

STOP AND THINK SOCIAL SKILLS

Dealing with Being Left Out or Rejected

It is common for students to be confronted by situations in which they may be rejected or excluded. One reason is that friendships become increasingly important as kids get older and their desire to be accepted by their friends also increases. Students in particular groups tend to favor exclusivity, and they may exclude or reject others to maintain their friendship circle.

Rejection occurs for other reasons, as well. It might happen because a student or group is looking for positive or negative attention. Or it might occur because a student wants to assert power over others. In addition, rejection can be motivated by revenge or anger. Finally, rejection can occur because a student doesn't have the skills to perform at a specific level. For example, a student might not be chosen for a sports team, a musical group, the school play, etc. In these situations, the rejection may not come specifically from the peer group, but the student still feels rejected.

When students are rejected for any reason, they may react in negative ways, and consequently, make a bad choice. By teaching students to deal with being left out, we maximize their good choices and minimize their bad choices.

Use the Stop and Think language at home with your children to help reinforce the steps of accepting consequences.

Step 1: Stop and Think.

Step 2: Am I going to make a good choice or a bad choice? A good choice!

Step 3: What are my choices or steps?

1. **Take** a deep breath and count to five.
2. **Identify** how you feel.
3. **Decide** what happened that caused you to feel rejected or left out.
4. **Determine** if it was done by accident or on purpose.
5. **Think** about your choices. You can:
 - a. **Try** to rejoin the person/group that rejected you or left you out.
 - b. **Choose** to join another person or group.
 - c. **Decide** to do something else.
6. **Choose** and act out your best choice.

Step 4: Just do it!

Step 5: Good job!