

# **Implementing Social Thinking Vocabulary and Concepts into our Home and School Day.**

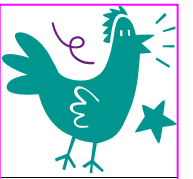
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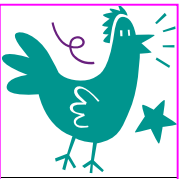
[www.socialthinking.com](http://www.socialthinking.com)



# Who am I and who are you??



# REVIEW YOUR HANDOUTS



Poor social skill development is likely a reflection of poor development of Social Cognition, however this can be caused by a variety of sources:

- Born with it (neurological).
- Acquired through poverty.
- Acquired due to head injury.
- Acquired due to drug or alcohol exposure.



# Defining Terms:

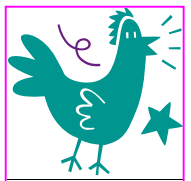
- Social Cognition = Social Thinking
- Our intervention program teaches:

“Social Thinking and Related Social Skills”.



Intervention for kids with poor social skill is not quite so simple as teaching them better social skills.

- We need to help teach students become more efficient social thinkers, before we can expect them to produce better social skills.
- Example: eye contact.



# The I LAUGH model of Social Cognition

I=Initiating

L=Listening with your eyes & brain

A=Abstracting and Inferencing

U=Understanding perspective

G=Getting the Big Picture (gestalt)

H=Humor!!!!

See handout



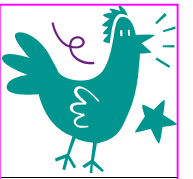
# Social Thinking Plays a PROMINENT role in the classroom when:

1. Students and teacher have to share space effectively.
2. Each participant has to interpret the other (student and teacher) accurately.
3. Students work together in peer based groups.
4. Students have to interpret and respond appropriately to the curriculum.



# Social thinking also plays a prominent role in more purely social times

- Recess Play – unstructured free time.
- Conversational skills
- Coping with lunch time
- Immediately before and after school

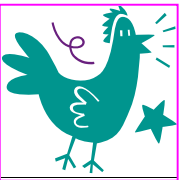


# Today's talk will be divided into three sections

1. Developing a curriculum for teaching social thinking and related skills.
2. Strategies we can use to help our regular education teachers, including complexity of social problem solving.
3. Building team understanding.



However much we try and  
separate social play skills from  
academic skills, it is impossible.



# Social Thinking is embedded in our academic curriculums.

The ability to predict, infer, conceptualize,  
determine motive and intentions, get  
organized, listen actively and speak our  
thoughts coherently are heavily grounded in  
one's social thinking.



If the standards are our “building blocks” of education, than our social thinking is the mortar that holds it all together.

Exploring how the standards relate to the I LAUGH Model of Social Cognition.



# Sample Pragmatic Standards for Initiating:

- Toddler: unwritten standard: ask for help
- 2.2.4 Ask clarifying questions about essential elements of exposition (why, what if, how).
- 5.1.1 Ask questions that seek information not already discussed.



# Sample Pragmatic Standards for listening:

- 1.1.1 Listen Attentively
- 2.1 Determine the purpose for listening.
- 5.1.2 Interpret the speaker's verbal and non-verbal message/purpose/perspective.



# Sample Abstract-Inferential Select Reading Standards

- K.2.2 predictions with pictures and context.
- 4.3.5 Define figurative language and identify its use in literary works.
- 7.3.1 Identify events that advance the plot...and foreshadow future actions.



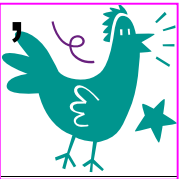
# Sample Standards for Perspective in Reading:

- 4.3.3 Use knowledge of situation, character traits/motivations to determine causes for character's actions.
- 6.3.2 Analyze the effect of the qualities of the character on plot and resolution of conflict.
- 9-10.3.4 Determine character's traits by seeing what they say about themselves in narrative, dialogue, etc..

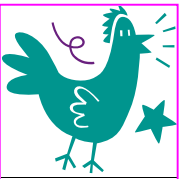


# Sample Gestalt Processing - Standards in Writing:

- 2.1.1 Create graphic organizer or outline to practice pre-writing skills.
- 4.1.2 Create multiple paragraphs, support with topic sentence...and conclusion paragraph.
- 7.1.3 Strategies of note taking, outlining, summarizing to impose structure on composition drafts.



# TEACHING THE SOCIAL THINKING CURRICULUM



# Two significant lessons that span across all aspects of the social curriculum:

1. The Four Steps of Communication

1. The Four Steps of Perspective Taking



# Reviewing the 4 Steps of Communication

1. THINKING about people who share your space or who you plan to communicate with.
2. Establishing a PHYSICAL PRESENCE to show intention to communicate.
3. Use EYES TO THINK ABOUT OTHERS.
4. LANGUAGE to related to others.

See handout for more information



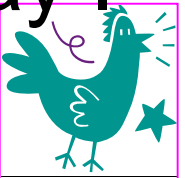
These 4 Steps of Communication  
help to organize and prioritize  
what we teach about human  
interaction.

Remember: Human interaction can be as  
simple as standing in a group of people and  
NOT talking, or asking for help in class.



# The 4 Steps of Perspective Taking are required in all groups:

1. I think about you, you think about me.
2. I am aware of your motive/intention. Why are you near me? What do you want from me?
3. Since you are thinking about me, what are you thinking about me?
4. I monitor my behavior and possibly adjust it to keep you thinking about me the way I want you to think about me.



# Perspective Taking is the ability to consider your own and other people's:

- Thoughts and Emotions
- Motives and Intentions
- Prior knowledge/Experiences
- Belief systems
- Personality



# Organize lessons around the “social thinking vocabulary”

- These are student friendly vocabulary concepts to explicitly teach social expectations.
- The vocabulary is user friendly for all teachers and educators to use across all environments.



# Seven Lesson Sections in the Social Thinking Curriculum:

1. Being Part of A Group: Realizing Expectations
2. How our body and mind help to be part of a group.
3. Self-awareness and self-monitoring of our behavior in a group.



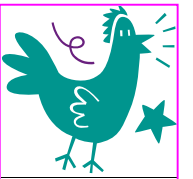
# Continue: 7 sections of the curriculum

4. Observing Others: the detective agency is born.
5. Figuring out what people mean by what they say: the super detective agency.
6. Imagination and Wonder to relate to others.



# Continue: 7 sections in the curriculum

7. Using language to relate to others.



# 1. Being Part of A Group: Realizing Expectations

Key Social thinking vocabulary:

- Expected/ unexpected: encourage the students to recognize they are aware of many of the rules.
- You can impact how I feel.
- Three parts of play
- Group imitation tasks: working together through non-verbal cues
- Who is the teacher teaching in her group: use popsicle sticks.



## 2. How our body and mind help to be part of a group.

Core social thinking concepts:

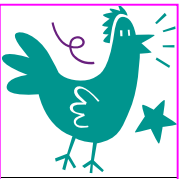
- Whole body listening
- Thinking with our eyes
- Thinking with our brains
- Thinking about what other people think.



# Group Task:

Pick one of the social thinking vocabulary concepts for Curriculum lessons 1& 2 and build a lesson related to it for your classroom or therapy room.

Handout on page 5



# 3. Self-awareness and self-monitoring of our behavior in a group.

Core social thinking concepts for lesson 3:

- Your body is in the group, your body is out of the group!
- Your brain is in the group, your brain is out of the group!
- Just me/ Thinking about you
- Good thoughts/Weird thoughts (colored sticks)
- “I’ve got a secret”
- Video moment to watch what other people are doing.



# Learning to monitor one's own behavior.

- Encourage students to define and track one or two behaviors related to classroom cooperation or productivity.
- Have them reward themselves for sticking with their target behavior.
- Create behavior charts.

See handout task on page 8



# What to try if: Student is getting so much negative attention, no point in cooperating.

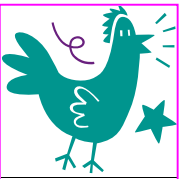
- Remove from the room. Work with him on behaviors to EARN re-entering the room; or have him leave the group if you cannot leave the room.
- Do NOT tolerate obnoxious purposeful behavior because the student has a diagnosis.



# Group Task:

Pick one of the social thinking vocabulary concepts for Curriculum lesson 3 and build a behavior awareness lesson related to it, for use in your classroom or therapy room.

Handout task page 7



# 4. Observing Others: the detective agency is born.

## Core Social Thinking Vocabulary:

- Figuring out other people's plans
- Smart guess/wacky guess
- Identifying one's own feelings
- Social behavior mapping



# Another tool:

- The Incredible 5 Point Scale (Dunn and Curtis, 2004)
- A cognitive behavior technique to help students learn more about their personal behavior, emotions and controls.
- Helps adults more deeply understand the needs of the students and related strategies. (see handout).
- Blends well is Social Behavior Map
- Handout page 10



# Group Task:

Pick one of the social thinking vocabulary concepts for Curriculum lesson 4 and create a lesson related to it for your classroom or therapy room.

Handout task on page 11



# 5. What people mean by what they say: the super detective agency.

## Core Social Thinking Vocabulary:

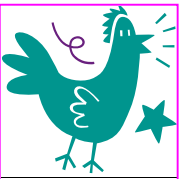
- Body language and Spoken language (verbal and non-verbal)
- Literal and figurative language
- Indirect language
- Figuring out meaning using 4 groups of clues
- Figuring out people's intentions
- Flexible brain



# Group Task:

Pick one of the social thinking vocabulary concepts for Curriculum lesson 5 and create a lesson related to it for your classroom or therapy room.

Handout task on page 13



## 6. How imagination and wonder contribute to social relations.

### Core Social Vocabulary Concepts:

- Thinking about what others are thinking
- Synchronizing our movements
- Imagination
- Wonder
- World wonder - Social wonders
- Social curiosity
- Asking wonder questions
- sharing in someone's wonder bubble



# Group Task:

Pick one of the social thinking vocabulary concepts for Curriculum lesson 6 and create a lesson related to it for your classroom or therapy room.

Handout task page 15



# 7. Using language to relate to others.

## Core Social Thinking Concepts:

- Social thinking about people's comments.
- Keeping friend files
- Asking questions to people about these people.
- Add a thought
- Whopping Topic Changes
- Follow questions
- Supporting comments (responses)
- Baiting questions



# 7. Continued: Using language to relate to others.

## Core Social Thinking Vocabulary

- Our bodies are part of communication.
- Clarifying needs/asking for help.
- Initiating topics
- Rude interruptions/acceptable interruptions
- Saying nothing gives people nothing to think about.
- How long is too long to talk?



# Group Task:

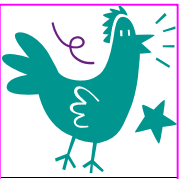
Pick one of the social thinking vocabulary concepts for Curriculum lesson 7 and create a lesson related to it for your classroom or therapy room.

Handout task page 18



# Section 2: Working with ALL teachers to explore the complexity of communication

Start with teaching these to regular ed. Teachers, to show them that social thinking can help many students!



# Core Social Thinking Concepts to help with Problem Solving:

- Hidden rules/hidden curriculum
- Social rules change with age
- Comic Strip Conversations
- Graphic Organizers - mind maps
- Spiral bound index cards for strategies
- Personal problem solving and Size of Problem
- The Boring Moment!
- Blurting



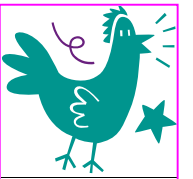
# Social contexts are filled with hidden rules, called “The Hidden Curriculum”

- For example: social rules for students’ behavior are different before and after the teacher officially starts the class. Students usually figure out the “hidden curriculum” through their own active social thinking. However, students with social cognitive deficits often have to be explicitly taught.  
Ex: Barnes and Noble



What are some other “hidden curriculums” you recognize with in your classroom and across the school day?

For students I refer to these as “the hidden rules”.



# Social Rules Change with Age

- Social Skills increase significantly in nuance and sophistication with age.
- Some of our students errors are due to the fact that they don't recognize the "rules have changed". Again, we never teach this explicitly.
- Example: student getting very upset because someone in high school swears. The rule is "no swearing" how do you handle this?



# Comic Strip Conversations

- Comic Strip Conversations (CSC) (Gray, see bibliography).
- CSC's allow insight into other people's thoughts and language.
- Practice writing a comic strip conversation about a child who thinks someone's face reminds him of a fish, so he tells the girl.
- Handout 19



# Graphic Organizers – Mind Maps

- Assist with helping students see how details can relate to concepts.
- Create these in the moment to help a student integrate details and concepts.
- Practice creating your own graphic organizer to help a student learn the main problem in the story “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”.
- Handout 20



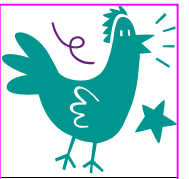
# Spiral bound index cards:

- Write in each strategy developed for a child onto a separate card.
- Create an index to locate the cards easily.
- Help the child learn these are his/her strategies to use.
- Adults refer child to the strategies rather than tell the child what to do!



# Problem Solving

- Teach Problem Solving Explicitly
- Teach students to better understand the “Size of Their Problem”
  - Handout page 21



Remember to teach about the  
**BORING MOMENT!!!!**

Expected and Unexpected  
behaviors.



# Avoid Blurting: Think With Your Eyes!

“I am looking at Robyn I am talking to Robyn, I am not talking to you right now”; while you hold up the palm of your hand towards the blurter.

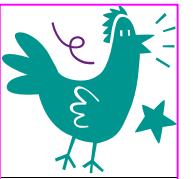


# SOCIAL STORIES

Carol Gray: [www.thegraycenter.org](http://www.thegraycenter.org)

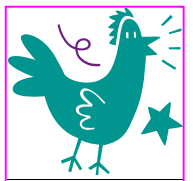
A golden tool that all teachers and parents should be familiar with.

Do your homework on this concept!

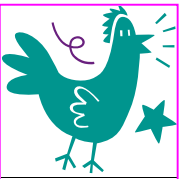


# What to try if: The student thinks the strategy makes him/her look different?

- Work with all students on their learning differences.
- Help students to realize that the strategy is less awkward than the actual behavior! (e.g. strategy book is creates less weird thoughts than having an adult have to help you all day!).



Social Thinking is far more powerful and important to education than we have considered.



# Auditory and Reading

## Comprehension Are Similar!

Beyond processing the signal or reading the code...both require:

- Interpretation of different perspectives
- Interpretation of the context
- Ability to determine the problems and related solutions
- Ability to make predictions about the text, etc.



# Written Expression Requires

- Clearly and efficiently identifying the main idea.
- Organizing information in prior to writing.
- Staying focused to central ideas with details.
- Summarizing effectively
- Taking perspective of characters and the needs of the intended reader.
- Considering the intent of the teacher who assigned it.



# What to do if: The student is just not getting the concept being taught.

- Make it visual, break it down, etc.
- Do not think we can teach all brains all concepts.
- De-escalate the learning curve. What lessons can be integrated? Inferencing across social and reading domains, etc.

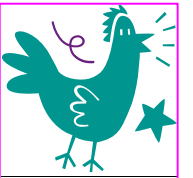


# When modifying assignments:

- Try to coordinate what the student is to focus on across lessons.
- Establish core concepts to relate to social and academic.
- See handout 22 on core social thinking questions to integrate teaching towards a more social mind.



# Thinking About The Intervention Team



Weaknesses in social thinking create challenges to one's mental health. The majority of our students also have tremendous anxiety, stress, obsessive compulsive disorder and/or depression.



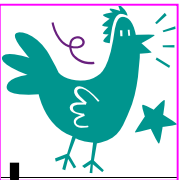
# Who are the team members?

- Special educators
- Regular educators
- Speech language pathologists
- Paraprofessionals
- Parents
- occupational therapists?
- Counselor or psychologist to help counsel.



Service providers have different roles in teaching social thinking, however all share the same concepts!

Realize these lessons are not in addition to teaching, but they are central to teaching a group of students!



# Resource Room Teachers

- Actively teach social thinking vocabulary to establish a stronger environment of social cooperation.
- Actively teach social thinking concepts as they relate to the curriculum.
- Communicate with the other teachers what concepts have been introduced.



# Teachers of Self-Contained Classrooms

- Establish a regular time, on a daily basis where social thinking vocabulary is introduced or expanded up in the classroom.
- Connect social thinking for social skills to social thinking for understanding the curriculum.
- Communicate with the other teachers what concepts have been introduced.



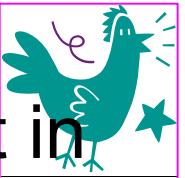
# Paraprofessionals

- To carryover the lessons introduced in the special education classes.
- To use social thinking vocabulary during teachable moments.
- Help integrate the ideas of social thinking across the day.



# Speech Language Pathologists

- Make explicit the concepts of social thinking in group therapy groups.
- Connect social thinking for social skills to social thinking for understanding the curriculum.
- Communicate with the other teachers what concepts have been introduced; provide tips to teachers on how you were able to get the student to understand and use the concept in the smaller group environment.



# Counselors or Psychologists

- Realize the relationship between one's social thinking skills and one's stress in school, community, etc.
- Use cognitive behavioral techniques to explore emotions, relatedness, etc.
- These professionals need to work with the whole team, not just the student!
- Working with the older student to understand who he/she is, in light of their disability



# Parents

- Provide clear feedback to them about the concepts being covered at school.
- Use the ME Binder to convey teaching handouts that introduce the social thinking vocabulary concepts.
- Parents should provide the social thinking vocabulary in teachable moments!



# Regular Education Teachers

- Use the social thinking vocabulary introduced in all other settings.
- Teach around the concepts of the 4 steps of communication and perspective taking during teachable moments.
- Recognize how social thinking invades their curriculums to better understand the student's challenges.



# What can happen at your school?

## How to lay out the roles:

- Speech language pathologist
- Resource
- Self contained classroom
- Paraprofessionals
- Regular ed
- Parent



# What to do at IEP meetings?

- Use HONEST COMPASSION. Do NOT pretend we can fix major problems.
- Encourage thoughtful, small stepped goal writing and indicate that home is also a learning environment.
- DO NOT pass off the problem saying he or she will grow out of it.
- Help parents understand you are learning about their child by learning about autism and Asperger syndrome.
- Work with your administrators if you feel you cannot sign an IEP knowing that will not benefit the student.



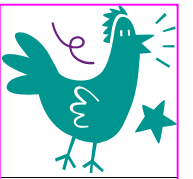
# How can we help the kids and teachers?

- Learn the resources of your school (counselors, 504, IEP program, etc.)
- Teachers stay adaptable to learning the social thinking vocabulary to help with all kids in their classes by helping to make social thinking information more explicit.
- Teach all students about their perspective taking abilities to help them appreciate the process and the struggles of some of their peers.
- Help our political administrators to learn there is more to education than test scores: return to the “whole child”.



After this big dump of  
information:

7 messages to summarize our  
day.



# The First Message:

Social Thinking and related social skills  
are not in addition to the standards,  
they are the infrastructure for the  
standards!

Without social knowledge learning is  
trapped in rote based learning and  
responses.



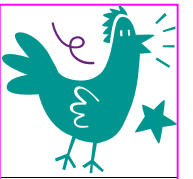
# The Second Message:

All professionals,  
paraprofessionals and parents  
need to work together to build a  
child's social thinking and related  
skills. It is not just the job of the  
person running the “social group”.



# The Third Message:

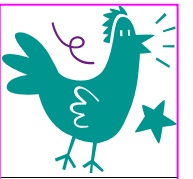
Different persons on the treatment team have different roles in the treatment process.



# The Fourth Message:

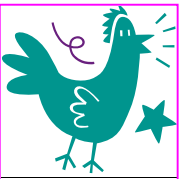
We need to address social thinking for all kids every day.

Teach clear strategies to help the kids learn how to think more abstractly not only about the curriculum but about their relations with others.



# The Fifth Message

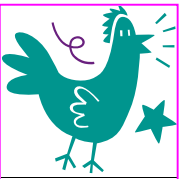
Students are complicated.  
Difficulties with social cognition  
co-exist with a number of other  
problems.



# The Sixth Message

You will not be able to determine  
these student's problems from  
interpreting standardized test  
scores!

Sorry!



# The SEVENTH and Final MESSAGE

- YOU CAN HELP.
- The Social Thinking program may need to begin with just you, but it counts!



# Contact Michelle

- [www.socialthinking.com](http://www.socialthinking.com)
  - Conferences
  - Products
  - Assessment and therapy
  - Mentor training
  - Michelle@socialthinking.com



# Bibliography

- Pages 23 - 25

