

CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

GAINING  
**CONFIDENCE**  
AND SO  
MUCH **MORE**

A STORY ABOUT SOCIAL SKILLS



CHILDREN'S AID  
AND FAMILY SERVICES





*The Social Skills program is part of Children's Aid and Family Services' community clinical services offered at its Ridgewood office. This innovative and effective program is designed to help children build and manage friendships, boost self-esteem, increase confidence, improve communication skills, deal with anger, and learn better problem-solving skills. Led by two professionals, children ages 4 to 12 meet in very small groups for up to 12 weeks at a time. The various social skills groups are done in "phases" so children may continue on from one phase to another. Individual courses are offered, as well as private parent coaching to help parents meet the unique needs of their children. Following is the story of a child who has made incredible progress with his socialization skills since attending the program.*

Steven, who's 8 years old, suffers from Asperger's Syndrome, a form of autism. He's always had difficulty making eye contact, holding conversations and making and keeping friends. As reported by his mother, he saw a private clinician for more than two years before

his mother enrolled him in the Social Skills program. After participating in several of the program's phases, Steven's mother wrote to the agency, "We never saw a difference or improvement (in Steven) until he began working with you. Thank you for your dedication, patience, enthusiasm and understanding."

She explained her son is now participating in and enjoying school, activities, and his peers in a way he was unable to do previously. For the first time in his young life, Steven is able to make friends. For instance, he began playing baseball this past year, and as a result, has gained an enormous sense of confidence. And to the amazement of his parents, this once uncommunicative child recently starred in a school play.

Steven continues to attend Social Skills and is thriving in the supportive environment. He continues to show progress in his ability to interact with his peers, develop conversational skills and make eye-contact. He even makes play dates with other members of his group.

All names have been changed to protect client privacy.

BE A VOLUNTEER, FOSTER/ADOPT A CHILD OR DONATE TODAY