

Social Skills IEP Goals — 3rd – 5th Grade

16 measurable goals written to IDEA standards. Replace [student] and [date]; adjust criteria to the student's baseline.

Conversation goals should measure reciprocity, not just initiation — a student who asks one question and then goes silent hasn't yet learned to maintain a conversation, which is the harder and more useful skill.

CONVERSATION & INITIATION

1. [student] will initiate a conversation with an unfamiliar or less-familiar peer using a greeting and an open-ended question, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.
2. [student] will maintain a conversation with a peer for at least 4 exchanges by asking follow-up questions, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.
3. [student] will recognize when a conversation partner is not interested (checking out, changing topic) and adjust, with 80% accuracy across 4 of 5 observed opportunities.

GROUP WORK & COOPERATION

4. [student] will contribute at least [X] ideas during a cooperative group project, without dominating or withdrawing, across 4 of 5 group tasks.
5. [student] will accept a group decision they disagree with, using appropriate language, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.
6. [student] will divide tasks fairly with group members during a cooperative activity, with adult support fading, across 4 of 5 group tasks.

SOCIAL THINKING & PERSPECTIVE-TAKING

7. [student] will identify expected and unexpected behavior for a specific social context and explain why, with 80% accuracy across 4 of 5 trials.
8. [student] will identify how their own behavior might make a peer feel, given a social scenario, with 80% accuracy across 4 of 5 trials.
9. [student] will use whole body listening during instruction and peer conversations, in 8 of 10 observed opportunities.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION & FRIENDSHIP

10. [student] will use a taught conflict-resolution strategy (compromise, take turns, get an adult) to resolve a peer conflict, in 4 of 5 documented opportunities.
11. [student] will identify at least [X] qualities of a good friend and evaluate whether their own behavior matches, with 80% accuracy across 4 of 5 trials.
12. [student] will maintain a friendship with at least 1 peer across the school year, as reported by self, teacher, or family observation.
13. [student] will accept feedback or correction from a peer without the target behavior, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.

SOCIAL PROBLEM-SOLVING & SELF-ADVOCACY

14. [student] will identify a social problem (being left out, teased) and generate at least [X] possible solutions before acting, in 4 of 5 documented opportunities.
15. [student] will ask an adult for help with a peer conflict using appropriate language, rather than the target behavior, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.
16. [student] will recognize and avoid a socially risky situation (an unsafe dare, unkind group behavior) using adult-taught strategies, in 4 of 5 documented opportunities.

Using These Social Skills Goals at 3rd – 5th Grade

Reciprocity is the real measure of conversation

Counting follow-up questions shows whether a student is maintaining a two-way exchange, not just initiating and going quiet.

Perspective-taking can be taught with concrete scenarios

Asking a student to predict how their action made a peer feel, using a real or hypothetical scenario, builds the skill more directly than a vague “be kind” goal.

Friendship goals need more than one observer

Whether a student “has a friend” should be verified by self-report and an adult or family observation, not assumed from one good day.

Teach the problem-solving steps before the goal, not during

A goal that expects a student to generate solutions to a social problem only works if they've already been taught a process to follow.

Verify friendship and peer-relationship goals with more than one source — self-report, teacher observation, and family report can all say something different.

Tired of rebuilding these forms every year?

IEP Goal Writer also drafts your PLAAFP and progress notes from the same student profile — free to try at iepgoalwriter.pro