



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

Monday's 4:30PM-5:30PM
Thursday's 4:30PM-5:30PM

Middle School/Jr.High

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

High School Group

Tuesday's 5:30PM-6:30PM

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

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.

Healthy child and adolescent development occurs through positive self-object experiences.

(e.g. Self-objects = parents, caretakers, schools)

Healthy self-object responses are: Attuned, empathic responsiveness from the environment; the parents, family, school = the environment. This will help your children and adolescents in every way. And it will help them to make and keep friends, and to be successful in their endeavors.

Contemporary Self-Psychology

At the heart of Kohut's theory, lies the self, conceptualized as a mental system that organizes a person's subjective experience in relation to their developmental needs. Kohut (1971) called these needs "self-object needs" because they are associated with sustaining the self and are satisfied (or not) by external figures in a person's life.

- **What do you wish for** your children, your adolescents and your family this new school year?
- Your relationship with them?
- **How do you understand being a parent? What is your role as parent?**
- What will help and support our developing and maturing children?

According to Contemporary Self-Psychology, our role as parents should be to promote a healthy self-object experience. Healthy development occurs through self-object experience that is attuned and empathic to the developing individual. The "good enough", "right" responsiveness to and for your child/ adolescent that is vitalizing, and will promote the development of the child/adolescent "self".

Pathology (= when things go wrong; a deviation from a normal state) (can) occurs through the breakdown of the "self-object, milieu! Yes, it is true.

Breakdowns will occur resulting in many areas for the child/adolescent including:

- Will your children grow up liking themselves?!
- Acceptance, making friends, communication skills, reduction of anxiety, their frustration tolerance, their confidence
- Will your children be able to learn to sooth themselves; and be able to be in control of their behaviors vs. being impulsive? Will they be able to succeed both in and out of school, and socially?

Your self-object empathic care and support, will help them to know what to say, how to make good choices, and how to behave in all kinds of situations. Your empathic time and care will help their social skills, which present first in the home and family life.

Your self-object empathic care and support will influence your children's/adolescent's behavior, academic performance, peer group and family relationships.

Applying care and compassion to your parenting can be incredibly invaluable. The failure of parental empathy to meet the natural (yes, developmentally entitled) needs during childhood, results in the ability to develop intra-psychic structures that can reliably regulate self-esteem, calm the self (ability for the child/adolescent or person to self-sooth), leaving the person able, and not dependent, on those around them to provide those functions for them. Often enough, teens and adolescents turn to drugs and alcohol to also do it for them. (self-sooth), and to be in control of their behavior; their self-control.

In addition, Anxiety Disorders are highly prevalent in too many children/adolescents in this 21st century and often coexist with depression.

What can parents and the caretakers of our growing and maturing children do to achieve a healthy self-psychological approach to parenting?

- Provide attuned empathic responses to and for your children/adolescents.
- Create a feeling of care and safety at home, and in your relationships with them.
- Make sure there is understanding and support in your relationships at home.
- Validate your children/adolescent's feelings and needs.
- Help them with processing their feelings, and tolerate them, so they will learn to tolerate their strong feelings. Talk about it!
- Take the time to understand how your

children/adolescent's experience you, and your relationship with them.

- Understand your child/adolescent's defensiveness and resistance; do not criticize or confront them. Lead them gently.
- Be intentional, not explosive or reactive! Then they will learn to be intentional.
- Support strivings for growth in your child/adolescent.
- **Notice** what you see is right in their efforts and behaviors! Notice them.
- **Hang in there with them.**
- **Love them with all your heart. Tell them.**

Have a great school year 2014-2015.

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

Some ideas taken from:

"SELFOBJECT" NEEDS IN KOHUT'S SELF PSYCHOLOGY

Links with Attachment, Self-Cohesion, Affect Regulation, and Adjustment

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