SOCIAL SKILLS and PLAY DATES for Children on the Spectrum

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Outline

- Changing Views
- Setting Up a Play Date
- Teaching Social Skills
- During the Play Date
- After the Play Date

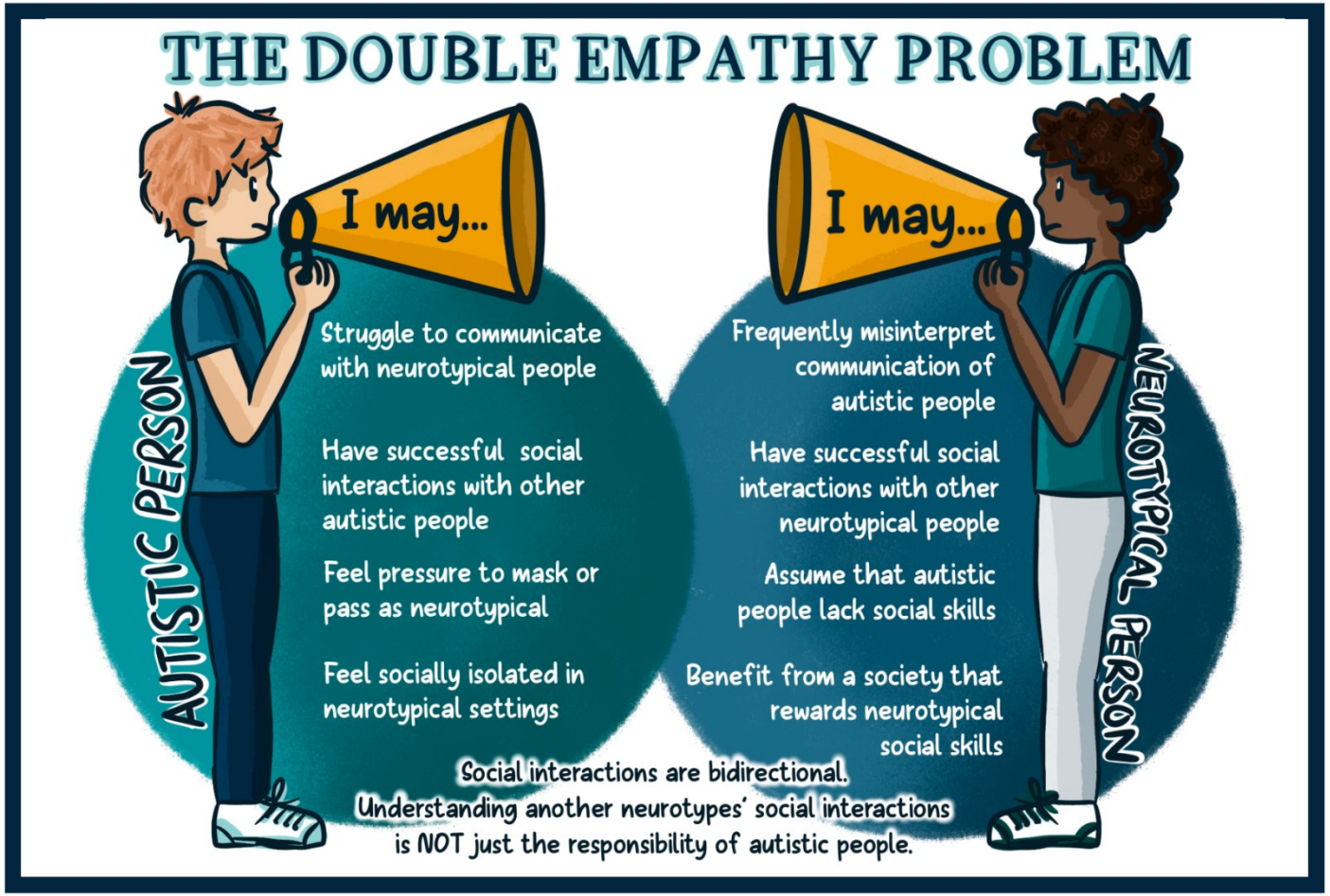
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Changing Views

- Listening to autistic adults
- Autistic Masking: Hiding autistic traits that they feel won't be accepted
- Described as exhausting
- Can contribute to mental health difficulties

Changing Views



the INFORMED SLP

This document accompanies the research review "How and why to be a neurodiversity friendly SLP" at www.theinformedslp.com
Artwork by Amanda Filbey, MA, CCC-SLP

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Changing Views

- What does all this mean for teaching social skills?
  - Burden of change should not only be left to autistic children
  - Focus on skills that promote self-advocacy and problem solving when possible
  - Incorporate autistic child's interests/build on strengths
  - Have play dates with other autistic children
  - Monitor closely for stress
  - Acceptance and accommodations
  - Teaching skills to allow desired participation and impact future life success (e.g., getting a job)

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Setting Up a Play date

- Who
  - Select a peer
    - Familiar child
    - Interest in one another
  - Compatibility
    - Attention and distractibility
    - Shared interests
    - Development and ability
    - Gender/age
    - Leader/follower
    - Persistence
  - Approach the parent(s)



Setting Up a Play Date

- What?
  - Have more activities planned than you have time to do
  - Include structured and unstructured play time
  - Plan activities your child enjoys and is familiar with
  - Use toys that naturally lead to interaction (e.g., large play equipment, constructive toys, or novel items)
  - Have duplicates of favorite toys
  - Communal snacks and food based activities
  - Include breaks
  - Mutually reinforcing activities

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Setting Up a Play Date

- What?
  - Modify activities if necessary: Uno



Setting Up a Play Date

- Modify activities if necessary: Memory



Setting Up a Play Date

- Modify activities if necessary: Scrabble



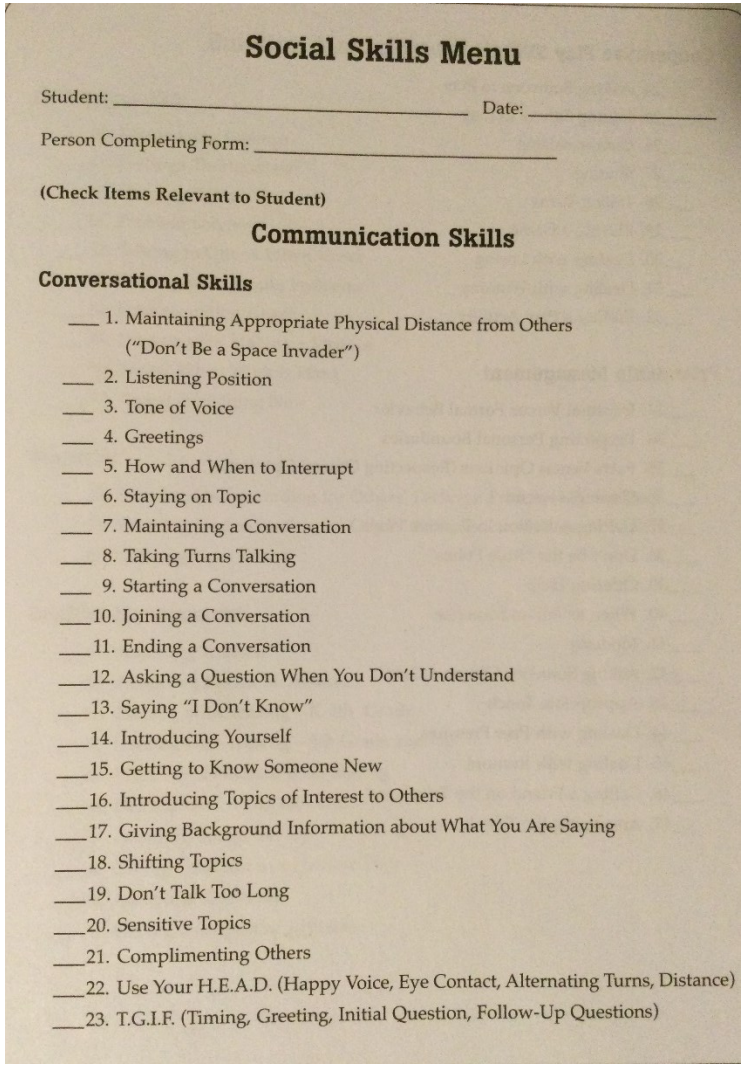
Setting Up a Play Date

- When?
  - You child is at their best
- Where?
  - Match environmental setting to your child's needs
  - Sound level and number of distractions
  - Activities available
  - Open/closed space
  - Familiarity
- How does your child play with others?
  - Not at all
  - Beside other children
  - Participate together (e.g., Simon Says)
  - Working together toward some goal or completion of task

➢ Use this to guide activity choices and amount of support you provide

Teaching Social Skills

- Determine what your child needs or wants to learn
  - Ask school
  - Observe your child playing with peers
  - Social skills resources
- What might the peer benefit from learning about autism and your child?



Social Skills Menu

Student: _____ Date: _____

Person Completing Form: _____

(Check Items Relevant to Student)

Communication Skills

Conversational Skills

___ 1. Maintaining Appropriate Physical Distance from Others ("Don't Be a Space Invader")
___ 2. Listening Position
___ 3. Tone of Voice
___ 4. Greetings
___ 5. How and When to Interrupt
___ 6. Staying on Topic
___ 7. Maintaining a Conversation
___ 8. Taking Turns Talking
___ 9. Starting a Conversation
___10. Joining a Conversation
___11. Ending a Conversation
___12. Asking a Question When You Don't Understand
___13. Saying "I Don't Know"
___14. Introducing Yourself
___15. Getting to Know Someone New
___16. Introducing Topics of Interest to Others
___17. Giving Background Information about What You Are Saying
___18. Shifting Topics
___19. Don't Talk Too Long
___20. Sensitive Topics
___21. Complimenting Others
___22. Use Your H.E.A.D. (Happy Voice, Eye Contact, Alternating Turns, Distance)
___23. T.G.I.F. (Timing, Greeting, Initial Question, Follow-Up Questions)

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Teaching Social Skills

Kit for Kids



Peer Education Grant

Learn how you can receive a **$500-$5,000 grant for your school** to promote autism acceptance.

TEACH KIDS ABOUT AUTISM

Our *Kit for Kids* program is designed to teach elementary and middle school students about their peers with autism. The kit is centered around an illustrated booklet entitled "What's Up with Nick?". This colorful, kid-friendly booklet tells the story about a new student, a boy with autism named Nick, through the eyes of a typical peer. The story teaches children that students with autism may think differently or need some accommodations, but all students are of equal worth and should be treated as such.

You can use this program to increase awareness of autism among students from grades K-8. With greater knowledge of autism, our youth will learn to see the person first rather than focus on a classmate's disability. By increasing students' acceptance of differences, the *Kit for Kids* creates a more inclusive classroom and overall sense of community.

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Teaching Social Skills

[Article from Reading Rockets]

Using Children's Picture Books About Autism as Resources in Inclusive Classrooms

By: Miranda L. Sigmon, Mary E. Tackett, Amy Price Azano



Children's picture books about autism can be a valuable resource for teachers in inclusive classrooms attempting to teach awareness, empathy, and acceptance among students. This article provides instructional tips for educators and offers suggestions for using children's picture books about autism to encourage positive, inclusive instruction.

Teaching Social Skills

- Structured Learning
- Video Modeling
- Social stories
- Self-Management
- Priming
- Curriculums (e.g., Jed Baker, Skillstreaming) and other resources

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Teaching Social Skills

- Structured Learning
  - Explain skill steps
  - Model
  - Role-play
  - Review skill and provide feedback

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Teaching Social Skills

- Video Modeling
  - Learning a skill from watching a video
  - Can be found on internet or create your own
  - Skills still need to be practiced after watching the videos
  - Examples on the next 3 slides

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Teaching Social Skills

- Video Modeling Example: Turn Taking



Teaching Social Skills

- Video Modeling Example: Conversation



Teaching Social Skills

- Video Modeling Example: Ask a friend to play



Teaching Social Skills

- Social Stories
  - Use to increase understanding of different situations
  - Can be read any time of the day, and prior to the situation
  - Can find some online or create your own

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Teaching Social Skills

- Example of a social story



I see my friend's sled,
and I want to have a turn.





I can ask 'can I have a turn?'





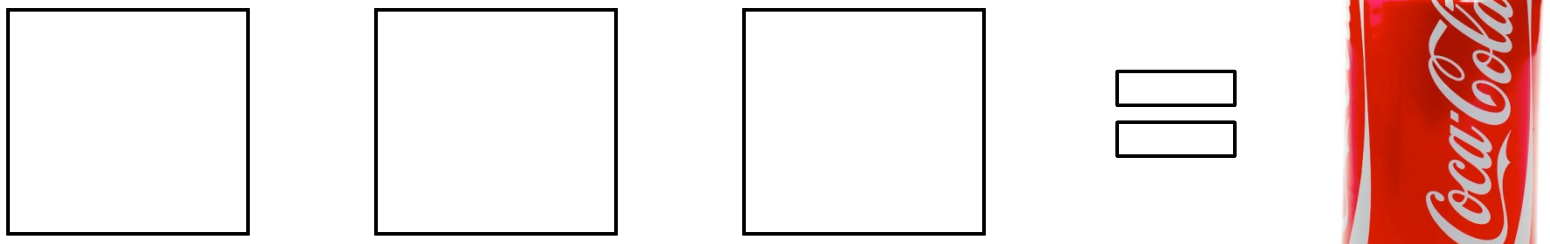
I can wait and listen for my
friend to say "yes" or "no".

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Teaching Social Skills

- Self Management
  - Define the behaviour
  - Help the child to identify when they will get checkmarks
  - Monitor
  - Reward
  - Fade your help over time



Teaching Social Skills

- Priming
  - Familiarize child with activities or skills
  - Examples:



Board Games



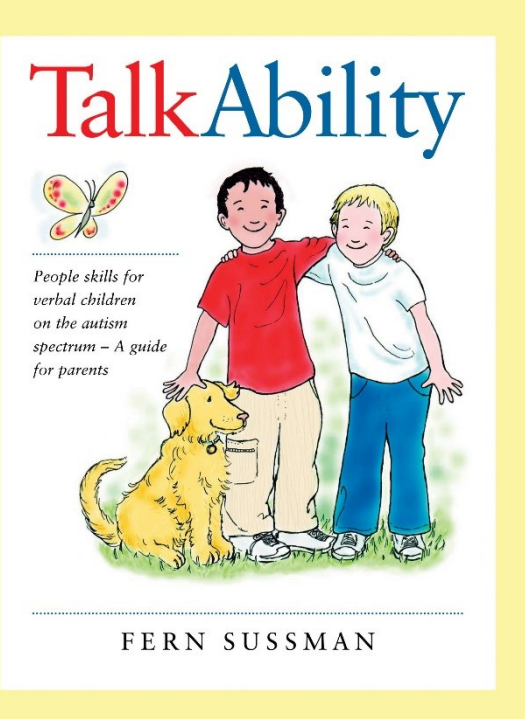
Baking

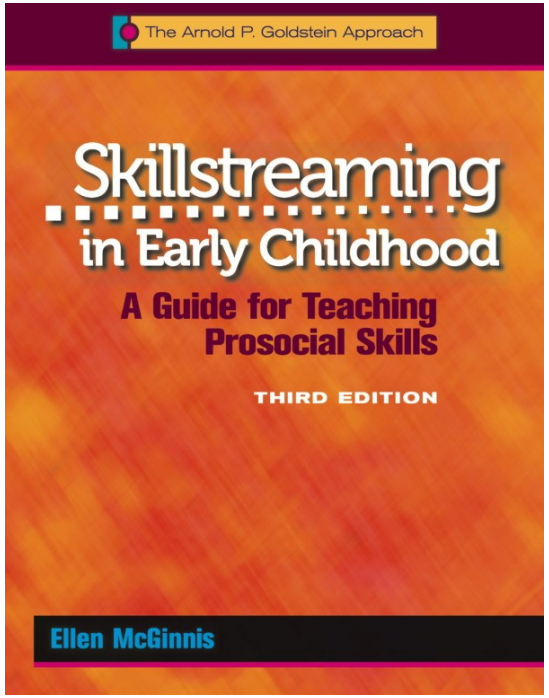


Greetings

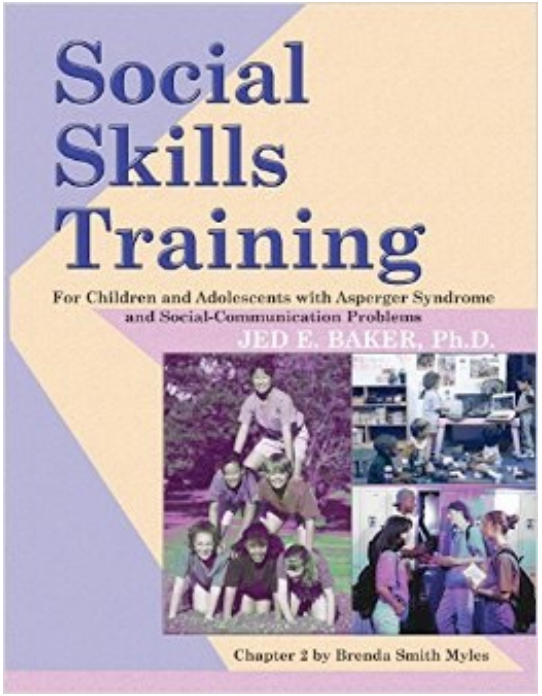
Teaching Social Skills

- Curriculums





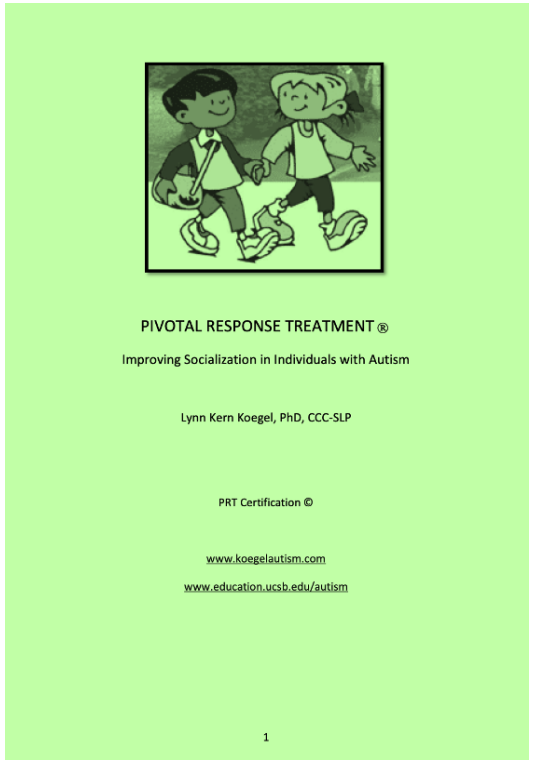


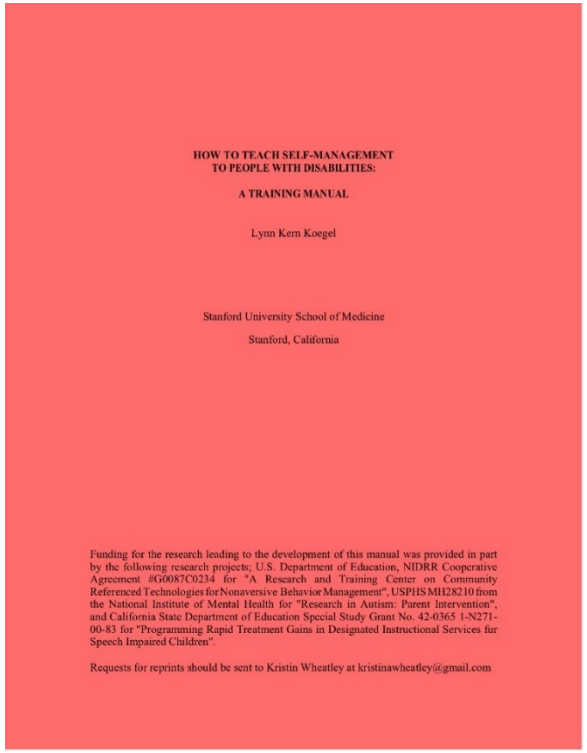


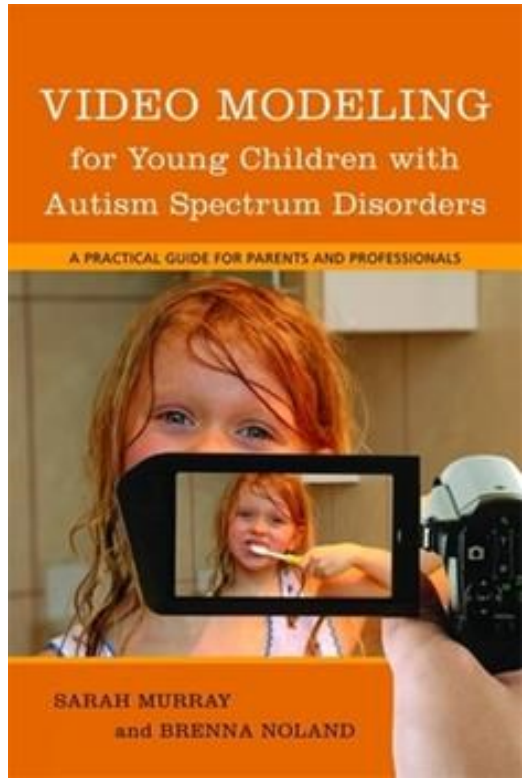
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Teaching Social Skills

- Additional Resources



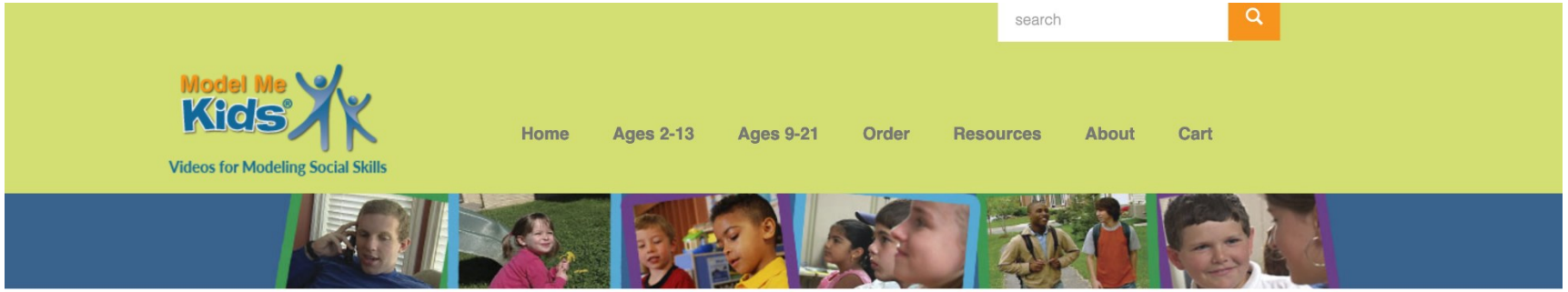




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Teaching Social Skills

- Additional Resources: Model Me Kids



Video Previews

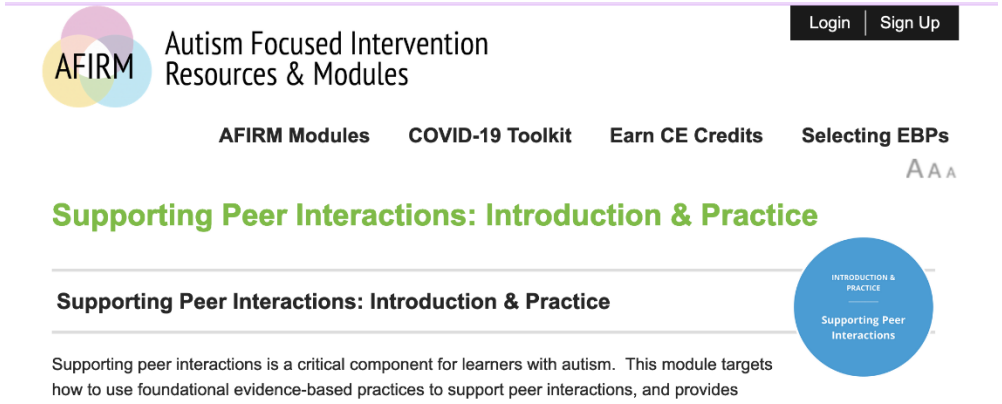
Time for School™
Time for a Playdate™
I Can Do It!™
Model Me Conversation Cues™
Model Me Friendship™
Model Me Tips & Tricks™
Model Me Organization & Motivation™
Model Me Job Skills™
Model Me Yoga™
Model Me Training™
Model Me Movement™

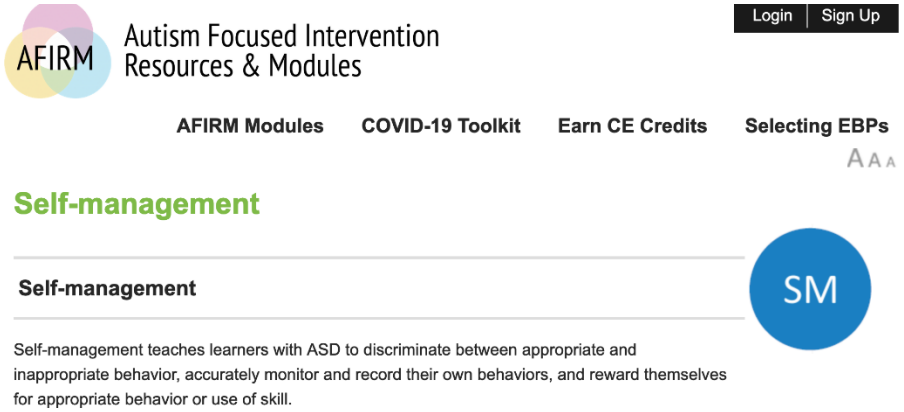


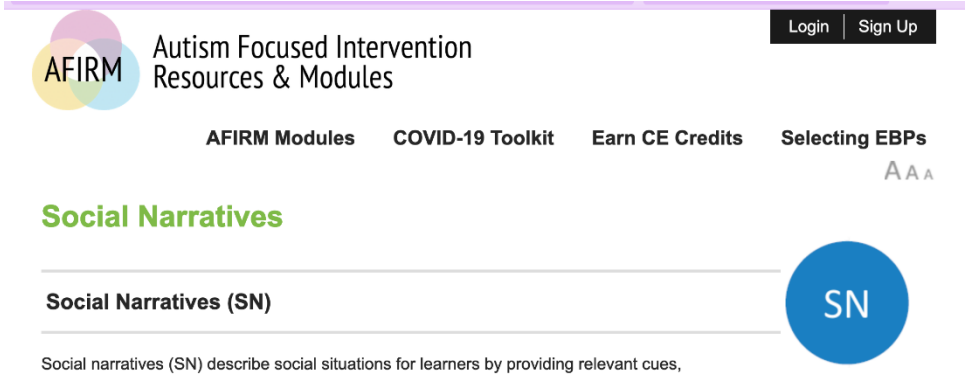
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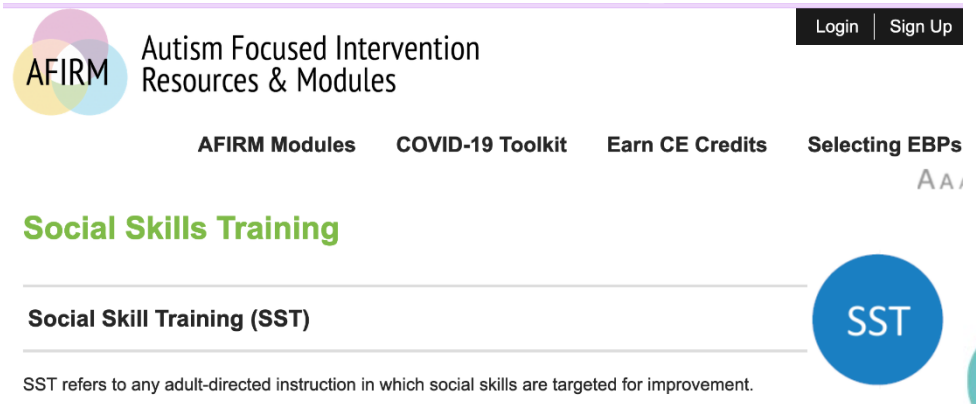
Teaching Social Skills

- Additional Resources: AFIRM Modules









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Teaching Social Skills

- Teaching/preparing the Peer
  - Remember that the burden of change is the responsibility of autistic children AND their peers
  - Amount of preparation depends on the peer
  - Sensitivity Training
  - Before the play date:
    - Conversation about Autism and what it is
    - Asking peer to be helper for your child to learn
    - Let child know expectations

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During the Play Date

- Facilitate by doing the following
  - Self management system
  - Cooperative arrangements
  - Prompt the child and peer
  - Redirect comments or questions to the peer
  - Provide frequent praise
  - Look for signs that the children need a break

During the Play Date

- Cooperative arrangements
  - Find something that both children are motivated to play with
  - Set up the activity so that they have to communicate with each other to complete it







During the Play Date

- Prompting
  - Model/show child what to do
  - Verbal
  - Visual
  - Gesture

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After the Play Date

- Reflect on the play date
  - What went well for your child?
  - What didn't go well?
  - How much support did your child need to be successful?
  - Was the peer a good fit?
  - Were the activities appropriate and timed well?
  - Name one thing that needs to be changed

After the Play Date

- Play date journal
  - Pictures from play date
  - Child's thoughts or feelings about it
  - Narrative to share with others
- Talk to your child and peer and ask them how it went
- Schedule another play date

Any Questions



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