

# Skills Training for Community Engagement Modules

## Module 4 — Building Social Skills

**Eleversity**  
NEXT-LEVEL WORKFORCE EDUCATION

# Building Social Skills and Relationships

## Introduction to Module

Having relationships with others is important for everyone. These connections provide a sense of belonging, help develop personal growth, improve a person's mental and emotional wellbeing, and enhance community involvement. Positive relationships with friends and acquaintances are a basic part of a good life and should be supported and encouraged for all. These skills are often referred to as "social skills".

Social skills are a set of actions, attitudes, and abilities that allow people to interact with others in various situations. These skills include both verbal (speaking) and non-verbal (body language and facial expressions) communication, understanding feelings and practicing active listening.

Sometimes people with developmental disabilities struggle with social skills. This can limit their ability to form friendships and may prevent them from being fully a part of their communities.

As a Day Habilitation staff, you play a vital role in helping people build meaningful relationships and develop social skills; both key elements that greatly enhance their quality of life. Through your work, you have the opportunity to show the community how incredible the people you support are. We hope this training equips you with strategies to support them in forming connections and engaging socially, which will make a lasting positive impact on their lives.

### Lesson 1, My Connections

**Learning Objectives:** In this activity, participants will map out their social network and community connections and will learn several strategies that they can use to build stronger relationships.

#### Lesson Overview

<b>Lesson Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>My Relationship Map</b> Worksheet</li><li>• <b>Strategies to Build Stronger Community Relationships- Current Connections</b> Activity sheet</li><li>• <b>Strategies to Build Stronger Community Relationships- New Connections</b> Activity sheet</li><li>• Staff's Relationship Map</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Print a copy of <b>My Relationship Map</b> for each participant</li><li>• Print a copy of <b>Strategies to Build Stronger Community Relationships-Current Connections</b> Activity-sheet for each participant</li><li>• <b>Strategies to Build Stronger Community Relationships- New Connections</b> Activity sheet</li><li>• Create your own <b>Relationship Map</b> to share with the class</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Details</b>	<p><b>Lesson Introduction:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Begin the lesson by asking participants to think of 3 people in their lives that they know. Have a few participants share the names of their 3 people.</li><li>2. <b>Ask:</b> How do you know these people? (Are they family members? Friends? Staff?)</li><li>3. Provide each participant with the <b>My Relationship Map</b> worksheet. Explain that this relationship map organizes the people they know into different categories/groups. Point out that they are in the center of this map. The most inner circle represents people they know the best. The outer circle represents the people they know, but not very well.</li><li>4. Help participants to complete this map with the people that they know. <i>Option: Prior to this lesson, create your own relationship map to use as a model.</i></li></ol>

**Lesson Activity:**

1. Once participants have completed their relationship map, explain that it is important to create and maintain relationships within the community. Different relationships within the community help to build communication and personal skills.
2. Explain that there are three strategies that will help them build stronger community relationships.
3. SAY: "We will learn three ways to build stronger relationships in the community."
4. After/during the discussion participants will fill out their own worksheet that matches the strategy.

**Strategy 1: Strengthen Current Connections**

- **ASK:** "What places do you already go in the community?"  
"Examples: mall, church, library, favorite restaurant etc.)"
- Discuss: "Who do you know there? How can you get to them better?" Examples: Ask them socially acceptable questions about their interests, invite them to do something outside that place (coffee, movie, etc.)

**Strategy 2: Find People with Similar Interests.**

- **ASK:** "What are your interests?"
- After participants share their interests, ask: "Where can you meet people who share those interests?" Example if you like cars, you might visit an auto repair shop, parts store, car show, NASCAR event, car museums, or transportation department.
- After identifying places, ask "Who could you talk to their (mechanic, salesclerk, etc.)"
- Note "This can also help you think about jobs you might like."

**Strategy 3: Get more involved**

- Explain that the final strategy will be for participants to make their own plan based on strategies 1 and 2.
- Help participants think about new places they could visit, volunteer, and how they can meet new people at those places.

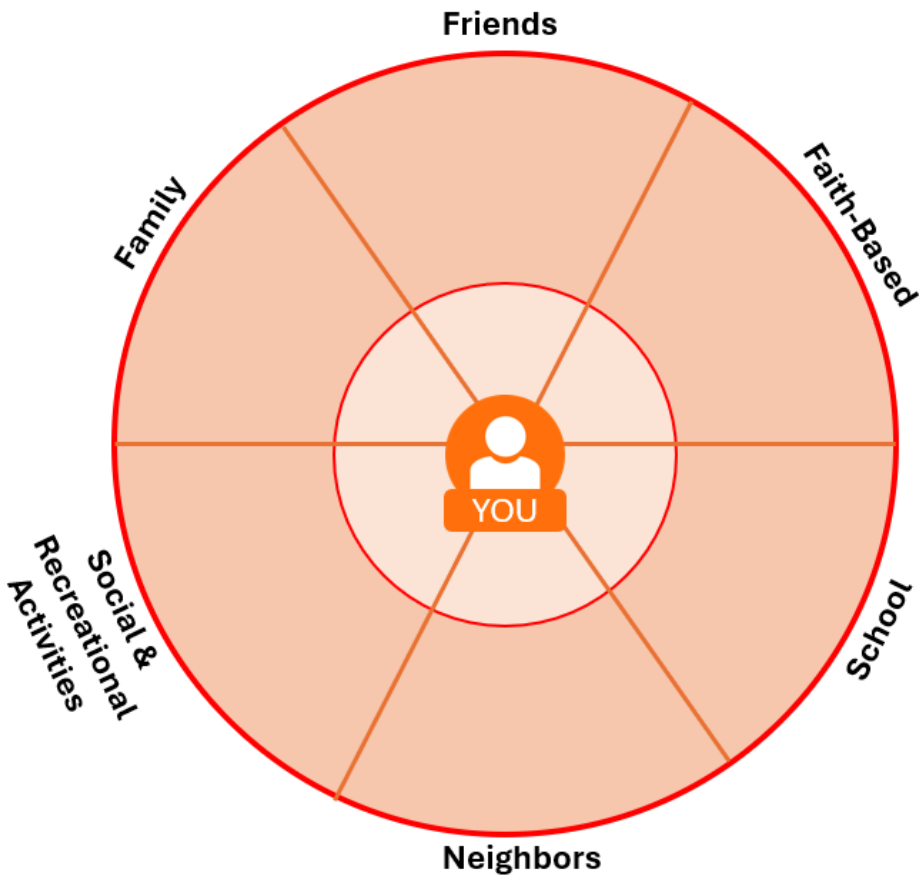
<b>Lesson Reflection</b>	As a whole group, or individually, complete the “3-2-1 Review!”
<b>Lesson Reinforcement</b>	Staff will develop a plan to reinforce and increase the skills learned from this lesson while participating in community activities. Brainstorm with staff and management, 3 places in the community where staff can prompt, instruct and reinforce the use and practice of the skills learned in this lesson. Share the lesson with other staff who accompany the person in community activities.

# Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 1



## My Relationship Map

Think about who you already know and complete the relationship map below.



## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 1

### Strategies to Build Stronger Community Relationships-Current Connections

**Strategy 1:** Who do I already know in the community and how can I strengthen the relationship?

Places in the community I already go	Who are the community members there?	What can I do to get to know them better?

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 1

### Strategies to Build Stronger Community Relationships- Current Connections — Worksheet

**Strategy 2:** Where can I go where I will meet people who share my interests?

Interest I have	Places where other people with interest can be found

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 1

### Strategies to Build Stronger Community Relationships- Getting More Involved

**Strategy 3:** Use this worksheet to plan how you will get more involved in your community. Think about new places to visit, volunteer opportunities, and ways to meet new people.

#### New Places to Visit

List at least three new places you would like to visit in your community:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Volunteer Opportunities

Write down two volunteer opportunities you are interested in:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Ways to Meet New People

List three ways you can meet new people at those places: (mentioned above)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 1

## 3-2-1 Review: My Connections

**THREE** new things that you have learned today.

**TWO** things that you will think about in the community and at home.

**ONE** thing that we should review again.

3.	A.	
	B.	
	C.	
2.	A.	
	B.	
1.	A.	

## **Lesson 2: How to connect with people who share your interests**

**Learning Objectives:** In this activity, participants will learn how to connect with others who have similar interests to them and who they like.

### **Lesson Overview:**

<b>Lesson Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper/Easel for writing down participant responses</li><li>• Rope, Yarn, or String (for 1<sup>st</sup> activity). You can also use fingertips to touch another or point if you don't have supplies.</li><li>• <b>Yarn Networking</b> Activity Handout</li><li>• <b>The Three Ps of Making Connections: Tips and Strategies</b> Handout</li><li>• <b>The Three Ps of Making Connections</b> Worksheet</li><li>• <b>Making New Connections</b> Scenarios</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Print copies of the <b>We Are All Connected Activity</b> Handout for each participant</li><li>• Print copies of <b>The Three Ps of Making Connections: Tips and Strategies</b> Handout for each participant</li><li>• Print copies of <b>The Three Ps of Making Connections</b> Worksheet for each participant</li><li>• Print copies of the <b>Making New Connections</b> Scenarios for each participant</li><li>• Review the <b>Making New Connections</b> staff guide</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Details</b>	<p><b>Lesson Introduction:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Begin the lesson by posing this question to the group: <i>Think about the people that are close to you in your life (other than immediate family members). How did you meet them? Did you already share similar interests when you met?</i></li><li>2. Ask a few participants to share about a person they know and how they met. If possible, give a personal example of someone that you know and the story behind how you met them. For example, you could explain that you met your spouse through a friend of a friend. etc.</li></ol>

3. Tell the group: There are many ways to meet new people, and we never know where those connections might lead. Some ways to meet new people are:

- **Meeting People Through People We Know:** Friends often introduce us to new friends. Example: “My friend invited me to their birthday party, and I met someone there”.
- **Meeting New People Through Shared Interests:** Simple examples: Community centers, art groups, religious services and hobby clubs.

**Lesson Activity:**

1. Next, hand out the **We Are All Connected Activity** Handout to group.
2. For this activity, you will need a large open area and a total of 4 volunteers.
3. **SAY:** I’m going to share a short story about meeting new people. This will help us understand what networking means, making connections with people. Use the following script, along with 3 volunteers and a piece of yarn or rope to show network connections.
4. **Script** (feel free to use real names)

Jessica (Volunteer 1) loves animals and wants to spend time with them, but she doesn’t know where to start. Jessica decides to start asking people she knows for help.

- Hand Jessica one end of the yarn/rope

Jessica asks her staff member, Nicole (Volunteer 2), for help

- Invite volunteer 3 up to be “John “and hold the end of the yarn/rope

Nicole talks to John and asks if he can share ideas with Jessica, like places to volunteer or clubs to join that would involve being around animals.

5. **Say:** “See how the rope connects everyone? That’s what networking looked like. It’s just asking people you know for

	<p>help and meeting new people through those connections.”  The rope represents the network of relationships and connections that help someone move closer to their goal. The length of the rope shows that opportunities often come through multiple steps, not just one direct contact.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Hand out and review <b>The Three Ps of Making Connections: Tips and Strategies</b> handout</li> <li>7. Hand out and review the <b>Making New Connections Scenario Cards</b>. Then, hand out <b>The Three Ps of Making Connections</b> worksheet</li> <li>8. Using scenario cards as examples, work with participants on filling out <b>The Three Ps of Making Connections</b> worksheet. Assist individuals will fill out the worksheet or go over the questions as a group.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Lesson Reflection</b></p>	<p>As a whole group, or as individuals, complete the “3-2-1 Review!”</p>
<p><b>Lesson Reinforcement</b></p>	<p>Staff will develop a plan to reinforce and increase the skills learned from this lesson while participating in community activities. Brainstorm with staff and management, 3 places in the community where staff can prompt, instruct and reinforce the use and practice of the skills learned in this lesson. Share the lesson with other staff who accompany the person in community activities.</p>

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 2

### We Are All Connected Activity

Your instructor will read a short story. Listen and follow instructions.

This is how the network should look at the end of the activity.



Jessica



Nicole



John

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 2

### The Three “P’s” of Making Connections:

#### Tips and Strategies

**Prepare:** *Do what you need to do to get ready*

#### Preparing for a face-to-face meeting:

- If you are visiting someone at their organization go to their website or social media site to learn more about them.
- If you are meeting up with someone outside of where you usually see them (at gym, restaurant, supermarket), make sure that it is a public area and maybe don't go alone.
- Write down some possible questions you'd like to ask the person you're meeting. Read them and practice saying them.

#### Preparing for a telephone or “Zoom” meeting:

- Again, learn about the company where that person works.
- Write down what you want to say and practice saying it out loud. Make a list of the main points you want to talk about.
- If on a phone call, prepare for what you say on a voicemail if the person doesn't pick up.
- If you meet via Zoom: dress as if you are going to see them in person! Log on and check your camera angle and background to make sure you are making a good impression.

**Practice:** *Practice what you will say over and over, (at least four to five times) so you feel confident*

- Practice the facial expressions (smiling, making eye contact) and body language (standing tall, firm handshake). Even if you are talking on the phone, smiling before dialing with help set the tone.
- Ask a friend or family member to role play with you. Practice asking the questions you have prepared.

**Pull Yourself Together:** *Be Brave! Be Confident!*

- Don't forget to bring a pen and paper for notetaking. This shows you are prepared and serious about making a connection.
- Dress for success! Dress the way you think the person you are meeting will be dressed.

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 2

### The Three “P’s” of Making Connections: Worksheet

#### **Prepare:** *Do what you need to do to get ready*

What are some things you will do to prepare for the opportunity to meet this person?

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

What are some things you would say or questions you would ask during your meeting?

#### **Practice:** *Practice what you will say over and over, (at least four to five times) so you feel confident*

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Pull Yourself Together:** *Be Brave! Be Confident!*

What are some things you would say or questions you would ask during your meeting?

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

I Will: \_\_\_\_\_

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 2

### Making New Connections — Scenarios

Instructions: Recall the 3 P's we learned earlier: Prepare, Practice, Pull yourself together. As a group, decide how you would use at least one the "three Ps" in each situation.

<p>You like cars. Your dad's friend Joe has a garage, and you're going to meet him at a family picnic next week.</p>	<p>You love animals. Your aunt gave you the phone number of a friend who helps at the local animal shelter, and you plan to call them this weekend.</p>
<p>You love dancing alone in your room. You want to meet other people who like dancing and maybe perform in front of an audience someday.</p>	<p>You like gardening and flowers, and you enjoy looking at flower arrangements online and in other places.</p>

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 2

### Making New Connections — Staff Guide

<p>You could plan to talk to Joe about the work he does at the garage and see if he would be willing to let you visit or if he knows of any clubs or other places where people who love cars spend time. You would want to <b>Prepare</b> and <b>Practice</b> for this meeting so that you know what you want to say. You might also want to <b>Pull yourself together</b> by not wearing dirty or ripped clothing in order to make a good first impression.</p>	<p>Before calling your aunt, you will want to Prepare by thinking about questions before hand, and perhaps Practice saying them. You might also make sure you have a pen and paper handy before calling so you can write down responses.</p>
<p>You could talk with people you know about the possibility of taking a dance class near you.</p>	<p>You could check your local library's community board, the community board in the supermarket. You can use Google to look for places like a botanical garden in your area.</p>

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 2

### 3-2-1 Review: How to Connect with People who Share Your Interests

As a group, discuss:

**THREE** new things that you have learned today.

**TWO** things that you will think about in the community and at home.

**ONE** thing that we should review again.

3.	A.	
	B.	
	C.	
2.	A.	
	B.	
1.	A.	

### **Lesson 3: How do you meet new people?**

**Lesson Objective:** In this activity, participants will learn about three or four ways to initiate a friendship

#### **Lesson Overview:**

<b>Lesson Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper/Easel for writing down participant responses</li><li>• <b>I've Got Mail</b> Activity Sheet</li><li>• <b>Making Friends</b> Activity Sheet</li><li>• <b>Making Friends</b> Activity Sheet Staff guide</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Print a copy of the <b>I've Got Mail</b> Activity sheet for each participant.</li><li>• Print a copy of the <b>Making Friends</b> Activity sheet for each participant</li><li>• Review <b>Making Friends</b> staff guide</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Details</b>	<p><b>Lesson Introduction:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Ask the group:</b> "Has anyone met someone new recently? Where did you meet them?"</li><li>2. <b>Ask the group:</b> "What are some places or activities where people share common interests?" Examples: sports teams, clubs, religious gatherings, parties.</li><li>3. <b>Ask:</b> "Has anyone ever introduced you to someone who later became a friend?" Encourage volunteers to share their experience.</li></ol> <p><b>Lesson Activity:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Tell the group: "We're going to do something fun known as an "Icebreaker activity", where the goal is to get to know each other better".<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the instructions for <b>I've Got Mail</b> and complete the activity</li></ul></li><li>2. Explain that we will not be looking at ways to build friendship in the community. Ask the group:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Why is it sometimes hard to meet new people?"</li><li>• "What do you think is the first step when trying to meet someone new?"</li><li>• If no one mentions it, say that the first step is starting a conversation</li></ul></li><li>3. Give tips for starting conversations:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Say: "A good way to start is by finding something you have in</li></ul></li></ol>

common or asking about their interests. Examples: What other places have you lived, and how long have you been coming to this group?

4. Discuss that there are good and bad ways to start conversations. Ask the group:
  - “What would be a bad way to start a conversation?”
  - If no one mentions it, make sure to include being too aggressive, overly friendly, making teasing jokes, being critical, or looking at your phone when someone is talking to you
5. Hand out the **Making Friends** worksheet. Review instructions and complete them individually or as a group.
6. After completing the worksheet, use the following questions to prompt discussion:
  - How do friendships start?
  - Where do you think these situations might have taken place?
  - Which of the ways on the worksheet would you try?
  - Which would you never try? Why or why not?
  - When was the last time you made a new friend? How did you become friends?
  - Where are good places to meet other people who have common interests?
7. Discuss with the group that not every example on the worksheet shows a good way to make a friend. Ask participants what they would change about those examples to make them a better way of making friends.
8. Mention that sometimes people will not want to be your friends. That’s OK! There are many reasons why someone may not be looking to make new friends, and it is not something you should take personally.

<b>Lesson Reflection</b>	As a whole group, or as individuals, complete the “3-2-1 Review!”
<b>Lesson Reinforcement</b>	Staff will develop a plan to reinforce and increase the skills learned from this lesson while participating in community activities. Brainstorm with staff and management, 3 places in the community where staff can prompt, instruct and reinforce the use and practice of the skills learned in this lesson. Share the lesson with other staff who accompany the person in community activities.

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 3

### I've Got Mail — Activity

**Staff Instructions:** Tell the group: "This game helps us get to know each other."

**How to play:**

1. Say "I've got mail for everyone who..." and finish the sentence with something that's true for some people in the group.
2. Anyone it's true for should raise their hands.

**Examples:**

- "I've got mail for everyone who has a pet"
- "I've got mail for everyone who likes pizza"

**Important:** Start with easy, comfortable statements (like favorite foods or color). As the game goes on, you can use statements that are more personal.

Some suggestions are below. Feel free to add your own or ask for ideas from those participants who have already joined a group.

- I've got mail for everyone who has a younger brother
- I've got mail for everyone who has an older sister
- I've got mail for everyone who has been out of the country
- I've got mail for everyone who lives with their parents
- I've got mail for everyone who has a pet
- I've got mail for everyone who ate cornflakes for breakfast this morning
- I've got mail for everyone who likes (celebrity)
- I've got mail for everyone who has ever broken their arm
- I've got mail for everyone who has had a job
- I've got mail for everyone who has been to Disney World
- I have mail for everyone who was born somewhere other than (name of city/town)
- I've got mail for anyone who is Catholic
- I've got mail for everyone who has celebrated Ramadan
- I've got mail for everyone who has been to California
- I've got mail for everyone who doesn't like ice cream

**Some prompts for discussion:**

- Did anyone notice someone they have something in common with?
- Did anyone learn something about a person that was surprising?

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 3

### Making Friends — Worksheet

**Participant Instructions:** Read each situation and decide if the response is a good way to build a friendship. Circle Yes, No, or Maybe next to each item. Be prepared to explain your answers!

**Staff Instructions:** Help participants think about what the best answer is and why. Use the prompts listed in the lesson details to spark discussion.

 Hi! Let's be friends	Yes No Maybe
 I need help planning our next fundraiser. Want to work together?	Yes No Maybe
 I'm going to ask if I can join that basketball game at the "Y"; it looks fun	Yes No Maybe
 I'll just eat lunch by myself and play games on my phone	Yes No Maybe
 Do you mind if I join you?	Yes No Maybe
 You look like you could use a hand. Would you like some help?	Yes No Maybe
 I'm having a party at my house after the game. Want to come?	Yes No Maybe
 Your clothes are so weird	Yes No Maybe
 Let's invite the new person	Yes No Maybe
 Would you introduce me to your friend Sally? WOWZAH!	Yes No Maybe

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 3

### Making Friends — Staff guide

1. No (may be too direct if you have just met the person)
2. Yes (positive, not too personal)
3. Yes (good way to see if the game needs another player)
4. No (This person could be lonely and/or shy)
5. Yes (this is a good way to get to know the person from the previous example)
6. Yes (This is perfect; it is not too direct, positive, and allows the person to choose)
7. Yes (If this is a regular team the person plays on and knows people, and they have food and drinks prepared at their house.)
8. No (Not nice, too direct!).
9. Yes, great getting the group to help the new person feel comfortable)
10. No (Too direct). You would need to know the person well. Not appropriate at a volunteer site or in a class. But if the person is a friend, you can ask in a “classier” way.

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 3

### 3-2-1 Review: How do you meet new people?

As a group, discuss:

**THREE** new things that you have learned today.

**TWO** things that you will think about in the community and at home.

**ONE** thing that we should review again.

3.	A.	
	B.	
	C.	
2.	A.	
	B.	
1.	A.	

#### **Lesson 4: How do we know how others are feeling?**

**Learning Objectives:** In this activity participants will learn about different ways to communicate without using words.

#### **Lesson Overview:**

<b>Lesson Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper/Easel for writing down participant responses</li><li>• <b>The Secret Language</b> Worksheet</li><li>• <b>Guess the Emotion</b> Activity</li><li>• <b>Emotion Cards</b></li><li>• The Secret Language Staff guide</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Print a copy of <b>The Secret Language</b> Activity sheet for each participant</li><li>• Print each of the <b>Emotion Cards</b>; these will be used in the Guess the Emotion activity sheet</li><li>• Print a copy of the <b>Guess the Emotion</b> activity sheet for each learner</li><li>• Review and/or print The Secret Language staff guide</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Details</b>	<p><b>Lesson Introduction:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Say: "Communication isn't just about words. Every time people interact, they send messages through:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facial expressions (especially their eyes)</li><li>• Body language (how they hold or move their bodies)</li></ul>Think of these as a "secret language" that adds meaning to the words people say</li><li>2. Explain that the message you give when using the "secret language" is very important. The expression on someone's face, their body posture and the way they sound can mean more than the words they say.</li><li>3. Say: "You can change what words mean by changing your tone of voice, your facial expressions and your body posture." Staff should say the phrase "I'm great" using the emotion listed in the examples below to connect the concept for the group.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• With a smile and a happy tone (sound excited)</li><li>• With a flat voice and no expression (sound sarcastic)</li><li>• With crossed arms and a frown (sound annoyed)</li></ul>Then say: "See how the same words send three different messages."</li></ol>

	<p>4. Explain that some people seem to understand these types of messages easily, and other people need help to understand them. The important thing is that anyone can learn to understand these messages with practice.</p> <p><b>Lesson Activity:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hand out <b>The Secret Language</b> Worksheet; or read the scenario out loud and ask participants the questions.</li> <li>2. After completing the worksheet. Say: Some people seem to understand these types of messages easily. Other people need help understanding them. But one thing is for sure - a person needs to know how to figure out these clues to make sense of other people's words and actions.</li> <li>3. SAY: "Now let's look at another kind of 'secret language', our faces. Our faces can show our emotions even when we don't say anything."</li> <li>4. SAY: Being able to recognize the ways our faces show our emotions is important because it is often the only way we will know how other's feelings. For many reasons, people can't or won't say how they are feeling, but their faces will show it.</li> <li>5. Once we know how someone is feeling, we can respond to them appropriately, which can help build and strengthen relationships.</li> <li>6. Review the <b>Emotion Cards</b> with the group. You can also demonstrate some of the faces (happy, sad, embarrassed, etc.) or ask for volunteers to show them. Ask participants what each emotion means.</li> <li>7. Hand out the <b>Guess the Emotion</b> activity sheet.</li> <li>8. SAY: "We're going to read each scenario and decide what the person might be feeling."</li> <li>9. Ask for volunteers. When someone gives an answer, hold up the corresponding emotion card and ask the group if they agree. Try to involve as many of the group as you can; people can point to the card if it is easier.</li> </ol>
<b>Lesson Reflection</b>	As a whole group, or individually, complete the "3-2-1 Review!"

<b>Lesson</b> <b>Reinforcement</b>	Staff will develop a plan to reinforce and increase the skills learned from this lesson while participating in community activities. Brainstorm with staff and management, 3 places in the community where staff can prompt, instruct and reinforce the use and practice of the skills learned in this lesson. Share the lesson with other staff who accompany the person in community activities.
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## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 4

### The Secret Language — Worksheet

**Instructions:** Read/listen to the scenario below and then answer the questions.

There once was a boy named Peter who had a big sister named Jane, a cat named Hairball, and a fat dog named Toothpick. Peter and Jane loved to eat fish and chips. They were thrilled one day when Mom decided to prepare her delicious homemade fish and chips for dinner. That evening, Peter and Jane were helping to put dinner on the table, when Peter accidentally stumbled over Hairball, who was lying in the middle of the kitchen floor. Unfortunately, Peter was carrying the platter of fish and chips, which went flying across the room, landing in front of Toothpick. In a flash Toothpick gobbled up all of the tasty fish and chips, leaving none for the family's dinner. At this, Jane looked over at Peter and said, "Good job, Peter!"

What ways could Peter interpret what Jane said? What clues could let him know what she meant?

How did Peter know she was not happy?

How do you think Jane felt?

How do you think Peter felt?

How do you think mom felt? What clues told you that?

How do you think Toothpick felt? What clues told you that?

How do you think Hairball felt? What clues told you that?

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 4

### The Secret Language — Worksheet — Staff Guide

What ways could Peter interpret what Jane said? What clues could let him know what she meant?

The answer is no! Peter knew right away that Jane was really upset that Peter tripped and dinner was gone. Jane's words meant "I'm upset" rather than "I'm happy"

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How did Peter know she was not happy?

Maybe Jane used an angry and/or sarcastic tone of voice, had clenched fists, scrunched up eyebrows, or down-turned mouth.

These would be nonverbal clues that Jane was angry. Peter also knew that Jane loved fish and chips. This was a clue that helped Peter figure out that Jane probably was upset over losing her chance to have Mom's fish and chips

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How do you think Jane felt?

Annoyed, angry, since she didn't get to eat her favorite meal.

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How do you think Peter felt?

Embarrassed. Angry, possibly in some pain.

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How do you think mom felt? What clues tell you that?

Angry since she probably spent time making this meal.

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How do you think Toothpick felt? What clues tell you that?

Scared or hurt by Peter tripping over him.

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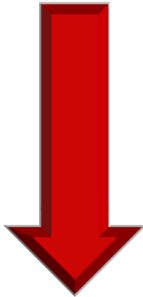
How do you think Hairball felt? What clues tell you that?

Happy to eat all that fish!

Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 4

Emotion Cards

Commented [JC1]: Amy can you please find less pixelated images to use here?





**Happy**



**Sad**



**Angry**



**Scared**



**Worried**



**Hurt**



**Surprise**



**Love**



**Excited**



**Jealous**



**Shy**



**Embarrassed**

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 4

### Guess the Emotion — Activity Sheet

**Instructions:** Read or listen to the scenarios below and guess what emotion the person is feeling.

1. You're playing the Pokémon card game with your friend Sam. Someone you don't know walks by and says, "Pokémon is dumb" and walks away. When you look at Sam he is frowning and his eyebrows are arched.
2. You are playing basketball with your friends, and you see your friend Andy sitting on the court holding his ankle, his face is red and squinched up.
3. At a party, a girl walks up to a group of other girls. They say something, and she walks away crying.
4. You're watching a baseball game. Steve hits a home run! He throws his arms up and cheers.
5. Peter is talking to a group of friends. He stands up, and his friend points and tells Peter his zipper is down. Peter turns red.
6. You're talking to your friend John. Lisa walks into the room, and John starts staring at her instead of listening to you.
7. Your best friend Jacob just got the new iPhone, and you wish you had it instead.
8. Your friend Billy is on the phone with his parents. He tells you his dad is in hospital. How do you think he is feeling?
9. You enter a raffle at your program and win a gift card!
10. Your friend Lori just got invited to a birthday party. She has a big smile on her face.
11. A new person, Julia, is asked to introduce herself to your church group. She looks down at her feet and speaks very softly.
12. Walking with your sister on a nature trail, you notice a big black widow spider inches from your foot. You scream!

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 4

### Guess the Emotion — Activity Sheet — Staff Guide

1. You're playing the Pokémon card game with your friend Sam. Someone you don't know walks by and says, "Pokémon is dumb" and walks away. When you look at Sam he is frowning and his eyebrows arched **Angry**.
2. You are playing basketball with your friends, and you see your friend Andy sitting on the court holding his ankle, his face is red and squinched up: **Hurt: Andy has a twisted ankle**
3. At a party, a girl walks up to a group of other girls. They say something, and she walks away crying. **Sad**.
4. You're watching a baseball game. Steve hits a home run! He throws his arms up and cheers. **Excited**
5. Peter is talking to a group of friends. He stands up, and his friend points and tells Peter his zipper is down. Peter turns red. **Embarrassed**.
6. You're talking to your friend John. Lisa walks into the room, and John starts staring at her instead of listening to you. **Love**
7. Your best friend Jacob just got the new iPhone you wish you had instead. **Jealous**
8. Your friend Billy is on the phone with his parents. He tells you his dad is in the hospital. How do you think he is feeling: **Worried**.
9. You enter a raffle at your program and win a gift card! **Surprised**
10. Your friend Lori just got invited to a birthday party. She has a big smile on her face. **Happy**.
11. A new person, Julia, is asked to introduce herself to your church group. She looks down at her feet and speaks very softly. **Shy**
12. Walking with your sister on a nature trail, you notice a big black widow spider inches from your foot. You scream! **Scared**.

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 4

### 3-2-1 Review: How do we know how others are feeling?

As a group, discuss:

**THREE** new things that you have learned today.

**TWO** things that you will think about in the community and at home.

**ONE** thing that we should review again.

3.	A.	
	B.	
	C.	
2.	A.	
	B.	
1.	A.	

## **Lesson 5: Who do you trust?**

**Learning Objectives:** In this activity participants will identify who they trust and why.

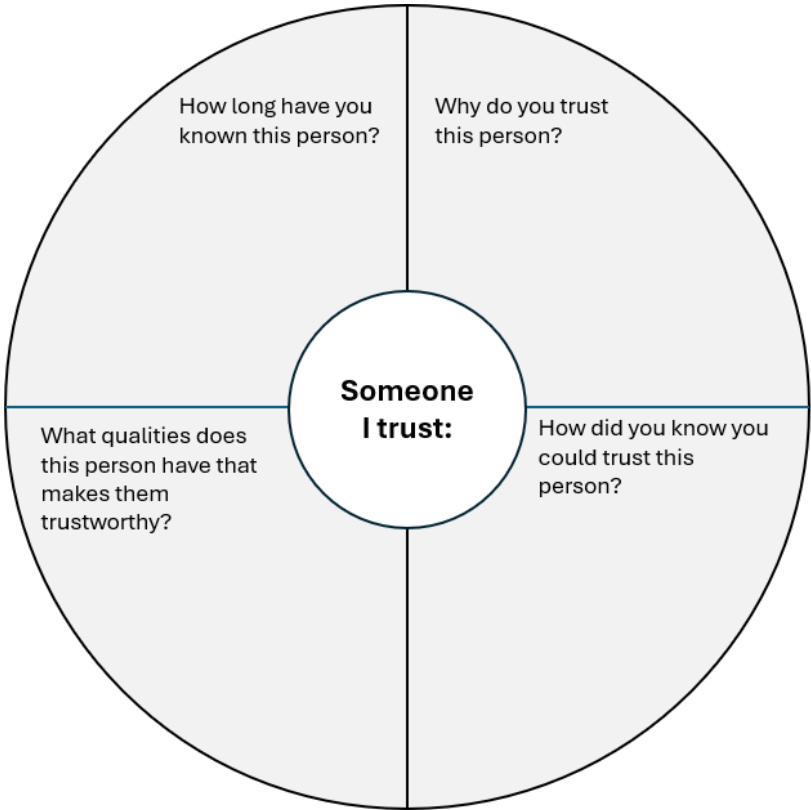
### **Lesson Overview:**

<b>Lesson Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper/Easel for writing down participant responses.</li><li>• <b>My Trust Circle</b> Activity sheet</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Print a copy of <b>My Trust Circle</b> Activity sheet for each participant.</li><li>• Complete your own “trust circle”</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Details</b>	<p><b>Lesson Introduction:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To begin the lesson activity, ask the group: What is trust? What does it mean to trust someone?</li></ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Definition: Trust means you believe someone will tell you the truth, keep you safe, and do what they say they will do. When you trust someone, you feel okay around them. You don't worry they will hurt you or trick you.</li></ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. To help participants understand the idea, give a personal example of someone you trust. Describe how you met the person and how long it took to develop your trust for that person. Explain that trust is something that people develop over time. Share an event or something that happened that made you see that you can trust this person.</li><li>3. You don't automatically get someone's trust. You have to show overtime that what you say and do will not hurt the other person. When people see that, they will trust you.</li><li>4. With that, there are some people that cannot be trusted. Ask the group: What makes someone untrustworthy?</li><li>5. If not mentioned, explain that a person you can't trust will lie to you, break promises and hide why they do things. Everyone makes mistakes sometimes, and that's okay. But if someone does these things over and over, they are most likely not trustworthy.</li></ol> <p><b>Lesson Activity:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Provide each participant with the <b>My Trust Circle</b> Activity sheet. Tell participants that you would like them to think of one person in their own life who they trust. Have participants write that person's name in the center of their circle.</li></ol>

	<p>2. Have them answer the questions about that person in the prompts listed around the circle.</p> <p>3. When students have completed their trust circle, have a few students share their circles out.</p> <p>4. Use the following prompts to engage participants in discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you find it easy or hard to trust someone?</li> <li>• What qualities do you have that make <b>you</b> a trustworthy person?</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson Reflection</b>	As a whole group, or individually, complete the “3-2-1 Review!”
<b>Lesson Reinforcement</b>	<p>Staff will develop a plan to reinforce and increase the skills learned from this lesson while participating in community activities.</p> <p>Brainstorm with staff and management, 3 places in the community where staff can prompt, instruct and reinforce the use and practice of the skills learned in this lesson. Share the lesson with other staff who accompany the person in community activities.</p>

**Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 5**

**My Trust Circle**



## Lesson 6: Tone of Voice

**Learning Objectives:** In this activity participants will Learn about the importance of tone of voice in building relationships.

### Lesson Overview:

<b>Lesson Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper/Easel for writing down participant responses</li><li>• Internet connected device</li><li>• Print 5 copies of Tone of Voice Role, one for each participant who will be participating.</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the Tone of Voice Role Play sheet</li><li>• Review the Tone of Voice Role Play Staff Guide</li><li>• Review video</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Details</b>	<p><b>Lesson Introduction:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Tell the class one of the social skills that it is important is “tone of voice”.</li><li>2. SAY: There are three main types of “tone” that we will focus on: emotional tone, sarcasm, and informal/formal tone.</li></ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Emotional tone:</b> This is the feeling connected with the sound of your words. We hear this sound before we hear was it is being said. Your best friend can tell you how great you are, but if he/she uses an angry tone, that is what you hear, right?</li><li>• <b>Sarcasm:</b> Sarcasm is when we make a joke or tease someone in order to make them feel bad. This is often shown by making certain faces and talking in a certain way. You can use this with a friend or someone you know well, but others may not like it.</li><li>• <b>Formal and informal tone:</b> Some people think of formal tone as “fancy” or polite. An informal tone is more casual, again, a way you talk with your family or friends. A formal tone often means using certain words (and avoiding others) and being grammatically correct. Think of talking to a boss or when you were in school, a teacher.</li></ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. SAY: We choose what tone of voice to use depending on where we are and who we are talking to.</li><li>4. Explain that tone has a huge effect on how well we communicate because it shapes how a message is</li></ol>

understood, beyond what is said.

5. **SAY:** Research shows that people rely heavily on vocal tone to understand meaning, intent, and emotion more often than actual words. Here's how tone of voice affects communication:
  - **Pass on the feelings of the person speaking:** tone communicates feelings such as frustration, enthusiasm, or sarcasm. The same words can be very different depending on tone. Example: "That's fine" can sound supportive, annoyed, or like you don't care about what someone is saying
  - **Build or damage trust:** A calm, respectful tone helps develop safety and trust, while a harsh, impatient or insulting tone can make a listener feel criticized and resistant to what the speaker is saying, even when the words are appropriate.
  - **Influences understanding:** Tone helps listeners understand meaning. A clear steady tone improves understanding, while a boring drone or overly emotional delivery can confuse listeners or cause them to stop learning
  - **Affects relationships:** Tone signals respect (or lack of it). In many different settings tones strongly influence how valued, heard, and respected a person feels
  - **Controls conflict:** During disagreement, tone often decides whether communication increases or decreases. A calm natural tone can reduce tension; an angry or insulting tone can make the conflict worse
  - **Affects participation and teamwork:** A positive tone can increase people's desire to do something and work together; flat or critical tones often have the opposite effect.
6. **Key Takeaway: People remember how you sounded more than what you said.** Effective communicators make sure that they match their message with their tone- clear, respectful, and emotionally appropriate- to make sure their true intent is clear to the listener.

	<p><b>Lesson Activity:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch this video with the group:  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPQyHXc1ksA&amp;t=3s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPQyHXc1ksA&amp;t=3s</a> Ex</li> <li>2. Pause the video to practice the phrases in the tone suggested when prompted by the video.</li> <li>3. Ask for volunteers for the role plays. Review instructions for participants and encourage questions. OR: Act out the role plays for the group</li> </ol>
<p><b>Lesson Reflection</b></p>	<p>As a whole group, or individually, complete the “3-2-1 Review!”</p>
<p><b>Lesson Reinforcement</b></p>	<p>Staff will develop a plan to reinforce and increase the skills learned from this lesson while participating in community activities. Brainstorm with staff and management, 3 places in the community where staff can prompt, instruct and reinforce the use and practice of the skills learned in this lesson. Share the lesson with other staff who accompany the person in community activities.</p>

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 5

### Tone of Voice Role Plays

**Instructions:** Read the phrase you are assigned twice, following the directions as best you can. Have fun!

#### 1. Negative and Positive Tone

Say the phrase “You’re early”

- A. In a warm, upbeat voice while smiling and using relaxed body language. Think of being excited to see someone
- B. In a flat or sharp voice with arms crossed

**Discussion prompt:** What made “B” feel uncomfortable even though the words didn’t change?

#### 2. Giving Instructions

Say the phrase “You need to finish this now”

- A. Calm, steady voice, with a natural expression
- B. Loud, rushed voice, while pointing or hollering

**Discussion prompt:** What made “B” feel uncomfortable even though the words didn’t change?

#### 3. Correcting a mistake

Say the phrase: “That’s not how we do it”

- A. In a voice that is calm and patient, with a slight pause before speaking
- B. Sighing, annoyed, with eye rolling

**Discussion prompt:** What made “B” feel uncomfortable even though the words didn’t change?

#### 4. Offering Help

Say the phrase “Do you need help?”

- A. In a friendly and respectful tone
- B. Speaking slowly with eyebrows raised

**Discussion prompt:** What made “B” feel uncomfortable even though the words didn’t change?

#### 5. Handling Frustration

Say the phrase “We need to talk”

- A. In calm tone, with controlled breathing
- B. In a tight voice, with short words.

**Discussion prompt:** What made “B” feel uncomfortable even though the words didn’t change?

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 5

### Tone of Voice Role Plays Staff Guide

**Staff Instructions:** The participant acting in this role play should read the script twice using different tones, following the body language prompts. After each act out, ask the rest of the group:

- How did that tone make you feel?
  - What do you think the speaker meant?
  - Practice the **preferred tone** together as a group.
  - Generalize to real life situations at home, work, or in the community.
1. This role play was focused on teaching participants that tone changes what listeners take away from what a speaker says, even when the words are the same. A. Message received might include appreciation and encouragement. B. Message received might be disapproval or suspicion.
  2. This role play was focused on the difference between a respectful versus a controlling tone. A. The message received was a clear expectation. B. This might send a message that the person might get fired if they don't finish the task, or otherwise a criticism of the job they're doing.
  3. This role play is meant to show the difference between coaching versus criticizing. A. The message received might be that they are being given an opportunity to learn. B. This message is more about shame or failure.
  4. The role play is meant to show the difference between being encouraged versus talking down to someone. A. The message received might be that the speaker didn't think the listener could do it, or was doing a bad job. B. The message received might be that the speaker is offering help to be kind.
  5. The role play is meant to show how we can regulate our emotions even if upset. A. The message received might be that the speaker and the listener will work together to solve a problem. B. The message received might be that the listener is in trouble, or that there is about to be an argument. Staff can also ask the group how hearing the words in the B example made their body feel.

## Building Social Skills and Relationships — Lesson 6

### 3-2-1 Review: Tone of voice

As a group, discuss:

**THREE** new things that you have learned today.

**TWO** things that you will think about in the community and at home.

**ONE** thing that we should review again.

3.	A.	
	B.	
	C.	
2.	A.	
	B.	
1.	A.	

## Building Social Skills and Relationships

### Citations

1. **How to Deliver the OPWDD Designed Work Readiness Curriculum** - Manual Module 2 – Fostering Community Involvement, Module 2 Lesson 1. P. 44-51
2. [Vocational Connections, Unit 4 Developing Community Connections Lesson 4](#)
3. Mannix, Darlene; **Life Skills Activities for Secondary Students with Special Needs**; p. 112-114.
4. [Vocational Connections, Unit 3: Think it, Say it, Feel it Lesson 7](#); p. 213-215
5. McAfee, J., MD (2002). *Navigating the Social World* (1st ed., pp. 81-86). Future Horizons.
6. <https://www.badgerstatespeechy.com/teaching-tone-of-voice/>