

SOCIAL WORK MONTHLY

Teaching Pro-Social Skills

Opportunities for Learning

The top priority when teaching pro-social skills is maintaining a loving and support parent-child bond. Often times bad behavior is a child's way of meeting a basic need (for example, attention). Engaging in regular conversation and play with your children you increase that bond and encounter more teachable moments for pro-social skill building.

Teachable Moments

Children learn pro-social skills better through:

- Watching and listening to positive exchanges in adult role models
- Teaching in the moment: whether through play or in daily activities, praise positives and redirect negatives.
- Specific teaching and practice in such skills including manners, coping, conflict resolution, etc.
- Discipline with love: fair and consistent redirection including reflection on behaviors and teaching appropriate responses.



Believe it or not, our children's success depends greatly on their ability to interact with others in an effective and positive manner. In order to give them their best chance in this area, it is crucial to teach them Pro-Social or positive social skills.

Many times parents may find it easier to simply ignore increasingly negative behaviors in their children, hoping it will go away with time however this often leads to the behavior becoming worse. The best place to start when looking to change or improve behaviors in our youth is to "begin with the end in mind", as stated by Stephen Covey in his 7 Habits books. As a parent, it is important to ask yourself, "How do I want my child to behave throughout their lives?" From here, you can begin to target specific behaviors you would like to see your child performing and celebrate their success in doing so.

By taking the time to teach Pro-Social Skills we enable children to engage in emotional identification and sharing, empathize with others, and improve resiliency and problem solving.

Take some time to review the tips and ideas in the side panel of this newsletter and be on the lookout for additional parenting tips throughout the year! If you would like further information please contact Kelsey Dean, Astoria School Social Worker, at 309-329-2158 or by email at kdean@acusdr.org.