



## Helping Children and Adolescents Succeed Socially!

### The Social Skills Groups

Social Skills Groups are held at:  
The Social Skills Place, Inc.  
464 Central Avenue Suite 6  
Northfield, Illinois 60093

#### Date and times:

##### Elementary School

Tuesday's 4:00PM-4:45PM  
Thursday's 4:30PM-5:20PM

##### Middle School/Jr.High

Monday's 5:00PM-5:50PM  
Thursday's 5:30PM-6:20PM

##### High School/College

Tuesday's 6:45PM-7:45PM  
Thursday's 7:00PM-8:00PM

##### Parent Group

Wednesday's 7:15PM-8:30PM

Founder:

**Susan Stern, MSW, LCSW**

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Visit us at:

[www.socialskillsplace.com](http://www.socialskillsplace.com)

#### Please Note:

We begin new groups as soon as we have enough children or adolescents to form a new group.

Dates and times of the groups are flexible.

### Father and Son Relationships

#### They can help or hurt your son's ability to make and keep friends

Research tells us that young children with thoughtfully involved and caring fathers tend to be more outgoing, adaptable, and secure. As children grow, this relationship will be expressed by your child in many ways. The learned social skills enable your child in many ways. They help them to know what to say, how to make good choices, and how to behave in all kinds of situations. Social skills also influence children and adolescent behavior, academic performance, peer group and family relationships. You will see less acting-out behaviors.

Many current fathers had relatively uninvolved fathers of their own, and they may find it difficult to become a "hands on" dad. Their own teacher and model was not this way. Fathers may not know how to become a part and involved in the emotional lives of their children. They may find such an undertaking intimidating.

Understanding the developing child is important, as growing children; sons idolize their fathers and think they are perfect. They internalize their fathers. As part of the natural course of child development sons identify with their fathers. This is played out by a son's imitation of his father's behavior. He may walk like him, and talk like him. He may exhibit nice social skills and nice friendships with his friends. He may be gentle and respectful towards his mother. Sons want so much to please their fathers and receive their approval and acceptance.

In another home, the father may be angry, reactive and make poor behavior choices and the son may model these behaviors as well. Knowing all of this, we can say to become a father is a rather important responsibility and should not be taken lightly. It is a noble job! Any man can become a father, but what kind of father does he want and chose to be is the question?

Laying the foundation for a nice rapport with sons is best if it occurs when children are in their formative years, age's infancy to six years old, if parents are interested in establishing a meaningful connection with them. Later on when they reach middle school and high school their emotional world will be accessible to their fathers. You can never go back and recreate that forming relationship, but you can begin today to change it.

Additionally, fathers serve as role models of masculine behavior to their sons. If fathers continually present a strong image, an impatient and angry one, their sons may be reluctant to share feelings with them. Let's face it they appear threatening and scary to a young growing child. It is also confusing to the child. Children come into the world needing to be loved and cared for

unconditionally. That is all they really need.

***Suggestions for fathers so they can become and/provide a healthy role model for their sons:***

1. Understand the/your developing child.
2. Learn how to become the father you did not have yourself.  
There are many resources to help you.
3. Take a look at your behaviors with your child and your family.  
Do not just repeat your history unless it is worth passing on.  
It is important to be honestly self aware.
4. Dads, share your own struggles and failures with your sons.
5. Allow your sons to know that making mistakes are a part of learning and that men can be vulnerable.
6. Model respect for women and healthy male-female relationships.
7. Work out your differences with your son in a sensible way, not reactive and abusive ways.
8. Pass on legacies and your passions and interests that make your life truly worth living. Do not live vicariously through your sons.

The benefits will be realized throughout the lives of your children as they feel able to invite you to share in their lives including their feelings and concerns.

***Next month-Mother and daughter relationships...***

***Susan Stern is the founder of The Social Skills Place, Inc.***

