

# Social Skills Groups

Social skills groups offer an opportunity for individuals with autism to practice their social skills with each other and/or typical peers on a regular basis. Although research on social skills group is fairly limited at this time, a review of five studies on social skills groups by researchers at the University of Utah and the U.C. Davis MIND Institute attempted to identify what made an effective social skills group. These tips include:

- Make the abstract concrete
- Provide structure and predictability
- Provide scaffolded language support (simplifying language and grouping children by language level)
- Provide multiple and varied learning opportunities
- Include other-focused activities (such that children always work in pairs or groups, and such that cooperation and partnership are encouraged)
- Foster self-awareness and self-esteem
- Select relevant goals (such that issues most central to autism are addressed)
- Program in a sequential and progressive manner.
- Provide opportunities for generalization and practice so that skills are used and useful beyond the group setting.

*Note: Above content was excerpted from *Social Skills Interventions: Getting to the Core of Autism* developed for the Interactive Autism Network (IAN) by Teresa j. Fodden and Connie Anderson, Ph.D.*