



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-4:50PM
Wednesday's 4:30PM-5:20PM

Middle School/Jr.High

Monday's 5:00PM-6:00PM
Wednesday's 5:30PM-6:30PM

High School/College

Tuesday's 6:30PM-7:30PM

Parent Group

Wednesday's 1:00PM-2:30PM
Wednesday's 7:00PM-8:30PM

Founder:

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Visit us at:

www.socialskillsplace.com

4 Basic Psychological Needs That Motivate Behavior

Understanding our Four Basic Needs will help Ourselves and Our Children

According to Dr. William Glasser, there are four basic psychological needs that motivate behavior. All individuals are motivated by needs.

- Belonging - Fulfilled by loving, sharing, and cooperating with others
- Power - Fulfilled by achieving, accomplishing, and being recognized and respected
- Freedom - Fulfilled by making choices
- Fun - Fulfilled by laughing and playing

According to Dr. Glasser, when children choose to misbehave, they are not doing so just to disobey you or drive you crazy. They are choosing their behavior to meet a need. **I describe it as, children are behaving their feelings, and it may be due to the fact that they are not feeling fulfilled and happy.** Let's look at each of the four basic needs in detail so that we will develop an understanding of what they are and what part they play in behavior.

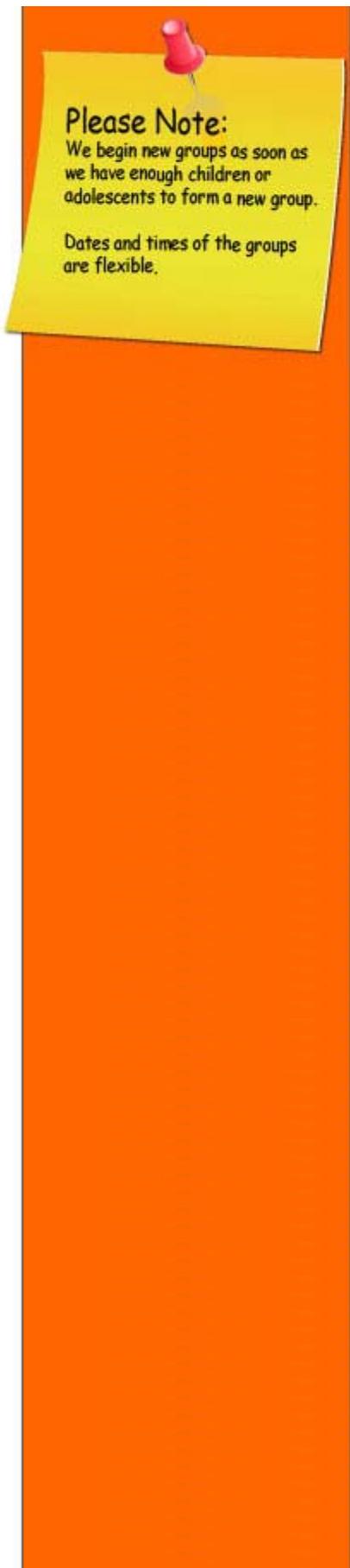
The Need for Survival Clearly this is a given. And it is added here in this newsletter. But I do not teach it to the children who I see in my practice.

This need is the easiest to describe. All living creatures are genetically programmed to survive. The need to survive includes the need to satisfy hunger, thirst and sexual desire. The need for survival also means responding to physical threats and seeking safety and security.

Dr. Glasser's Four Basic Needs:

1. The Need for Love and Belonging

This is the strongest of the basic psychological needs. The need to love and be loved, to belong and have friends, is almost as strong as the need to survive. When we feel unloved and alone, we are profoundly sad. Parents of teenagers are very familiar with this need. A 15-year-old boy often expressed it as, "I want to be with my friends." And, as with all teenagers, his need for belonging and friendship usually takes precedence over chores, homework or most anything.



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.

Look inside yourself and think what your life would be like without your family or any friends, and you will see the critical importance of fulfilling the need for love and belonging.

It is vitally important that you as parents support your children to fulfill this need. When parents are too busy or do not know how to do this themselves, their children will and do suffer. It is important to help children to socialize at a very young age. Then they will be able to take this on themselves. **YOU MUST SUPPORT THEM. PLEASE.** For they are dependent on us until they go to high school and then some more years after that...

2. The Need for Power

This is the most misunderstood of the psychological needs because we tend to think of power in a negative sense, as power over other people. The power that Dr. Glasser is talking about is a personal power, a sense of self-worth that comes from accomplishment and recognition.

The need for power is also the need to feel that we are in control of our own lives. When you give your children orders or commands, you frustrate their need for power. When you give them choices, you satisfy their need for power and give them a feeling that they are responsible enough to have control over their own behavior.

When you praise your children and NOTICE the things they do well, when you recognize their accomplishments, you are satisfying their need for power. When children feel powerless, they attempt to satisfy this need by exerting power over others by bullying, acting out in the home or in class or disobeying rules (showing they are more powerful than the person who set the rules).

3. The Need for Freedom

This is the need for the freedom to choose how we live our lives, to express ourselves freely, and to be free from the control of others. We are fortunate to live in our American society with considerable freedom, and we are free to make countless choices every day.

Helping children satisfy this need does not mean giving them the freedom to do whatever they want to do. When we talk about helping children to learn about responsibility, we are talking about giving them the freedom to choose. For instance, consider the following statement by a parent to a child: "If you do not do your work, you are not going to go to be able to participate in basketball." Now, compare that statement to this one: "Of course, you can participate in basketball, just as long as your work is done. It is your choice."

A threat frustrates the children's need for power and does nothing to meet their need for freedom. Offering a choice meets both their needs for power and freedom and teaches them about responsibility-it is their choice.

4. The Need for Fun

I look at the psychological need for fun as most important. When you are having fun, you are very happy. You are so happy that whatever cares or concerns you might have go into the background of your mind. When we are having fun, we relax, recharge our batteries and enjoy a much-needed relief from the pressures that surround us. Fun should be enjoyed by every age in life; it is not just for children.

Dr. Glasser defines fun as the genetic reward for learning. This is very important to remember when dealing with children. Watch children when they are at play. They are constantly discovering, learning and having a great time. Whenever any of us discover something new, there is a sense of excitement and fun that accompanies the learning.

I continually teach parents that punishment does not teach children anything. There is no fun in being punished. Not only is it painful, there is no learning and therefore no fun. Instead I teach parents to NOTICE the positive in the children and their behaviors and you will get more positive behaviors and everyone will feel good.

In summary, we all have basic needs that we are continually attempting to satisfy. If we can teach children how to satisfy their basic needs without impinging on the needs of others, we have taught them how to be responsible for themselves and this will help them better understand themselves as well as others. This is what it is all about...And this will lead to more fulfilling lives. And they will learn to make and keep friends.

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

Dr. William Glasser has devoted over 40 years of his professional life proving that so-called mental illnesses can be cured or made healthy by having happy marital, family, teacher-student relationships. He developed The Peaceable School Program, A Comprehensive Program for Teaching Conflict Resolution.

