

## Encouraging Language Development

More Than Words & Social Thinking  
(an overview of two programs)

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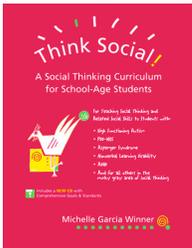
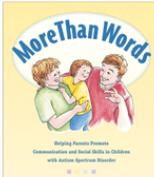
## Introduction

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- Hanen-Certified SLP
- Director, Camp Yes! in the Woods
- Co-founder The Other Paw Assistance Dogs
- Paws for Purple Hearts



## Social Language



## Hanen More Than Words



- For parents of children ages 5 and under on the autism spectrum
- Provides parents with tools, strategies, and support to help their children reach communication goals
- 8 parent-only training sessions in small groups
- Individual video feedback sessions




## More Than Words

- “Learning to communicate is a very social process and children learn to communicate from birth within everyday interactions with their parents.”
- “Parents foster their child’s communication development by responding promptly and building on what the child is communicating about.”

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## Responsiveness

- Respond promptly
- Respond in ways that show the parent is interested in what the child is saying
- Stick with what the child is communicating about and interested in



## Social Language Learning & Parent Responsiveness

- allow the child to initiate interactions
- follow the child's lead; base interactions on what interests the child
- treat the child's communication as if it is meaningful; be responsive to ANY communication
- use natural, everyday situations
- use the natural repetition, structure, and predictability of everyday routines
- use visual supports (gestures, visual aids)
- set up the environment to encourage communication



## Video Feedback Sessions

- 5 minutes
- Watch together
- Look for specific things
- Watch again
- Parent rates self
- Parent determines next steps



## A few examples...

- Language Wheel
- Strategies:
  - Imitate
  - Interpret
  - Comment
  - Ask questions
- Rock a Routine



## Research

Parents who participated in the Hanen More Than Words Program used more responsive interaction strategies than parents who did not.

Children of parents who participated in the Hanen More Than Words Program:

- had larger vocabularies;
- communicated more often;
- participated in turn-taking routines more often;
- made more eye contact with people



## What is Social Thinking?



- social thinking is what we do when we interact with people
- most of us develop communication from birth onwards, observing and acquiring social information and learning how to respond to people
- many individuals do not intuitively learn the nuances of social communication and interaction, regardless of IQ score.



## Core Facts and Theories

- we think about people all the time, even when we're not interacting with them
- we adjust our behavior based on what we think the people around us are thinking
- we try to avoid each other's "weird thoughts"
- we constantly adjust our behavior to help people have "normal thoughts" about us
- how we adapt our behavior changes in different situations and over time
- social thinking is something we all do all day every day, even when we are alone
- social thinking continues into adulthood in order to succeed at work and in relationships with others



## What is Social Thinking?

- social thinking challenges are commonly experienced by individuals with:
  - autism spectrum disorders
  - social communication disorders
  - ADHD
  - nonverbal learning disability (NLD)
- many children & adults experiencing social learning difficulties have no diagnosis



## Individuals experiencing difficulties with Social Thinking

- don't seem to learn from watching others
- may need direct instruction or coaching to understand what to do
- may miss the big picture in a situation ("reading the plan")
  - the theme of an activity
  - the topic of conversation
  - the expected behaviors for a situation ("expected/unexpected")
- emotional reaction does not match the level of intensity of the situation ("problem size")
- difficulty with win/lose situations
- moves away from the group when frustrated or distracted ("body in/out of the group")



## Individuals experiencing difficulties with Social Thinking

- may not respond appropriately to other people's emotions; seem to lack empathy
- may not understand "personal space"; may stand too close or be too far away from others in the group
- may not understand the back and forth, give and take nature of conversation
  - talk mostly about their own interests or area of expertise
- may have difficulty taking other people's perspective or accepting others' points of view ("just me/thinking of others")



## Social Thinking

"The ability to consider your own and others' thoughts, emotions, beliefs, intentions, and knowledge, etc. to help interpret and respond to the information in your mind, and possibly through your social behavioral interactions..."

"[children with social thinking challenges] struggle to pick up the social cues from their environment or that others are sending, they need to be directly told how they are affecting others' thoughts and feelings, as they do not naturally make that social connection."

" unexpected or inappropriate behavior is usually not willful disobedience"

-Michelle Garcia Winner



## ILAUGH Model

- Michelle Garcia Winner-Think Social!
  - **I**nitiation
  - **L**istening (with eyes/brain, etc)
  - **A**bstract language: Inference/Prediction
  - **U**nderstanding Perspective
  - **G**estalt
  - **H**umor

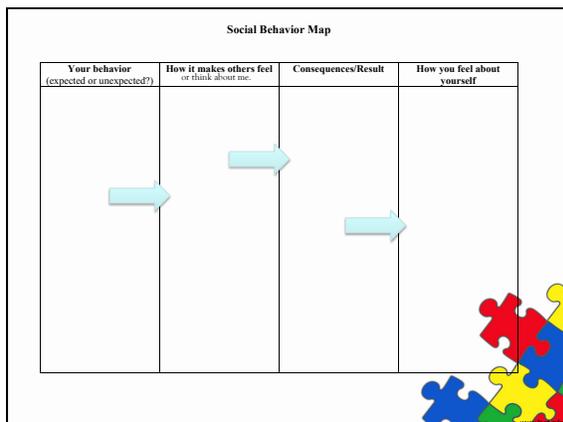


## Social Thinking Strategies

teach individuals:

- how their own social minds work
- why they and others react and respond the way they do
- how their behaviors affect the way others perceive and respond to them
- how this affects their own emotions, responses to and relationships with others across different social contexts





## Vocabulary

- Expected/unexpected behaviors
- In the group/Out of the group
- Just ME/Thinking of others
- Thinking with your eyes
- Figure out “the plan”
- Problem size/Reaction size
- Smart Guess/Wacky Guess

## Let's have some fun...

- Problem Size/Reaction Size
- Conversation tree game

## Research

- online

## Resources

- Think Social-Michelle Garcia Winner
  - [www.socialthinking.com](http://www.socialthinking.com)
  - Incredible, Flexible You (preschool)
  - Superflex (elementary)
- [www.hanen.org](http://www.hanen.org)
  - Talkability
- [www.zonesofregulation.com](http://www.zonesofregulation.com)
- ACCA Alaska Center for Children and Adults
- Camp Yes! in the Woods
- Conversation Station