

**It's Not Just *Who* You Know;  
It's *How* You Treat Them:**

**“The Importance of Teaching Social Skills  
In A Relationship-Driven World”**

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MY LIFE BROKEN DOWN INTO SEGMENTS

CartoonChurch.com

**Agenda**

- Transition Dreams and Nightmares
- What Social Skills Are and What They Aren't
- Importance and Challenges of Teaching Social Skills
- How Do We Teach Social Skills?
- What Do We Do Next?

School To World 3

**The Dream in IDEA 2004**

Ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.

School To World 4

**The Dream for Students with Disabilities**

What is the dream for students with disabilities and how **different** is it for them than “typical” youth?

School To World 5

**The Dream for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities and their families have dreams for **a smooth transition to adulthood** that results in **a high quality of life** including:

- independent living
- the opportunity for higher education
- paid and satisfying work
- varied and interesting recreational activities
- positive and fulfilling relationships with peers and significant others

School To World 6

***The Nightmares: Challenges in Transitioning Students with Disabilities***

After High School:  
A First Look at the Post-School Experiences of  
Youth with Disabilities

National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

***National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS2)***

- nationally representative sample
- more than 12,000 youth included
- on 12/1/00 were between ages 13 and 16, receiving special education services, and in at least the seventh grade
- study ran through 2010
- new data coming out all the time

***National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS2)***

Compared to their non-disabled peers, students with disabilities are:

- less likely to receive a regular high school diploma
- drop out twice as often
- enroll in and complete post secondary education programs at half the rate
- are employed at approximately one-third the rate (32% compared to 81%)

***The National Organization on Disability reports similar findings:***

- People with disabilities remain twice as likely to drop out of high school (21 percent compared to 10 percent of those without disabilities).
- Only 35 percent of people with disabilities reported being employed full or part time, compared to 78 percent of those who do not have disabilities.
- Three times as many people with disabilities live in poverty.
- People with disabilities are twice as likely to have inadequate transportation (31 percent compared to 13 percent).

***The National Organization on Disability reports similar findings:***

- A much higher percentage of people with disabilities go without needed health care (18 percent compared to 7 percent of those without disabilities).
- People with disabilities are less likely to socialize, eat out, or attend religious services than their counterparts without disabilities.

***The National Organization on Disability reports similar findings:***

Not surprisingly, given the persistence of these gaps, life satisfaction for people with disabilities also trails, with only 34 percent saying they are very satisfied with their lives, compared to 61 percent of those without disabilities.

### *Department of Rehabilitation Outcomes with Clients with Mental Health Problems*

- Clients with mental health problems represent the largest group with whom DOR works
- This group also has the worst outcomes

### *Mental Illness and the Justice System*

- **2,000,000** prisoners in jails and prisons in US
- **500,000** are mentally ill
- **Only 50,000 beds** for mentally ill that are in psychiatric hospitals

### *National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)*

- **16 percent** of the prison population can be classified as **severely** mentally ill
- Includes **schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar**
- Number of inmates suffering from mental illness and substance abuse is **well over 50%**

### *Mental Illness and the Justice System*

- Once in jail, many individuals don't receive the treatment they need and **end up getting worse**, not better.
- They **stay longer** than their counterparts without mental illness.
- They are **at-risk of victimization** and often their mental health conditions get worse.

### *Mental Illness and the Justice System*

- After leaving jail, many **no longer have access** to needed healthcare and benefits.
- A criminal record often makes it **hard** for individuals **to get a job or housing**.
- Many individuals, especially without access to mental health services and supports, wind up **homeless, in emergency rooms** and often **re-arrested**.

### *Mental Illness and the Justice System*

The largest mental health facility in the United States is:

**Cook County Jail  
Chicago, Illinois**

Over 30% of the inmates there have some kind of mental illness

***A Sense of Urgency:***

“School-based transition services offered adolescents with disabilities are apt to be the **last set of coordinated educational and social services they are likely to receive.**”

Dr. Michael Bullis  
University of Oregon



*Window of Opportunity*  
*(Now)*



*Window of Opportunity*  
*(Soon)*

*Window of Opportunity*  
*(Not Long After That)*

***What Are Social Skills?***

“Social skills are those communication, problem-solving, decision making, self-management, and peer relations abilities that allow one to initiate and maintain positive social relationships with others.”

From: Tom McIntyre at [www.behavioradvisor.com](http://www.behavioradvisor.com)

***What Are Social Skills?***  
***(and What They Aren't)***

Social skills are **not** the same thing as behavior. Rather, they are components of behavior that help an individual understand and adapt across a variety of social settings.



**What Are Social Skills?**  
(Zins, Weissbert, Wang, & Walberg, 2004)

Social skills can also include:

- recognizing and managing our emotions,
- developing caring and concern for others,
- establishing positive relationships,
- making responsible decisions, and
- handling challenging situations constructively and ethically.

School To World 25

**Social Skills Throughout The Ages**

- "It's not what you know, it's who you know."
- "Treat others the way you want to be treated"
- "What goes around, comes around."
- "You get more flies with honey than you do with vinegar."
- "The best way to have a friend is to be a friend."
- "90% of life is just showing up."

School To World 26

**Social Skills Throughout The Ages**

- The less you speak, the more you will hear. (Alexander Solshenisten)
- Arguing with a fool proves there are two. (Doris Smith)
- No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted. (Aesop)
- You can make more friends in two months by becoming really interested in *other* people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in *you*. (Dale Carnegie)
- A lot of people are afraid to say what they want. That's why they don't get what they want. (Madonna)

School To World 27

**What does current research say about the value of social skills?**

School To World 28

**Social Skills Training**

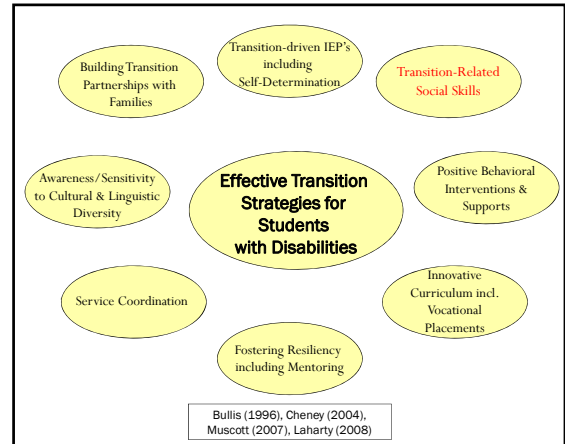
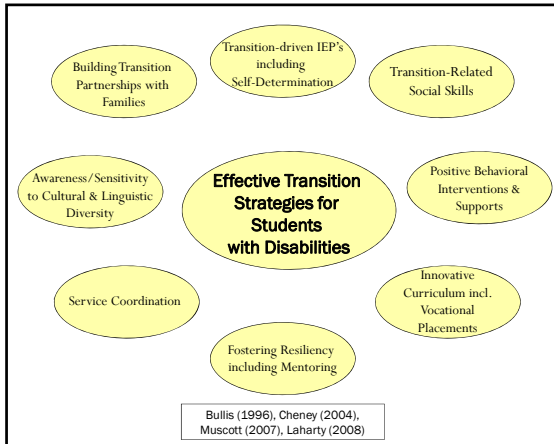
Research has shown that an effective comprehensive social skills training program arguably has the **greatest positive single influence** for reducing recidivism or preventing antisocial behavior in youth with disabilities.

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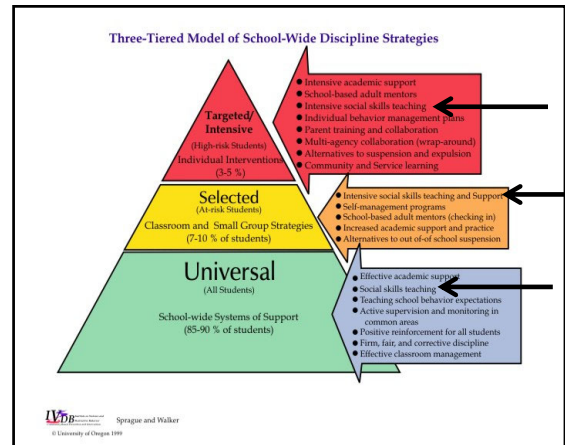
**Transition-Related Social Skills**  
(Bullis and Cheney)

- Competence in social interactions is crucial to peer acceptance and general life.
- Competence in social interactions is crucial to transition success for persons with disabilities.
- Social skills are often proven to be the predominant reason behind successful work placements **period**.

School To World 30



- Best Practices for Effective Programming (K. Larson)**  
*Delinquent Youth with Learning, Attention, and Behavioral Disabilities*
1. Individual juvenile planning
  2. Skill based interventions
    - a. Counseling
    - b. Social Skills**
    - c. Vocational
    - d. Academic
    - e. Life skills
  3. Medical interventions
    - a. Medication
    - b. Substance abuse treatment
  4. Behavior Systems
  5. Family involvement
  6. Transitioning/ Plan/ System of Care/ Wraparound
  7. Staffing
  8. Assessment of Program Effectiveness
- School To World* 33



**Social Skills in the Community and at Work**  
*(Gresham, Sugai, and Horner 2001)*

In community life and on the job, appropriate social behavior may be even **more important** than academic or vocational task-related skills in determining whether one is perceived as a competent individual.

*School To World* 34

**Social Skills in the Community and at Work**  
*(Gresham, Sugai, and Horner 2001)*

Workers with disabilities who demonstrate competence in social skills are generally perceived **more positively** than those who lack such skills, regardless of task-related skill level.

*School To World* 35

**Social Skills in the Community and at Work**  
(Gresham, Sugai, and Horner 2001)

The notion that competence in using **social skills** leads to **positive perceptions** of people with disabilities can be **extended to other community settings** (educational, neighborhood etc.)

**Possible Outcomes of Social Skills Deficiencies**

Students who are lacking social skills are at risk for:

- Aggression
- Peer rejection
- Loneliness
- Social dissatisfaction
- Academic failure
- School drop-out
- Contact with the legal system
- Substance Abuse
- Difficulty maintaining employment & relationships

**"Learning Disabilities & Social Skills-- Positive Traits That Other Kids Like"** Rick Lavoie

1. Smiling and Laughing
2. Greet Others
3. Extend Invitations
4. Converse
5. Share
6. Give Compliments
7. Good Appearance

**"Skills for Success in the Mainstream Classroom"**

Rick Lavoie

1. Listening
2. Follow directions
3. Stay on task
4. How to get help
5. Ability to get started
6. Finish on time
7. Word attack skills

**Top Reasons For Termination Within First 1000 Hours of Employment**

1. Didn't show up.
2. Didn't show up on time.
3. Did not follow directions.
4. Did not start task promptly.
5. Did not complete task.
6. Did not get along with supervisor.
7. Did not get along with co-workers.
8. Inappropriate hygiene.

**How to Succeed in School and the Workplace Or The Basic Eight Rules for Success\***

1. Show up
2. Be on time
3. Start your task promptly
4. Complete your task
5. Follow directions
6. Get along with peers
7. Get along with adults
8. Have good hygiene

\*from the "Markkula Center for Applied Ethics",  
Santa Clara University

### *Why Don't We Do It?*

- Don't have time
- Don't know how
- Not my job
- Too difficult

### *Why Is This So Difficult?*

- Human beings are hard-wired to be in relationships.
- Some believe it is too difficult to teach social skills
  - because they are done "naturally."
- People with emotional, behavioral, and/or processing difficulties do **not** generalize well.

### *Why Is This So Difficult?*

- Most groups who have difficulty with social skills are very isolated from mainstream.
- Negative effects of isolation
- If it were easy to do, it would already be done.

### *Important Point!!*

Adequate social skills need to be acquired while the student is **still enrolled** in school and further supported and refined in postsecondary, community, and work settings.

### *More Important Points!!*

- Students must see a need for the skills being taught.
- They must feel able to make the change.
- They must feel supported in making the change.
- Otherwise there is no motivation to change.

### *Even More Important Points!!!*

- Practice it where you have to execute it
- Neurons that fire together, wire together
- Skyscrapers
- Deliberate practice



*(Can you believe it?)  
Even More Important Points!!!*

- Establish a supportive atmosphere
- Make sure social skills taught help person get needs met
- Integrate strategies to promote generalization and maintenance of the skills being taught
- Remember to consider the student's background and select social skills that are respectful of that child's culture.

School To World 44

### How People Learn - the "Cone of Experience"

People generally remember:

10% of what they read  
20% of what they hear

30% of what they see

50% of what they hear  
and see

70% of what they say or write

90% of what they say as  
they do a thing

**Verbal**  
**Visual**  
**Kinesthetic  
(Experiential)**

*It's not just what you say,*

- it's how you say it
- and
- it's where you say it
- and
- it's to whom you say it.

School To World 51

*It's not just what you say...  
it's how you say it.*

- 7% of the message is communicated with actual words.
- 38% of the message is communicated in tone of voice.
- 55% of the message is in body language.

So what happens if you don't recognize or understand body language and tone?

School To World 52

### *Social Skill Mechanics (aka HowYou Say It)*

- Gestures
- Fiddling
- Gross body movements
- Smiling
- Appropriate head movements
- Eye-contact
- Predictability of responses
- Attention feedback responses
- Amount spoken
- Interruptions
- Questions asked
- Initiations

School To World 53

### *Community-based Social Skill Content Areas (aka Where You Say It--Context)*

- Interacting with Peers in Social Situations
- Interacting with Peers Who are Trying to Take Advantage of You
- Handling Bad Moods
- Money
- Personal Appearance
- Cars or Transportation
- Alcohol or Drug Use
- Lying or Stealing
- Relationships

School To World 54

**Community-based Social Skill Content Areas  
(aka To Whom You Say It)**

- Parents
- Siblings
- Residential Care Providers
- Roommates
- Business People (e.g. shop owners, clerks)
- Police or Store Security
- Caseworkers or Probation Officers
- Neighbors
- Making friends
- Dating
- Resisting Peer Pressure

**Social skills may be viewed differently because of the influence of culture but are generally categorized into four types:**

1. Survival skills
2. Interpersonal skills
3. Problem-solving skills
4. Conflict resolution skills

(National Association of School Psychologists)

**Examples of "survival skills"**

- Listening
- Following directions
- Ignoring distractions
- Using nice or brave talk
- Rewarding yourself

**Examples of "interpersonal skills"**

- Sharing
- Asking for permission
- Joining an activity
- Waiting your turn

**Examples of "problem-solving skills"**

- Asking for help
- Apologizing
- Accepting consequences
- Deciding what to do

**Examples of "conflict-resolution skills"**

- Dealing with teasing, belittling, bullying etc.
- Losing
- Accusations
- Being left out
- Peer pressure

***Tips for Social Skills Training***

Prior to determining the best means to help a student develop better social skills, it is important to understand specifically what a student *can*, *can't* or *won't* do.

School To World 61

***Tips for Social Skills Training***

It is crucial to assess and classify the nature of a person's social skill deficits in order to come up with the most appropriate intervention.

School To World 62

***Tips for Social Skills Training***

- Skill deficit is an "I can't" deficit:
  - When addressing "I can't deficits, social skills training should incorporate:
    - Direct Instruction
    - Modeling
    - Behavioral Rehearsal
    - Coaching

School To World 63

***Tips for Social Skills Training***

- Performance deficit is an "I won't" deficit:
  - When addressing "I won't" deficit, social skills intervention should incorporate:
    - Reinforce use of social skills
    - Incorporate group contingencies

School To World 64

***It's Not Just Who You Know;  
It Is How You Treat Them!***

If you were aware of a tool you could use with your students that could significantly increase the odds of them moving more successfully from "school to world", wouldn't you use it? Wouldn't you be foolish not to? Teaching social skills is that tool. Now what?

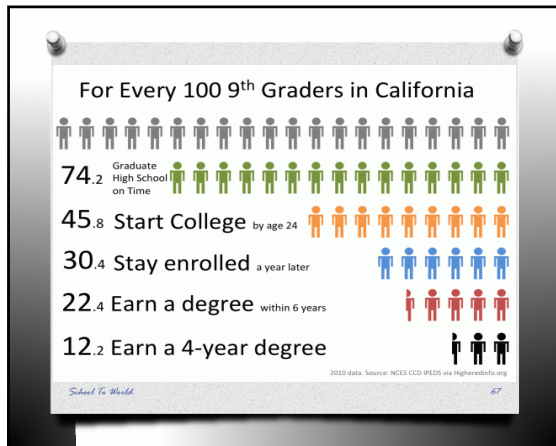
School To World 65

***Don't Forget!!!***

**It's "School To World,"**

**Not Just School To Work**

School To World 66



- Wrap-up*
- Examples of Curricula etc.
- WAGES (Johnson et al) Voyager Sopris
  - Second Step (Committee for Children)
  - Skillstreaming (Goldstein) Research Press
  - Skills to Pay the Bills (on-line and free)
  - Strong Kids (Merell) University of Oregon
  - CASEL- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
  - Project ACCESS - University of Oregon  
<http://projectaccess.uoregon.edu/>
- School To World 68

"We are not called to be successful;  
we are called to be faithful."

Greg Boyle

School To World 69

*And now a final thought...*

School To World 70

"Here is Edward the Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump, bump, on the back of his head, behind Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way... if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it."

Winnie-the-Pooh  
A.A. Milne

School To World 71

*because if you don't...*

School To World 72



**“I’m Making A List”**  
**Shel Silverstein, *Where the Sidewalk Ends***

I'm making a list of things I must say  
for politeness,  
And goodness and kindness and gentleness  
sweetness and rightness:  
Hello,  
Pardon me,

School To World 73

**“I’m Making A List”**  
**Shel Silverstein, *Where the Sidewalk Ends***

How are you?  
Excuse me,  
Bless you,  
May I?  
Thank you,  
Goodbye.  
If you know some that I've forgot,  
please stick them in your eye!

School To World 74