A Test of a Measure for Assessing Teachers' Judgments about Social Interaction Practices in the Preschool Years

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Abstract

The primary purpose of this article is to describe the development and utility of the Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years (SIPPY) questionnaire. The SIPPY is a tool designed to assess teachers' judgments of the acceptability and feasibility, as well as their current use, of literature-supported strategies for promoting the development of young children's social competence in early childhood classrooms. The questionnaire was administered to 57 female preschool teachers, the majority of whom held either a national or Florida Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, but very few of whom held a bachelor's degree or beyond. Participants had an average of 5 years' experience as teachers of young children. Results support the internal consistency of the tool and suggest that it is a useful assessment tool for research on teachers' knowledge and beliefs about supporting social competence, as well as a tool for creation of individually appropriate professional development activities for teachers. Analyses suggest that, in general, teachers in this sample viewed literature-supported strategies as acceptable and feasible. They were more likely, however, to judge strategies as acceptable and feasible than was reflected in their current use of those strategies. These teachers also viewed more intensive strategies as less acceptable and less feasible than environmental and natural activity strategies. Suggestions are made for further research to replicate and explain these findings.

Literature Review

Peer Social Competence

Social competence has been defined as "the ability to achieve personal goals in social interaction while simultaneously maintaining positive relationships with others over time and across situations" (Rubin & Rose-Krasnor, 1992, p. 285). In the realm of early childhood education, children's competence in social interaction with peers has traditionally been accorded prominent importance, and with good reason. The classroom peer group provides a uniquely ripe context in which children learn, practice, and refine the give and take that is essential to competent social interaction (Hartup & Moore, 1991). A substantial body of research verifies that difficult peer relations in childhood are a strong predictor of adjustment difficulties later in life (Kupersmidt, Coie, & Dodge, 1990; Parker & Asher, 1987). The ability to interact effectively with peers is viewed as an important component of school readiness and is predictive of children's positive adjustment to later schooling (Birch & Ladd, 1996). Competent classroom social interaction has been found to predict performance on standardized achievement tests (Malecki & Elliott, 2002; Welsh, Park, Widaman, & O'Neil, 2001). Recent reviews of the literature have concluded that "there is a growing body of scientifically-based research supporting the strong impact that enhanced social and emotional behaviors can have on success in school and ultimately in life" (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004, p. 19).

The Important Role of a Teacher

The early childhood environment provides an arena for the development of peer-related social competence. The extent to which that potential is realized, however, can vary tremendously from one setting to another. The growth of peer-related social competence in an early childhood program can be enhanced by the attention of a teacher who understands the social needs and capabilities of the children, who knows how to provide appropriate support as needed, and who intentionally and purposefully acts to do so (Katz & McClellan, 1997).

Research, theory, and tradition have generated an abundance of useful strategies and teaching skills to support the growth of young children's social and emotional learning and development (for a review, see Kemple, 2004). A schematic for classifying strategies, as well as for making decisions about which strategies to consider first, is described by Brown, Odom, and Conroy (2001). Teachers are generally urged to consider the most naturalistic approaches first, before moving on to more intensive, highly structured, and adult-directed approaches. This approach is exemplified in a hierarchical pyramid model for supporting social competence and preventing challenging behaviors in young children (Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2003). This model suggests that practitioners begin with naturalistic strategies such as developing meaningful relationships and creating a supportive classroom environment and move toward more specific and individualized teaching strategies and interventions.

Purpose

The purpose of this article is to describe the development and reliability of the Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years (SIPPY) questionnaire, a tool to assess preschool teachers' judgments about the acceptability and feasibility as well as their current use of practices for promoting peer-related social competence. The scale is designed to assess judgments of feasibility, acceptability, and current use of strategies that can be conceptualized according to three categories that vary incrementally in the degree to which they can be described as classroom-wide, normalized, and "natural."

The first category, labeled here as "Environmental Strategies," includes the intentional and reflective utilization of classroom environment, broadly defined to include the physical structures, objects, and organization of the room; the temporal organization of activities and routines; and the emotional climate of the setting. The second category is labeled as "Natural Activity Strategies" and includes practices of support and intervention that are integrated within the natural and typical flow of classroom activity. The third category is labeled as "Intensive Strategies" and is characterized by highly planned, usually individualized approaches that involve intentional alteration of social contingencies to influence behavior and/or that use direct instruction to teach specific social behaviors. Development of the SIPPY questionnaire is viewed as an avenue to understanding teachers' beliefs about their role in supporting peer competence, as well as a source of information for planning professional development activities designed to enhance teachers' ability and behavior in promoting peer competence.

Scale Development

The creation of the SIPPY was initially based on a scale called the Social Interaction Program Features Questionnaire (SIPFQ) (Odom, McConnell, & Chandler, 1993), which was developed to help assess teachers' judgments of the acceptability, feasibility, and their current use of intervention strategies for promoting social interaction skills of young children with disabilities. Specific support and intervention strategies included in the SIPFQ were derived from the research literature on early childhood special education.

The SIPPY has retained the basic format of the Odom et al. (1993) measure, as well as the basic core content of about 50% of the items. The item content of the SIPPY,

however, is based on recent reviews of the literature in both early childhood special education and early childhood education. The literature from which the SIPPY items were constructed is described in Kemple (2004). Items for the SIPPY were generated in three categories: Environmental Strategies, Natural Activity Strategies, and Intensive Strategies. The review panel consisted of two groups: one was a group of three early childhood doctoral students who had extensive knowledge of the social competence literature and were asked to review the content of the items; the other was a group of five practicing preschool teachers who were asked to review the comprehensiveness of the items. The doctoral students and the preschool teachers provided feedback on the content and comprehensiveness. The authors refined the test items based on the feedback.

Based upon the feedback from the review panel, items were revised to include more specific wording as well as exemplars. This resulted in a 30-item scale, in which each item is judged for three features: acceptability, feasibility, and current use. See Appendix A for the descriptions of these three features. Actual scale items are listed in Appendix B. Respondents were instructed as follows: "For each of the teaching strategies below, we would like you to assign a rating to its *Feasibility*, its *Acceptability*, and your *Current Use* of the strategy. Scores range from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest score."

Method

Participants

Participants were 57 female preschool teachers in a small city in northern Florida, located in a primarily rural county. Twenty-four teachers completed the SIPPY as the initial assessment step in a professional development project that was focused on using the Second Step Violence Prevention program (Committee for Children, 2002). The other 33 teachers were recruited from child care centers with primarily middle SES populations. Co-authors visited 33 early childhood centers to provide four or five invitation letters per center. Teachers interested in participation returned consent letters by mail.

Of the 57 participants, 15 teachers (26%) worked in Head Start and 42 teachers (74%) worked in community child care settings. The teacher-to-child ratio in participants' classrooms was an average of 8.64 children per teacher (median = 8, mode = 8). The number of children ranged from 3 to 22. Approximately 25 classrooms (46%) had more than a 1:8 ratio, and 25 classrooms (46%) had a 1:3 to 1:8 ratio. Four classrooms (7%) had less than a 1:3 ratio, and these were mostly infant classes of child care centers. Forty-seven participants (87%) worked with 3- to 5-year-old children. Participating teachers varied in terms of experience and education level: 29 teachers (51%) had more than 5 years' experience teaching young children; 28 teachers (49%) had worked less than 5 years with young children. Among all participants, 21 teachers (37%) had more than 10 years' teaching experience with young children. Only 5 teachers (9%) held a bachelor's degree or higher, and 22 teachers (39%) held an associate's degree. Forty-one teachers (72%) including all of those with an associate's degree or higher reported holding a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential.

Procedures

The SIPPY was administered in a small group setting. Teachers who returned the consent letter were invited to come in for one half-hour meeting for the SIPPY administration. Several dates and times were offered to the teachers in order to accommodate their schedules, and authors led the sessions. Each group had one to four participants at a time. Participants were told that the researchers were interested in preschool teachers' beliefs about their roles, and that the researchers were assessing the usefulness of a questionnaire to assess preschool teachers' beliefs and practices. Instructions for scale completion were provided in written form and were also read aloud to participants. The group leader read the first two to three items to participants and explained how to complete each item. The leader explained that she was available to answer any questions or clear up any confusion about how to complete the scale. This approach resulted in very few questions, all of which were resolved by reiterating instructions. Each participant was asked to complete the SIPPY individually, and no discussions or comparisons were allowed. Completion of the scale required between 15 and 20 minutes. All teachers were compensated for their time.

Results

Internal Consistency

The Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years was found to possess adequate internal consistency. Table 1 shows internal consistency, as indicated by Cronbach's alpha, for each of the three features within each of the three strategy categories.

Table 1
Internal Consistency of the SIPPY Scales

Feature	Standardized Item Alpha
Overall Scale	
Acceptability	.87
Feasibility	.85
Current Use	.88
Subscale: Environmental Strategies	
Acceptability	.84
Feasibility	.71
Current Use	.81
Subscale: Natural Activity Strategies	
Acceptability	.73
Feasibility	.70
Current Use	.79
Subscale: Intensive Strategies	
Acceptability	.66
Feasibility	.79
Current Use	.83

Teachers' Judgments about Strategies: Descriptive Statistics

Range, mean, and standard deviations of ratings for the overall scale and subscales are presented in Table 2. Participants' responses indicated that they judged intensive interventions to be less acceptable and less feasible than the other categories of intervention, and they reported using these less frequently. Overall scores indicate that participants judged the total collection of strategies to be more acceptable than feasible, and more feasible than currently used.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics: Teacher Ratings of Acceptability, Feasibility,
and Current Use of Strategies

	Min*	Max*	Mean	Standard Deviation
Overall Scale				
Acceptability	107	149	135.35	10.01
Feasibility	105	150	131.74	11.17

Current Use	84	147	124.39	14.74
Environmental Strategies				
Acceptability	33	50	47.39	3.93
Feasibility	35	50	46.3	3.85
Current Use	25	50	45.65	5.05
Natural Activity Strategies				
Acceptability	39	50	47.68	2.89
Feasibility	39	50	46.04	3.05
Current Use	34	50	44.77	4.30
Intensive Strategies				
Acceptability	26	50	40.28	5.72
Feasibility	24	50	38.6	7.12
Current Use	17	50	33.96	8.76

*Possible scores range from 10 to 50 for each subscale and from 30 to 150 for the overall scales.

Relationships between Rating Dimensions

To examine the relationship among acceptability, feasibility, and teachers' current use of intervention strategies, Pearson Product moment correlations were computed between mean item ratings for these three variables. Results indicate positive relationships between acceptability and feasibility ($r = .71$, $p < .001$), between feasibility and current use ($r = .68$, $p < .001$), and between acceptability and current use ($r = .44$, $p < .001$). A t-test between correlations indicated a significant difference between the correlation of feasibility and current use ($t = 5.07$, $p < .001$), feasibility and acceptability ($t = -3.38$, $p < .001$), and of acceptability and current use ($t = 6.02$, $p < .001$).

When examined within individual subscales, this same pattern of correlations was upheld. For environmental arrangements, the correlation between feasibility and acceptability was .81 ($p < .001$), the correlation between feasibility and current use was .84 ($p < .001$), and the correlation between acceptability and current use was .75 ($p < .001$). A t-test between correlations indicated a significant difference in environmental arrangement between the correlation of feasibility and acceptability ($t = -3.41$, $p < .001$) and of acceptability and current use ($t = 3.94$, $p < .001$). For naturalistic activities, the correlation between feasibility and acceptability was .64 ($p < .001$), the correlation between feasibility and current use was .62 ($p < .001$), and the correlation between acceptability and current use was .36 ($p < .01$). A t-test between correlations indicated a significant difference in naturalistic activities between the correlation of feasibility and current use ($t = 4.59$, $p < .001$), the correlation between feasibility and acceptability ($t = -2.50$, $p < .05$), and the correlation between acceptability and current use ($t = 5.18$, $p < .001$). For higher intensity interventions, the correlation between feasibility and acceptability was .68 ($p < .001$), the correlation between feasibility and current use was .63 ($p < .001$), and the correlation between acceptability and current use was .44 ($p < .01$). A t-test between correlations indicated a significant difference in higher intensity interventions between the correlation of feasibility and current use ($t = 4.99$, $p < .001$), feasibility and acceptability ($t = -2.41$, $p < .05$), and acceptability and current use ($t = 5.88$, $p < .001$).

Discussion

The descriptive data of the study yielded several interesting findings that also raise questions for future research. In general, teachers in this sample were more likely to judge strategies as acceptable and feasible than was reflected in their current use of those strategies. If teachers view such strategies as acceptable as well as feasible, why would they not use them? Teachers in this sample also, in general, viewed strategies as more acceptable than feasible. Several possible impediments might make it less feasible for teachers to use strategies that they view as appropriate. For example, prior research indicates that there is a relationship between adult-to-child ratio and teacher interventions to help children's autonomous peer interaction (Kemple, David, & Hysmith, 1997). The research provides some evidence that higher adult-to-child ratios were positively related to disruption of peer interaction and that the teachers who teach in classrooms with higher ratios are more likely to use lower levels of supportive intervention to facilitate social interaction of children.

The responses of teachers in this sample showed positive relationships among their ratings of the acceptability and current use of strategies, and between feasibility and current use of strategies. This finding aligns with previous research that has found positive relationships between current use of an approach and perceptions of its practicality (Odom et al., 1993). The relationship between feasibility and current use, however, was higher than the relationships between acceptability and current use. This finding also mirrors that of Odom et al. (1993), who studied a different population of early childhood special education teachers. This finding suggests that, among both populations of teachers, the decision to use a strategy is based more on questions of practicality than on issues of acceptability.

Teachers in this sample viewed higher intensity interventions as generally less acceptable and less feasible than the less-structured and less-intensive strategies. Is this a reflection of an implicit hierarchical model in teachers' minds, such that they judge these as "final resort" interventions to be used only for a few children when other forms of support have proven insufficient? Or does this reflect a degree of rejection of these strategies, drawn primarily from the special education literature? It is of interest to note that early childhood special education teachers in Odom et al. (1993) rated environmental arrangements slightly lower overall than child-specific and peer-mediated strategies (which are of general higher intensity than environmental arrangements). As practices of including children with special needs continue, it is important to know more about teachers' attitudes toward practices that may occasionally be necessary for children (either with or without disabilities) who have very significant social competence needs.

The Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years questionnaire (SIPPY) appears to be an internally consistent questionnaire and shows good promise as a tool for assessing preschool teachers' judgments about the acceptability and feasibility of strategies for supporting young children's peer competence, as well as teachers' current use of those strategies. The authors have utilized this scale as an aid in designing professional development activities to teach preschool teachers to support growth of positive peer interaction in the classroom, and anecdotal observations have supported this use as a good source of information for planning professional development experiences that meet teachers' needs. Teachers' responses to professional development experiences planned using SIPPY data and focus group interview data were overwhelmingly positive. There is a shortage of tools for assessing teachers' beliefs about strategies to support the growth of social competence in early childhood classrooms. The SIPPY may provide a useful tool for both research and professional development in this area.

One limitation of this study is the possibility that teachers who participated do not represent the larger population of early childhood teachers. Approximately half of the teachers who participated had signed up for professional development related to an anti-violence program, and they may be different from teachers who did not take advantage of this opportunity. The other half of the participants responded to a mail-out invitation, and they represented only a small proportion of the teachers who were invited. The background data for all of the teachers, however, suggest that this is not an unusual population of teachers with regard to education and experience. Another limitation of this study is that the SIPPY instrument uses self-reported data. Especially when we are looking at inconsistencies of acceptability or feasibility with current use of the strategies, there could be even larger gaps between those domains if we incorporate observation and/or interview tools. Finally, another limitation is that the sample size is relatively small, but given that this is a preliminary test of the SIPPY measurement, the sample is adequate to show stable reliability.

Future research utilizing this instrument could explore questions of concurrent validity by using observations of teachers' current use of strategies and interviews designed to further explore beliefs about feasibility and acceptability. Interviews could also be used to explore potential explanations for relationships among ratings of acceptability, feasibility, and current use. Teachers' theoretical beliefs are situational and are translated into practice only in relation to the complexities of the teaching context (Fang, 1996). There is a need for studies that examine the challenges that teachers face in translating their beliefs into practice and how to overcome obstacles to implementation that teachers face in everyday classroom situations. Constraints that may impact teachers behavior in this regard include limited role perceptions such that teachers feel it is not their job to provide such interventions (File, 1994); limited resources resulting in poor program quality; large class sizes and high child-to-adult ratios; competing demands for teachers' time and attention (Kemple, David, & Hysmith, 1997; Kontos & Dunn, 1993); and lack of knowledge, skills, and training in methods of nurturing children's peer competence (Howes, Phillips, & Whitebook, 1992).

Research on teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and actual practices related to social and emotional learning is sparse. While a large body of literature supports an array of strategies for promoting young children's social competence, the manner in which that information is put to use is likely to be influenced by what teachers think and what teachers feel competent and able to do. The Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years questionnaire shows promise as a tool for exploring further questions in this area of early childhood education.

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Appendix A

Definitions and Rating Criteria for Acceptability, Feasibility, and Current Use

Acceptability means how much you feel the particular strategy fits with your philosophy of teaching social skills to young children. The scores should be assigned according to these criteria:

1	=	Unacceptable
2	=	May be acceptable on rare occasions
3	=	Acceptable under certain conditions
4	=	Acceptable under most conditions
5	=	Completely acceptable

Feasibility means your ability as a teacher to implement the approach in your classroom, given your current resources (personnel in the classroom, training, materials, space, etc.). The scores should be assigned according to these criteria:

1	=	*Never* feasible to use in my classroom
2	=	Feasible to use in my classroom on *infrequent* occasions
3	=	Feasible to use in my classroom *some of the time* (in other words, for at least one child, on about 50% of the school days)
4	=	Feasible to use in my classroom *most of the time* (in other words, for at least one child, on about 75% of the school days)
5	=	Feasible to use in my classroom *nearly all of the time* (in other words, for at least one child on 75% to 100% of the school days)

Current Use means how much you currently use the procedure in your present classroom. These scores should be assigned according to the following criteria:

1	=	Never used in my classroom
2	=	Have used on infrequent occasions (in other words, once or twice)
3	=	Have used sometimes in the classroom (in other words, for at least one child up to 50% of the school days)
4	=	Have used often (in other words, for at least one child, on 51% to 75% of the school days)
5	=	Use all of the time (in other words, for at least one child on 75% to 100% of the school days)

Appendix B

Items of the Social Interaction Practices for the Preschool Years Questionnaire

Environmental Strategies

1. The classroom is arranged into relatively small, well-defined areas that are associated with specific play activities or materials (in contrast to large, undefined play areas).
2. Toys and materials that encourage social interaction are present in play areas. *(For example, housekeeping play materials, dress-up clothes, toys that encourage pretend play, blocks, trucks, dollhouses.)*
3. The classroom is arranged to include at least one cozy private area where an individual child can choose to go to relax, play alone, look at a book, etc.
4. The daily classroom schedule includes a block of at least 30 minutes of freely chosen indoor play.
5. Snack times allow for social conversations: children do not eat alone and are allowed to talk to each other.
6. A sufficient number of play options are available so that children have opportunities to make choices about what and where to play, without having to wait a long time for a turn.
7. The classroom includes a dramatic play area (or "housekeeping" area) that can accommodate at least four children.
8. The classroom includes a block play area that can accommodate at least four children.
9. Different materials are added periodically to expand social play possibilities. *(For example, different dress-up clothes, different blocks or props in the block area, materials to fit a particular theme like astronaut gear, picnic supplies, etc.)*
10. Four-year-old children are in classroom groups of no more than 20 children to 2 adults, and 3-year-old children are in classroom groups of no more than 16 children to 2 adults.

Natural Activity Strategies

11. The teacher reads or tells stories that emphasize positive social interaction with peers.
12. The teacher praises a child for using social skills. *(For example, the teacher says, "I like the way you said, "Maria, please pass the rolling pin.")*
13. The teacher describes to children activities during the day when social skills could be used. *(For example, the teacher says, "When you are on the playground, you can practice taking turns with the swings" or "You can practice sharing when you are at the play dough table.")*
14. The teacher prompts children in groups to work and play cooperatively.
15. During natural peer interaction, the teacher gives on-the-spot support by encouraging children to think of social strategies they could use or suggesting strategies they could use. *(For example, the teacher says, "You have different ideas about what to play. What could you do about that?" Or "You have different ideas about what to play. Maybe you could find a way to play "doctor" and "witches" at the same time.")*

16. The teacher praises individual peers for interacting with a less-competent target child. *(For example, the teacher says, "Jackson, I saw you say "hi buddy" to Marcus. That's great! I'll bet you that made him feel good.")*

17. During natural peer interaction, the teacher provides on-the-spot support by stepping in and demonstrating or modeling social strategies. *(For example, the teacher demonstrates a play entry bid by saying, "I see you're playing beauty parlor. Maybe you need a nail technician too. I could be that.")*

18. During group time, the teacher uses puppetry to demonstrate and discuss typical social interaction problems. *(For example, the teacher has the puppets act out a conflict about sharing a toy and has the puppets discuss possible solutions with the children.)*

19. During group times, the teacher helps children talk about real social interaction problems they have had in the classroom and helps them think about ways to solve the problem. *(For example, the teacher says, "I noticed a fight in the book corner this morning… What was that about?… What do you think children could do if a problem like that happens again?…")*

20. During group times, the teacher uses modified games or songs that include prompts for children to practice friendly behaviors. *(For example, "If you're happy and you know it. clap your hands….if you're happy and you know it, say hi to a friend….if you're happy and you know it, pat your neighbor on the back….)*

Intensive Strategies

21. The teacher uses "direct instruction" techniques to teach social skills and social concepts in a group setting (in other words, the teacher uses rapid pacing, frequent responding by children, procedures that keep children on task). *(For example, the teacher calls out energetically to the group assembled on the rug, "To get a friend's attention, do you shout?" The children respond and clap in unison, "No!" The teacher says, "To get a friend's attention, do you hit them?" The children respond and clap in unison, "No!" The teacher says, "What can you do to get a friend's attention…Samuel!" Samuel responds, "say their name." The teacher asks "Is he right?" The children call "Yes!" Teacher: Let's cheer for Samuel!" Children applaud and respond "Yea, Samuel!")*

22. The teacher designs high-structure play activities to encourage practice of social skills. The teacher introduces the activity, provides limited materials related to a specific theme or activity, and specifies children's roles. *(For example, the teacher explains, "Karla, Mary, and Tiffany, you are going to play together in this center for the next 5 minutes, with this animal bingo game. Karla will be the one who calls out the bingo animals, and Mary and Tiffany, you will both work together to fill up this one bingo card with animal stickers. Help each other.")*

23. The teacher develops an individualized program to teach particular social interaction skills to a child (taking into account the child's background, language/cognitive development, and current level of social skills).

24. The teacher provides a child multiple opportunities to rehearse social skills with teacher supervision. *(For example, the teacher encourages a child to practice speaking loudly enough to be heard in a variety of different contexts and gives the child feedback about audibility. Or, the teacher gives the child multiple opportunities to practice getting a peer's attention by saying the peer's name clearly and making eye contact.)*

25. The teacher provides activity reinforcement (e.g., extra swing time) or tangible reinforcement (e.g., tokens, stickers) to a child for using predetermined social skills. *(For example, the teacher has explained to Anne that she will get a sticker every time she uses a child's name to get his/her attention, instead of her usual strategy of forcefully saying, "Uuhhhh!")*

26. The teacher gradually reduces reinforcement for social interaction. *(For example, after Anne has begun to consistently call peers by their names to get their attention, the teacher gives her a sticker every third time, instead of every time. When she sees that Anne is still using her new skill, she reduces the sticker to every fifth time, and then she eventually stops giving the stickers.)*

27. The teacher provides opportunities for a child to monitor (in other words, to record and evaluate) his own social interaction skills. *(For example, the teacher shows Gary how to place a sticker on a chart in his cubby every time he allows someone to join him at the Lego table. Near the end of the day, the teacher takes a minute to look with Gary at his star chart and to hear him talk about how well he feels he did.)*

28. The teacher teaches socially competent peers to use specific strategies for communicating with a specific child who is less socially competent. *(For example, the teacher has taught children to sign "let's play" and "hi" to a socially withdrawn child with hearing impairment.)*

29. The teacher teaches children to persist in their social interactions with unresponsive "target" peers (specific children with social competence difficulties). *(For example, the teacher teaches children to repeat themselves and touch Sofi's arm gently if she doesn't respond when they talk to her, and to say it in different words or with gestures if she still doesn't respond.)*

30. The teacher provides "activity reinforcement" (e.g., being the door holder) or "tangible reinforcement" (e.g., stickers) to children for interacting with a less socially competent child. *(For example, the teacher has explained to Paris and Matt, who are both very socially skilled, that they will get a sticker each day they engage Mitch in conversation at the snack table.)*