

Training in Core Social Skills

1 - 1 SOCIAL COACHING PROGRAM

Target Group: Children ages 6-16 with social skills difficulty, for whom a 1-1 social coaching program would fit better than a group program. Some reasons may be:

- The times or locations of the group program do not work for the family
- The parents do not want to wait to start the program at the regular start times
- More targeted intervention around individual needs is desired
- The child needs greater levels of support than can be offered in a group program
- A group program might be too overwhelming or fast-paced for the child

Goals: To build skill and confidence in children and teens regarding social interaction. A secondary goal is to build capacity in parents to support the development of social skills in their child.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In the 1-1 social coaching program, we work with participants and move through the concepts and skills normally covered in our school year group Training in Core Social Skills Program. (please see description below) However, on an individual basis, we can go slower or faster through the material depending on the client's individual needs. We can also work more intensively on areas of personal need in the client and help relate that to the child's own life in a more consistent and concrete way. We also bring in other resources that might be more helpful to that specific client and his/her needs.

Level 1: The Hidden Conversation

Emphasis will be on the following:

- Understanding Social Cognition and the Nonverbal Messages we receive from and send to others.
 - Learning vocabulary for feelings and how they are communicated.
 - Recognizing, understanding, and responding to nonverbal and contextual cues from others (body language, facial expression, gestures, etc.).
 - Recognizing and using voice cues such as tone and volume to understand others and communicate effectively.
 - Looking at our own nonverbal communication and recognizing how it can affect the messages we send and how others receive them.
 - Understanding how our messages and behaviour can positively or negatively affect our ability to build social relationships.

Level 2: Successful Communication

Emphasis will be on the following:

- Effective verbal communication skills.
 - Conversations (initiating, listening, interjecting, staying on topic, conversational manners)
 - Offering and asking for help; Asking questions to deepen conversations and connections
 - Joining in; Including others
 - Expressing emotions and needs in an effective way
 - Understanding figurative speech (sarcasm, irony, similes, metaphors, etc.)
 - For Teens: Online communication strategies

Level 3: Positive Peer Interaction

Emphasis will be on the following:

- Gaining greater self-control in relation to emotions and handling difficult situations (social problem-solving).
 - Dealing with feelings (anger, fear/anxiety, disappointment, failure, humour, embarrassment)
 - Recognizing, understanding, and expressing our feelings
 - Recognizing stress signs and causes; Self-monitoring stress levels; Stress prevention
 - Positive thinking – the connection between our thoughts and our feelings; Perspective-taking
 - Assertive communication
 - Problem-solving and conflict resolution (negotiating, compromising, cooperating, etc.)
 - Dealing with teasing, peer pressure; Self-control

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

For children who will be doing 1-1 Social Coaching sessions covering all 3 Levels of our program, it is a 24 -session program, running over 24 weeks. In the 1-1 Social Coaching program, there are 21 child/parent sessions and 3 "parents-only" sessions with the supervising psychologist and social coach. Parent sessions are run approximately every 7 weeks. If a child has already taken our Level 1 program, we can begin the social coaching sessions at any point that is needed. In that case, the program may only consist of 8 or 16 weeks.

The child participates in 21 consecutive 1-hour sessions (with occasional breaks for school holidays, family commitments, etc.). They work 1-1 with a social coach, involving parents at strategic times each session to learn how to coach their child throughout the week, and partnering for small group activities with other children in 1-1 social coaching at the same time for social interaction practice activities when possible. Parents participate in 3 parents-only sessions to discuss successes, challenges and recommendations as the child moves through their 21 -week program.

*The number of sessions may be altered depending on the needs of the child/family.

The key to the 1-1 Social Coaching Program is flexibility....

although we have a schedule of start dates and sessions, in this program it is possible to adjust these to make sure they meet the family's needs.

- we schedule only the number of sessions that your child needs
- occasionally, we can arrange an alternate day for your session if your child needs to be elsewhere
- we arrange breaks between Levels that are convenient for the family's needs

*There will be a 1-2 week session break every 7 sessions for staff case conference.

- The structure of each 1-hour session would be as follows:
 - 45-50 minutes of individual work with the child (discussions, roleplays, videos, games)
 - 10-15 minutes with the parent to go over concepts covered and parent coaching tips (split between start and end of session)

A summary report will be provided upon completion of the 24 - session program (or whatever number of sessions that are arranged for your child).

LOCATION

Corinne Eckert Child & Adolescent Psychology clinic.

PROGRAM DATES

Program starts at various times during the year. We work in conjunction with parents to decide on a start date that fits with the clinic schedule and their family needs.

CORINNE ECKERT

Corinne Eckert is a child and adolescent psychologist who works with children and families in private practice, as well as providing behaviour consultation and assessment to schools. She has worked in schools as a teacher and school counsellor, in children's mental health as a therapist, as well as a school behaviour consultant. She has facilitated many children's groups, as well as parent sessions and teacher/teacher assistant training in child mental health and strategies/skill-building. She has been an instructor at the University of Alberta in the area of counselling skills. Out of her experiences with children, Corinne has developed the Training in Core Social Skills program to help provide comprehensive and integrated social skill development. Corinne also works with schools and school districts to help integrate social skills training into daily school life.

The cost of psychological services is reimbursed by many employee extended health insurance plans. Child health services costs may also be claimed on income tax returns. Receipts with treatment dates will be provided at the end of each session. Other children's services agencies such as Supports for Permanency, and Child and Family Services may offer funding for these programs if you are a current client (please speak with your caseworker directly). We bill these agencies directly.

REGISTRATION

Contact us at office@eckertchildpsych.ca to discuss whether this group would be appropriate for your child. A telephone intake interview will be scheduled and if the program is a good fit for your child, a registration form will then be emailed to you.

For further information on our programs, or to be added to our email list, please contact us at office@eckertchildpsych.ca or see our website at www.eckertchildpsych.ca.

