. Tune in to what is going on in your body that helps you know you are about to lose control of yourself.      + Are you getting tense, angry, hot, short of breath, or fidgety?   2. Decide what happened to make you feel this way.      + (high school) Consider both outside events and internal thoughts.      + (middle school) Ask yourself, “Why do I feel this way?”   3. Think about ways in which you might control yourself.      + Slow down      + Count from 10 to 1 in your head      + Breathe deeply      + Distract yourself with work/task      + Put your hands in your pockets (so you won’t use them)      + Stand in the back of the classroom      + Stand outside the classroom door   4. Decide how you will make the choice to control yourself based on the situation.   5. Do it. | * Discuss various ways to control anger or frustration that are age and school appropriate (narrowing the list to 2-3 options). * Practice during role plays and keep track of the techniques that work. |
| **Avoiding Trouble with Others** | * 1. Decide if you are in a situation that might get you into trouble.      + (middle school) Ask yourself, “Could I get in trouble if I stay here?”      + (high school) Examine both immediate and long term consequences.   2. Make the choice to get out of the situation that might cause you to get into trouble.      + Tell yourself, “It’s not worth it. I make my own choices.”   3. Do what is best for you. * Leave. * Suggest other things you might do. * Tell the other people what you decided and why. | * This will take lots of role playing of possible scenarios that a scholar may face (both inside and outside the school setting). * Individualize the scenarios based on situations the student faces (e.g. interactions in the hallway, bathroom, after school walking home, after school in the bodega, afterschool in the park, etc.). |
| **Keeping Out of Fights** | * 1. Stop and think about why you want to fight. * Think, “I want to fight because …”   1. Think about what will happen if you fight.   2. Make the decision not to fight.   3. Think about other ways to handle the situation:      + Negotiate      + Ask for help      + Pacify the person      + Walk away   4. Decide the best way to handle the situation.   5. Do it. | * It is important to teach Using Self-Control prior to this skill. * Generate examples of and practice what negotiating looks like and what pacifying another person looks like. |
| **Responding to Failure** | * 1. Decide if you have failed at something      + Is it interpersonal, academic or athletic?   2. Think about why you failed.      + Focus, time spent on task, didn’t ask for help, motivation, luck, circumstance   3. Think about what you could do differently next time.      + Evaluate what is under your control to change.        - Effort        - Focus        - Time spent on the task        - Asking for help        - Thoughtfulness   4. Decide when you will try again (now or next time).   5. Try again using your new idea. | * Some students can benefit from a self-efficacy statement like: Say to yourself, “I didn’t succeed this time, but I know that I can succeed. Im hard working.” * Add this as a step if appropriate. |
| **Accepting consequences** | * 1. Decide if you were wrong.   2. If you were wrong, say to yourself, "I have to accept consequences for my choices."   3. Say to the person, "Yes, I did \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (describe what you did."   4. Say something else:      1. How will you avoid this next time?      2. Apologize. | * Teach problem solving first. * Make sure you go over that it is ok to be wrong and that everyone makes mistakes. |
| **Dealing with an Accusation** | * 1. Stop and say, "I have to calm down."   2. Think about what the person has accused you of.   3. Ask yourself, "Is this person right?"   4. Think about your choices:      1. Ask a question.      2. Explain, in a friendly way, that you didn't do it.      3. Apologize.      4. Offer to make up for what happened.   5. Act out your best choice. | * Reinforce that everyone makes mistakes and it is important to be honest if you made the mistake. * Practice talking in a "friendly way" |
| **Ignoring Distractions** | * 1. Lock your eyes on the teacher or on your work.   2. Count to five in your head.   3. Say to yourself, "I won't get distracted. I'll keep on working."   4. Continue to work.   5. Say to yourself, "Good for me; I did it!" | * Figure out a signal for the scholar to acknowledge every time they ignored a distraction. |