



Social Skills that Break the Cycle of Bullying by Redefining “Cool”™

Social Skills and Anti-Bullying Research

Making the case for a pro-active approach to addressing the bullying epidemic: The importance of social skills (social competence) training during early years

Anderson Cooper 360 Town Hall Specials on Bullying

Bullying Awareness Months—October [multiple years]

Cartoon Network, Facebook, Time Warner, Dr. Phil McGraw, Rosalind Wiseman (author, bullying expert), students, parents, and others present at these airings

Dr. Phil’s comments: Paraphrased

- Kids need to be taught empathy; to relate to what another child is feeling; tolerance and acceptance
- School-wide curricula must start at the earliest grades
- Kids need to learn *The COOL thing is to NOT bully*

Promoting Social Competence in Early Childhood: Classroom Curricula and Social Skills Coaching Programs

Children who do not acquire social skills at the proper time and therefore begin school with poorly developed social competence are at increased risk for difficulty in school. This can worsen during adolescence and contribute to social and emotional problems such as anxiety, depression, substance use, and delinquency. (Study by Karen L. Bierman and Stephen A. Erath. “Promoting Social Competence in Early Childhood: Classroom Curricula and Social Skills Coaching Programs”)

Preschoolers Benefit from both Basics and Social Skills

A study funded by the NIH and other Federal Agencies, conducted by Penn State University at 44 Head Start sites, found that preschoolers who received both basic ABC’s and 123’s and social skills training were better prepared for kindergarten and performed better throughout their school years.

(Study by Bierman, K. L., Domitrovich, C. E., Nix, R. L., Gest, S. D., Welsh, J. A., Greenberg, M. T., Blair, C., Nelson, K. E., and Gill, S. “Promoting Academic and Social-Emotional School Readiness: The Head Start REDI Program.” *Child Development*, Vol. 79, Issue 6. Used with permission.)

Scholastic/Parents: Bullies in Disguise by Suzanne Marie Fanger

Developing well-balanced friendships is key to a child becoming neither a victim nor an aggressor. Therefore, it’s important for you to help your children learn healthy social skills in the preschool years, when the nature of friendships is first being explored. By learning how to effectively handle difficult situations with friends, children can take care of themselves and develop healthy relationships. The time to start is early in life.

Bullying: Facts for Schools and Parents

By Andrea Cohn & Andrea Canter, Ph.D., NCSP
National Association of School Psychologists

What Can Schools Do?

Today, schools typically respond to bullying, or other school violence, with reactive measures. However, that usually results in long-term negative effects.

- **Early intervention.** Researchers advocate intervening in elementary or middle school, or as early as preschool. Group and building-wide social skills training is highly recommended.
- **Parent training.** Parents must learn to reinforce their children's positive behavior patterns and model appropriate interpersonal interactions.

What Can Parents Do?

- **Provide positive feedback** to children for appropriate social behaviors and model interactions that do not include bullying or aggression.
- **Stop bullying behavior** as it is happening and begin working on appropriate social skills early.

4 Site Pilot Case Studies

Determining the efficacy of the *"Cool Kind Kid" (Tanner's Manners) Social Skills, Character Values, and Anti-Bullying Curriculum*, Elementary School Edition, in public, private, and charter schools, and after-school programs:

John Glenn Elementary School (Pine Hill, NJ) [4 classrooms X 16 class times each]

Nobel Learning Communities, Inc. (3 national locations) [3 sites nationally X 2 classrooms each X 16 class times each]

Leap Academy University Charter School (Camden, NJ) [3 classrooms X 16 class times each]

Camden County YMCA, Camden, NJ (after-school sites-inner city and suburban) [3 sites X 16 class times each]

Results:

- Improved behavior, reduction in bullying incidents, kids engaged by music and content, kids adopting "Cool Kind Kid" concept, they thought it was "fun."
- Teachers reported students asked every day, "Are we doing Tanner's Manners (Cool Kind Kid) today?"
- One principal reported that the kids "were actually greeting me, and making eye contact."
- Another principal reported kids began policing themselves—asking each other, "Would a Cool Kind Kid do that?" "Would a Cool Kind Kid say that?"
- County YMCA director, after 16 class times in 3 after-school sites reported that behavior had improved, kids were engaged, and instructors were pleased with ease of implementation. She asked us to develop educational materials for their camps and after-school programs. We then developed the *"Cool Kind Kid" Camp Kits*, one for 4-6 year-olds and one for 7-9 year-olds.
- Nobel Learning Communities purchased the curriculum for their elementary schools nationwide.

(Note: We have included research on the preschool demographic to highlight the importance of teaching social skills as early as possible. Children who learn what is right and expected in all their social encounters will go into those situations with more confidence, and will behave better. Early social skills' training establishes good habits that will follow a child throughout life.)