



mylemarksTM

HELPING KIDS ALONG THE WAY!

The Social Skills Workbook

Z. ANDREW JATAU

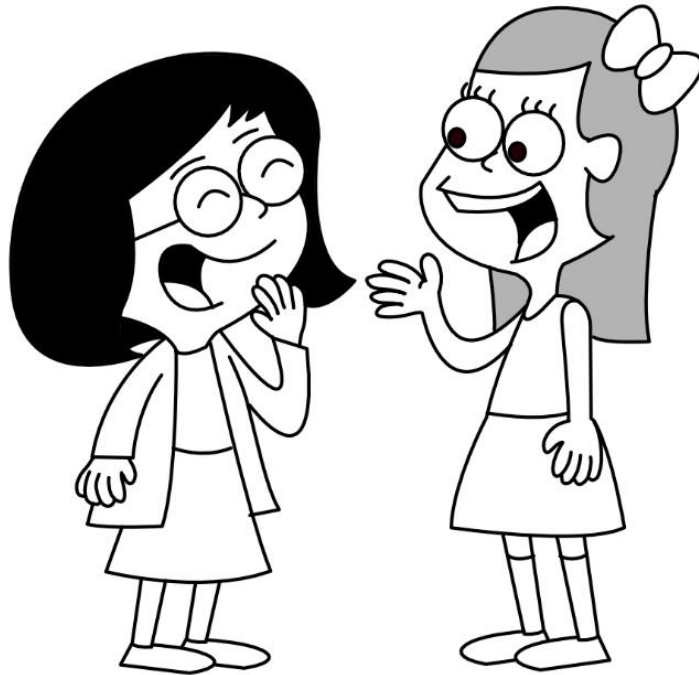
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What are Social Skills?

Social skills are the way that we behave and talk when we're around others. These things can have an impact on how other people feel about us and how they treat us.

People that display **Good** social skills usually have pleasant interactions with peers and adults. They are the type of people that others enjoy being around because they are kind and polite. This leads to them having more and longer lasting friendships. People with good social skills know how to have great conversations and show others that they are listening to them and are interested in what they have to say.



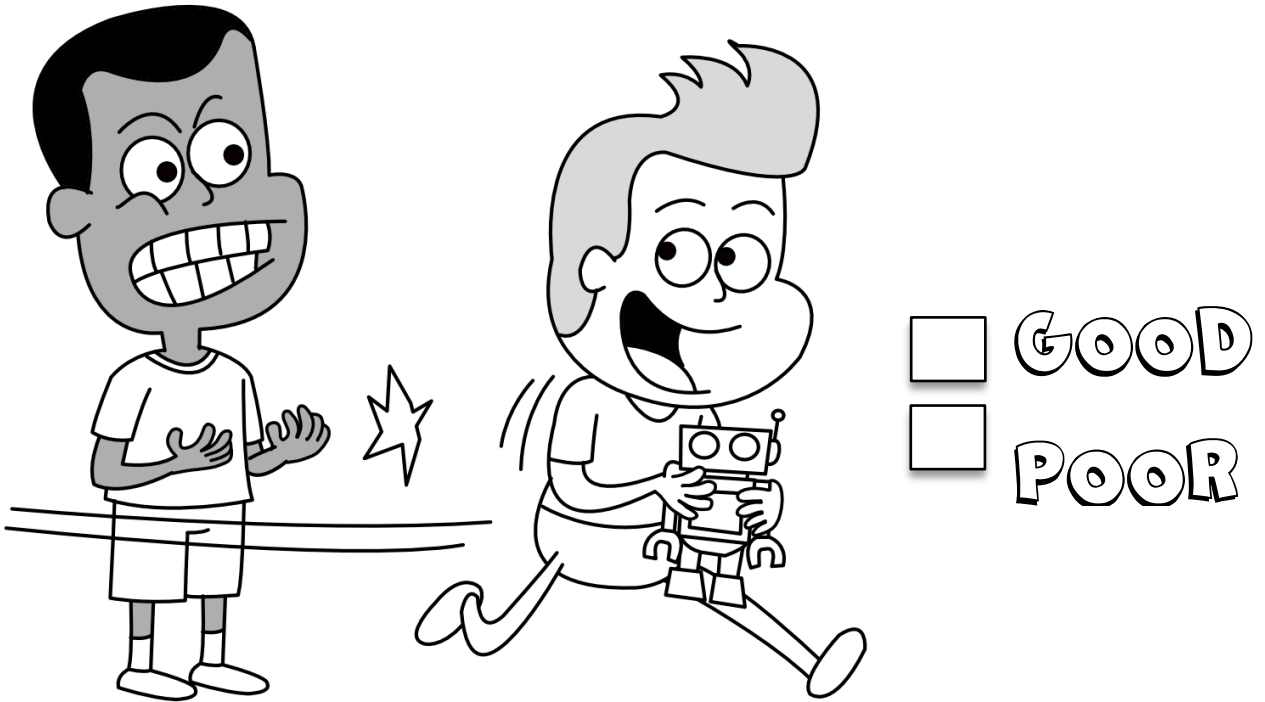
Someone with **Poor** social skills might have a hard time making and keeping friends. A lot of times, people don't enjoy being around them because they might feel annoyed, unheard, or disrespected. People with poor social skills have a hard time understanding how their actions impact others.

A good way to help tell the difference between good and poor social skills is to ask yourself this question:

“Will what I’m about to do or say make this person want to be around me or want to walk away?”

If it will make the person want to walk away, then it is likely a poor social skill and you probably shouldn't do or say it!

Hugo sees Colin playing with a brand-new toy robot. Hugo is jealous and really wants to play with it, so he walks up to Colin and grabs the toy right out of his hands! Is Hugo displaying Good or Poor social skills?



Why? _____

How do you think it makes Colin feel? _____

What do you think he'll say or do to Hugo? _____

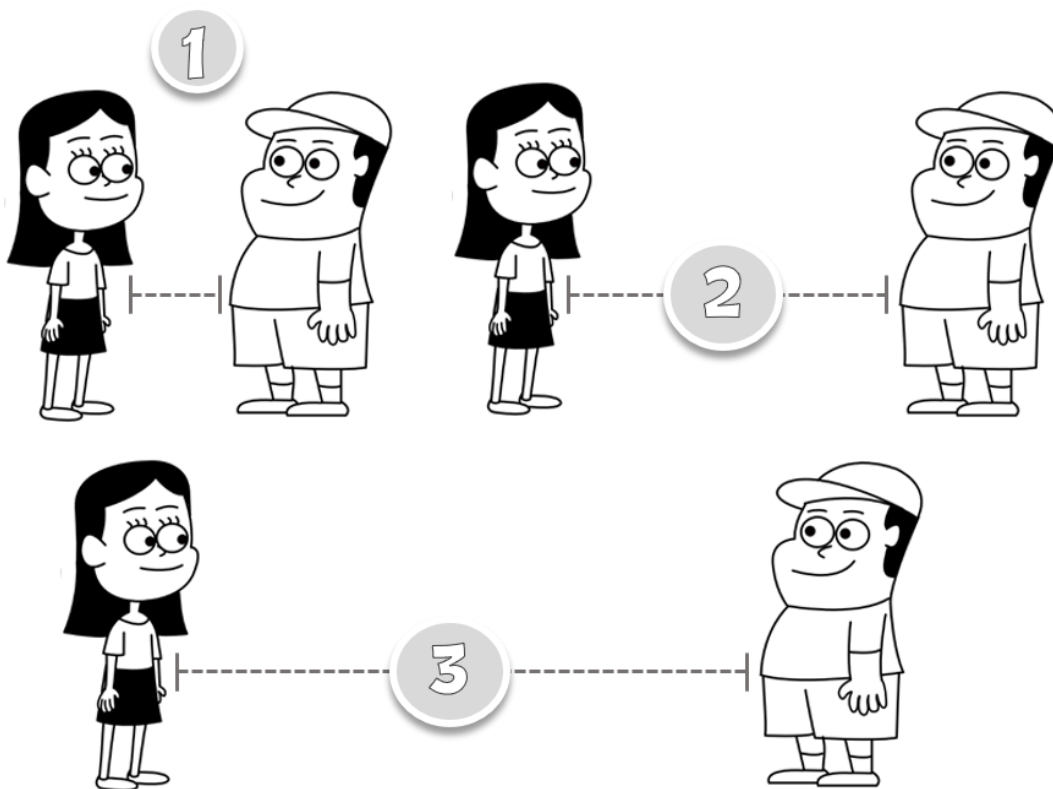
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you checked Poor for any of these, what can each person do instead to make it Good?
2. Have any of these situations ever happened to you? How did it make you feel?

ACTIVITY

Personal Space

Answer the questions below about who you feel comfortable letting into your different personal space zones. Which zone do you allow your friends into? What about teachers?



Who is allowed in **1** ?

Who is allowed in **2** ?

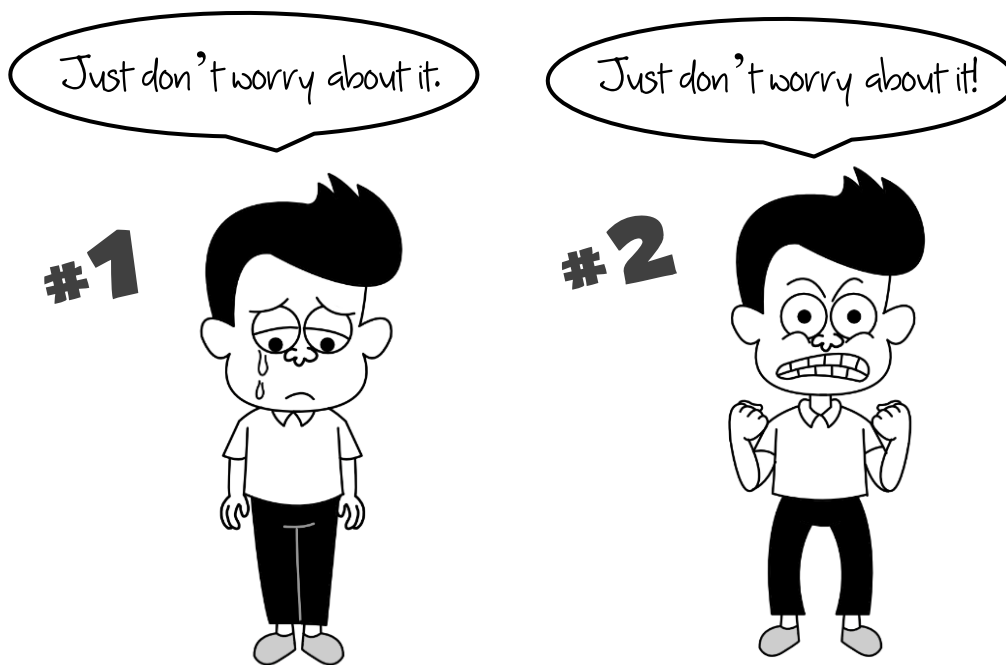
Who is allowed in **3** ?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it take for someone to be allowed into your Zone 1?
2. What do you do if people in Zone 2 or 3, try to get into Zone 1?

Voice Tone

Sometimes it's not what you say, but *how* you say something that can make all the difference. Your tone of voice can let others know how you're feeling in the moment. You could be saying the exact same sentence, but if you were to change your tone of voice, it would express different meanings. Look at the two examples below.



If you look at the difference in social clues from both boys, you can guess that Boy #1 is feeling sad and Boy #2 is angry. Even though they're both saying the same thing, you can imagine that their tone of voice and body language send a different message.

Sarcasm

Sarcasm is when someone says the opposite of what they really mean. When people use sarcasm, they usually change the tone of their voice. Sarcastic comments can be said jokingly, and other times it can be used to be mean.

For example, if you see your friend trip and fall in the hallway, and you walk up to them and ask, "Hey, how's it going?" If they were being sarcastic, they might reply, "Great! This is the best day ever! Can't you tell?"

If you didn't know that they were being sarcastic, you would be confused. That's why it is important to listen to the tone of voice as well as other social clues.



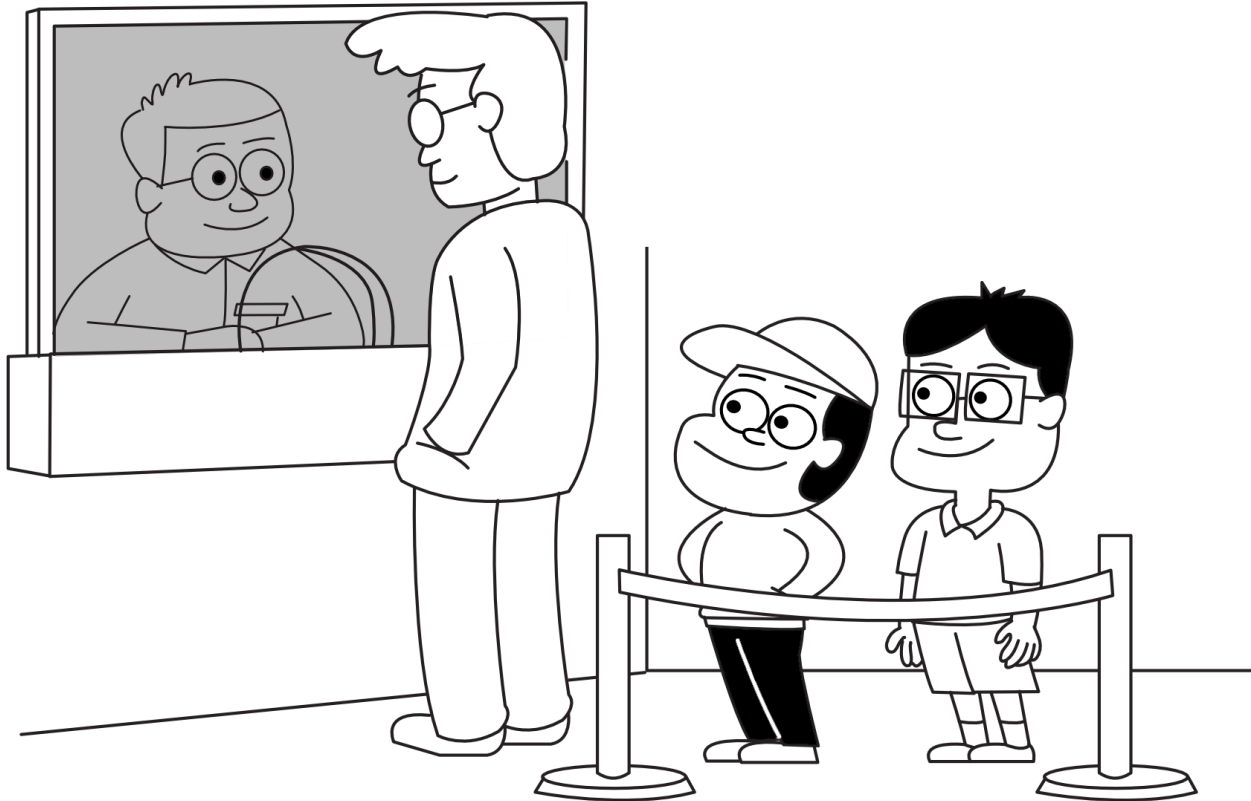
Does this person look like they want to have a conversation? **YES** **NO**

How can you tell?

How do you think this person is feeling? _____

What might happen if you were to try to have a conversation with them?

Mario and Filip are both waiting in line to see the new movie, *Attack of the Purple Squirrels*. They are both there by themselves. What do you think Mario can say to Filip to get the conversation started?



“ ”

“ ”

“ ”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some situations where you have trouble starting a conversation?
2. What do you think some good conversation starters would be in those moments?

ACTIVITY

Asking Questions

Read each comment and try to think of questions you can ask in response to keep the conversation going.

**I'M REALLY
LOOKING
FORWARD TO
SPRING BREAK
THIS YEAR.**

Peer Pressure

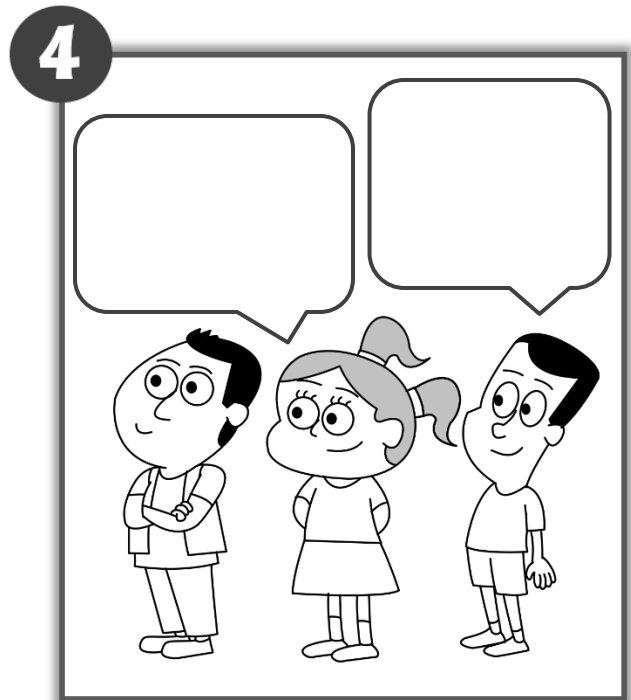
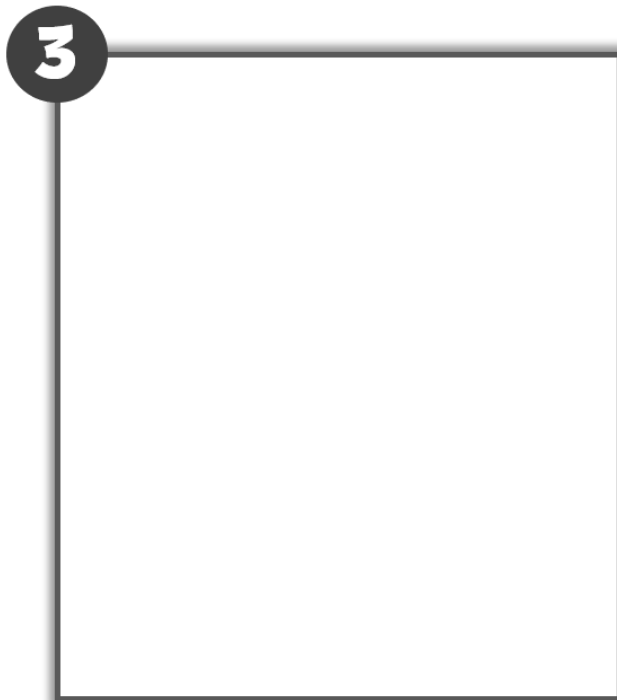
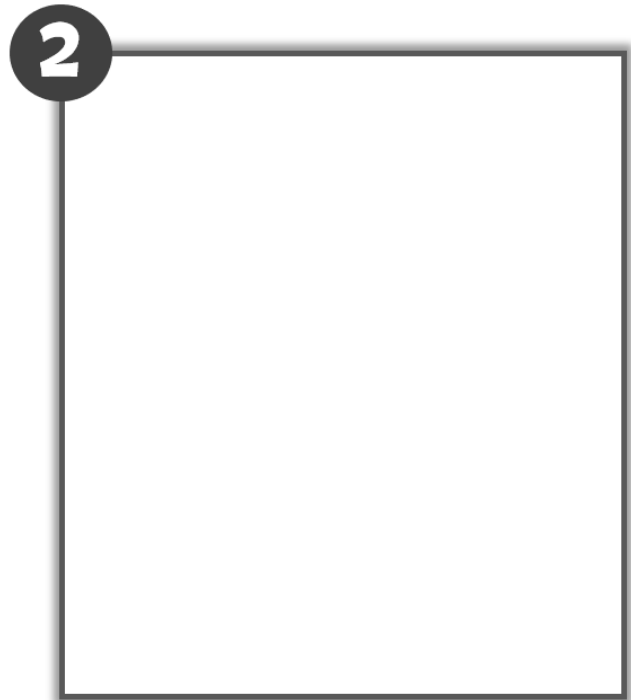
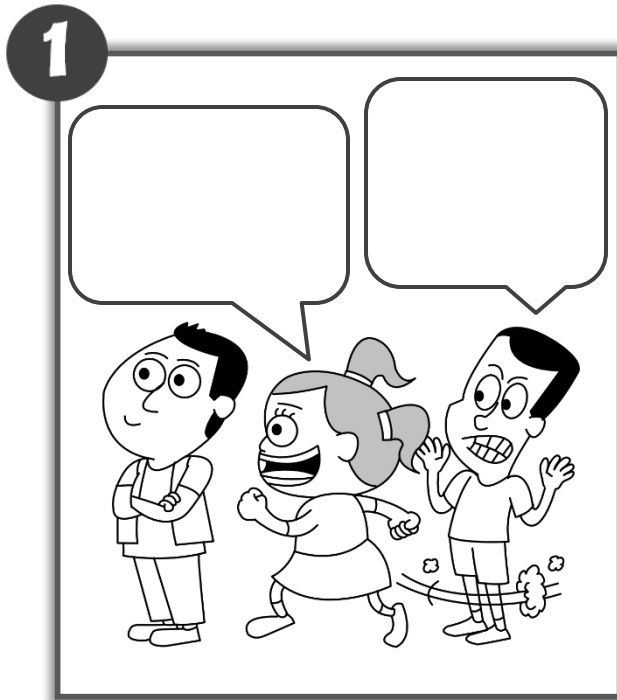
Sometimes people will pretend to be your friend in order to get you to do things that you know are wrong. These kids will act nice to you sometimes, but other times they might threaten you or make fun of you if you don't do as they say. These are not your friends!

Peer pressure is when someone tries to convince you to do something you may not really want to do.

How do you know if it's peer pressure? Here are a few questions you can ask yourself.



Have you ever experienced peer pressure before?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have any of these examples ever happened to you? How did you resolve the conflict?
2. What would Box 4 look like if the characters handled the conflict in an unhealthy way?

ACTIVITY

Social Skills Checklist

Which skills do you think you need to improve? Place a check mark next to the sentence that is true for you.

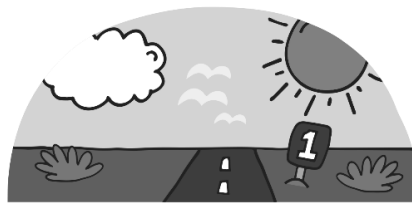
- I have a hard time understanding how people are thinking or feeling.
- I don't work well with other people.
- I can't keep friends for a long time.
- I get easily distracted when I'm spoken to.
- I avoid talking to people because I don't know what to say.
- People usually don't laugh at my jokes.
- I can be a sore winner or a sore loser sometimes.
- I give into peer pressure pretty easily.
- I yell and scream, insult people, or throw things whenever I get mad.
- I don't understand other people's facial expressions and body language.
- People often tell me that I need to *act my age*.
- I say inappropriate things sometimes.
- I can't keep a conversation going because I don't know what to say.
- I rarely say "please", "thank you", or "excuse me".
- I invade people's personal space sometimes.
- I don't know how to make friends.
- I've been told before that I have poor manners.
- I get nervous and anxious when I'm around other people.
- I don't tell other people how I feel when I'm upset with them.
- I have a hard time controlling the volume of my voice.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How many of the sentences did you check?
2. Are you ready to do something to start improving your social skills?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Z. Andrew Jatau, MS, has served diverse populations in his roles as a case manager, professional counselor, and adjunct professor. He has developed programs and presentations focused on helping children, teens, and young adults develop socially and emotionally. He is the founder and CEO of Mylemarks LLC.



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