

# Social Skills for Tweens Resources



**This list of resources accompanies Lifestart's *Social Skills for Tweens* webinar.**

## Takeaway tips

- 'Social skills' is a broad umbrella term that includes verbal and non-verbal communication such as speech, gestures, facial expression and body language.
- Body language makes up about 55% of the impact of your total message, leaving 38% for tone of voice and only 7% of what you say. This means we need to be thoughtful about the intended message and how it might be perceived by others.
- We need good social skills to be able to communicate well with others. With verbal skills, you might think about the content of the conversations that you have with your family and friends. You might notice that what we say is usually made up of a mix of questions, comments, and compliments.
- As children grow up, and as they transition between primary school to high school, their friendships become more intense and they may spend a lot more time with their friends. This is a time where tweens are looking to their friends to gain an understanding of what are socially acceptable norms and where friends become very influential.
- Girls are often seen developing their relationships through detailed and frequent conversations while boys may prefer to bond through physical activities such as sports, video games, or other activities that allow them to share.
- Social skills are crucial in making and sustaining friendships. This is because interactions with other people do not always run smoothly - you must be able to implement appropriate strategies, such as conflict resolution, when difficulties arise.
- One of the most effective ways to teach your child about healthy relationships is to model positive relationships.
- Characteristics of a healthy relationship includes respect - for yourself and for one another; safety - emotionally and physically; support - feeling cared for; fairness and equality; acceptance - of who you really are; honesty and trust; and lastly communication. Good, open communication builds the foundation for all healthy relationships - whether that be between friends or between you and your child.

- How to encourage and foster healthy relationships:
  - create opportunities for discussion
  - be sensitive to the pressures of adolescence
  - create positive connections and interactions with your child – spend time listening and talking to them
  - be aware of your child’s use of technology and set age-appropriate limits
  - encourage your child’s emotional awareness – the ability to recognise a whole range of feelings and how to express them appropriately
  - be involved – encourage and support your child’s interests and involvement in their school or community
- Talking to your child about how to be assertive is one of those things that can support our young people to build resilience and gain back some power and control. Being assertive is the middle ground between being passive and being aggressive. (How would they tell their friends how they feel? Express a difference in opinion? Ask for help? Or simply say no?).
- Anxiety is closely linked to social interactions and negative experiences. Some general coping strategies to support your child include:
  - encouraging good self-care at home (including sleep routines, staying active, eating well)
  - or talk about it (with close family/friends, journal)
  - notice unhelpful thinking patterns and try to change them (this stems from CBT) if you have negative thought e.g. Nobody likes me, change it into a positive one e.g. I have a few close friends who care about me.
- Try breathing strategies. As anxiety involves a cycle of physical sensations, working on controlling your breathing can help interrupt that cycle.

## Websites to address Q and A

### Helen Sanderson person centred thinking tools

<http://helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/person-centred-thinking-tools/>

- What’s working/not working
- All about Me profile
- Good day/Bad day

### Raising Children Network

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/communicating-relationships/connecting/social-skills-for-teens-with-asd>

### Reachout.com

[https://schools.au.reachout.com/friendships?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=MKTG%20Schools%20September%202020\\_Friednships\\_AJ&utm\\_content=MKTG%20Schools%20September%202020\\_Friednships\\_AJ+CID\\_77908d88911b88f6a9e44fc73b8c9a6d&utm\\_source=emailCM&utm\\_term=Check%20it%20out](https://schools.au.reachout.com/friendships?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=MKTG%20Schools%20September%202020_Friednships_AJ&utm_content=MKTG%20Schools%20September%202020_Friednships_AJ+CID_77908d88911b88f6a9e44fc73b8c9a6d&utm_source=emailCM&utm_term=Check%20it%20out)

### Bullying

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying>

- talk to a counsellor

<https://parents.au.reachout.com/common-concerns/everyday-issues/bullying-and-teenagers>

<https://headspace.org.au/workshop/> - run school workshops. Lots of resources on the Headspace website as well.

### PEERS Program

<https://www.adhdsupportaustralia.com.au/peers-social-skills/> - offering telehealth programs starting 2021

### Secret Agent Society

<https://www.sst-institute.net/> - Lifestart have trained facilitators and can run this program as an individual program via telehealth.

### Talkabout for Teenagers by Alex Kelly

Talkabout for Teenagers is a professional workbook supporting educators and therapists who deliver social and relationship skills groups for older children and young adults with social, emotional, or behavioural difficulties.

### Source Kids Magazine

<https://www.sourcekids.com.au/> - sign up to receive email newsletter and free magazine issues. It is a resource that has been created by parents, for parents and offers one 'source' of information that is relevant, reliable, and up to date, whilst also being vibrant and positive.

Spring edition of **Source Kids** had these opportunities:

<https://www.riverlink.org.au/disability-services/teen-programs-for-social-community-participation/>

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/youthlink/skills-4-life/>

<https://cerebralpalsy.org.au/cpa-youth/> - offer PEERS program

### Sandbox Learning

[https://www.sandbox-learning.com/FileLib/Strategies\\_for\\_Developing\\_Classroom\\_Friendships.pdf](https://www.sandbox-learning.com/FileLib/Strategies_for_Developing_Classroom_Friendships.pdf)



### Videos to watch together

#### PEERS social skills training videos

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxT94OpRnXE&list=PLno\\_RXpGDMUmDGOPolmhSNBxb7oMO6KhE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxT94OpRnXE&list=PLno_RXpGDMUmDGOPolmhSNBxb7oMO6KhE)