



FACILITATOR GUIDE for SOCIAL SKILLS

Time Frame

Imbed throughout the Transition Institute

Description

In order to progress in the transition process, young adults will need to learn a variety of social skills to prepare for adult life. This includes being able to share about themselves, which may include description of their disability, areas of interest, dreams and goals and what supports they need. It may extend to how to interact in person, in print or online or by phone. Often young adults are ill prepared to adapt how they communicate in various settings and with different people. For example, a different set of social skills are needed when seeking a dating relationship or going for a job interview.

Definition: Social Skills

Social skill is any [skill](#) facilitating [interaction](#) and [communication](#) with others. [Social rules](#) and [relations](#) are created, communicated, and changed in [verbal](#) and nonverbal ways. The process of learning such skills is called [socialization](#).

Interpersonal skills are sometimes also referred to as [people skills](#) or [communication skills](#).^[1] Interpersonal skills are the skills a person uses to communicate and interact with others. They include [persuasion](#), [active listening](#),^[2] delegation, and leadership.

Source: Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_skills

Purpose

To provide young adults with an array of activities to practice social and communication skills in a variety of settings and for a variety of purposes. By allowing for reflection and discussion, help young people learn to give constructive feedback to each other rather than negative criticism so they can learn from each other.



Suggested To Do List

- 1) Encourage ALL participants to introduce themselves online before arriving. Mentors can lead off on writing a short 3 – 5 sentence self-introduction and invite others to do the same. This can include: name, name sign, age, describe vision and hearing and communication style and one or two things about their interests or hobbies.
- 2) On the first evening, have a variety of games and craft activities available as people arrive. Have one activity that everyone will do and later share. (e.g. design a tactile nametag for dorm room door, decorate pair of flip-flops, and design a “ME” puzzle piece that can be attached to a group mural.
- 3) Arrange the room where everyone has communication set. It is okay if the room is not set neat and tidy in rows or circles.
- 4) On the first evening have everyone introduce him or herself and tell where they are from, their age and 1 thing they like. Often good if there is a common topic, like what is your favorite movie or song/music since this helps to find common interests.
- 5) After opening introductions, divide so that young adults are in a group without their families so they can get to know each other.
- 6) Have at least one icebreaker the first evening to help people meet each other. Use SSP’s to facilitate and scribe responses. See attached Fun Facts. For Human Bingo Activity Sheets go to: www.mftrou.com/buzz-word-bingo.html
- 7) In order to do the “Me Bag” activity, prior to coming, tell young adults to bring 2 – 3 items that illustrate things about themselves. These can include: paintbrushes, DVD/CD, black belt, swim goggles, etc.). They can pass around their items as they tell about themselves. Another variation is to pass around the item and have the group guess what it represents (e.g. clay means they like to sculpt; wooden spoon means they like to bake, etc.).
- 8) An activity such as arrange themselves in a line according to birthdates is a good way to make people talk to each other and to move around. Make sure you have a large space and plenty of SSP’s.



- 9) Early on the second day, establish communication rules to raise hands and wait to be recognized before speaking. If there are FM mikes, wait to receive microphone before speaking.
- 10) Encourage discussions to get feedback on presentations, to share personal experiences and clarify concepts.
- 11) Ask what the terms “Self-Determination” and “Self-Advocacy” means to each person. Discuss the responses.
- 12) Encourage interaction throughout the presentations through the use of Role-play, questions to presenters, voting by stomping feet or tapping tables for agreement, etc.
- 13) Use mentors and other young adult participants as presenters to share a skill or an experience. This helps the group to broaden their ideas on things they, too can try.
- 14) Videotape interviews of young adults. This provides an experience of thinking on their feet to answer questions and the experience of being videotaped. Provide interpreters for sign and voice as needed.
- 15) Provide activities throughout the weekend that showcase the gifts and talents of the young adult participants.
- 16) Sometimes it is helpful to have someone with a counseling background available.

Things to Keep in Mind

- 1) Be sure to have enough SSP's for the various activities.
- 2) If going off site for a recreation activity, devise a way of easily accounting for everyone, so no one is left behind. Assign Group Leaders responsible for their carload or group of young adults and SSP's.
- 3) If going offsite, see if the place needs advance arrangements to accommodate your group or to get a group discount.



- 4) Make sure to let families know in advance about how much spending money they will need for off site activities. Have a plan to support those who cannot afford the activity in a manner that does not embarrass them.
- 5) Find out something about each young person so you can facilitate introductions with others who have similar interests. This is especially helpful during mealtime breaks and casual downtime.
- 6) Encourage young adults with different modes of communication to get together. Can provide an interpreter, but also encourage and give examples how young adults can communicate directly with each other.
- 7) Be aware that you may be opening up some uncomfortable feelings and some young adults may first need to sit back and observe rather than being forced to share in EVERY activity.

Sample Activities

Getting to know you Ice Breakers (i.e. Fun Facts sheet or Human Bingo)

Team building activities (i.e. Knots)

Arts and Crafts activities

Games (board, card, Wii, ping pong, pool)

Photographic Scavenger Hunt

Sign up for a variety of social media outlets (Facebook, Pinterest, and BLOGS)

Role Plays

Talent Show

Dance and Karaoke

Going to a theme park

Going to a Family Fun Arcade Center or Bowling



Resources for Ice Breakers

[Hyperlink for Buzzle Icebreaker Activities: http://www.buzzle.com/articles/icebreaker-activities/](http://www.buzzle.com/articles/icebreaker-activities/)

[Hyperlink for Icebreaker.net: http://icebreakergames.net/](http://icebreakergames.net/)

[Hyperlink for Icebreakers ws: http://www.icebreakers.ws/](http://www.icebreakers.ws/)

[Hyperlink for Group Games: http://www.group-games.com/](http://www.group-games.com/)

[Hyperlink for Family Reunion Success: http://www.family-reunion-success.com/ice-breaker-activities.html](http://www.family-reunion-success.com/ice-breaker-activities.html)