

**SOCIAL SKILLS GROUP OBSERVATION CHECKLIST:
DETAILED ANCHOR POINTS VERSION (4/26/21)**

Group Leader: _____ Date: _____

Consultant: _____ Skill: _____

Instructions: Complete this checklist after reviewing an audio recording of or observing a group leader (i.e., the primary facilitator) conducting a session. For each item, check off whether the group leader performed this skill “Not at all”, “Partially”, or “Fully.” Please be sure to review carefully notes in each column and the Important Guidelines for Making Ratings section at the end of this document prior to making ratings. The first session of a group series has special rating instructions that are detailed in the Important Guidelines section.

General structuring and positive engagement skills	Not at all	Partially	Fully
1. Created a warm, welcoming atmosphere.	No statements thanking group members for their attendance or participation; no warm voice used.	At least one statement thanking group members for their attendance or participation using a voice that is somewhat warm.	Several statements to the group thanking them for their attendance and/or participation in the SST group using a warm tone of voice.
2. Spoke clearly, using a voice neither overloud nor oversoft.	Was either very quiet or too loud or did not enunciate throughout most of the session.	Most statements are clear and projected.	All (or virtually all) statements are clear and projected.
3. Established an agenda and maintained the structure of the session.	Did not establish an agenda or follow through with the group session sequence. For most of the session, the primary facilitator is not following the group session sequence. Proper time management is necessary for maintaining the structure of the session, including leaving time for discussing outside practice assignments. If there are significant problems with time management (e.g., such as spending too much time on early steps of the SST Group Session Sequence so that little time is left for	Did one but not both of the following: stated the agenda at the beginning of the session or followed the group session sequence. This rating is also appropriate for groups which were “on track” for some but not all the time in terms of following the group session sequence. If a step or two is skipped or done out of order, this would also suggest a rating of a “partially” for this item.	Stated the agenda for the session at the beginning. Followed the group session sequence. For a fully, if you were to randomly review a portion of the audio recording you would quickly know what step in the group session sequence the primary facilitator was facilitating. Ideally, the facilitator would consistently make statements when transitioning between steps of the group session sequence (e.g., “Now that we have reviewed the steps of the skill, I will demonstrate the skill in a model.”).

General structuring and positive engagement skills	Not at all	Partially	Fully
	group member role plays), this would be rated a “Partially” or a “Not at all” depending on the severity of the problem.		
<p>4. Provided ample positive feedback for participation.</p> <p>(Note: The behaviorally specific positive feedback that is given/elicited after role plays is rated separately in item #15.)</p>	Did not provide positive feedback for participation.	Every once in a while provided positive feedback during the session.	Throughout the session used many opportunities to provide positive feedback to group members for contributing in positive ways, such as offering a rationale, reading the steps, coming up to role play, giving appropriate feedback on role plays, etc.
<p>5. Redirected group members who interrupted or strayed from the topic, using a kind but firm voice.</p> <p>(Note: Please rate whether the group leader makes appropriate attempts to redirect, not whether the group member is fully responsive to these attempts.)</p>	Did not redirect group members who got off topic or interrupted.	Redirected group members at times but also missed significant opportunities to redirect group members who interrupted or strayed from the topic. Or, consistently redirected without a kind voice.	Consistently, quickly, and politely redirected group members who strayed from the topic or interrupted to get them back on track.
<p>6. Asked group members for examples of personal experiences in which skills could be or were used.</p>	Did not ask group members either in rationale or role play set up for personally relevant experiences with the skill.	Asked at least one person for an example of a personal experience with the skill either in role play set up or in the rationale development.	Asked in the rationale development for personal examples of using the skill; asked all individuals – who role played – for personal examples of using the skill at role play set up (even if not all could think of one).
<p>7. Used a shaping approach to help members gradually learn new social skills by reinforcing small steps toward the targeted skill.</p>	Did not use a shaping approach.	Used a shaping approach with at least one group member (but not all those that role played) in which the group member first heard specific positive feedback based on the steps and other behavioral aspects of the role play and then received 1-2	Used a shaping approach with all or virtually all those who role played in which group members heard specific positive feedback based on the steps and other behavioral aspects of the role play first, followed by 1-2 maximum specific areas of

General structuring and positive engagement skills	Not at all	Partially	Fully
		<p>maximum specific areas to improve on the next role play. For the shaping approach to be successful, the scenario is initially tailored to each group member but then in the great majority of cases the scenario then remains the same for the 3 role plays for that group member. For each group member, a scenario is only changed after the first of the 3 role plays if the scenario in the first role play turned out to not work as a good practice for the skill or if the group member's mastery of the skill in the first role play scenario suggested the need for a more challenging scenario.</p>	<p>improvement. Made role play more challenging if applicable. For the shaping approach to be successful, the scenario is initially tailored to each group member but then in the great majority of cases the scenario then remains the same for the 3 role plays for that group member. For each group member, a <u>scenario</u> is only changed after the first of the 3 role plays if the scenario in the first role play turned out to not work as a good practice for the skill or if the group member's mastery of the skill in the first role play scenario suggested the need for a more challenging scenario.</p>
<p>8. Encouraged group members to be actively involved in the session.</p> <p>(Members can be active in different ways, such as reading the steps of the skill out loud, providing a rationale, providing feedback for role plays, participating in role plays, contributing examples of personal experience.)</p>	<p>Did not ask for group members' input.</p>	<p>Encouraged participation at times in the session, but not consistently. May not have encouraged participation in some sections (e.g., did not ask group members to read the steps, did not consistently ask group members for feedback on role plays, etc.).</p>	<p>Encouraged group member participation throughout the session including contributing to rationale, reading steps out loud, providing feedback on model and role plays, participating in role plays, and contributing examples of personal experience.</p>

Steps of social skills training	Not at all	Partially	Fully
<p>9. Reviewed homework from the previous group session.</p> <p>(Note to Consultant: For the first SST session, rate item as "Fully" as no outside practice is expected to be reviewed.)</p>	<p>Did not ask about outside practice of previous skills.</p>	<p>Asked at least one group member (but not all) about outside practice or just asked a Y/N question about whether outside practice was completed.</p>	<p>Asked each group member who had been assigned outside practice about their outside practice and briefly but fully reviewed what occurred during the outside practice including at least some reference to the steps of the skill.</p>
<p>10. Established a rationale for using the skill.</p>	<p>Did not establish why the skill is useful.</p>	<p>Did not fully establish why the skill is useful using input from group members and facilitator(s).</p>	<p>Established why the skill is useful using input from group members and facilitator(s).</p>
<p>11. Discussed the steps of the skill with group members.</p>	<p>The steps of the skill were not read or discussed.</p>	<p>The steps of the skill were read out loud (ideally by group members rather than by a facilitator) but there was virtually no discussion of how to do a step or why any of the steps were important.</p>	<p>The group members read out loud all the steps of the skill. For all or almost all the steps, a group member or the facilitator briefly discussed why it is important and/or asked for examples of how to execute the step.</p>
<p>12. Modeled the skill in a role play.</p> <p>(Note: Typically, the model is done only once unless a mistake is made in the initial model.)</p>	<p>Did not model or demonstrated how to do the skill poorly.</p>	<p>Demonstrated the skill in a model. However, the scenario was either not stated up front, the secondary facilitator did the steps (the primary, not the secondary facilitator, should be the individual to demonstrate the steps), or the model was not done in a simple, brief role play of the steps. If the model is done more than once without a clear teaching purpose this should be rated a partially.</p>	<p>Stated the scenario, whom to watch do the steps (i.e., primary facilitator), and executed all the steps well in a single, brief, simple role play. If the model is repeated, this is done for a clear teaching purpose</p>

Steps of social skills training	Not at all	Partially	Fully
13. Reviewed the model with the group members.	Did not review the model.	Elicited specific feedback on some of the steps or asked for general feedback on the model.	Elicited specific feedback based on each step of the skill.
<p>14. Engaged all group members in a role play of the skill.</p> <p>(Note: Show appropriate flexibility and judgment in rating this item as some skills may be more complex and take more time for each participant to role play than others. The number of group members and the length of the group may vary considerably. The suggested number of group members engaged in role plays in the columns to the right is meant as a guideline, not a strict standard. For the first session in a group series, please refer to the Important Guidelines section below for instructions regarding rating these sessions and giving group leader feedback.)</p>	Did not engage any group members in a role play of the skill.	Engaged one, but less than half, of the participants in role plays <u>or</u> role plays were set up poorly (e.g., the facilitator did not give clear instructions about the roles of the group member and the role play buddy in the interaction or role plays were not consistently personally relevant to the group members).	Engaged about half the participants or more in a role play of the skill in a group involving 6-10 group members. Role plays were consistently personally relevant to the group members and set up well by the facilitator (e.g., with clear instructions about the roles of the group member and the role play buddy in the interaction).
15. Provided or elicited behaviorally specific positive feedback for each group member's role play.	Did not give positive feedback after role plays or consistently only gave <u>very</u> general positive feedback (e.g., "good job.").	Gave and elicited from the group specific positive feedback for <i>at least some</i> role plays. Or provided behaviorally specific positive feedback but at times this occurred only after group members first heard constructive feedback (i.e., specific positive feedback was delivered	Consistently gave and elicited behaviorally specific positive feedback after each role play.

Steps of social skills training	Not at all	Partially	Fully
		but it was not consistently provided in the proper order).	
16. Provided or elicited behaviorally specific suggestions for improvement for each group member's role play.	Did not provide or elicit suggestions for improvement or provided vague suggestions only.	Provided or elicited specific, behavioral suggestions for improvement after at least one role play (1 st and 2 nd in the typical set of 3 role plays).	Provided or elicited specific, behavioral suggestions for improvement consistently after 1 st and 2 nd role plays in a set of 3 role plays (or in all but the last role play, if there are more than 3 role plays in a set conducted with the same group member). Constructive suggestions were given to all group members engaging in role plays. Stated how to make role play scenario more challenging if a group member's first role play displayed mastery of the skill within the initial scenario's context. Made sure group member was clear on specific suggestion before doing next role play.
17. Assigned specific homework to practice the skill outside the group.	Did not mention outside practice.	Any encouragement to do outside practice of the skill of the day is rated "partially." However, the plans may not be specific.	Encouraged all group members (or at least all those that role played the skill) to come up with specific plans for outside practice including when/with whom they will use the skill.

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR MAKING RATINGS

- 1) For the first session of a group series, as noted in item #9, you rate outside practice as fully because no outside practice is reviewed. Also, for the first session, there are additional agenda items including introductions, review of group purpose and structure, discussion of group expectations, and the opportunity to share individual goals prior to the discussion of the rationale of a social skill. For this reason, item #14 "Engaged all group members in a role play of the skill" can potentially be rated "Fully" if at least 1 participant completes a series of 3 role plays in the first session. However, use good judgment in determining whether the facilitator had adequate focus on role plays in the session and skillfully completed this

step to warrant the rating of a “Fully” for a series of 3 role plays for one participant. For example, in a 90-minute group with 3 group members, a facilitator who only completed a series of 3 role plays with 1 of the 3 group members would likely be rated as a “Partially” given that there was ample time to complete the other first session agenda items. In the “Additional Feedback” text box at the bottom of the Social Skills Group Observation Checklist in the EBP Portal, be sure to provide a narrative regarding how the facilitator did with covering the agenda items expected in the first SST group of a group series and whether the facilitator had adequate focus on role plays in the session, if applicable.

- 2) If there are extraneous circumstances that impact the group (e.g., the group is forced to change rooms in the middle of group), use common sense to rate the items keeping in mind the most appropriate responses to these circumstances. For example, if there was a group room change and fewer than half the role plays were completed this group due to the time lost changing rooms, you may still choose to rate item #14 a “Fully.” However, if extraneous circumstances result in the facilitator not completing steps of the group, these steps should be rated “Not at all.” For example, in the case of a fire drill when the group is required to stop after item #11, all subsequent items are rated “Not at all.” Consultants, in your qualitative feedback you should document the reasons for these types of ratings.
- 3) Keep in mind the instructions given to training participants regarding how they should conduct more than one group on the same skill. For example, in the Consultation Orientation Session they are given the following instructions: “When repeating the skill, it is recommended that you follow the basic SST group session sequence as you did when you first presented the skill. When you conduct an SST group on the same social skill for a 2nd (or 3rd) time, however, you may choose to abbreviate certain portions of the steps in the early portion of the group session sequence if the great majority of the group members were present at the previous group session where the skill was previously presented. When abbreviating the material, cover the information in enough detail to be helpful for the group members who did not attend the previous group on the skill, including sociocultural and linguistic factors. Specifically, when completing steps 2 (Establish a rationale for the skill) and Step 3 (Briefly have members share a relevant experience or rationale) it is acceptable to summarize, or ask a Veteran or the group to summarize, the rationale for the skill discussed in the last group and for there to be a briefer discussion of the relevance of the skill for the group members’ experiences and lives. For Step 4. Explain the steps of the skill, all the steps of the skill should be reviewed but these can be reviewed in less detail than the first time the steps of the skill were covered.” If the training participant followed these directions, rate Social Skills Group Observation Checklist items #10 and #11 (which relate to the review of the rationale and steps of the skill) as “Fully.” To be clear, these alternate rating instructions only apply to the 2nd or 3rd group in which the same social skill is the focus.
- 4) Regarding items 9-17, if the secondary facilitator fully led a step of the group, this should be rated “Not at all” on the relevant step of social skill training on this checklist. The checklist is meant to reflect primarily the actions of the primary facilitator. However, if the secondary facilitator merely helped a bit with a certain step in such a way as to make it not possible to ascertain whether the primary facilitator could have done this step independently and correctly, the relevant item would be rated “Partially.”
- 5) If a step of the group is done correctly but out of order, the step of the group item (e.g., items 9-17) should be rated “Fully” but Item #3 should be rated “Partially or “Not at all.” If an item is skipped or completed out of order, item #3 cannot be rated “Fully.”