

Friendship Club

Friendship Club is designed specifically for children/teens with:

- social difficulties and social cognitive deficits, to include but not limited to:
 - Asperger's Syndrome,
 - HFA,
 - PDD-NOS &
 - Non-Verbal Learning Disability.

These children typically present with difficulties communicating and understanding verbal as well as non-verbal information such as:

- facial expressions,
- body posture & gestures,
- personal space,
- voice intonation,
- initiating and responding appropriately to novel activities,
- listening,
- comprehending abstract language,
- understanding perspective taking,
- getting the whole picture and
- deciphering humor.

Children with these difficulties may have trouble with:

- unspoken social rules of social conduct,
- the acquisition of acceptable social skills.

Offered through weekly sessions, **FRIENDSHIP CLUB** goes beyond just teaching social skills.

Activities help:

- social thinking ,
- social actions,
- effective utilization of social skills,
- understand and practice the hidden social rules,
- expected behaviors within various environments.

Children are taught to **think how to be social**. Because social rules and challenges are different at various developmental stages and ages, program activities and goals vary accordingly to meet specific social needs.

Concepts utilized in the program are based on the works of:

- Michelle Garcia Winner,
- Stephanie Madrigal, and
- Sandie Frawley, EdD

Best-practice techniques used include:

- Role-play,
- guided practice,
- pretend play,
- games,
- video modeling,
- feedback,
- positive reinforcement.

Group meetings are highly structured to include activities and experiences supporting the mastery of program objectives to include:

*** Develop communicative intent (verbal & nonverbal)**

*** Develop ability to initiate & maintain conversation**

*** Enhance understanding of how actions influence others**

*** Develop understanding of “the why” of social skills**

*** Develop peer friendships**

*** Enhance self-esteem and social confidence**