

Social Communication Skills Checklist

Kevin Plummer, Ph.D.
School Clinical & Consulting Services

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS CHECKLIST

Demonstrates Effective Listening

- looks at the speaker when listening (or uses gaze checks)
- attends to the listener when speaking (or uses gaze checks)
- secures and maintains joint or shared attention
- uses eye gaze that is appropriate in length and timing
- modifies output base upon listener's verbal and nonverbal cues

Provides Nonverbal Cues To Help Sustain Communication

- uses head nods to mean yes and no to accompany or replace speech
- uses head nods to convey agreement
- uses head nods to signify permission to continue (acknowledgement)
- shows affect appropriate to the situation
- uses gestures to support language
- appearance is free of self-stimulation, overly repetitive movements, or noncommunicative gestures

Maintains Proper Physical Orientation To The Listener or Speaker

- sits or stands appropriately while communicating
- uses appropriate distance during interaction
- moves closer to initiate interaction
- moves away to terminate interaction
- uses appropriate head orientation

Paralinguistic Features of Language Are Appropriate

- speech is intelligible
- uses appropriate volume
- use appropriate pitch
- uses appropriate vocal quality

- uses appropriate intonation
- uses appropriate stress
- uses appropriate prosody (rhythm & rate)
- speech is fluent
- does not exhibit extraneous sounds
- does not exhibit jargon or self-talk

Demonstrates Effective Narrative Skills

- provides the listener with relevant background or “setting” information
- provides information in proper sequence or temporal order
- provides information clearly connected to a main point or idea
- provides cause and effect references
- monitors the interest level and understanding of the listener
- can take a short break to allow input from the listener (opportunity for listener to comment or ask a question)
- provides appropriate amount of detail/information
- provides relevant information
- can take the listener’s perspective

Initiates And Maintains Effective Conversation

- introduces/establishes conversation topic
- uses reciprocal questions
- uses acknowledgements
- uses expansion questions
- takes the listener’s perspective
- presents appropriate amount of information
- identifies and tracks the topic of conversation
- adds relevant comments and information

responds appropriately (e.g., acknowledges) to comments
signals topic change and makes a fluid shift
provides relevant conversation topic extensions
introduces related topics (not off-target topic)
monitors the interest level and understanding of the listener
conveys interest appropriately
signals disinterest in a socially acceptable fashion
appropriately signals end of conversation

Uses Breakdown and Repair Strategies

requests clarification
responds appropriately to requests for clarification
recognizes breakdown
adjusts language or topic to improve comprehension of the listener
offers additional details
paraphrases same information
improves intelligibility

Understands And Uses Metalinguistic Communication

understands figurative language (e.g., use of metaphors)
uses figurative language
understands idioms and “expressions”
uses idioms and “expressions”
understands age appropriate jokes
tells age appropriate jokes