The Incredible Flexible You*
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*A social thinking curriculum by Michelle Garcia Winner et al.
Managing behavior instead of letting behavior control You!

Model desired behaviors
Children are like concrete. Everything you do, leaves a lasting impression.

Children observe, imitate, absorb and retain 1000s of behaviors a day.

With the increase in the use of technology, there is less emphasis on social skills.
What is Social Thinking?

- Me thinking about you thinking about me.
- Making choices based upon how others feel and how we want them to see and treat us.
- Know our plan, read someone else's plan and adapt as needed.
The Incredible Flexible You Curriculum

- Children 4–7 years old
- Taught in a small group format
- Assess using progress charts
- Ideas for writing goals
- Music to accompany lessons
The Visual Schedule

- Dry Erase board
- Choice Board on Computer
- Pictures with velcro
- Felt board (LOL)
Social Thinking Visual Schedule

- Define the Plan
The Group

- When the children arrive tell them to find a place to sit and put their bodies in the group.
- Pull out pictures of the children one by one and say, "let's see who is in our group today." Each child says, "hello." We say hello by turning our bodies toward the person, looking at the person and using the word, "Hi!"
Tell them that greeting people makes them feel happy and a part of the group. It may make them want to be our friend.

Tell them that they are all part of the group and we are all ready to think about the plan.

Give the children the words vs. saying, "use your words." Sometimes they don't have the words.
The Group Plan
Who's thinking about the plan?
What can your body do?

Use Dice
Use Mr. Potato Head
Use Puppets
Managing behaviors instead of letting behaviors control you!

Model desired behaviors.
Attention:

- Get down on their eye level.
- Say, “Collin, look at my face.”
- Talk about what they are doing first, then when you have their attention, interject your point.
- Wiggle desirable object in their field of vision pull it back to your face.
Teachable Moments

- Redirect (vs react)
- Role play
- Take a smart guess
- Talk about feelings
- Social Stories
- Use humor (not sarcasm)
How do I Redirect?

- Give a choice of 2
- First this... then that.
- Give verbal directions one time and then physically prompt
- Count backward from 5
- Use a timer.
- You are going to have to get up
Roleplaying

- Manners at a friends house
- Greetings
- Giving/Accepting a gift
- Looking while listening
Roleplaying

- Sharing
- Appropriate touching at home, at school, at church
- Table manners: May I please?
Take a Smart Guess

- What do you think you should say if a friend takes your toy?
- What do you think you should say if you hurt someone's feelings.
Social Stories*

- Write a story incorporating your child doing the desired behavior.

- Make up a song about your child doing the desired behavior. I pick up my socks, I put away my toys, I brush my teeth I go to bed I’m a sleepy head. My name is sam Green and this where I live

- 438 Bush Dr thats in Ballwin, MO, MO, MO

- Catch you children doing the right thing and reinforce with praise, hugs, etc.
Volunteers

- Give me a situation and let's write a social story
You will eliminate 90% of undesirable behavior by defining the expectation.
Holiday Social Skill Strategies

The holidays are a wonderful time for participating in cherished traditions and making new memories. However, children often spend time with family and friends they see only a few times a year, and for many children, social situations associated with the holidays are relatively unfamiliar. Help children prepare for holiday social situations with these strategies.

1. **Remind Children** – Although children may hear about relatives and talk to them on the phone, they may have difficulty remembering people they do not see regularly. Help children remember family members’ names and information by creating a family and friends book. On each page include a photo and one or two facts about the family member or friend. For example, their cousin Sam lives in Maine and is on the swim team. Include pictures from past holiday gatherings to review traditions. If you do not have pictures of specific activities, draw pictures or write stories.

2. **Make Contact in Advance** – Have children send letters or emails to family members in advance. This is a good way to open communication for children. They can tell their relatives how much they are looking forward to seeing them. They also can mention shared interests such as being in the same sport as their cousin or having a model plane similar to the one Uncle Ed flew in the Air Force. Reminders of past shared experiences such as a favorite holiday dish or playing the family game of charades are another way to bring people together.

3. **Practice Unfamiliar Situations** – Holiday gatherings often have specific etiquette. Practice new situations. For example, children may have food served to them at home, but holidays meals may be buffet style. If children are old enough to serve themselves, practice taking appropriate portions by having a few meals family style (food in bowls so children serve themselves) before the holidays. If it is a gift giving holiday, practice manners for giving and receiving gifts.

4. **Bring Items that Initiate Social Interactions** – For children who are shy or working on social skills, help them initiate interactions by bringing familiar toys or items they can share with others. Discussing their favorite robot or sharing their favorite game with a cousin can help children transition to a new environment with less stress and anxiety. Be sure to discuss and practice sharing the toys in advance so children are prepared to share them with other people.

5. **Review and Praise** – Review and remind children of social expectations in advance, immediately before, and in some cases during the event. The excitement of being around people, eating holiday foods, and participating in activities can be overwhelming so children may quickly forget what they practiced. Be sure to praise children for appropriate behavior.

6. **Have Additional Plans** – If a child has special food or seating needs, parents should let the host know in advance. Although children may be told not to eat certain foods, they may not recognize the ingredients in some holiday dishes. For children with very limited food interests, have them try new foods, but prepare and bring a separate meal in case the menu is limited. Sitting at a table without a parent may be extremely stressful for some children so having some tables with adults and children rather than just tables for children and just tables for adults may be a way to plan in advance and reduce a child’s anxiety.

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Catch your children doing the right thing and praise them for it.

Ignore inappropriate behavior.
Reinforce desired behavior

- Smiles
- Hugs
- Verbal Praise
- Whisper
- Gentle touch
- Tokens
- Stickers
- Favorite activity
Common Courtesy

- Greetings
- Acknowledging Feelings
- Helpfulness
- Gratitude
My Sensory System is out of Sync!

Is it too loud of a noise, too soft of a touch, too close, too bright?

Sometimes we all just need a break!
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