



Research Studies Supporting Project CLASS® and the Teaching of Social and Emotional Skills

- Durlack, J, Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B, Taylor, R.D., & Schellinger, K.B. (2011) Meta-Analysis showed that social and emotional learning interventions decreased emotional distress such as anxiety and depression, improved social and emotional skills, such as self-awareness and self-regulation, improved attitudes about self, others and school (including higher academic motivation) decreased classroom misbehavior and aggression, and improved academic performance. The effective programs taught skills in a systematic way, using sequenced learning and active-learning techniques such as role play.
- Mena (2001, 2005) Research specific to Project CLASS shows that Project CLASS effectively develops social skills in children and effectively strengthens social skills teaching abilities in adults. Students in a Houston elementary school using the Project CLASS social skills training showed statistically significant improvement in school and home functioning.
- Jones, Greenburg, and Crowley (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2015) Results of this study, which followed 753 kindergartners for 20 years, show that teacher-rated social competence in kindergarten was a consistent and significant indicator of both positive and negative future outcomes across all major domains: education, employment, criminal justice, substance use and mental health. Specifically, "kindergarten students who are more inclined to exhibit 'social competence' traits—such as sharing, cooperating, or helping other kids—may be more likely to attain higher education and well-paying jobs. In contrast, students who exhibit weaker social competency skills may be more likely to drop out of high school, abuse drugs and alcohol, and need government assistance."
- Gresham & Elliott (1990) Untreated social skills problems are relatively persistent, are related to poor academic performance, and may result in later social adjustment problems or serious psychopathology.
- Gresham & Elliott (1999) Several studies taken from the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) review the relationship between Social Skills and Problem Behaviors. The assessment of problem behaviors, as well as social skills development, is extremely important because problem behaviors often prevent individuals from behaving in a socially competent fashion (Asher & Hymel, 1981; Cartledge & Milburn, 1986; Foster & Ritchey, 1979; Gresham & Reschly, 1988; Walker & McConnell, 1988).
- Wang (1977) Social and emotional variables are integral rather than incidental to learning and these variables are not just relevant to academic achievement, they are *central* to it.
- Jensen (2000) concluded that some of the most effective strategies working with ADD, hyperactivity, oppositional and conduct disorders were: teaching social skills, having clear routines and expectations, using praise and positive feedback, using behavior achievement plans, being consistent, and having positive role models.
- Erwin (1994) found that Social Skills Training produced three important improvements for children who had social skills deficits: higher level of social interaction, higher level of acceptance by peers, and higher level of ability to solve problems.
- Kress (2004) states that being academically smart does not guarantee future success in life, referring to the need for social skills in addition to cognitive abilities.

- Spence (2003) found social skills training was effective in reducing social anxiety and improving social skills, as evidenced in post treatment and follow-up evaluation. Spence also found that social skills training effectiveness could be improved by: careful selection of the skills to be taught including cultural context; sufficient length of training; booster sessions; and a variety of children's contexts.
- McGeehan (2001) Bodybrain Research and Experiential Learning article states that a safe and predictable emotional climate begins with positive relationships--teacher to student and student to student. Such relationships are helped where there is a common language describing the ways in which people agree to interact respectfully.
- Gresham & Elliott (1991) As cited from the Social Skills Rating Scale (SSRS) overview, many studies have established a relationship between social skills and academic functioning (Bursuch & Asher, 1986; Coie & Krehbiel, 1984; Krehbiel, 1983).
- Gresham & Elliott (1990) Sharing, helping, initiating relationships, requesting help, giving compliments, and saying "please" and "thank you" are examples of social skills. Developing such skills is necessary for successful relationships and is one of the most important accomplishments of childhood.
- Wilson (2001) This study of school-based prevention activities revealed that social and emotional learning programs decreased rates of non-attendance and drop-out, two factors important for school success.
- Moote, Smyth, and Wodarski (1999) performed a meta-analysis of social skills training studies. The majority of the studies reviewed reported a positive correlation between social skills training and improvement of social skills and functional behavior.
- The Northeast Foundation for Children Study (1989) found positive outcomes in classrooms teaching social skills: decrease in behavior problems; increase in positive behaviors; and students with more developed social skills had significantly greater academic growth as measured by the Iowa-Test of Basic Skills.
- Dryfoos (1990) The Perry Michigan Preschool study stated teaching social skills to 3 & 4 year olds resulted in higher educational attainment, and more positive behavior when students moved to elementary school.
- Bandura (1986) theory of social cognition asserts that the acquisition of social skills is a necessary and important process of learning.
- Ladd and Price (1987) concluded that children who were more cooperative in their play in preschool and who had positive encounters with classmates tended to be better liked by their peers and were perceived by their teachers to be more involved with new classmates. In contrast, children who spent more time engaging in aggressive play or aggressive behavior with peers were more likely to be disliked by peers and perceived as hostile by teachers.
- Woodfin & Cusack cite the following studies in a Social Emotional Learning Research Overview prepared for the Houston Independent School District.
 - ✓ According to Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence and Working with Emotional Intelligence*, social and emotional abilities were four times more important than IQ in determining professional success and prestige.
 - ✓ According to a study conducted by the Board on Children, Youth, and Families in the Institute of Medicine, young children who act in anti-social ways participate less in classroom activities and are less likely to be accepted by classmates and teachers.