

# Kindy Kids Connect

Build & cultivate resilience in children.



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## SOCIAL SKILLS & COMMUNICATION

Interacting with others daily, requires communication and social skills, including speech, gesture, facial expression and body language.

As a child develops they learn social skills from their parents and other adults around them. As they reach school age they start to practice these skills with peers and their environment.

Research shows that different social skill levels can also influence a child's behaviour, how they develop friendships and ability to understand other people's needs based on verbal and non verbal cues.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS

### What activities can help improve social skills?

Children develop their social skills from mimicking and practicing what they see from adults around them. Below are some helpful activities that you can do to help your child develop advantageous social skills:

#### Role Plays

Get creative and teach your child social skills using role plays, you can use toys such as puppets, dolls or plush toys or by acting out different playground scenarios that you experienced as a child or that they are experiencing now such as:

- A child approaching a group and asking to play
- Feeling sad or angry and telling the teacher
- Asking to use a toy or pencil
- Using manners

#### Mimic game

Helping your child understand different emotions can help them with building empathy and understanding what others may be feeling or thinking at any given time. Why not try making different facial expressions and get your child to try and mimic the face and explain what emotion or feeling you are expressing. You can also draw faces and get your child to practice their drawing skills as well as learning facial expressions.

#### Everyday interactions

When interacting with others it is important to remember that children are observing and learning from your actions and those around them. You may want to discuss certain social situations and strategies that you used in your own interactions and how your problem solved to assist your child in developing critical life long social skills. For example; going to the shops you may want to get your child to play shops at home, ask for help, ordering food, etc.. this will help build their confidence to communicate with others.

### Supports available at School:

School staff  
Pastoral care staff  
CatholicCare school counselling program

**Contact your school for more information**

# A Child's Developmental Milestones

As children age they will reach different developmental milestones with their social skills. Developing children's social skills and confidence to communicate with others, plays an important role in building their resilience to deal with more complex situations as they grow. Skills like awareness of self and others, understanding and expressing their feelings, and managing conflict are qualities that result in positive relationships, academic success and the ability to adapt to changes. Even though every child and person develops at their own pace, we all have the capacity to develop social skills. Understanding your child's capacity and where they are up to on developmental milestones will help you help them reach their potential. Speak to your family doctor or school if you are noticing that your child is significantly struggling with their social skills (such as developing friendships, understanding emotions, difficulties with verbal and non verbal cues or trouble expressing feelings) compared to their peers.

## Out of Hours School Care (OSHC)

CatholicCare Wollongong is an approved provider of Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) in the Illawarra and Macarthur areas currently operating in 12 schools. We provide varied before and after school care for children aged 5 to 12 years.

Our services are located within school grounds and provide children with a safe and welcoming environment.

The spaces cater to a wide range of activities for children of differing ages, interests and needs.

Our program encourages and enables children to grow and develop in a safe, caring and supportive environment. As well as our structured activities, there is plenty of time to have fun and play with friends. Children have access to sporting equipment, arts and crafts, drama, science, cooking, toys, games, dress ups and more.

For more information visit: <https://www.catholiccare.dow.org.au/services-and-programs/family/school-care/out-of-school-hours-care-oshc/>



### HOW CAN WE BENEFIT FROM SOCIAL SKILLS?

- Making new friends
- Maintaining friendships with peers
- Communicating with unfamiliar individuals
- Asking for help Reading/understanding social situations
- Understanding jokes
- Coping with failure or let downs
- Behavioural issues / playground fights
- Isolation

**Together  
in Care.**

**catholiccare**  
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