VERMONT Consultation & Psychiatry Access PROGRAM

Supporting Pediatric and Perinatal Providers

CAREGIVERS GUIDE

SOCIAL SKILLS & CONNECTION RESOURCES

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All kids need connection. Positive social connections are an important part of every child's health and well-being. Some children may need extra support developing social skills, finding opportunities to connect with peers, or building friendships. Here are some ideas for helping your child build social connections:

- **Connect with your child's school.** Ask your child's school counselor or other support staff about opportunities such as social skills groups, "lunch bunch" groups, peer activities, clubs, or other social supports.
- **Explore activities in your community.** Playgroups, playgrounds, libraries, community centers, and other local spaces can provide opportunities for children to interact with peers. Many libraries offer free activities, clubs, and programs for children and teens.
- **Check your local Parks & Recreation programs.** Look for sports, clubs, camps, classes, or other activities that match your child's interests and provide opportunities to spend time with other children.
- **Build from your child's interests.** Children may find it easier to connect with peers when an activity is centered around something they already enjoy, whether that's art, gaming, animals, music, sports, nature, or another interest.
- **Start small.** For children who find social situations challenging or overwhelming, a one-on-one activity with another child or a small, structured group may feel more manageable than a large group activity.

NAME & WEBSITE	SERVICES
Kayla's Directory	A directory of resources for children with unique health or educational needs, and it includes a listing of social opportunities.
The Stern Center	Offers social skills groups and summer programming aimed at social/emotional learning. These services are not covered by insurance, but they typically offer scholarships.
Social Thinking	Offers books, games, and learning resources for purchase, related to social development for kids of all ages.
PEERS	Offers free videos demonstrating various social skills
All Brains Belong	Offers a Kid Virtual Connections Program. This program virtually connects kids with similar interests to engage in an activity that they both enjoy. It is for ages 4-17 and is FREE.

Camp Akeela	Is a sleep away camp that focuses on social development. Other helpful places with information on summer camps are: Vermont Camp and School Finder and Vermont Family Network Camp Guide
Simply Social Skills	Offers groups for kids ages 8+ is available online. This is a social skills and coaching program (not a clinical group). This is available for monthly tuition fee and is not covered by insurance.

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