

# Promoting Positive Peer Social Interactions



Project funded by the Child Care and Head Start Bureaus in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



## What Works Brief Training Kit #8

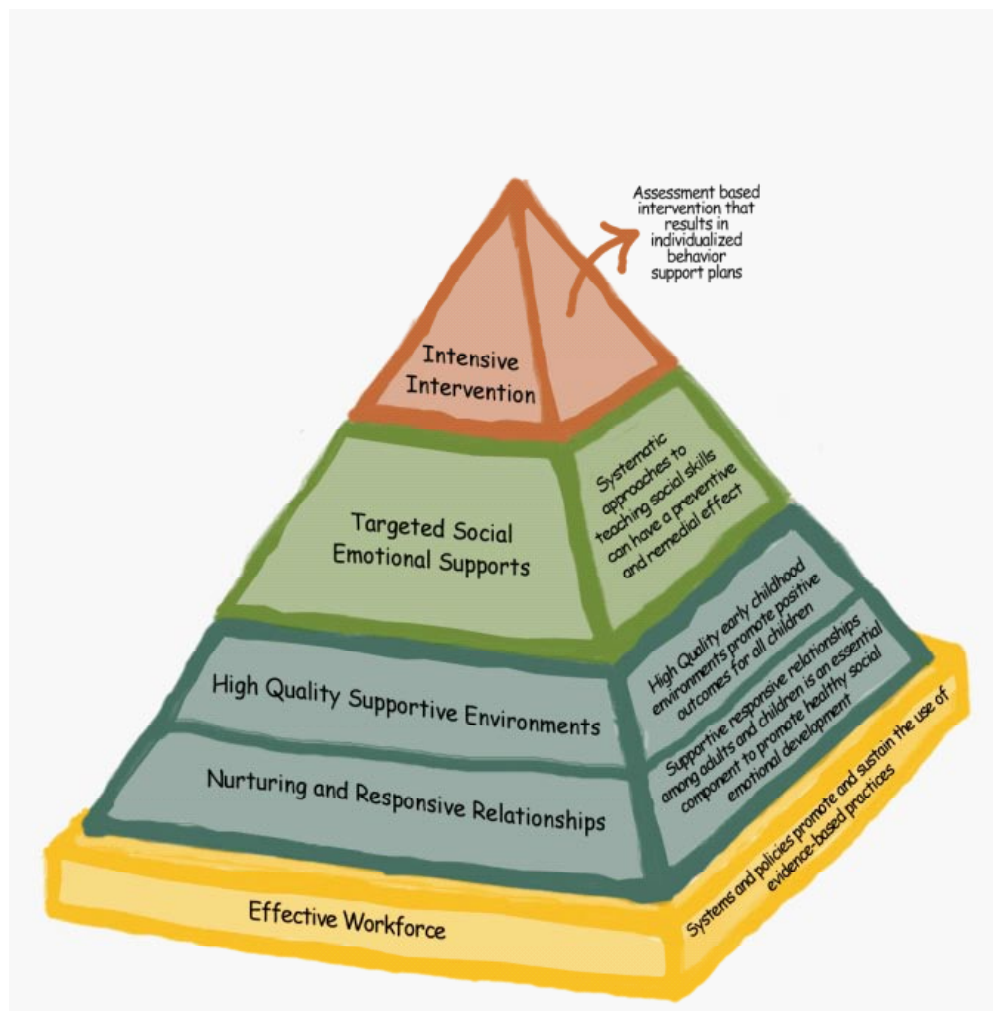


**Center on the Social and Emotional  
Foundations for Early Learning**  
[www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/)

April 2008

The What Works Brief Training Kits were developed to help in-service and pre-service providers conduct staff development activities. Each kit is based on one What Work Brief and contains the following items: presenter's PowerPoint note pages, participant handouts, activity ideas, pre-training survey, demographic form, training evaluation, and training certificate.

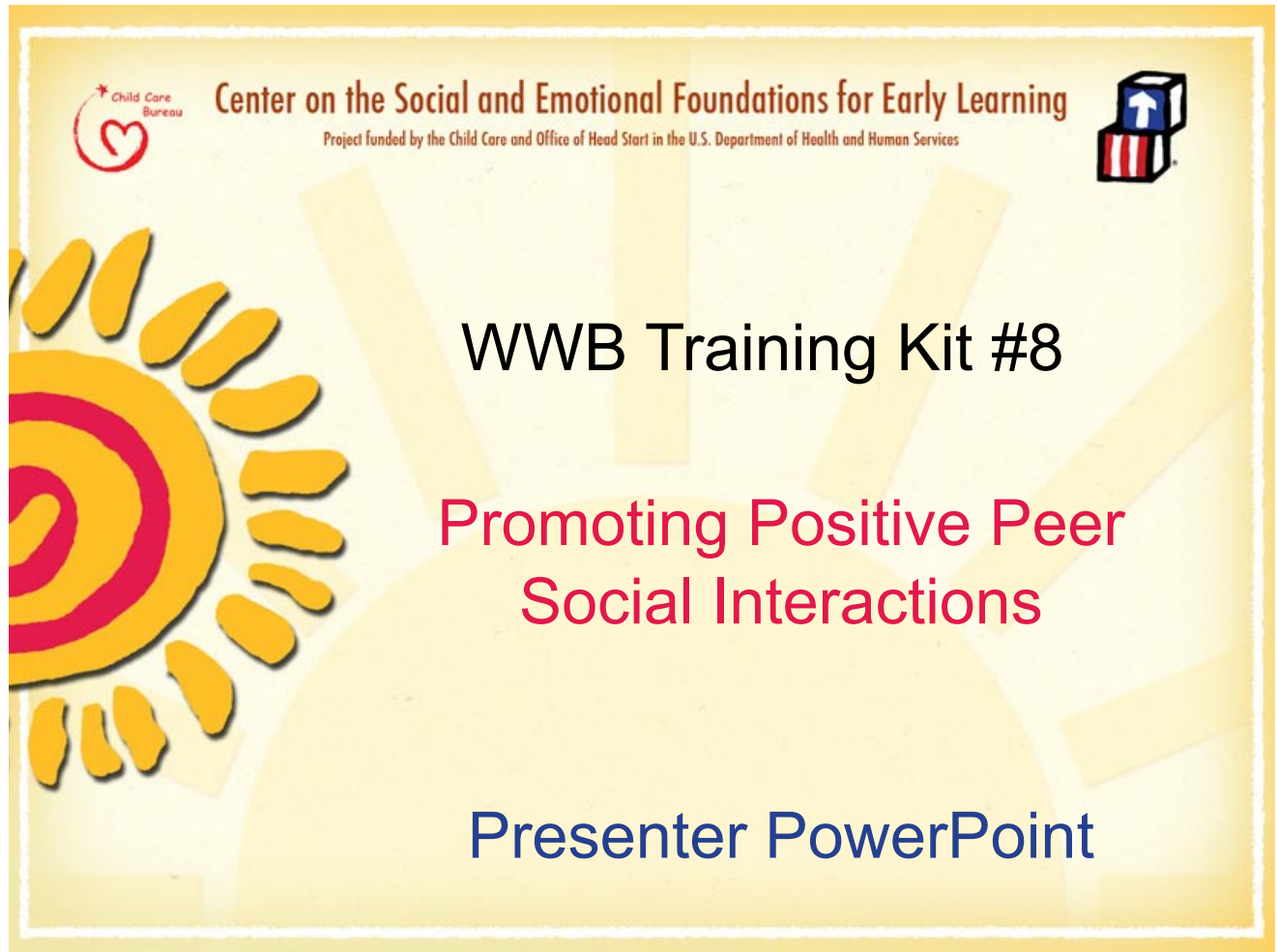
The What Works Brief Training Kits are grounded in the Pyramid model depicted below, which provides a framework for describing the four interrelated levels of practice that address the social and emotional development of all children. The Pyramid is designed to guide practitioners in understanding the importance of children's social-emotional competence in terms of school readiness and the prevention of challenging behavior. This What Works Brief Training Kit relates to the "High Quality Environments" level of the Pyramid.



We welcome your feedback as you provide professional development activities with these materials.

Special thanks to the Meginnis Endowment at UIUC for funding to help support this effort and to the following individuals who developed the What Works Brief Training Kits materials: Micki Ostrosky, Hedda Meadan, Greg Cheatham, Monique Mills, Sallee Beneke, Nancy Gaumer, Amy Hayden, Elenor Rentschler, and Angel Fettig.

## Presenter Notes



### *Speaker Notes:*

- Presenter should be familiar with the content in What Works Brief #8 and Module 2, Section III on Developing Friendship Skills (available at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>).
- Consider using the What Works Brief # 8 handout as a supplemental resource.
- Welcome participants.
- Take care of any logistics (e.g., length of time for session, break, handouts, etc.).
- Pass out pre-training survey for all participants to complete and turn in if desired.
- As you present the workshop: Remind participants to take the culture and background of children into consideration and to work hand-in-hand with parents when they select target behaviors, since some behaviors may be part of the child's culture.

## Positive Peer Social Interactions

- Interactions that take place between peers that are positive in nature and successful for both children involved



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### *Speaker Notes:*

- Defining positive peer social interactions.
- Example of positive peer social interaction:  

Two little girls playing in the dramatic play area, laughing and talking as they pretend to play house.
- Group discussion:  

Can you think of any other positive peer social interactions?

## Children with Positive Peer Social Interactions Tend to Have:

- Positive social and emotional development
- Popularity among peers
- Stronger friendships
- More opportunities for classroom activity inclusion



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### *Speaker Notes:*

- Note that research supports these four reasons to facilitate positive peer social interactions.

## Children with Positive Peer Social Interactions...

Display a limited number of the following negative peer interactions:

- Grabbing
- Pushing
- Name calling
- Engagement in negative social interactions at home



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### *Speaker Notes:*

Research supports these outcomes.

## Positive Social Skills

Sample target social skills include:

- Getting a friend's attention
- Sharing objects
- Asking a peer to share objects
- Providing a play idea to a peer
- Saying something nice to a friend
- Entering group play



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### *Speaker Notes:*

These are commonly identified social skills that are noted as being important for successful peer interaction.

- Getting a friend's attention: "Amanda, let's do a puzzle."
- Sharing objects: "Sallee, here's some playdoh."
- Asking a peer to share objects: "Greg, can I have a block?"
- Providing a play idea to a peer: "Monique, let's build a zoo!"
- Saying something nice to a friend: "Thanks for the scissors, Amy."
- Entering group play: "Here's a cage for the lions."

See clips 2.2 – 2.5 at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/preschool.html> for examples of positive social skills.

## Direction Teaching of Social Skills

1. Explain the skill (e.g., teach greeting or sharing)
2. Demonstrate the correct way to use it
3. Demonstrate an inappropriate way and allow children to problem solve
4. Let a children practice the skill with an adult or with another child
5. Provide positive feedback and attention on use of the skills



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### *Speaker Notes:*

This slide contains ideas for teaching social skills to your children. Strategies for teaching target social skills may vary depending on cultural and developmental differences in children.

#### Cultural Differences

- Direct eye contact may or may not be valued in every culture. Children may be resistant to looking their peers in the eye while asking them to play. Teachers can validate home cultures by saying “Maria, I know that at home children do not look directly in other peoples’ faces. At school it is ok for you to look directly in other peoples’ faces. In fact, I want you to! I have talked to your (primary caregiver) and s/he wants you to know that this is acceptable.”

#### Developmental Differences

- Teachers may give children with developmental disabilities, who may be nonverbal, a picture card to communicate.
- Most children with special needs need direct teaching to acquire positive social skills.

#### Cognitive Differences

- Instructor should consider the mode of communication (verbal, visual, tactile, auditory), as children learn best in different ways.

Direct teaching format can be group or individual.



## Adults May Support Children in Using Social Skills by:

- Monitoring during play and large group time
- Cueing children to play together, share with their friends, and be persistent
- Modeling positive peer interaction other adults in the classroom
- Including cooperative use toys in the classroom



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### *Speaker Notes:*

- **Monitoring:** Watching the child during center time or play and prompting or providing feedback regarding social skills.
- **Cueing:** Prompting one child to share with another or prompting a child to ask his friend again or ask another way (being persistent); use of different modalities (e.g., visual, auditory, tactile, verbal)
- **Modeling:** Asking the other adult in the classroom to please pass you an object and saying thank you when you get the object
- **Cooperative toys:** See next slide and refer to What Works Brief #6

## Cooperative Use Toys

- Balls
- Puppets
- Two telephones
- Dramatic play materials
- Teeter-totters
- Dress-up clothes
- Rocking boats
- Wagons
- Board games
- Tire swings



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### *Speaker Notes:*

Here are some examples of toys that increase the opportunities for social peer interaction between two or more people.

- Cooperative use toys set the stage for cooperative play.
- Cooperative toys require at least two children.

Refer to What Works Brief #6 for more on cooperative toys.

# Adults May Support Children in Implementing Strategies by:

- Giving specific verbal cues, praise, and suggestions
- Giving material reinforcers
- Providing physical assistance
- Embedding planned social interactions



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## *Speaker Notes:*

### Verbal Cues

- "Remember to tap him on the shoulder."
- "Danielle, ask Joshua for a paintbrush."
- "Remember to look at him, tap him on the shoulder and say his name, then give him the block."
- Limitation: Verbal cues may stop the natural flow of communication.

### Praise

- "Thank you for handing Danielle a paintbrush."

### Suggestions

- "You two can finish painting the house together using the rollers."
- "Why don't you hand Billy a block?"

### Material Reinforcers

- For example, "superstars" are necklaces the teachers and children have. When the teacher observes a child using the target social skill naturally during play, s/he could reinforce this behavior by giving the child a superstar.
- Other material reinforcers include hearts, friendship capes, etc.
- Limitations: Material reinforcers may encourage students to focus on extrinsic rather than intrinsic rewards associated with socially interacting with others.

### Provide Physical Assistance

- Children with physical disabilities may need hand-over-hand assistance in tapping peer on shoulder to initiate social interaction.
- Some children may need to be prompted to use social skills. For example, a child with a language delay may need to be physically led over to the easel and assisted with handing a picture from the communication board to a peer to request a conversational turn or object.

### Planned Social Interactions

- Passing out names for jobs at circle
- Passing out napkins at snack
- Choosing a friend to help feed birds

### Discussion Questions

- Why would a teacher be cautious about use of material reinforcers?
- Pros: Encourages children who are reluctant to engage with others.
- Cons: Teaches children to focus on extrinsic rather than intrinsic rewards associated with socially acting with others.

## Activity

### Pair-Think-Share

- **Pair** with a partner
- **Think** about ways you can embed social interaction opportunities into the four classroom routines provided
- **Share** your thoughts with the large group



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#### *Speaker Notes:*

- Assign partners.
- Pairs should think about ways you can embed social interaction opportunities into four classroom routines. Complete the chart.
- Share thoughts with the large group by having a few groups share their ideas.

## Activity 1

Routine	Opportunity to use social interaction
Arrival	
Center Time	
Outside	
Snack	
Transitions	



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### *Speaker Notes:*

- Think of ways you can embed social interaction instruction and practice opportunities into four classroom routines in your center, program, or school.

## Additional Resources

- <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/preschool.html>. “You’ve got to have friends” article in Module #2.
- Chandler, L. (1998). Promoting positive interaction between preschool-age children free play: The PALS center. *Young Exceptional Children*, 1(3), 14-19.
- LEAP Outreach Project. (2003). *Nurturing social skills in the inclusive classroom: Staff workbook*. Tualatin, OR: Teacher’s Toolbox.
- Taylor, A. S., Peterson, C. A., McMurray- Schwarz, P., & Guillou, T. S. (2002). Social skills interventions: Not just for children with special needs. *Young Exceptional Children*, 5(4), 19-26.



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### *Speaker Notes:*

- This slide contains additional resources participants can use to find more information on using environmental strategies to promote positive social interactions.
- Refer to the website and read the article entitled “You’ve Got to Have Friends” in Module #2. This article contains:
  - A list of cooperative toys
  - Example of a scheduled with embedded friendship opportunities
  - Strategies for friendship development
- Thank the participants for participating and have them complete the evaluation form, if appropriate.
- Distribute the certificate of attendance if appropriate.

# Pre-training Survey

WWBTK #8: Promoting Positive Peer Social Interactions

☀ What are some benefits to children's positive peer social interactions?

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☀ What are two strategies you can use to support children's positive peer social interactions?

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☀ What are two cooperative toys that can be used to promote children's positive peer social interactions?

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☀ What are the three most pressing issues you face as an early childhood professional?

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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# Participant Notes



Child Care Resource Center  
Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning  
Project funded by the Child Care and Office of Head Start in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services


## WWB Training Kit #

### Promoting Positive Peer Social Interactions

#### Participant PowerPoint

### Positive Peer Social Interactions

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## Notes

# Activity 1

## Using Self-Management in Your Setting

WWBTK #8: Promoting Positive Peer Social Interactions

### ☀ Directions:

*Think about ways children can use self-management within different settings their (center/school). What are some obstacles in the setting that keep children from using self-management techniques? Share thoughts with the large group.*

CSEFEL



Routine	Opportunities to use positive social skills
Arrival	One child is assigned to be the “greeter” and greets children by name as they arrive
Center Time	
Outside	
Snack	
Transitions	

# CSEFEL Training Workshop Evaluation

WWBTK #8: Promoting Positive Peer Social Interactions

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Your position: \_\_\_\_\_

CSEFEL



☀ Circle the number that best expresses your reaction to each of the following items:

- |  |                       |   |   |   |   |                        |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|------------------------|
| 1. This topic is important to me.            | (Extremely Important) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Important at All) |
| 2. The amount of information covered was     | (Just Right)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Inadequate)           |
| 3. The information covered was clear.        | (Very Clear)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Vague)                |
| 4. The activities conducted were beneficial. | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 5. The handouts provided were useful.        | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 6. Overall, this presentation was            | (Very Useful)         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Useful)           |

☀ Things I liked about this presentation:

☀ Things I would change about this presentation:

☀ Additional information I would like on this topic:

☀ New things I am going to try as a result of this workshop:

☀ Additional comments:

# Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning

## *Certificate of Training*

Promoting Positive Peer Social Interactions

This is to certify that

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successfully completed the above training

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*Trainer*

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*Trainer*



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*Participant*

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*Date and Location*