

Houston Achievement Place  
Project CLASS for School Collaborations

### **Purpose**

To collaborate with early childhood centers, elementary schools and middle schools for best practices and Project CLASS services to benefit children, teachers, parents, and other caring adults.

### **Project CLASS (Children Learning Appropriate Social Skills)**

- [www.projectclass.org](http://www.projectclass.org)
- Stands for Children Learning Appropriate Social Skills
- Builds social skills development in children 3-5 & 6-12 years old
- Strengthens social skills teaching abilities of teachers, parents, other caring adults
- Is extraordinary **TRAINING** integrated with invaluable teaching & learning tools including posters, music, songs & movements that are fun and engaging
- Incorporates in-school follow-up services to strengthen implementation & effectiveness
- Involves working directly with children who have the most behavior problems
- Has an extensive history of demonstrated and documented effectiveness & positive outcomes

### **Why is Project CLASS Needed?**

Whether at home, school, work or in the community, healthy relationships and relationship skills significantly determine success or failure. Relationship success begins with social skills. All children must learn and develop core foundational building block social, relationship and emotional skills to get along with others and succeed in life. How parents, teachers, and other caring adults teach these skills makes a world of difference. Help, support, training and tools to assist children in learning these skills are critically important.

### **Why Focus on Children 3-5 and 6-12 Years Old?**

Research indicates that amplified learning is possible during a child's early and formative years. While the "younger the better" rings true, practical considerations temper this principle. By focusing on children 3-5 & 6-12 years old, Project CLASS merges the best of two worlds: 1) the learning potential of young children and 2) the accessibility of adults who care for and teach these children and the value of consistent, skill-based training. More skills are learned with better results by concentrating on children 3-12 years old and their adult care providers.

### **What are Core Building Block Social and Relationship Skills?**

Social skills are the skills necessary to get along with others and form constructive relationships. These skills are the starting point for positive relationship development. These skills are also the elemental foundation for more complex skills in the future. Project CLASS skills include: Looking at the Person Talking, Paying Attention, Following Instructions, Accepting Feedback, Accepting No as an Answer. These and other Project CLASS skills underpin the development of values and character.

### **Why Project CLASS Works**

The formula for why Project CLASS works is: **CONTENT + IMPACT = LEARNING.**

Project CLASS incorporates Skills Content that is clear, simple, focused, consistent and immediately beneficial. Project CLASS integrates a FUN and Engaging Approach that includes songs, music, movements, stories, games, role-plays and theatrical activities for Impact. Learning is optimized by working in conjunction with child developmental realities, brain functioning, effective modes of learning and attention span parameters. Consistent social skills language and consistent social skills teaching methodology are hallmarks of Project CLASS and contribute to its effectiveness.

### **Who is Project CLASS for Schools Currently Helping?**

Project CLASS is currently serving over 32,000 children, 4,000 teachers and 2,000 parents in 60+ early childhood centers and elementary schools. Schools served are Houston ISD, Spring Branch ISD, KIPP charter schools, Faith-Based & Catholic Schools, and other districts, charters and private schools.

### **Is Project CLASS Research Based?**

*Project CLASS teaching methodology.* Project CLASS is built on an extensive foundation of research studies conducted through the University of Kansas (Lawrence, Kansas) and the Achievement Place Research Project.

*Importance of social skills development.* Durlak and Weissberg (2005) did a quantitative analysis of 300 research studies demonstrating the beneficial impact of social and emotional development programs on academic performance, on-task behavior and constructive relationships

*Effectiveness of Project CLASS in developing social skills in children and in strengthening social skills teaching abilities of teachers.* Mena (Datatude 2001; Datatude 2005) demonstrated the effectiveness of Project CLASS in decreasing inappropriate student behavior and increasing appropriate behavior; demonstrated increased usage of effective social skills teaching skill sets by teachers and decreased usage of ineffective social skills teaching skill sets.

### **What are Project CLASS Results and Demonstrated Outcomes?**

- Increased social skills usage by children (30%-200%)  
(Follow Instructions, Pay Attention, Ask Permission, Accept No, etc.)
- Increased social skills teaching abilities by teachers (25%-100%)  
(Use of social skills language; Use of Praise & Positive Attention; Use of Reminder Prompts, etc.)
- Increased appropriate behavior by children (30%-200%)
- Decreased inappropriate behavior by children (20%+)
- Decreased disciplinary referrals for children by teachers (20%-80%)
- Positive Assessments by 80%-96% of teachers and principals across the dimensions of Project CLASS Usefulness; Helpfulness; Development of Valuable Skills; Positive Impact on School Climate; Improved Student Behavior; Increased Academic Teaching Time; Decreased Disciplinary Time; Increased On-Task Behavior; Improved Academic Performance
- Increased positive teacher-student interactions in the classroom (30%-50%)
- Decreased negative teacher-student interactions in the classroom (30%-50%)

### **How is Project CLASS Different from Other Social Skills Programs?**

Most social skills programs are comprised of a "kit" and little or nothing else. Project CLASS focuses on workshop training and in-school training experiences that develop skills and skill sets. Without integrative in-school training experiences, kits are largely ineffective, sounding better in the promotional information than where the action really is, in the classrooms and lives of the children.

### **DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES**

Covers the Full School Year or Half School Year

Comprised of Three (3) parts:

**A Core-Skills Workshop Training (6.5 hours)**

**B In-School Services**

**C Tools & Resources**

**D Cost to School Campus**

## **A Core-Skills Workshop Training (6.5 hours)**

The Core-Skills Workshop Training most often occurs before the start of school in August. We strongly encourage training all the school's teachers and core staff at the same time. The Workshop Training experience is full day (6.5 hours). The training location is in the Houston Heights and a working lunch is provided. In some cases, the Core-Skills Workshop Training can be provided at a school location for an additional fee.

## **B In-School Services**

In addition to the Core-Skills Workshop Training component, each campus will have a Project CLASS Trainer at the school to assist with implementation in the classrooms and a to work directly with the children with the most behavior problems. The Project CLASS trainer will be in the school one full school day (school hours) each school week for the full school year. Project CLASS in-school trainer services focus 50% time on strengthening teacher skills in working with student behavior in the classrooms and 50% time working directly with the students with the most behavior problems in small groups on a weekly basis.

## **C Tools & Resources**

Each participant in the Core-Skills Training Workshop will receive: a set of 11" x 17" social skills posters (English & Spanish- a set is 10 posters); social skills music & songs; Project CLASS manual of skills & skill sets.

## **D Cost to School Campus**

Project CLASS school collaborations are funded by a combination of school funding & donated monies fund-raised through Houston Achievement Place (HAP). Typically, the school is responsible for less than 50% of the cost for the services the school receives. This situation is only possible because of the generous donors who care about our schools and are picking up most of our costs for us to deliver these services.

## **MORE PARTICULARS**

Project CLASS (Children Learning Appropriate Social Skills) develops core foundation social and relationship skills in children 3-5 and 6-12 years old. Project CLASS strengthens social skills teaching abilities of teachers, teacher assistants and parents. Project CLASS is extraordinary training integrated with music, songs and movements to accelerate skill development. Project CLASS is simple, engaging, fun, effective and extremely user-friendly. The Project CLASS website is a source for additional information [www.projectclass.org](http://www.projectclass.org).

Project CLASS is focused on the development of Core-Foundation building block social and relationship skills so that students are more attentive, better behaved, more learning ready and better academically performing. The key priority is Core-Foundation skills. Far too often, children are not sufficiently equipped with Core-Foundation skills to learn and succeed.

Without a rock-solid foundation, a house will not stand. Without the ABCs, reading will not happen. Without Core-Foundation skills, more complex skills will not be put into practice. Project CLASS Core-Foundation skills include: Look at the Person Talking, Pay Attention, Follow Instructions, Accept Feedback, Accept No. These and other Project CLASS skills underpin the development of values and character.

## **A Core-Skills Workshop Training (6.5 hours) MORE PARTICULARS**

Project CLASS Workshop Training is a full-day (6.5 hours) training experience typically delivered to groups ranging from 15 to 75 persons. This Workshop is experiential, skill development focused, and involves a trainee to trainer ratio of 4-7 trainees per trainer in Houston. The reason for this structure is to facilitate skill development in the least amount of time.

The Project CLASS Workshop builds on current skills of participants & strengthens abilities to:

- concentrate teaching on important, simple, clear, defined user-friendly social skills;
- notice and communicate what children are doing and not doing in their social behavior;
- communicate with language and intention that help children implement skills and experience success;
- respond in a consistent and effective way to children's appropriate and inappropriate social skills behavior, facilitating their social skills development;
- effectively "set expectations" for social skills behaviors;
- effectively use "praise and positive attention" directly linked to social skills behaviors;
- effectively use "reminder prompts" directly linked to social skills behaviors;
- effectively make use of "choices" and "consequences" directly linked to social skills behaviors;
- make social skills teaching FUN by using music, songs, movements, and stories;
- avoid a number of pitfalls that lead to power struggles with children;
- feel more confident that participants know what to teach and how to teach social skills effectively;
- teach social skills positively with positive results.

## **B In-School Services MORE PARTICULARS**

The delivery of In-School Services is through a Project CLASS Trainer who works at the school one full school day, school hours, each week of the school year.

Project CLASS In-School Services supplement and integrate the core Project CLASS Workshop Training experience. These services are typically delivered by Project CLASS trainers who are certified teachers.

Based on needs, priorities and preferences, the menu of options for these services includes:

- ✓ working directly with individual children who have need for extra social skills practice;
- ✓ working directly with several children in small groups who have need for social skills practice;
- ✓ providing social skills focused observations and feedback to teachers & teacher assistants;
- ✓ social skills problem-solving;
- ✓ providing refresher & booster training sessions;
- ✓ doing presentations or mini-training sessions for parents;
- ✓ reading Project CLASS social skills story adventures;
- ✓ conducting mini-pep rallies;
- ✓ demonstrating music, songs and movements;
- ✓ role-modeling social skills teaching skills.

## **C Tools & Resources MORE PARTICULARS**

Project CLASS Tools & Resources are designed to optimize teaching and learning. These Tools & Resources work in conjunction with child developmental realities, brain functioning, effective modes of learning, and attention span parameters. Project CLASS Tools & Resources include: social skills posters (English, Spanish); social skills songs and music (English & Spanish); social skills movements; activities; stories; games; dramatic scenarios; motivation systems; animations; children's books; demo videos; parent & educator activities guides; films; more.

## **Contact Information**

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