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**PARENT CONNECTION**

# ***Nobody Wants To Be My Friend!***

**With Zipora Schuck, MA, MS  
November 19, 2013**



## Our Guest: Zipora Schuck, MA, MS



*Mrs. Schuck is a School Psychologist from Rockland County, NY. She is dedicated to helping children find success during the school day and beyond, through her work with teachers, principals, parents and children. She holds two masters degrees, one in Special Education and one in School Psychology as well as having completed extensive post graduate work in administration.*

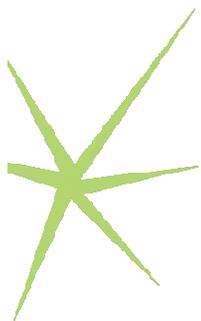
*After working for the NYC Dept. of Education, she assumed the role of Director of the Learning Center at the Beth Rochel School in Monsey, as well as founding Pathways Consulting Services LLC, a professional development agency. She has served as the permanent educational consultant for many schools in Monsey over the last decade, and presents trainings throughout the country. Mrs. Schuck is also an adjunct faculty instructor for Mercy College, teaching in both the undergraduate and graduate programs of Special Education and Psychology.*

*From all her responsibilities, she most enjoys her counseling and coaching sessions with children and teens, giving them the cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional tools they need to succeed in the real world.*

## Overview of the Session

The ability to make and keep friends is elusive to some children, and painful to both the children and their parents.

This webinar offers some information about the skills required to successfully form friendships, as well as some tips of how parents can help that happen.

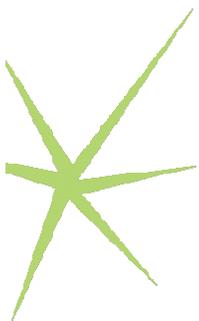


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## Session Goals:

- To discuss some reasons children struggle with socialization.
- To identify key components of socialization.
- To learn sample strategies for teaching these skills.
- To empower parents with continuing education options.



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# What Are Social Skills?

*Social skills are the various and intricate pieces of interpersonal interactions that we do to initiate and maintain good relationships.*

*Social skills are often soft skills – only noticed in their absence.*



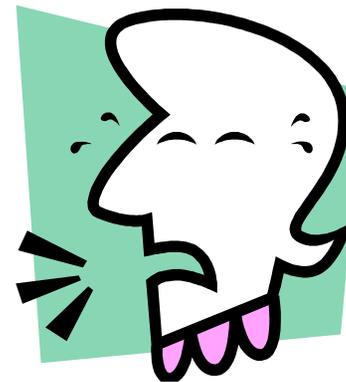
## When Parents Cry –It’s Rarely About the Academics that their Child Struggles with

“When a parent experiences that kind of pain it is because of the social isolation, rejection and humiliation that the child suffers every day – sitting alone on the school bus, hiding in the restroom during recess, eating lunch at an empty table, waiting for the phone to ring and birthday party invitations that never arrive.”

-Richard Lavoie



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# Why does my child struggle? Did I do something wrong??

## NO!

- Two socially appropriate parents, who are excellent models, may still have a child with social difficulties.
- Some children are born with good social skills, and constantly use environmental cues to adjust themselves.
- Other children need social skills to be taught directly.

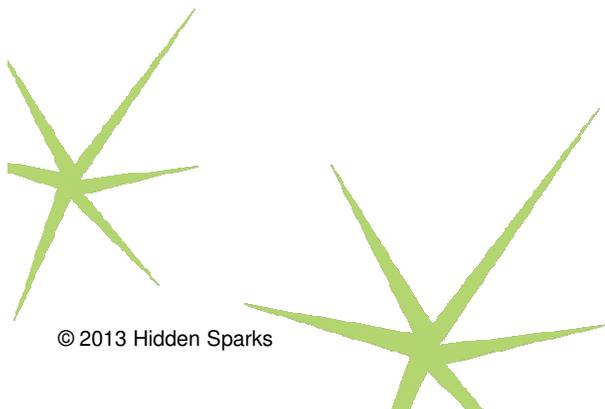


# Why Teach Social Skills?

Almost all environments are social.

A child cannot compensate  
for his/her lack of social competence.

Social skills may be the ultimate determining factor  
in a child's future success, happiness, and  
acceptance.



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# Where were the children with social skills deficits when we were growing up?

## They were there.

We just didn't use sophisticated language to describe their challenges.

“Marches to the beat of his own drummer”

“Out of the box”

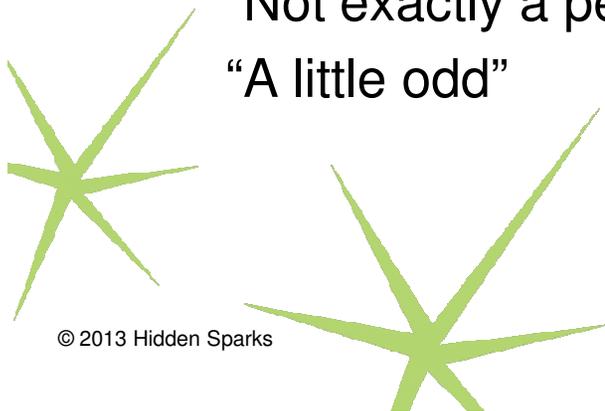
“Free thinker”

“Interesting”

“Unique”

“Not exactly a people person”

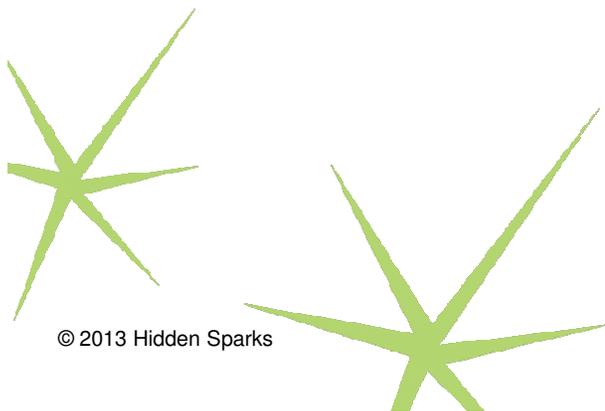
“A little odd”



# Scholarly Research has Educated and Empowered us.

- The Asperger's population
- Children with learning disabilities

We have learned that social skills is a form of social cognition – and some children, even outside these two groups, struggle with it as well.



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# Social skill challenges occur because of, together with, or unrelated to:



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# Is It Really a Problem?

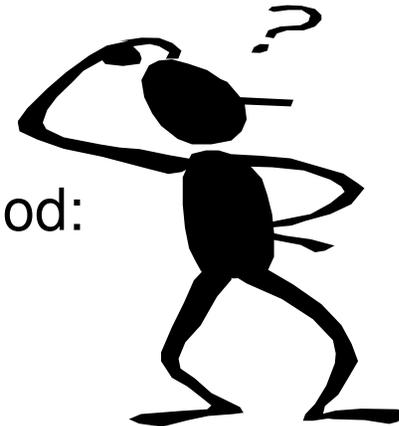
## Don't we all have personality quirks?

They becomes problematic when they interfere with the 3 tasks of childhood:

- To play
- To learn
- To have friends

Which later become the 3 tasks of adulthood:

- To do meaningful work
- To have pleasure in life
- To form relationships



**Intervention may be needed.**

# Something Seems Off, But Where Do I Start?

- ✓ Using menus and checklists
- ✓ Using our own expectations
- ✓ Observing strengths and weaknesses



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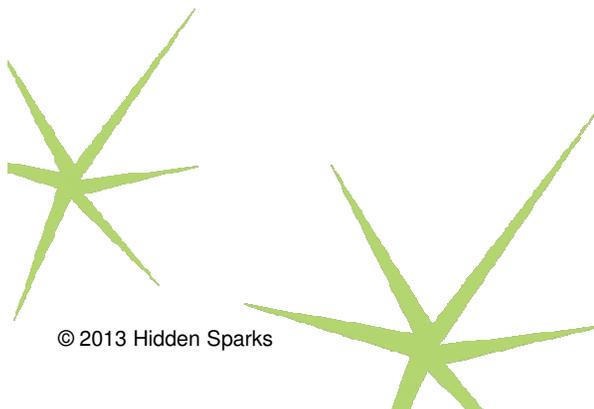
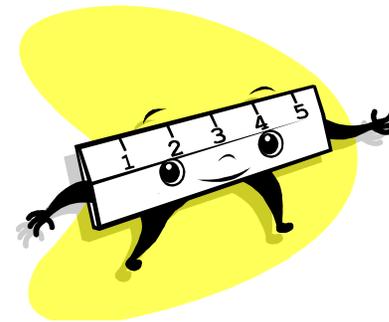


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# Communication Skills

## Proxemics and personal space Using the child's arm as a measurement model

- Shoulder to fingertips
- Above elbow to fingertips
- Under elbow to fingertips
- Front to front
- Side to side
- Front to back



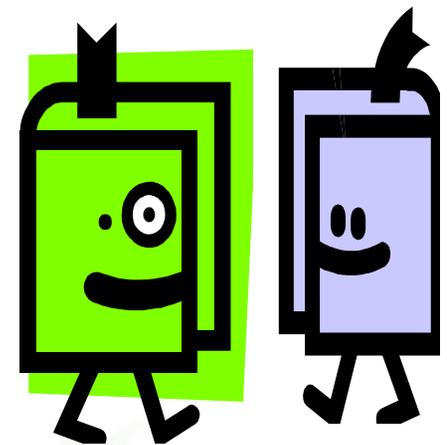
# Communication Skills

## Tone Of Voice

*My son did not  
break the window*



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# Communication Skills

## Non-verbal Communication

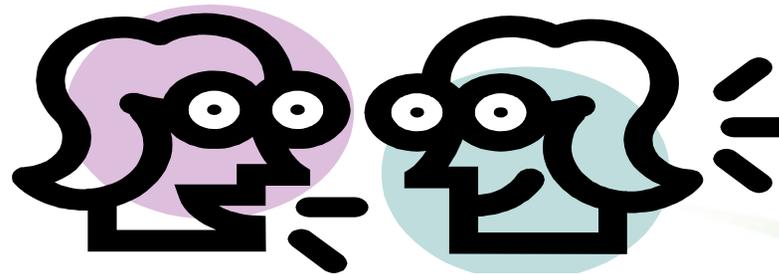
- Body language, eye contact, gestures, facial expressions
- The 75 - 25 rule
- Be a clear model!

*Children that don't read others' body language well,  
have an even harder time accurately  
projecting their own.*



# Conversation Skills

- ✓ **Listening position**
- ✓ **Starting, joining, ending,**
- ✓ **Alternating turns**
- ✓ **Topics of interest**
- ✓ **Interrupting**
- ✓ **Think it - don't say it**



# Play Skills

-  Asking someone to play
-  Joining in
-  Sharing
-  Turn taking
-  Looking with your eyes
-  Game play
-  Wining and losing



# Friendship Skills

- ☺ Being positive
- ☺ Sharing a friend
- ☺ The rule police
- ☺ Telephone skills
- ☺ Timing and development
- ☺ Friendship management



# Expected vs. Unexpected

Move away from saying “appropriate or inappropriate” – they are judgmental statements that don’t always belong in social skill remediation.

- **Expected behavior** does not cause people to think about you.
- **Unexpected behavior** causes others to think about you – not always in positive ways.

Teach your child to be a social detective/spy – What behavior seems to be expected here? What are others doing? Does my behavior match theirs?



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## How can I help?

- ✓ Talk about the tricks to making and keeping friends.
- ✓ Validate and empathize how difficult it may be.
- ✓ Always reinforce when you notice your child doing something well. Behavior that is reinforced is repeated.
- ✓ Use phrases like “I noticed”, “I’m wondering if...”, “I’d like to help you with this”.
- ✓ Encourage successful play dates by planning activities and discussing expectations.
- ✓ Emphasize good hygiene and accessories – you don’t get a second chance to make a first impression.
- ✓ Provide practical suggestions not problematic diagnoses.

**Remember – every child wants to be liked and have friends!**

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# Only Have Time for One Book?

***Teaching Your Child the Language of Social Success***

by Duke, Nowicki, and Martin.

***The Unwritten Rules of Friendship***

by Elman and Kennedy-Moore



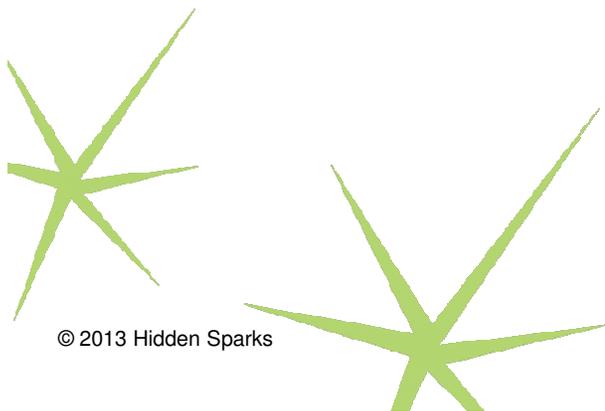
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# Some Books for Children

Using books almost always normalizes the situation for the child – they realize the author didn't write the book for them, and that other children also struggle with this challenge.

- The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig
- How To Be a Friend by Marc Brown
- How Kids Make Friends by Lonnie Michelle



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# TMI? Not Enough? Here's More for Adults

**Check out the books, lectures, DVDs, and websites  
from experts in the field**

- Michelle Garcia Winner – *Thinking About Me, Thinking About You*
- Richard Lavoie – *Its So Much Work to be Your Friend, Last One Picked – First One Picked On DVD*
- Carol Gray – *Social Stories*
- Cathy Grayson – *Parenting Your Asperger's Child*
- Jed Baker – *Social Skills*



# Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Parent Connection Sessions

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Wednesday,<br/>December 11, 2013</b> | <b><i>Children and Screen Time: A Practical Guide to Media<br/>Use With Young Children<br/>With Jeannie Crowley</i></b> |
| <b>Tuesday,<br/>January 7, 2014</b>     | <b><i>Passive v. Active Screen Time<br/>With Jeannie Crowley</i></b>  |

***For more information visit:  
[www.hiddensparks.org](http://www.hiddensparks.org)***



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