



# Social Skills & IEPs

101 IEP Goal Ideas &  
15 Evidence-Based Interventions  
and Strategies to Try

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WITH LISA LIGHTNER | DON'T IEP ALONE

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## Printable List of Social Skills IEP Goals

### Self-Awareness and Emotional Regulation

- Identify and name their own emotions in 4 out of 5 observed opportunities.
- Describe situations in which they experience a given emotion in 4 out of 5 opportunities.
- Identify personal strengths and areas for improvement in 3 out of 4 discussions.
- Use a visual scale (1-10) to rate levels of anxiety or discomfort in social interactions and record the ratings over time.
- Demonstrate coping strategies in 80% of situations that previously led to escalation.
- Identify emotional states in others in 4 out of 5 opportunities.
- State why a person might be feeling a particular emotion in 4 out of 5 opportunities.
- Identify simple emotional states in self 4 out of 5 opportunities.
- State an appropriate response to a particular emotional state 4 out of 5 opportunities.
- Allow themselves to be mad or frustrated without hurting 90% of observed opportunities.

### Self-Management

- Use positive self-talk and calming strategies when presented with a frustrating task, 4 out of 5 times.
- Independently take a break using a visual cue in 4 out of 5 situations where overwhelmed.
- Transition between tasks or settings with no more than one adult prompt in 4 out of 5 opportunities.
- Control impulsive behavior with 80% accuracy.
- Remain on task and work independently with 80% frequency.
- Ignore distractions while completing independent work in 4 out of 5 opportunities.
- Accept correction appropriately and adapt effectively to changes in routine.

### Social Awareness

- Identify emotions in others by interpreting facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language in 4 out of 5 trials.
- Describe how another person might feel in a given situation with 80% accuracy.
- Identify how their actions affect others in 3 out of 5 scenarios.
- Name at least three ways to show empathy toward peers in 4 out of 5 discussions.
- Respond to teasing from peers appropriately in 4 out of 5 observed situations.
- Distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors in peer interactions.

### Relationship Skills

- Initiate and maintain a conversation with a peer for at least 3 conversational turns, 4 out of 5 times.

- Participate in cooperative play with one or more peers for at least 10 minutes during recess, 4 out of 5 days.
- Offer help or support to a peer in distress in at least 2 out of 3 opportunities.
- Ask relevant questions during group discussions or shared activities in 4 out of 5 opportunities.
- Engage in cooperative group work by sharing materials and contributing ideas in 4 out of 5 trials.
- Maintain appropriate personal space and boundaries in 4 out of 5 peer interactions.
- Appropriately express feelings when wronged in 4 out of 5 situations.

### **Responsible Decision-Making**

- Generate two possible solutions to a social conflict when presented with a hypothetical scenario, 4 out of 5 times.
- Describe the potential consequences of different choices in a given social situation in 4 out of 5 trials.
- Follow through with a decision and reflect on its outcome in a structured conversation, 3 out of 4 sessions.
- Identify steps in making a decision and complete them independently in 3 out of 5 opportunities.
- Recognize signs of frustration and take a break when appropriate in 4 out of 5 situations.
- Identify and request help from an adult when appropriate in 4 out of 5 trials.

## Social Skills: Measurable IEP Goals

1. During unstructured play times, \_\_\_\_\_ will interact with peers in an appropriate manner through maintaining personal space and a respectful voice for an average 80% of intervals, measured over a 2 week period.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ will decrease inappropriate verbal comments (such as "you are weird" or "you are a loser") to 1 time per week or less by responding appropriately when his/her feelings are hurt (use words, talk to a teacher, walk away, stay calm) and seeking attention in appropriate ways (asking a friend to play, initiating conversation, giving a compliment) in 4 out of 5 trials as measured by teacher charted data.
3. During unstructured play (recess, choice time), \_\_\_\_\_ will play (participate, share, follow directions/rules, take turns) with 1-2 peers for 10 minutes with no more than 1 adult prompt in 4 out of 5 opportunities as measured by teacher/staff data and observation.
4. When given scenarios of social conflicts, \_\_\_\_\_ will demonstrate problem solving skills by identifying the problem and generating two solutions appropriate to the situation in 4/5 trials, as measured by data collection.
5. Given a pre-recess check-in with an adult, student will identify the classmates she would like to get to know and greet them independently with 80% success across 3 consecutive weeks during recess.
6. During recess, student will initiate and begin a back and forth conversation exchange (for example, greeting and asking about a shared interest, such as a TV show, or asking if the peer enjoys crafts/art) with one of the previously identified classmates independently with 80% success across 3 consecutive weeks.
7. Given a preferred activity, student will invite one of her new "friends" to join her in a shared favorite activity during recess. (For example, student will invite the friend to join her in making rainbow band bracelets or in drawing with sidewalk chalk in the designated area of the playground). Student will participate in this activity with a peer for at least five minutes during recess with 80% success across 3 consecutive weeks.
8. While engaged in a shared activity, student will comment, ask questions appropriate to the activity, and respond to questions or comments provided by the peer for 5 conversational turns with 80% success during recess across 3 consecutive weeks during recess.
9. Making friends - Attend one event a week where I'll have a chance to meet new people.
10. Facing a fear of big events - Practice relaxation techniques for fifteen minutes every day. (more of an accommodation, can also add in ability to recognize and troubleshoot situations)
11. Feeling less awkward around people - After certain social interactions, inspect (trouble shoot, self identify) the thoughts that came up during and after it. Troubleshoot the ones that are negative and maladaptive and list 3 alternatives.
12. Improving conversation skills - Strike up a quick conversation with three people a day.
13. Making friends - Meet two potential new friends and start spending time with them at least once every two weeks.
14. Facing a fear of big events - By the end of three months, be able to attend a house party and stay for at least two hours.
15. Feeling less awkward around people - Come up with a 1-10 scale for how uncomfortable and nervous you feel in social interactions. Over the next three months record how you felt during certain interactions and move the average rating down from an 8 to a 4.
16. Improving conversation skills - Be able to have a half-hour conversation with someone you haven't talked to much before, and subjectively rate yourself as feeling confident throughout it.

**The follow five social skills goals also have supporting objectives, if that is what your district does.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ **will develop social understanding skills as measured by the benchmarks listed below.**
  1. \_\_\_\_\_ will raise their hand and wait to be called on before talking aloud in group settings 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  2. \_\_\_\_\_ will work cooperatively with peers in small group settings (ie. Share materials, allow peers to share different thoughts) 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  3. \_\_\_\_\_ will develop an understanding of the relationship between his/her verbalizations and actions/effect on others 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  4. \_\_\_\_\_ will engage in appropriate cooperative social play interactions initiated by others 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  5. \_\_\_\_\_ will engage in cooperative social play interactions by allowing others to make changes or alter the play routine 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  6. \_\_\_\_\_ will engage in appropriate turn-taking skills by attending to peer's turn and waiting for own turn 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  7. \_\_\_\_\_ will appropriately acknowledge an interaction initiated by others by giving an appropriate response, either verbal or non-verbal.
  8. \_\_\_\_\_ will develop an understanding of the rationale for various social skills by stating the reason when asked (ie. Why do we say excuse me?)
  9. \_\_\_\_\_ will increase social awareness of environment by stating what is taking place in environment or imitating actions of others 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  10. \_\_\_\_\_ will increase safety awareness by stating the effect of various situations 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  11. \_\_\_\_\_ will identify appropriate social rules and codes of conduct for various social situations 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  12. \_\_\_\_\_ will refrain from interrupting others by exhibiting appropriate social interaction skills 4/5 opportunities.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ **will increase social-emotional skills as measured by the benchmarks listed below.**
  1. \_\_\_\_\_ will identify various emotional states in others 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  2. \_\_\_\_\_ will state why a person might be feeling a particular emotion 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  3. \_\_\_\_\_ will identify various simple emotional states in self 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  4. \_\_\_\_\_ will state why he/she might be feeling a particular emotion 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  5. \_\_\_\_\_ will state what would be an appropriate response to a particular emotional state 4/5 opportunities to do so.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ **will increase social communication skills as measured by the benchmarks listed below.**
  1. \_\_\_\_\_ will initiate communicative interactions with others 4/5 opportunities to do so.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ will initiate varied appropriate topics with others 4/5 opportunities to do so.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ will initiate communicative interactions with others by asking questions 4/5 opportunities to do so.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ will engage in conversational turn-taking with others across 3-4 conversational turns, 4/5 opportunities to do so (topics initiated by self /others).
5. \_\_\_\_\_ will call attention to communicative partner prior to communicating 4/5 opportunities to do so.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ will ask questions of others regarding topics initiated by self or others to sustain conversation for conversational turn-taking 4/5 opportunities to do so.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ will identify and understand various non-verbal social communication behaviors (ie. Tone of voice, personal space, vocal volume, body orientation, facial expressions) by stating their implied meaning 4/5 opportunities to do so.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ will spontaneously seek assistance/ ask for help/ seek additional information given visual prompts 4/5 opportunities to do so.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ will spontaneously use a verbal or non-verbal message to indicate to the speaker that he needs additional “wait” time to process information editorially 4/5 opportunities to do so.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ will identify breakdowns in communication and make appropriate adjustments 4/5 opportunities to do so.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ **will increase narrative discourse skills to objective criteria as measured by the benchmarks listed below.**
  1. \_\_\_\_\_ will state the main idea of the story, video or situation 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  2. \_\_\_\_\_ will relate information (ie. Past events, stories, situations, etc...) sequentially 4/5 opportunities to do so.
  3. \_\_\_\_\_ will identify what happened first, in the middle, and last regarding a previous read story, past event, or situation.
  4. When relating information \_\_\_\_\_ will provide an initial background statement, include referents, include important pieces of relational information and leave out irrelevant details.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ **will increase their ability to function appropriately within the school environment as measured by the benchmarks listed below.**
  1. Given visual and verbal prompts, \_\_\_\_\_ will participate in tasks/ activities to completion by exhibiting appropriate behaviors, \_% of the time.
  2. \_\_\_\_\_ will transition appropriately from tasks and activities and school environments \_% of the time given visual and verbal prompts.
  3. \_\_\_\_\_ will accept changes in routine/schedule by exhibiting appropriate behaviors given visual and verbal cues \_ % of the time.
  4. \_\_\_\_\_ will follow classroom rules and directives given visual and verbal prompts \_% of the time.
  5. \_\_\_\_\_ will independently take a break given visual prompts \_ % of the time. (goal #5: objectives contd.)
  6. \_\_\_\_\_ will independently ask to take a break given visual and verbal prompts \_% of the time.