

Volunteer Training – Teen/Tween Social

Teen/Tween Social is a fun 3-hour event for Fort Bend Co. teens age 11 – 18 who have an intellectual or developmental disability (IDD).

What is IDD? IDDs are neurological differences usually present at birth that affect a person’s physical, intellectual, and/or emotional development. IDD’s impact the ability to learn, reason and problem solve. IDD’s can affect adaptive behavior, which includes everyday social and life skills. Examples of IDD include Autism, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Fragile X and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

What is Teen/Tween Social? A monthly social for teens with IDD to enjoy activities in a welcoming environment while their parents enjoy a night out. Teens with IDD are matched 1 to 1 or in small groups with volunteers age 14 + and adults. Everyone has a fun night getting to know each other while playing games, activities, or doing arts and crafts. Socials are held on the first Friday of each month throughout the school year.

Tips for Connecting With Your Teen Participant

- 1. Introduce yourself.** Start by introducing yourself and what school you go to or what you do for work. Then ask their name and where they go to school.
- 2. Get to know each other.** Share something about yourself like a favorite food, sport or activity. Ask if they have a favorite food, sport or activity. Let the conversation go from there.
- 3. Transition to the first activity.** Give them a choice. Ask if they’d like to get something to eat or drink, or, start an activity.

CHART: some characteristics a person with IDD may have and strategies to try.

	If . . .	Try . . .
Communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none">I. Limited language or non-verbalII. Trouble using or understanding sarcasm, slang or body language	<ol style="list-style-type: none">I. Use plain language. Use picture cards or ask them to use their communication device. Watch their gestures.II. Explain in simple language. Let them know it’s okay if they still don’t understand and move on to an activity.

Sensory	Difficulty with sensory input. Ex: an activity may be too loud, a smell may be extra strong, or the feel of something may be itchy.)	Remove from the loud or smelly location. Use ear plugs or headphones. Remove itchy tags or change clothing. Allow a sensory object – fidgets.
Routine	Need for a particular routine so they know what to expect. Can become frustrated when things don't go the way they expected.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain what is happening now, and what will happen next. 2. Give voice & choice. Offer 2 – 3 different activities to try. Ask which one they'd like to try. 3. Challenge to try something new. Say "Let's try a new activity in 3 minutes. We'll play catch for 5 mins. Then we can come back to Legos."
Transition	Difficulty organizing the activity or switching from one activity to another (especially if switching from something enjoyable to something not enjoyable.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give a 3 - 5 minute warning before changing activities. Use a timer on a cell phone or a visual timer. 2. Use "First, Then." "First we will play Uno, then we will play dodge ball."
Frustration	Irritable or angry about something.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distract or redirect their behavior instead of saying "stop" or "no." Model the correct behavior/speech. Ex: Show how to play the game nicely, how to walk instead of run, etc. Say what a proper response would be. 2. Move to a quiet space with less noise and people. 3. Transition to a quieter activity the person enjoys.

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

Just be yourself. Have FUN! The social is all about interacting with each other.

Have questions? Not sure what to do? Ask a staff member.