

# INTRODUCTION

*Working Together: Building Children's Social Skills Through Folktales* is a training program in social skills for children in regular and mainstreamed classrooms, grades 3 through 6, and for older children with special needs. Activities can either stand alone or be used to extend or supplement language arts or social studies curricula. The program's emphases are peer relationships, conflict resolution, and meaningful use of language. Training includes the behavioral, cognitive, and affective components of social skills. Only when all these facets of social interaction are integrated can students successfully live with others and work together.

Social skills instruction is extremely important for children. Interacting positively with others, communicating effectively, and responding assertively to social situations are behaviors that enable children to be more productive and improve the overall quality of their lives. Research shows positive correlations between academic achievement and social skills, particularly in such behaviors as attending, staying on task, volunteering, and asking instructionally relevant questions. Other studies indicate that children tend to reject peers who display aggression and poor social skills. Children who fail to acquire these

critical skills often face school failure and peer conflict.

Social skills are typically learned informally, mainly through day-to-day interactions in the family, school, and place of worship. There is good evidence, however, that a more formal curriculum can be effective in enhancing social skills development and alleviating various adjustment problems. *Working Together* aims to provide teachers, clinicians, and other professionals with specific strategies for social skills instruction. The skills included here are those shown to be critical to the social development of school-age children.

## DEVELOPMENT

This curriculum builds on and extends *Taking Part: Introducing Social Skills to Children* (Cartledge & Kleefeld, 2009), a social skills program for younger children. Using the same theoretical framework and instructional model and similar skills as *Taking Part*, *Working Together* provides developmentally appropriate classroom activities that present new social skills and reinforce ones taught previously. As in *Taking Part*, stories and role plays are the primary means for education; however, at this level, greater emphasis is placed on written language (reading and writing), expressive language (role playing), and

receptive language (storytelling). Whereas social skills instruction can and should take place through incidental teaching throughout the school day, this curriculum makes the teaching explicit and reinforces academic areas such as language arts and social studies

## **INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL**

Social skills can be taught much like other parts of the curriculum. Components of instruction are:

- Defining the behavior to be taught
- Assessing the student's current proficiency in the behavior
- Teaching the necessary skills by presenting examples, asking questions, and providing feedback
- Evaluating the results of teaching; teaching again when necessary
- Providing opportunities for practice, generalization, and maintenance over time (Cartledge & Milburn, 1996)

These steps are consistent with those of other skills-training procedures (for example, Goldstein & McGinnis, 1997; McGinnis & Goldstein 1997, 2003; Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004) and compose the model employed in this curriculum.

### **Defining the Behavior to Be Taught**

Social skills are best presented as clearly defined behaviors, each as a sequence of steps involving thinking, feeling, and doing. Teachers and students alike must know exactly what responses are expected and when the skills have been performed. Globally stated behaviors are not only confusing, but they often fail to result in the acquisition of skills. No two children interpret the statement "Be nice to each other" in the same way. A skill such as "helping others participate," however, can be specifically defined and practiced.

### **Assessing Current Proficiency**

Social skills are typically assessed through some form of behavioral observation. You may wish to set up a situation that calls for a particular skill and then watch children respond. For example, in assessing a student's skill at asking for help, you might enlist the assistance of a second child, directing the target student accordingly: "Jonathan, you just heard Mary ask me for help with her geography project. What would you do if you needed help with your project?" When Jonathan responds, you would evaluate his current facility with the skill.

For most skills, you might simply observe students in natural classroom conditions. Direct observation may be done informally, but it should focus on a particular skill or set of skills. For example, if you are interested in developing or improving conversation skills, note the degree to which specific students contribute to classroom discussions and the relevance of their contributions. Students with significant deficiencies can be identified for further instruction.

You can also determine student competence through the use of a formal social skills assessment instrument such as the Social Skills Rating System (Gresham & Elliott, 1990). The scores obtained from these ratings can be used to compare students and assign them to instructional groups.

### **Teaching the Skills**

As discussed later in this Introduction, the skills of *Working Together* are taught in a sequence of motivation, practice, and maintenance activities. At each stage of instruction, students are given many examples of appropriate skill use, asked questions to enhance their understanding of skills, and provided with specific feedback as they practice skills.

### **Evaluating the Results of Teaching**

In evaluating students' skill performance, look for spontaneity of response, completeness of

response, and smoothness of performance. Because the use of social skills depends on particular social situations, evaluation of a student's performance can be based largely on your own personal satisfaction with the response. Students who fail to meet your established standards should receive additional instruction. You may choose to present program activities again or to modify them based on your students' needs. In some cases, you may only need to provide additional practice activities; in others, you may need to review concepts as well.

### **Providing for Practice, Generalization, and Maintenance**

*Practice* is essential to a child's understanding and internalizing a skill. Introductory and motivational activities may acquaint the child with the skill's language and steps, but only the personal involvement of trying out the behavior can make it a learned, automatic response.

*Generalization* occurs when a child performs the behavior across a variety of conditions and settings. For example, if a child learns to use courtesy words during your social skills instruction, the child should also use courtesy words during other times of the day and in places outside the classroom, such as home and playground.

*Maintenance* refers to getting a behavior to persist over time, making sure children continue to perform the skill after they've finished the program. Ideally, the social skills you teach will become a permanent part of each student's repertoire, with gradual, appropriate changes as the child develops.

## **TEACHING THE SKILLS**

*Working Together* consists of five units:

- Making Conversation and Expressing Feelings
- Cooperating with Peers

- Playing with Peers
- Responding to Conflict and Aggression
- Performing in the Classroom

Each unit contains from four to eight specific skills, thirty-one skills in all. The skills are presented in developmental sequence. There is necessarily some overlapping of age appropriateness, but earlier units generally contain basic skills that facilitate more complex later skills. Skills within a unit grow increasingly more difficult.

### **Unit 1: Making Conversation and Expressing Feelings**

1. Making Conversation
2. Introducing Yourself
3. Using Positive Self-Talk
4. Making Positive Statements to Others
5. Speaking Assertively
6. Using Courtesy Words
7. Asking for Help
8. Questioning What Seems Unfair

### **Unit 2: Cooperating with Peers**

9. Accepting Individual Differences
10. Mediating Group Rules
11. Offering and Giving Help
12. Giving and Accepting Criticism
13. Respecting Others' Property

### **Unit 3: Playing with Peers**

14. Following Game Rules
15. Helping Others Participate
16. Winning and Losing
17. Starting a Play Activity
18. Joining a Play Activity
19. Inviting Others to Play

## **Unit 4: Responding to Conflict and Aggression**

20. Ignoring or Leaving Bad Situations
21. Asking for Help in Bad Situations
22. Negotiating Conflict
23. Controlling Your Temper

## **Unit 5: Performing in the Classroom**

24. Finishing Schoolwork on Time
25. Doing Your Best Work
26. Following the Teacher's Directions
27. Keeping Your Desk and Classroom Clean
28. Moving from One Activity to Another
29. Answering and Asking Questions
30. Participating in Groups
31. Using Free Time Wisely

## **CHOOSING SKILLS TO TEACH**

The skills included in this curriculum are those considered critical to a child's social development. However, teachers will need to consider various factors in deciding which skills to teach.

One such consideration is relevance. If peers or important adults in your students' environment do not agree that a skill is important, it will not be reinforced, and children will have difficulty maintaining it. Similarly, if you don't feel a skill is significant for your students, you would be well-advised to skip it in favor of others you prize more highly. On the other hand, if you feel a skill is not highly prized in the immediate environment but is important to the students' academic and overall success, you might find it worthwhile to include it and to solicit the involvement and support of families or other individuals who will most directly influence the children to use the skill.

A second consideration is developmental level. Your expectations for a child will vary according to the child's age and ability. To illustrate, conversation skills such as introducing oneself may be appropriate for your particular

school setting, but different age levels or developmental disabilities among your students may necessitate different behavioral goals. Older children are inclined to engage class newcomers in conversation about their background (for example, "Where did you go to school before this?") and to supply information about the new setting. Nondisabled younger children, however, tend to offer assistance or ask the new student to do something with them. In teaching conversation skills to younger children, then, the more developmentally appropriate response for them to learn would be how to offer assistance rather than how to engage a peer in the exchange of background information.

A third consideration relates to student need. Instead of presenting skills sequentially, you may choose to present them according to your students' particular needs. In one classroom, for example, the most urgent need may be responding to aggression; in another, the most immediate need may be play skills.

## **SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF GROUPS**

Social skills are most effectively taught in small groups of no more than ten students. Some activities may be used with individual children, but because these skills require interaction with others, students need to practice with peers. Students in larger groups have fewer opportunities to practice skills and receive feedback—the most critical factors in their social skills development. If small-group instruction is impossible in your setting, you might increase the number of sessions allocated to each skill in order to allow for sufficient student practice.

To the extent possible, social skills groups need to include competent students as well as students with significant skill deficiencies. All children stand to benefit from social skills instruction. For some children, the focus will be on establishing an entirely new skill in their

repertoire; others will be helped to refine existing skills; others, already proficient, will serve as models to aid in their peers' skill development. By including students with varying levels of proficiency, you avoid the possibility of stigmatizing children who have been targeted for instruction. Stigma can further be avoided by establishing rules within your social skills groups that help maintain mutual respect and a comfortable, encouraging classroom atmosphere. Children will also benefit from your modeling and reinforcing appropriate ways to prompt and encourage social skills performance.

## TIME REQUIREMENTS

*Working Together* will be most useful in classroom settings in which the instructor has regular, frequent contact with students. Activities are most effective when presented in short instructional periods throughout the year. Alternative schedules, such as lengthy or combined and concentrated instructional periods, are possible but less effective. The more these skills can be incorporated into daily use with frequent practice, the more students will internalize and retain them.

You may choose either to present social skills instruction at specified times or to teach specific skills in response to students' needs. For example, you might teach or review the skill of mediating rules if an argument about rules erupts. In general, it is best to watch, note, and respond to your students' social skills needs. You may want to plan lessons on a weekly basis, identifying the skills needed and the students who will be involved in the instruction.

Many activities will take fifteen minutes or less. Frequency, rather than duration, is the key to competence. You will usually introduce a skill on the first day, review and allow for practice on the second and third days, and provide for maintenance for two or three subsequent days. After this, it's best to use periodic or intermittent reinforcement to help maintain the skill

while you're introducing and practicing new skills. Intermittent reinforcement may be occurring for several skills at one time and should only take a few minutes of your day.

## MATERIALS

Beyond typical classroom supplies, the materials called for in the *Working Together* activities are specified. All materials required for an activity are listed; any preparation needed is described.

The *Working Together* materials include the following:

- **Teacher's Guide:** This book includes step-by-step descriptions of all activities. Also provided are an introduction to the program and its materials, teaching guidelines, introductions to each unit, and appendixes containing blackline masters, stories, and posters.
- **Folk Stories:** The folk stories were adapted from traditional folktales from international cultures. A folk story is used to introduce each skill and provide a rationale for performing the skill. The stories are located in Appendix A of the curriculum and are discussed in the next section of this Introduction.
- **Skill Posters:** Each of the 31 skills includes a poster listing the skill steps. Posters are introduced during motivational activities, displayed during practice activities, and referred to as needed during maintenance activities. They serve as useful prompts and reminders for students.
- **Blackline Masters:** Various activities call for material to be duplicated from the blackline masters at the back of this book. Each unit includes a student assessment form ("How Am I Doing?") that students use to rate their own progress with specific skills, record their experiences meeting individual goals for skills, and note ways various skills are used in the world outside

the classroom. This unnumbered blackline master is referred to in materials lists by its title and unit. The first blackline master in the set, “Individual Social Skills Checklist,” is a sample assessment form that you can either adapt for your own use or photocopy for each student.

- **Parent Letters:** A parent letter for each unit informs families about the skills children will be learning.

## TEACHING SEQUENCE AND INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDELINES

Each skill in *Working Together* offers an average of twelve activities, organized in a sequence of motivation, practice, and maintenance. Some activities include variations of the main procedure. Implement these activities as they best fit your schedule, in the order that seems logical and useful for you. If needed, activities and materials can be easily adapted for more or less able children. Activities calling for a written response, for example, may be revised into oral activities for nonreaders, and vice versa.

### Motivation

Motivation activities help children understand why a particular social skill is important for them to learn and use. Even though students may be able to identify the appropriate social skill for a given situation, they may not use the skill unless they can appreciate its benefits—the reward or payoff for using the skill. Taking another’s bicycle, for example, may look like the most expedient way of satisfying a child’s wishes, even though the negative consequences of the act will probably outweigh the benefits. The motivating activities in *Working Together* attempt to put negative social acts in perspective for children, helping them name and describe desirable and undesirable behaviors and their corresponding outcomes.

The central motivation activity for each skill is a story, usually a folktale that has been adapted for this curriculum. Several of the skills

also include a puzzler, which is an additional, optional motivation activity.

### Puzzlers

Puzzlers are tricks or problem-solving activities related to specific skills. These “icebreakers” offer an amusing, intriguing way to introduce a skill. Any materials or preparation needed for the puzzlers are noted, and step-by-step directions, often accompanied by diagrams, ensure ease of presentation. Suggested dialogue connects each puzzler to the skill it introduces. These activities are likely to generate high interest and enthusiasm in students. You will want to regularly reinforce the connection between the puzzler and the social skill. Puzzlers are enjoyable and motivational for young students and provide another way to interest your class in the value of social skills. Eleven skills include puzzler activities. For six additional puzzlers, see Appendix D.

### Folk Stories

Folk stories are a natural fit for social skills instruction. Early folk stories were created and retold partly for entertainment, but primarily for the purpose of passing along social and behavioral mores. For example, the folktales of the Gatiloke were used by Cambodian Buddhist monks as “speech/teach” sermons—examples of right and wrong, good and bad. The word “Gatiloke” reflects this: “Gati” means “the way,” and “loke” means “the world.” Freely translated, “Gatiloke” means “the right way for the people of the world to live.”

Storytelling may be the oldest of all the arts. Storytellers carried “traditions on their tongues,” transmitting wisdom from mouth to ear to mouth. Early storytellers were teachers who cloaked important values in engaging symbols, ridiculous situations, and amusing exploits. Folktales represent the best of the answers of wise people, seers, storytellers, and shamans to the perennial questions of children. These tales set us wondering what we would

do in similar circumstances. They enlarge our horizons and help us crystallize our own beliefs, values, and experiences.

The stories in *Working Together* come from the folklore of Sweden, Turkey, ancient Greece, England, and Mexico; from various peoples of Africa; from Native American, African American, and Hawaiian cultures; from Japan, Cambodia, China, Russia, Czechoslovakia, the United States, and Jamaica.

You are encouraged to locate countries and regions on a classroom map and to provide some information about cultures as background to the stories. You might also locate pictures of the people of these countries and regions so children can make realistic associations as they listen to and discuss stories.

These stories are intended to be shared orally, as most have been historically. At times, you may need to clarify vocabulary.

Stories were chosen according to various criteria:

- The major point of the story matches the skill to be taught.
- The lesson is taught through prosocial means with minimal or no violence (see comments about violence in the next section).
- The story is simple enough to be understood by elementary-age children.
- The story is relatively brief.
- The story represents a diverse culture and complements the existing collection of stories.

### *A Word About Violence*

Every effort was made to minimize violence in the stories selected for this curriculum because children prone to adjustment problems are vulnerable to aggressive models in stories, media, and the immediate environment. Folk literature, however, often includes violence. When aggressive acts do occur in stories, consider discussing them with students, noting alternative nonviolent, prosocial ways the situ-

ation might be handled and the undesired consequences of aggression.

### *A Word About Gender*

Every effort was made to present stories with both female and male protagonists. Folk literature as a whole, however, includes many more stories featuring male characters. You may want to mention this fact to students, asking them to pay attention to gender roles within certain stories. Students could also consider how stories might change in tone or content if the heroes were female rather than male.

After students listen to the story, they participate in a brief discussion of the plot and message. This is a time to clear up any misunderstandings, review important details, and define words. Next, students discuss the connection between the story and the social skill being introduced. Once this point is grasped, the skill poster is presented. Students consider and discuss each skill step, talking about whether characters in the story used the step, failed to use it, or might have used it.

The activity following the skill poster presentation, "Understanding the Skill," calls for children to consider the affective aspects of the skill: how people feel when they use it, when they fail to use it, and when others use or fail to use it. Children are asked to recall times they used the skill or wish they had. The discussion concludes with the children listing why the skill and its steps are important.

For each part of the story, poster, and skill discussions, suggested questions, answers, and dialogue are provided.

At times, you may want to hold several class discussions of a skill, particularly when students' understanding is in doubt. Before proceeding to practice activities, you need to be satisfied that each child in the group understands the skill.

### **Practice**

Once the importance of a social skill has become clear to children, they need opportunities to

practice the skill. Skills are practiced within the context of role plays, cooperative activities, and games, thereby increasing the similarity of practice activities to students' daily lives.

### **Role Plays**

Each practice section begins with a role-play activity that allows children to act out the skill within the context of typical situations in their lives. To increase the skill's value to students, it is important to involve them in generating scenarios. Sample situations are provided but may not be as relevant as the ones they generate themselves. Whenever possible, attempt to personalize these activities, using realistic situations from your students' lives and emphasizing the specific responses needed.

As children role play and enact these various behaviors, they need corrective and reinforcing feedback. This feedback needs to be highly specific, such as "Rubin, you were a good sport when you congratulated Gail on winning the game. Remember to smile and look at her the next time you congratulate her." A more global response such as "That was a good job" or "That wasn't right" isn't nearly as effective in helping a child learn a skill.

### **Further Practice**

The more a child practices a behavior, the greater the likelihood the skill will be mastered. Practice activities such as games, written exercises, discussions of the feelings connected with a skill, and consideration of the importance to a skill of nonverbal communication and word choice encourage children to perform a social skill fluently, without extensive prompting. *Working Together* provides many opportunities for skill practice. You'll want to use as many activities and adaptations as your students require. Several sessions may be needed for the practice component of certain skills, in order to ensure skill acquisition and fluency.

### **Maintenance**

The third part of each skill consists of activities intended to maintain the skill in the child's repertoire and to help the child generalize the behavior to other settings. Maintenance activities encourage children to use their skills in real-life situations.

These activities need not be confined to your designated social skills instruction periods. For the most part, they lend themselves to application throughout the school day. For example, a typical maintenance activity is structured so that children you observe displaying the target skill anytime through the day earn the opportunity to be recognized on a bulletin board display. When the display is completely filled in with names or other signs of recognition, the class achieves its goal.

Maintenance activities for each skill begin with "My Master Plan," in which students are helped to choose individual goals for using the skill. For example, they might plan to practice a skill at home, with a particular friend, or during a particular activity. Students use the form "How Am I Doing?" to keep track of their progress and to discuss the experience with you once they meet their goals. Some students may work best when paired with a "buddy" to act as a source of reminders, evaluation, and reinforcement. If you pair students as buddies, discuss with them appropriate methods of reminding, coaching, encouraging, and reinforcing.

Another maintenance activity for every skill, "Claim Your Strengths," suggests that you conduct one or more brief class discussions about students' progress with the skill. These discussions can center on personal experiences, including your own, that illustrate the importance of the skill.

In addition to the activities, a major component of the maintenance program is reinforcement of the behaviors when they occur in the natural classroom environment. Whenever you see a student performing a newly taught skill, take time to recognize and compliment that



student, referring specifically to the skill performed: “Kelsey, you are really improving at controlling your temper.” Complimenting students publicly helps others recognize, label, and imitate specific skills and is reinforcing for the group. As appropriate for your group, you can ask students to tell you when they have used a skill. Those children can then be recognized.

Some children may need more powerful reinforcers, such as tokens, stickers, or privileges. Be sure to couple such tangible rewards with recognition and praise, gradually decreasing the use of tangibles as students become more self-directed. The goal is for students to derive pleasure from the behavior itself. The child who learns to make positive statements to others may find it naturally reinforcing to have the response reciprocated, thereby triggering further positive interactions.

### **Creative Writing**

Each maintenance section includes an activity calling for creative writing about the skill, its uses, and its value. This writing may be done individually, in groups, or in a writing center. The activity, which may fit well into whole language instruction, can be changed as needed to an oral exercise.

### **Further Maintenance**

Other maintenance activities promote generalization and encourage students’ self-management and intrinsic motivation. One activity suggested fairly frequently is “The Real World,” in which students are asked to observe and record the way skills occur or fail to occur in daily life.

### **Extension Activities**

Each skill concludes with various extension activities for further practice and enrichment. Many skills include an activity suggesting the use of children’s literature as a way to illustrate and encourage social skills. These activities

include an annotated list of suggested books for use with the given skill. Extension activities may also include suggested discussions and creative writing assignments, often centered on one or more of the stories.

### **Further Extension Activities**

You can further extend these lessons and integrate them into your reading and/or social studies curricula by, for example, using the folk stories as the basis for discussions of cultural diversity, particularly as it relates to the students in your classroom. People of various cultures from the community might be invited to visit the classroom, or students could interview them about social skills in their culture. These resource people might be willing to read or tell other folk stories they remember.

Students might also research behavior typical of children in the country of their family’s origin. For example, in Turkey children greet their elders by kissing the hand of the adult and touching the adult’s kissed hand to the child’s forehead. On a day students listen to one of the Turkish folktales, a child of Turkish origins might share what he or she has learned.

### **Folk Fest**

Consider locating several anthologies of folktales and sharing them with your students. Your own favorites will communicate most effectively, because the storyteller’s voice is so important with these kinds of tales. Help students see that the ideas, fears, and feelings of the characters in these stories are often the same as those we know today.

After selecting and rehearsing several engaging stories, have students arrange a storytelling day or “Folk Fest” with another class. Designate some students to read and others to lead a discussion of the story. They might ask such questions as:

- What do you like about this story?
- Why do you think the story was told?

- Is there anything in this story that reminded you of people and situations in your own life? Of books, movies, or TV?

The Folk Fest could also include short presentations about the countries and cultures represented by the folktales.

### **Further Reading of Folk Literature**

Students can also be encouraged to expand their reading of the world's rich folk literature. Consider having volunteers locate other folktales and read them to the class.

Follow the reading with a discussion of the lessons most probably intended by the storytellers who passed on the tale, using questions like the ones suggested earlier. Examine the story for possible social skills or problem-solving steps. Examine the humor in the story.

### **Encouraging Skill Use at Home**

Students are helped immeasurably to use social skills when family members encourage them. Each unit in *Working Together* includes a parent letter to send home, explaining the skills children will be practicing. Each parent letter also includes a return form that allows parents to provide feedback on their children's use of these new social skills at home. You can further encourage students to use their new skills at home by giving simple home assignments. For example, after completing the given activities about making positive statements to others, you might ask children to compliment someone in their family. Before this, conduct a brief classroom practice session on making positive statements to family members. A note home advising the family of the skill being taught and requesting confirmation that it was performed can be helpful, as can a follow-up discussion of how students' family members received the compliments.

### **Encouraging Skill Use in School**

As discussed, students can be asked to make positive statements to classmates or teachers.

You can assist by informing colleagues of the skills students are learning and asking them to note and encourage the use of those skills. This may be particularly effective if you have children who are being mainstreamed into regular education classes or students who have regular contact with art, music, physical education, or other special-subject teachers.

Peers are another valuable resource for getting behaviors to transfer and be maintained. Throughout the instruction, children should be encouraged to notice and praise each other when they observe social skills being performed. You can prompt this behavior by saying, for example, "Did you see George offer to help Julia? Let's compliment him for it." Or, "Peter, can you remind Joseph of the steps for congratulating the winner of a game?"

As mentioned, some maintenance activities ask children to work toward a group goal. This cooperative style encourages them to praise and shape each other's behavior. In many instances, you will need to model and monitor such peer reinforcement.

## **CULTURAL ISSUES IN TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS**

Social skills are culturally determined and situation specific. A culturally diverse society produces many behavioral differences among children. Teachers and other professionals need to differentiate cultural differences from behavioral deficits. For example, although the larger society values eye contact as a basic element in social communication, some cultural groups discourage children from making eye contact with adults. Significant differences may be found in such areas as socialization of the sexes, assertive and aggressive communication styles, and the special social communication skills encouraged. In some cases, it may be advisable for teachers to present certain social skills in this program as alternative ways to behave, rather than as the preferred way to respond. On the other hand, in situations where a student's response repertoire is self-destructive and in

conflict with the school's culture—for example, inappropriate responses to aggression—teachers are obliged to encourage more adaptive behaviors.

## **ASSESSING STUDENTS' PROGRESS**

Assessment is most useful when viewed as an ongoing process rather than an isolated event. A good record-keeping system with specific monitoring procedures can be very helpful, allowing continual feedback on student progress. Individual performance standards need to be established for each child, taking into consideration developmental level, cultural factors, and need.

The sample assessment form included in the set of blackline masters ("Individual Social Skills Checklist") can be useful in monitoring student progress. You can adapt this form or simply photocopy it, using a separate sheet for each student. In the spaces below the categories of "Has Mastery," "Shows Some Competence," and "Needs More Instruction," fill in the date the skill was assessed. This makes it possible not only to record students' progress, but also to track how long the instruction took. Use the "Comments" section for any notes that seem useful.

The checklist is an example of one kind of record keeping. Any system that can help you

provide an ongoing assessment of your students' performance will help strengthen and validate your social skills instruction.

## **REFERENCES**

- Cartledge, G., & Kleefeld, J. (2009). *Taking part: Introducing social skills to children, pre-K–grade 3* (2d ed.). Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Cartledge, G., & Milburn, J. F. (1996). *Cultural diversity and social skills instruction: Understanding ethnic and gender differences*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Goldstein, A. P., & McGinnis, E. (1997). *Skillstreaming the adolescent: New strategies and perspectives for teaching prosocial skills*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Gresham, F. M., & Elliott, S. N. (1990). *Social skills rating system*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.
- McGinnis, E., & Goldstein, A. P. (1997). *Skillstreaming the elementary school child: New strategies and perspectives for teaching prosocial skills*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- McGinnis, E., & Goldstein, A. P. (2003). *Skillstreaming in early childhood: New strategies and perspectives for teaching prosocial skills*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Walker, H., Ramsey, E., & Gresham, F. M. (2004). *Antisocial behavior in school: Evidence-based practice*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.