



Rifka Schonfeld **STRATEGIES**

THE NEWSLETTER FOR OPTIMUM SUCCESS

TIPS ON SOCIAL SKILLS FOR ADULTS & CHILDREN

KNOW SOMEONE LACKING SOCIAL SKILLS?

Dear Readers,

This week's newsletter includes two questions on the topic of decoding non-verbal learning disabilities.

How can we identify non-verbal learning disabilities (NVLD) earlier on and help them succeed?



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I keep hearing about non-verbal learning disability (NVLD).

What does this mean?

Children with non-verbal learning disability (NVLD) wrestle with issues similar to children with Aspergers Syndrome (AS), a syndrome on the autistic spectrum. In reality, those with AS and those with NVLD share many characteristics; however, NVLD is a much milder disorder.

Kids with NVLD are very verbal and often do not have academic problems until they get to the upper grades in school. When they are younger, the biggest sign of the disability is their struggle with social skills. So, how can you recognize a child with NVLD? Here are some attributes of those with NVLD:

Disadvantages:

- **Attention to detail, but misses the big picture.** Children with NVLD are great at picking up the minor elements of a story or a conversation, but often lose the overall idea.
- **Great decoding skills with trouble comprehending reading.** The actual words are not a problem for those with NVLD; however, understanding the content of the story can be problematic.
- **Difficulty with non-verbal communication.** Body language, facial expression, and tone of voice will often be misinterpreted or ignored.
- **Poor abstract reasoning.** Those with NVLD think very concretely and have trouble with ideas that are conceptual or intangible.
- **Poor social skills.** Because of the inability to read non-verbal cues and to think abstractly, many children with NVLD struggle with making and keeping friends.
- **Fear of new situations.** Children with NVLD fail to adapt quickly to new places or circumstances and therefore fear entering unfamiliar settings.

Advantages:

- **Great vocabulary and verbal expression.** A huge asset of children with NVLD is verbal expression – they are wonderful at expressing ideas and manipulating language.
- **Excellent memory skills.** Attention to detail, when coupled with an exceptional memory, yields children who are shockingly able to recall events.

There are several things that parents can do in order to help their children better adjust to living a life with NVLD. One of the most important things that a parent can do is provide consistency: in location, time and activity. Keep the home environment predictable and familiar. Therefore, if you always eat dinner at the kitchen table and do homework in the dining room, try not to vary from that routine. In addition, provide structure and routine throughout the day, marking time through different activities: benching, negelwasser, brushing teeth, getting dressed, and eating breakfast in the

same unsurprising order daily.

If you must vary the routine, prepare your child in advance for those changes through logical explanations. If prepared in advance, the transition will ultimately be a lot smoother.

In terms of schooling, the best way to help children with NVLD is assist your child in learning organizational and time management skills. Help him come up with checklists and to-do lists in order to make sense of his activities and allow him to easily adapt from situation to situation.

Lastly, when dealing with social skills, consider explicitly teaching him about non-verbal communication. While most children instinctively pick up non-verbal cues, children with NVLD need to be coached in these skills. Consider getting him social skills training in order to help him make friends and interact with his peers. If you choose to work with your child on social skills – remember to nurture his unique individuality while still correcting the deficits in his communication skills.

While NVLD is a learning disability that affects children both academically and socially, its manifestations are relatively mild. With a little bit of help, children with NVLD can live happy, full, and social lives.

Coming Soon?



NEW!
SOCIAL SKILLS
COMIC BOOK
by Rifka Schonfeld

Rifka Schonfeld Presents



**Dr.
Ross
Greene**
Ph.D.



RETHINKING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

— OF —
CHILDREN | TEENS | ADULTS

TUESDAY

NOV. 14. 2017

8:30AM-4:30PM



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