



SELmedia™
Social Emotional Learning for Life

S.S.GRIN
Social Skills Group Intervention

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Parent Handout for S.S.GRIN
Social Skills Group Intervention

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IS...

Nonverbal Communication is communicating **HOW** we think or feel without using words.

Some examples are tone of voice, body language, facial expressions, and eye contact.

...not what you say
(verbal),
but how you say it
(nonverbal).

Communication is the key to making a relationship work. It is important to understand any challenges children may face when they try to communicate nonverbally.

Some areas that are difficult for children are:

- ◊ Matching nonverbal and verbal communication (for example, smiling while saying something sad or looking angry while asking another child to play)
- ◊ Interpreting others' nonverbal communication (for example, when the person you are talking to looks away because you are talking for a long time)



THE FIVE METHODS OF CHANGE

EACH METHOD PROVIDES CONCRETE WAYS OF HELPING CHILDREN BUILD POSITIVE SKILLS AND RELATIONSHIPS.

Coaching	Pay attention to how your child uses his body and tone of voice when expressing himself. Give specific feedback by pointing out how his body, face, or tone may not match what he is saying. Actively praise his efforts to improve these skills and offer opportunities to practice nonverbal communication with you. When he is speaking to someone, encourage your child to look at the person's nose and look away every few seconds. Encourage your child to respect personal space. Although personal space varies by culture, standing 2-3 feet apart is generally acceptable.
Modeling	Model and actively point out when you or others use nonverbal cues. For example, "I am not happy with the choice you made. Look at my face, eyes, and mouth. Listen to my tone of voice and look at my body position." Your child will watch and learn from your nonverbal communication.
Role Plays	Play charades with family and friends. You may play traditional charades and/or feelings charades. For feelings charades, act out various emotions (happy, sad, frustrated, disappointed, etc...) without using words, only facial expressions and body language. Have your child guess what the emotion is and then change places. Reinforce when your child effectively communicates and emphasize when more details are needed to effectively communicate complex emotions.
Setting	Work with your child on nonverbal communication within the home and with close friends. Share what you are working on and why with your child's teacher and coaches.
Talking	Ask your child what it is like to try and understand others' nonverbal communication. "Are you ever confused about what someone's facial expression means or why they are doing something with their body?" Ask your child to share a personal example and discuss the thoughts and feelings that accompanied this experience.



FOR MORE RESOURCES AND TOOLS
TO HELP YOUR CHILD, GO TO
www.SELmediainc.com