

February Asset of the Month

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

Young people need the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions and to cope with new situations.

1. Planning and Decision Making – Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
2. Interpersonal Competence – Young person has empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills.
3. Cultural Competence – Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
4. Resistance Skills – Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
5. Peaceful Conflict Resolution – Young person seeks to resolve conflict non-violently.

PRACTICAL TIPS TO CREATE SOCIAL COMPETENCIES IN YOUR CHILDREN AND IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD CHILDREN

- ◆ Hold family meetings in which children have input into decisions.
- ◆ Give young children at least two equally appealing choices whenever possible.
- ◆ Practice good social skills by having “tea parties” where children can act out social situations using dolls, puppets, or favorite book characters, have “formal” family meals, and role play polite telephone manners.
- ◆ Make Valentines or other seasonal/holiday cards for people who live alone or are in hospitals.
- ◆ Encourage older children to give back to the community by volunteering. Allow them to see you volunteering.
- ◆ Talk with them about the positive effects of volunteering.
- ◆ Attend cultural celebrations, religious organization festivals and art and music programs featuring artists from diverse backgrounds.
- ◆ Make holidays such as Martin Luther King, Jr. Day more than a day off by participating in community activities.
- ◆ Try a different ethnic restaurant or cook a different ethnic meal monthly.
- ◆ Encourage school-age children to practice healthy responses to peer pressure and uncomfortable situations.
- ◆ Help children to learn ways of handling conflict without fighting.
- ◆ Talk about real-life heroes such as Gandhi and Martin Luther King and how these heroes promoted non-violent resistance.