



The SocialPals Playbook



BCBA Edition

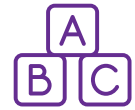


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Foreword

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I am delighted to write this foreword, not only because I have great admiration for Sam Blanco, Mordechai Meisels, and Sara Bauer but also because I believe deeply in the value of making resources, such as this one, easily accessible to help those in need. Social skills deficits are a core feature of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and as children with ASD continue to benefit from ABA therapy, integration with neurotypical peers, family, and members of the community has become increasingly more important.

The Social Pals Playbook provides a guide for clinicians to assist with teaching social skills despite the new challenges of providing opportunities via telehealth therapy. The playbook provides specific activities, instructions and implementation techniques.

I hope that this guide will become a go-to resource for technicians, behavior analysts, and educators to help make programming and social skills development an essential component of our efforts.

Introduction



Social Pals is an innovative social skills training framework between two similar pals that is facilitated by a behavior technician through telehealth.

Social Pals provides a number of benefits to clients, including learning new social skills, generalizing social skills across individuals, and utilizing social skills in a variety of contexts. Social Pals employs a tailor-made peer-matching system to identify good social matches between specific individuals to maximize opportunities for increased motivation and natural reinforcement.

The Social Pals Playbook is an evidence-based framework that simplifies the process of teaching social skills for both BCBA's and behavior technicians. The framework includes a goal bank with corresponding activities, with step-by-step instructions for implementing the activity through a telehealth format that makes teaching social skills simple and enjoyable.

Providing any type of direct service can be challenging through telehealth. Moving from social groups to Social Pals is a manageable and exciting way to continue skill development and engagement in social activities. Social Pals has been specifically designed by BCBA's to address the unique challenges presented through this model, and provide a curriculum for teaching social skills to meet these challenges. The Social Pals Playbook provides concrete activities aligned with appropriate social skills goals and clear instructions for implementing all aspects of the teaching procedures.



Prerequisite Skills

While Social Pals is designed for a range of learners, there are a few prerequisite skills that are necessary to be able to receive effective telehealth services.

The individual must have each of the following skills in their repertoire:

- Comes to seat/computer when asked by behavior technician on screen
- Responds to name when behavior technician says it
- Responds to name when peer on screen says it
- Follows simple directions from person on screen
- Attends to a peer on a screen

If you are interested in using Social Pals with an individual, or have a parent/guardian who is requesting it, but the individual has not yet mastered these skills, it is possible to teach the skills.

Matching Social Pals



Finding an appropriate match between two peers can be exceptionally challenging.

Below are questions for consideration as you work to identify good pairings for Social Pals. You do not need two pals to have identical responses for all of the questions below. Instead, you're looking for the following: common strengths, complementary strengths, and similar interests.

Keep in mind that your ultimate goal is for the Social Pals to be able to sustain a variety of social activities without adult intervention. In order to do this, they must not only have a level of social skills that allows for independence, but also an interest in their Social Pal and ability to participate naturalistic reinforcement.

1. Which best describes the individual's current level of communication?

- a. Speaks mostly in single words or brief phrases
- b. Speaks in full sentences
- c. Speaks in complex sentences

2. Which best describes the individual's current ability level in conversation?

- a. Responds to others, but struggles to remain on topic
- b. Able to engage in conversations for at least two exchanges
- c. Able to engage in conversations for multiple exchanges

3. Which best describes the individual's current level of interest in peers?

- a. Requires prompting to attend to or interact with peers
- b. Demonstrates interest in peers but struggles with initiating interactions
- c. Initiates interactions easily with peers but struggles with maintaining interactions
- d. Initiates interactions easily, but struggles with following interests/conversation topics of conversation partner interactions

4. Which best describes the individual's current level of interest in peers?

- a. Videos
- b. Songs/Music
- c. Jokes/Word Play
- d. Physical Activities
- e. Adult Attention
- f. Peer Attention
- g. Other _____



Goal Bank

The Social Pals Playbook includes a goal bank with corresponding activities, with clear instructions for implementing the activity through a telehealth format that makes teaching social skills simple and enjoyable.

The goal bank is aligned with the Social Responsiveness Scale-2 (SRS-2) and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Framework for Social-Emotional Learning.

The SRS-2 is designed to assess social impairments related to Autism Spectrum Disorder. It contains five subscales: Social Awareness, Social Cognition, Social Communication, Social Motivation, and Restricted Interests and Repetitive Behavior.

The CASEL Framework for Social-Emotional Learning is designed for use with both children and adults of all ability levels. It contains five core competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Relationship Decision-Making.

Our objective in aligning the goal bank with these two resources was to clearly identify social impairments while simultaneously setting goals based on social skills expectations of the neurotypical population. The goals and targets are concise and clearly described in order for easy implementation by behavior technicians.



Goal Bank



Domain: Social-Emotional Reciprocity

Goal:	Will accept initiations of interactions
Target:	Accept invitation to play from peer
Operational Definition:	Says "okay," "yes," or similar statement and joins activity within 5 seconds of invitation
Sd:	Invitation from peer (i.e., "do you want to play cars with me?")
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	When first introducing this target, the activity the client is being invited to join in should be one that is a preferred activity.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. When first introducing the skill, you should select activities for which the client demonstrates the highest preference.

Goal:	Will accept initiations of interactions
Target:	Sustain play with peer without adult intervention.
Operational Definition:	Remains engaged in activity as designed for specified duration without redirection from an adult. Disengagement from activity would be counted if the client stops participating in activity as designed for longer than 10 seconds..
Sd:	Go play!
Data Collection Method:	Duration
Special Considerations:	When first introducing this target, the activity should be one that is a preferred activity.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. When first introducing the skill, you should select activities for which the client demonstrates the highest preference.

Goal:	Will accept initiations of interactions
Target:	Respond to question from peer
Operational Definition:	Responds with an appropriate statement within 5 seconds of a peer asking a question.
Sd:	Question from a peer (varies)
Data Collection Method:	Rate
Special Considerations:	This should be varied, so you should not mark this as mastered if the client can only respond to one or two different questions from peers.
Aligned Activities:	What's Different?, Charades, Hide and Seek

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will accept initiations of interactions
Target:	Respond to mand from peer
Operational Definition:	Responds with an appropriate statement or action (i.e., retrieving item requested) within 5 seconds of a peer manding.
Sd:	Mand from a peer (varies)
Data Collection Method:	Rate
Special Considerations:	This should be varied, so you should not mark this as mastered if the client can only respond to one or two different mands from peers.
Aligned Activities:	What's Different, I'm Thinking Of..., Hide and Seek

Goal:	Will accept initiations of interactions
Target:	Respond to statement from peer
Operational Definition:	Responds with an appropriate statement within 5 seconds of a peer's statement.
Sd:	Statement from a peer (varies)
Data Collection Method:	Rate
Special Considerations:	This should be varied, so you should not mark this as mastered if the client can only respond to one or two different mands from peers.
Aligned Activities:	Works of Art, Learning About You, Tell Me How, Where Are We Going To?, Story Building

Goal:	Imitation
Target:	Imitate in natural environment to complete at task
Operational Definition:	Imitate an action to complete a task within 5 seconds of the model
Sd:	"Do this", "follow me", or Action modeled by another individual (varies)
Data Collection Method:	Discrete Trials
Special Considerations:	
Aligned Activities:	Follow Me, Exercise, Tell Me How

Goal Bank



Goal:	Imitation
Target:	Imitate peer without adult intervention
Operational Definition:	Imitate peer without an adult prompt within 5 seconds of the model
Sd:	"Do this", "follow me", or Action modeled by another individual (varies)
Data Collection Method:	Discrete Trials
Special Considerations:	For this program to be run effectively, the imitation skills should be coordinated with an activity that the individual is not overly familiar with so that imitation is required in order to complete the task.
Aligned Activities:	Tell Me How

Goal:	Will initiate social interactions
Target:	Invite peer to play preferred activity
Operational Definition:	Upon seeing a peer, the client will say the peer's name and invite the peer to play with a question such as "Do you want to play with me?" or a statement such as "Let's play with -----"
Sd:	Presence of peer
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	Ideally, the client will contact natural reinforcement in the form of his/her peer agreeing to play. After identifying preferred activities, you can increase your client's MO for inviting the peer to play by making those preferred activities available only in the presence of the peer. to one or two different mands from peers.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities that have been assessed and determined to be a preferred activity for your client.

Goal:	Will initiate social interactions
Target:	Hold up an item when asked "show me," etc.
Operational Definition:	Upon being asked, the client will hold an item closer to the view of the screen or pick up an item and bring it closer to the view of the screen.
Sd:	"Show me," "Can I see?," or "What do you have there?"
Data Collection Method:	Discrete Trials
Special Considerations:	
Aligned Activities:	Works of Art, Learning About You, Hide and Seek, Tell Me How

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will initiate social interactions
Target:	Approach a person who has a known reinforcer
Operational Definition:	The client will come closer (within 1 foot) to person on the screen who is holding up a known reinforcer in such a way so that the client can see it.
Sd:	The person in the screen will hold up the known reinforcer such that it will be visible to the client.
Data Collection Method:	Discrete Trials
Special Considerations:	
Aligned Activities:	Any activities that have been assessed and determined to be a preferred activity for your client.

Goal:	Will initiate social interactions
Target:	Show picture or page in a book to another person
Operational Definition:	The client will hold up a picture or page in an opened book such that the page will be in the view of the screen.
Sd:	"What are you reading?"
Data Collection Method:	Discrete Trial
Special Considerations:	This should be done in a naturalistic manner, such as during a specific game or activity, or when the client is already holding a picture or book.
Aligned Activities:	Learning About You

Goal:	Will initiate social interactions
Target:	Show craft or project to another person
Operational Definition:	The client will hold up a craft or project that he or she is working on or has completed so that it will be visible on the screen for the other person to see.
Sd:	"What are you making?" "Wow! What are you working on?!" "Did you make that project?! Can I see it?"
Data Collection Method:	Discrete Trials
Special Considerations:	This should be done in a naturalistic manner, such as when the parent/guardian or client has informed you of a previously completed craft or project, or during an activity in which a craft or project is being completed.
Aligned Activities:	Works of Art, Learning About you, Tell Me How

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will initiate social interactions
Target:	Request peer to show toy or item
Operational Definition:	The client will ask his or her peer to hold up a toy or item closer to the view of the screen or pick up a toy or item and bring it closer to the view of the screen.
Sd:	Peer is holding a toy or item in partial view OR peer has mentioned a toy or item that is out of view.
Data Collection Method:	Discrete Trial
Special Considerations:	This should be done in a naturalistic way through a specified activity in which motivation to see toys or items is increased.
Aligned Activities:	Works of Art, Learning About You, Hide and Seek, Tell Me How

Goal:	Will initiate social interactions
Target:	Respond to a variety of requests to share
Operational Definition:	Responds with a non-vocal response (i.e., shaking head yes or showing toy to peer) or on-topic vocal response within five seconds of request
Sd:	Varies, can include "Can I see?" or "Tell me more."
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	Be sure that your client can respond to the many different ways in which peers make requests to share.
Aligned Activities:	Works of Art, Learning About You, Hide and Seek, Tell Me How

Goal:	Will maintain conversations
Target:	Give on-topic response to peer w/in 5 seconds
Operational Definition:	Upon hearing a peer directly address the client with a statement, the client will respond with a statement on the same topic within five seconds.
Sd:	Varies, includes any statement a peer makes directly to the client (examples could include, "I got a new toy" or "My favorite song is _____.")
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	When teaching conversation skills, use video modeling or gestural prompts when possible instead of vocal prompts.
Aligned Activities:	Learning About You, Where Are We Going To?, Story Building

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will maintain conversations
Target:	Initiate a conversation with another individual
Operational Definition:	Upon seeing another individual, says their name and makes a statement (examples can include a statement such as "Look at my band-aid," or a question such as "What are you doing?")
Sd:	Presence of peer
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	When teaching conversation skills, use video modeling or gestural prompts when possible instead of vocal prompts. You should also ensure that the client is not using the same statement or question to initiate interactions.
Aligned Activities:	Learning About You, Story Building, Generate a Thought

Goal:	Will maintain conversations
Target:	Reciprocate a question after answering.
Operational Definition:	Upon being asked a question, the client will respond then repeat the same question back to their peer within five seconds. For example, peer 1 says "Do you like trains?" Your client says "Yes, do you like trains?"
Sd:	Varies, examples include "How was your weekend?" or "What did you eat for lunch?"
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	When teaching conversation skills, use video modeling or gestural prompts when possible instead of vocal prompts.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. When first introducing the skill, you should select topics for which the client demonstrates the highest preference.

Goal:	Will maintain conversations
Target:	Carry on two conversational exchanges w/peer
Operational Definition:	In interaction with peer will respond to statement, listen to next statement, and respond again with no more than 5 seconds between the end of conversation partner's statement and their response. OR In interaction with peer will initiate conversation with a statement or question, listen to response, then respond again with no more than 5 seconds between the end of conversation partner's statement and their response.
Sd:	Statement from peer
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	When teaching conversation skills, use video modeling or gestural prompts when possible instead of vocal prompts.
Aligned Activities:	What's Different, Where Are We Going To?, Story Building

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will maintain conversations
Target:	Engage in 5 exchanges on one topic
Operational Definition:	In interaction with peer will respond to statement, listen to next statement, and respond again with no more than 5 seconds between the end of conversation partner's statement and their response for FIVE exchanges. OR In interaction with peer will initiate conversation with a statement or question, listen to response, then respond again with no more than 5 seconds between the end of conversation partner's statement and their response for FIVE exchanges.
Sd:	Statement from peer
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	When teaching conversation skills, use video modeling or gestural prompts when possible instead of vocal prompts.
Aligned Activities:	What's Different, Where Are We Going To?, Story Building

Goal:	Will maintain conversations
Target:	Engage in 5 on-topic exchanges for multiple topics
Operational Definition:	In interaction with peer will respond to statement, listen to next statement, and respond again with no more than 5 seconds between the end of conversation partner's statement and their response for FIVE exchanges. OR In interaction with peer will initiate conversation with a statement or question, listen to response, then respond again with no more than 5 seconds between the end of conversation partner's statement and their response for FIVE exchanges.
Sd:	Statement from peer
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	When teaching conversation skills, use video modeling or gestural prompts when possible instead of vocal prompts.
Aligned Activities:	What's Different, Where Are We Going To?, Story Building

Goal:	Will maintain conversations
Target:	Answer conversational question within 5 seconds
Operational Definition:	Respond to a question from a peer within 5 seconds of the end of the peer's question.
Sd:	Varies, any question from a peer
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	When teaching conversation skills, use video modeling or gestural prompts when possible instead of vocal prompts.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. When first introducing the skill, you should select topics for which the client demonstrates the highest preference.

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will relate to other in environment
Target:	Introduces self to unknown peer
Operational Definition:	Within 10 seconds of seeing an unknown peer, will look at the person and make a statement such as "Hello, my name is _____."
Sd:	Appearance of unknown peer
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	You may have to contrive instances of unknown peers appearing in order to practice the skill. Introducing the skill with video modeling or role playing is appropriate.
Aligned Activities:	Introductions

Goal:	Will relate to others in environment
Target:	Identifies similarity with peer
Operational Definition:	(1) Upon being asked to identify something in common, the client will respond within 5 seconds with at least one example of a similarity with their Pal. (2) Upon being presented with a similarity the client will identify it as a similarity within 5 seconds (i.e., the Pal shows a picture of family at a baseball game and the client says "My family also likes baseball.")
Sd:	Varies
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	Similarities should not simply be based on visual stimuli (i.e., we both have brown hair,) but should also relate to common interests or backgrounds.
Aligned Activities:	Profile, Guess Who, Learning About You, Show and Tell

Goal:	Will relate to others in environment
Target:	Shares interest with peer
Operational Definition:	Upon being asked a question such as "Tell me something you like?" or "What is one of your hobbies?" the client will respond within 5 seconds with a statement about one of their interests.
Sd:	Varies
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	Be sure your client is able to respond to questions in a discrete trial format about favorite activities before introducing it with peers. If a client is resistant to labeling favorites, be sure to address this prior to introducing it with peers.
Aligned Activities:	Profile, Guess Who, Learning About You, Show and Tell

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will relate to other in environment
Target:	Asks peer about interests
Operational Definition:	(1) Upon answering a question about their own interests, will reciprocate asking the peer about interests. (2) Upon seeing a visual stimulus (i.e. a t-shirt with a cartoon character or a basketball in the Pal's room) will ask peer about interest with a specific question.
Sd:	Varies
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	It may be valuable to teach this skill through the use of video modeling prior to introducing it in sessions with peers. If you do need to prompt the client to ask the peer questions, you should do it covertly (i.e., through a text message or using the chat feature of the platform in which you conduct telehealth sessions) instead of interrupting the conversation to provide the prompt.
Aligned Activities:	Profile, Guess Who, Learning About You, Show and Tell

Goal:	Will respond appropriately to the emotions of others
Target:	Demonstrate concern for peer
Operational Definition:	Within five seconds of seeing a peer upset (i.e., peer groans, cries, stomps foot, etc.) will ask a question such as "Are you okay?"
Sd:	Varies, observes peer upset
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	It may be valuable to teach this skill through the use of video modeling prior to introducing it in sessions with peers.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. The goal is for the client to recognize the peer's emotion in situ, not through contrived situations.

Goal:	Will respond appropriately to the emotions of others
Target:	Offer to help a peer
Operational Definition:	Respond appropriately for a specific emotion within 5 seconds of seeing the emotion (i.e. sees peer is frustrated with task and asks if they can help, sees peer is crying and asks if peer is okay, or sees peer is excited and asks what happened.)
Sd:	Varies, observes peer unable to complete task or observes peer upset
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	It may be valuable to teach this skill through the use of video modeling prior to introducing it in sessions with peers.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. The goal is for the client to respond to the peer's emotion in situ, not through contrived situations.

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will show emotions appropriately
Target:	Responds with emotion appropriate for environment
Operational Definition:	When frustrated or angry, communicates with words their emotion and engages in a learned replacement behavior. This should be paired with a behavior intervention plan created by the BCBA.
Sd:	Varies
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	A replacement behavior specific the client's behavior and skill set should be taught individually.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. The goal is for the client to respond appropriately in situ, not through contrived situations.

Goal:	Will show emotions appropriately
Target:	Identify appropriate emotion for given scenario
Operational Definition:	When given scenarios during play activities, the client can identify the appropriate emotional response within the scenario within five seconds of being asked. For example, in creating a scenario about fixing a car, and breaking an essential tool, the client can state an appropriate emotional response to the broken tool.
Sd:	Varies, could include questions such as "What should he do?" or "Would it be okay for him to scream right now?"
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	It may be valuable to teach this skill through the use of video modeling prior to introducing it in sessions with peers.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. The goal is for the client to respond to the peer's emotion in situ, not through contrived situations.

Goal:	Will show emotions appropriately
Target:	Identify appropriate emotion for environment
Operational Definition:	When given scenarios during play activities, the client can identify the appropriate emotional response for the environment within the scenario within five seconds of being asked. For example, in creating a scenario about being at work, and dropping something on your foot, the client can state an appropriate emotional response to the pain.
Sd:	Varies, could include questions such as "What should he do?" or "Would it be okay for him to scream right now?"
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	It may be valuable to teach this skill through the use of video modeling prior to introducing it in sessions with peers.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. The goal is for the client to respond to the peer's emotion in situ, not through contrived situations.

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will show emotions appropriately
Target:	Corrects emotional response when prompted
Operational Definition:	When a peer asks for a change in response (i.e., says "please stop yelling" or similar statement) the client changes behavior within ten seconds
Sd:	Varies
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	It may be valuable to teach this skill through the use of video modeling prior to introducing it in sessions with peers.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. The goal is for the client to respond to the peer's correction in situ, not through contrived situations.

Goal Bank



Domain: Developing & Maintaining Relationships

Goal:	Will improve confidence when interacting with others
Target:	Keep hands still in social situations
Operational Definition:	Keeps hands still for specified duration without redirection from an adult.
Sd:	Varies, includes another person speaking to them or access to activity/toy with a peer
Data Collection Method:	Duration
Special Considerations:	This is a great goal for peer-mediated prompting and/or reinforcement. You may also want to teach this skill with differential reinforcement of an alternative or an incompatible replacement behavior.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. When first introducing the skill, you should select activities for which the client demonstrates the highest preference or which most easily allow the client to engage in the targeted replacement behavior.

Goal:	Will improve confidence when interacting with others
Target:	Remain in seat in social situations
Operational Definition:	Remains seated specified duration without redirection from an adult.
Sd:	Varies, includes another person speaking to them or access to activity/toy with a peer
Data Collection Method:	Duration
Special Considerations:	This is a great goal for peer-mediated prompting and/or reinforcement. You may also want to teach this skill with differential reinforcement of an alternative or an incompatible replacement behavior.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. When first introducing the skill, you should select activities for which the client demonstrates the highest preference or which most easily allow the client to engage in the targeted replacement behavior.

Goal:	Will improve confidence when interacting with others
Target:	Orient towards speaker
Operational Definition:	Orients towards screen on which speaker appears within five seconds of speaker starting to talk.
Sd:	Sound of speaker's voice
Data Collection Method:	Rate or Duration (varies depending on individual's current skill level)
Special Considerations:	It can be challenging to accurately measure this skill through telehealth, especially if you have a poor connection. If a poor connection is an issue during a specific session, this program should not be run.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. When first introducing the skill, you should select activities for which the client demonstrates the highest preference.

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will improve confidence when interacting with others
Target:	Sit up straight
Operational Definition:	Keeping the head in an upright position (in line with the torso and not bent down or back) with the lower back supported by the chair's back support, and the legs positioned immediately in line with the hips with feet placed on the floor.
Sd:	Varies, includes another person being present and visible in the computer screen. This person can either speak to them or access to activity/toy with a peer
Data Collection Method:	Frequency, Momentary Time sampling
Special Considerations:	This is a great goal for peer-mediated prompting and/or reinforcement. You may also want to teach this skill with differential reinforcement of an alternative or an incompatible replacement behavior.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. When first introducing the skill, you should select activities for which the client demonstrates the highest preference or which most easily allow the client to engage in the targeted replacement behavior.

Goal:	Will maintain friendships
Target:	Greet peers appropriately
Operational Definition:	Upon seeing a peer for the first time that day, says "hello" or similar greeting AND Upon being greeted by a peer responds with "hello" or similar greeting
Sd:	Peer comes into view OR Peer greets individual
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	The client must be able to greet in response to a greeting as well as in response to seeing a peer for the first time.
Aligned Activities:	This goal is not aligned to specific activities, but probe data should be collected at the beginning of each session.

Goal:	Will maintain friendships
Target:	Allow peers to make changes in play activities
Operational Definition:	When a peer requests a change within an activity (i.e., pretending cars are racing to pretending you're washing the cars,) the client will follow the peer's lead and continue playing with the peer for a specified duration.
Sd:	Varies depending upon the play activity
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	If there are problem behaviors that occur as a result of a peer making changes in play activities, then you must implement this goal as part of a behavior intervention plan and a replacement behavior should also be taught.
Aligned Activities:	Follow Me, Going to the Market, Story Building

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will maintain friendships
Target:	Introduce activity that peer enjoys
Operational Definition:	Asks a peer to join an activity or independently starts an activity that is a known preference of that particular peer.
Sd:	Varies, but may include the peer coming into view or visible preferred activity/toys
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	A prerequisite for this skill is to identify favorite activities of the peer.
Aligned Activities:	Varies based on peer preferences

Goal:	Will maintain friendships
Target:	Introduce topic of conversation that peer enjoys
Operational Definition:	Asks a peer a question or independently start a conversation that is a known preference of that particular peer.
Sd:	Varies, but may include the peer coming into view or the peer responding to a greeting.
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	A prerequisite for this skill is to identify favorite topics of conversation of the peer.
Aligned Activities:	Varies based on peer preferences

Goal:	Will maintain friendships
Target:	Change activities when peer requests to do so
Operational Definition:	When a peer requests a change to a different activity (i.e., pretending cars are racing and then says “my car drove to the restaurant, what should I cook”,) the client will follow the peer’s lead and continue playing with the peer for a specified duration.
Sd:	Varies depending upon the play activity
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	If there are problem behaviors that occur as a result of a peer making changes in play activities, then you must implement this goal as part of a behavior intervention plan and a replacement behavior should also be taught.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill. When first introducing the skill, you should transition to activities for which the client demonstrates some preference.

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will make changes based on peer feedback
Target:	Reduce noise level when asked
Operational Definition:	When asked by a peer to either speak more quietly, the client will reduce the volume of his/her voice. OR When asked by a peer to reduce the volume on a device, the client will press a button to reduce the volume
Sd:	Varies, can include "You're hurting my ears," "Can you turn it down?" or "It's too loud."
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	It may be valuable to provide a decibel meter on the screen as a visual cue
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill

Goal:	Will make changes based on peer feedback
Target:	Reduce noise level when given visual cue
Operational Definition:	When given a visual cue (i.e., peer covering ears,) the client will reduce the volume of his/her voice OR push a button to reduce the volume on a device
Sd:	Varies, can include covering ears with hands, jumping/startling when sound is too loud, or wincing
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	It may be valuable to provide a decibel meter on the screen as a visual cue
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill

Goal:	Will make changes based on peer feedback
Target:	Identify nonverbal cues for talking too much
Operational Definition:	When asked to identify a nonverbal cue for talking too much, the client will state one example (i.e., listener stops looking at you.)
Sd:	How can you tell if you are talking too much? OR What might a listener do when you are talking too much?
Data Collection Method:	Discrete trial
Special Considerations:	This skill should be taught outside Social Pals session, then practiced within session, with the BT prompting the Pal to give nonverbal cues when the client is talking too much.
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will make changes based on peer feedback
Target:	Respond to nonverbal cues for talking too much
Operational Definition:	During an interaction, when the listener provides a nonverbal cue for talking too much, the client will stop talking, and then ask the listener a question
Sd:	Varies, can include listener slumping and/or sighing, listener looking around at other things, listener looking at watch or phone
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	It is important to teach a client a variety of nonverbal cues if talking too much or dominating conversation is a barrier to the client developing and maintaining relationships
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill

Goal:	Will make changes based on peer feedback
Target:	Ask others questions during conversation
Operational Definition:	During an interaction with a peer, the client will ask a question to a peer that is related to the current topic
Sd:	presence of peers
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	The BT should reinforce variability in asking questions. For example, if in one Social Pals session the client asks "What are you eating for dinner?" the client should not receive reinforcement for asking the same question in the next session
Aligned Activities:	Learning About You, Tell Me How, How Do You See It?

Goal:	Will make changes based on peer feedback
Target:	Allow others to interject
Operational Definition:	When the client observes the listener opening mouth to being speaking or starting to vocalize a word, the client will pause in the conversation and allow the listener to being speaking
Sd:	Varies, includes the listener starting a word (i.e., saying "Bu---") or the listener gesturing in another way that they want to speak
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	A prerequisite skill for this target it that the client attend to the face of the listener while speaking
Aligned Activities:	Learning About You, Tell Me How, How Do You See It?

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will play appropriately with same-age peers
Target:	Use 5 different ways to initiate peer interaction
Operational Definition:	Upon seeing a peer or a preferred play activity, the client will get the peer's attention. The client will then ask a question or make a statement to initiate the activity. Examples include: "Want to play with me?", "Let's play _____," or "Do you want to build with the blocks?"
Sd:	Appearance of peer OR access to preferred play activity
Data Collection Method:	Probe (will need to record words used to initiate peer interaction in order to collect data on the number of ways in which the client initiates)
Special Considerations:	When first introducing this skill, the BT should arrange materials/activities so that they are highly preferred by both Pals
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill

Goal:	Will play appropriately with same-age peers
Target:	Respond appropriately to peer rejecting interaction
Operational Definition:	Upon being rejected by a peer, the client will say "okay," ask if the peer wants to play something different, or say "What do you want to do?"
Sd:	Varies, but may include the peer shaking head "no" upon being invited to play, the peer saying "no" or the peer making a statement such as "I don't want to play that."
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	The BT should prompt the peer to reject an initiation in multiple ways (varying the Sd) in order to avoid scripted responding
Aligned Activities:	Any activities can be used to work on this skill

Goal:	Will play appropriately with same-age peers
Target:	Take turns in a game with a peer
Operational Definition:	Taking a turn is comprised of completing an action required in a game or activity, then removing hands from materials, and waiting for peer to complete their action before touching materials again
Sd:	Varies, but can include presence of a game/activity that requires turn-taking, seeing peer complete turn, or someone saying "my turn" or "your turn"
Data Collection Method:	Discrete trial
Special Considerations:	If there are problem behaviors that occur as a result of being required to take turns, then you must implement this goal as part of a behavior intervention plan and a replacement behavior should also be taught
Aligned Activities:	Learning About You, I'm Thinking Of..., Going to the Market, Where Are We Going To?, and Story Building

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will play appropriately with same-age peers
Target:	Wait his/her turn
Operational Definition:	While the peer is completing their turn with the activity or materials, the client will wait without attempting to interrupt the peer's turn
Sd:	Varies, can include the peer visibly completing their turn, peer saying "my turn" or peer saying "wait, I'm not done yet."
Data Collection Method:	Duration
Special Considerations:	If there are problem behaviors that occur as a result of being required to take turns, then you must implement this goal as part of a behavior intervention plan and a replacement behavior should also be taught
Aligned Activities:	Learning About You, I'm Thinking Of..., Going to the Market, Where Are We Going To?, and Story Building

Goal:	Will respond appropriately to tone of conversations
Target:	Identify tone of voice
Operational Definition:	When provided with an example of a tone of voice, the client will identify the tone within 5 seconds. Examples may include: serious, silly, scared, angry, happy, etc.
Sd:	Varies
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	Tone of voice may need to be taught through discrete trial instruction in individual sessions before introducing it in sessions with peers. It may be valuable to use examples from cartoons or favorite tv shows to initially teach tone of voice.
Aligned Activities:	Story Building, Generate a Thought

Goal:	Will respond appropriately to tone of conversations
Target:	Use appropriate tone of voice for conversation
Operational Definition:	During play activities, the client will use an appropriate tone for speaking for characters based on the scenario. For example, if the client pretends to see a scary bear during a play activity, the client will use a scared tone of voice in the next sentence they speak.
Sd:	Varies
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	Tone of voice may need to be taught through discrete trial instruction in individual sessions before introducing it in sessions with peers.
Aligned Activities:	Story Building, Generate a Thought

Goal Bank



Goal:	Will respond appropriately to tone of conversations
Target:	Change tone of voice when necessary
Operational Definition:	During play activities, the client will their tone for speaking for characters based on a change in the scenario. For example, if the Pals are telling a story together and one introduces a scary bear, the client will use a scared tone of voice in the next sentence they speak
Sd:	Varies
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	If there are problem behaviors that occur as a result of being required to take turns, then you must implement this goal as part of a behavior intervention plan and a replacement behavior should also be taught
Aligned Activities:	Story Building, Generate a Thought

Goal:	Will respond appropriately to tone of conversations
Target:	Use tone of voice to signal specific emotion
Operational Definition:	
Sd:	Varies
Data Collection Method:	Probe
Special Considerations:	If there are problem behaviors that occur as a result of being required to take turns, then you must implement this goal as part of a behavior intervention plan and a replacement behavior should also be taught
Aligned Activities:	Story Building, Generate a Thought



How-To Guide



GROUP CONTINGENCIES

One way to increase motivation for peer interactions is through the implementation of group contingencies.

For a group contingency to be effective, the desired behaviors need to be clearly defined as well as the contingency itself. Below are definitions for each type of group contingency along with examples for how to use that group contingency within a telehealth session.

INDEPENDENT CONTINGENCY

Definition: Contingency presented to all members of the group, reinforcement only delivered to those members who meet criterion outlined by contingency.

Example: The BT introduces What's Different game and tells both clients that they will earn tokens for looking at the screen appropriately. Client 1 looks at the screen as required by the game, and earns one token. Client 2 does not look at the screen as required and does not earn a token.

DEPENDENT CONTINGENCY

Definition: Reward for ALL members of group contingent on performance of one individual.

Example: The BT introduces What's Different game and tells both clients that they will earn tokens for looking at the screen appropriately. Client 1 looks at the screen as required by the game, and earns one token. Client 2 does not look at the screen as required and does not earn a token.

How-To Guide



GROUP CONTINGENCIES

INTERDEPENDENT CONTINGENCY

Definition: All members of the group must meet criterion before ANY member earns the reward

Example: The BT introduces What's Different game and tells both clients that they will earn tokens for looking at the screen appropriately, but that BOTH of them must do it. Client 1 looks at the screen as required by the game. Two minutes later Client 2 looks at the screen as required. The BT says, "You've both been looking at the screen, you both earn a token."

GOOD BEHAVIOR GAME

Definition: Client 1 and Client 2 compete against each other. The individual with the FEWEST marks against them at the end of the specified time wins the game and earns the reinforcer. BOTH pals can earn the reinforcer if they earn below a SPECIFIED number of marks. Marks are received for clearly defined inappropriate/undesirable behaviors.

Example: The BT introduces the I Spy game and tells both clients that they will be competing against each other for fewest number of marks against them. Whoever gets less than 5 marks wins the game and earns a token. If both clients get less than 5 marks, then they both win and get tokens. Clients will receive marks if they shout out of turn, or move out of view of the screen for more than 15 seconds. Client 1 shouts out the answer when it is Client 2's turn 6 times and receives 6 marks. Client 2 does not engage in any shouting out of turn or moving out of screen behavior and does not receive any marks. Client 2 wins the game and earns a token. Client 2 does not look at the screen as required and does not earn a token.



How-To Guide

PEER-MEDIATED PROMPTING AND REINFORCEMENT

One of the overarching goals of Social Pals is to have the two Pals interact as independently as possible. This means that you will need to train each Pal on how to prompt and reinforce their partner so that it is peer-mediated instead of adult-mediated.

Antecedents and consequences can both be socially mediated. Examples of socially mediated antecedents may include: a peer saying “put the pencil in the box,” a parent asking “Where is the milk?” or a peer saying “You’re it” and then running towards you.

Examples of socially mediated consequences may include: a friend points to a pencil after you say “Have you seen my pencil?,” a parent looks at you and smiles after you tie your shoes independently, or a peer yells “no” after you attempt to take a bite of his cupcake.

Providing services through telehealth gives a unique opportunity for the BT to prompt one peer to provide a prompt or reinforcement to the other peer. For example, dependent upon the platform used, the BT can send a message through chat to one individual prompting him/her to ask the peer a question or tell the peer “good job.” In this manner, the BT is able to provide social, conversational prompts without interrupting the flow of conversation or causing unnatural interactions.

Case Example: John is a 10-year-old boy with ASD who is paired with his peer, Sam, also a 10-year-old both with ASD. John and Sam are Social Pals and their BT, Jessica, is working on facilitating reciprocal communication between the two boys. More specifically, John is working on initiating conversations with peers while Sam is working on maintaining conversations with peers. To make sure the boys are engaging in conversation, Jessica starts the Activity, “Learning about you” and presents a picture of an ice cream truck to John. As an additional prompt for John, Jessica sends a brief chat message only to

How-To Guide



PEER-MEDIATED PROMPTING AND REINFORCEMENT

John with the words, “Ask favorite ice cream flavor.” John then says to Sam, “what is your favorite ice cream flavor?” Once the question has been asked, Jessica sends Sam a private chat message, just to him with the options, “chocolate or vanilla?” Sam immediately replies to John, “chocolate!” and John laughs and replies, “I like a chocolate and vanilla mixed.” Jessica provides behavior-specific social praise to both boys and the game continues.

PEER-MEDIATED PROMPTING

When first introducing peer-mediated prompting, you should be very specific about the behavior you are targeting and how the peer should prompt. Ideally, the behavior you are targeting is a behavior that will be motivating for the peer who is doing the prompting.

For example, in relation to the case described above, if John asked what is your favorite flavor and Sam responds “chocolate” but is looking behind him, John can say “Hey! Look at me!”

PEER-MEDIATED REINFORCEMENT

Reinforcement should be naturalistic, rather than contrived, whenever possible. Examples of naturalistic peer-mediated reinforcement include: a peer laughing at a joke, a peer saying good job, a peer joining in a game after being invited, a peer asking you to join a game, or a peer looking at you when you speak.

The goal is to promote opportunities for naturalistic reinforcement, but the BT can also send individual Pals a message reminding them to say “good job” or “I liked how you _____” with behavior-specific praise.

Activities



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In the pages that follow, several activities are outlined. While some of these activities are based on common activities in school and play settings, all of these have been specifically designed for use through Telehealth.

While the activities are numbered, they can be introduced in any order. When selecting for activities you should consider the following:

- Interests of the two pals
- Target skills for the two pals
- Introducing as much variability in activities as possible
- Increasing the amount of time in which the Social Pals participate in social interactions without adult intervention

Activities



Activity: Follow Me	In this activity, both clients should get out of their chairs but still be in view of the camera. Client 1 is the leader, and engages in different actions (i.e., jumping, clapping, turning around.) Client 2 follows all of Client 1's actions. Then they switch roles.
What the BT does:	The first time this activity is introduced, the BT should model the activity for the two clients. The BT will also be implementing any group contingencies or other reinforcement strategies selected by the BCBA.
What the clients do:	In this activity, the goal is for the clients to imitate one another, generate fun or funny actions to imitate, and to provide reinforcement to one another.
Materials Needed:	None
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Imitate gross motor movements ● Imitate fine motor movements
Possible Modifications:	Have the clients imitate with specified objects (i.e. Client 1 would complete actions with a ball and Client 2 would imitate the actions with a ball.)

Activity: Exercise	The BT and both clients will take turns with this activity. First, the BT will demonstrate an exercise move (i.e., stretching) and the clients will have to follow the move. Then, Client 1 will demonstrate the next exercise move (i.e., jumping jacks) and the BT and Client 2 will follow the move. Finally, Client 2 will demonstrate an exercise move (i.e., sit ups) and the BT and Client 1 will follow the move.
What the BT does:	The first time this activity is introduced, the BT should model the activity for the two clients. The BT will also be implementing any group contingencies or other reinforcement strategies selected by the BCBA.
What the clients do:	In this activity, the goal is for the clients to imitate one another, generate fun or funny actions to imitate, and to provide reinforcement to one another.
Materials Needed:	Varies, but may include yoga mat or an exercise ball.
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Imitate gross motor movements ● Follow single step directions ● Follow directions that involve numbers (i.e., clap your hands five times)
Possible Modifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have one client lead the activity ● Create a PowerPoint or other visual that the clients independently follow without instructions from the BT

Activities



Activity: What's Different	Client 1 will move out of view of the screen, then change one thing about their appearance and come back into view of the screen. Client 2 has to guess the difference.
What the BT does:	In the first instance of implementing this activity, the BT should model for the clients how to change their appearance.
What the clients do:	In this activity, the goal is for both clients to attend to one another and to ask questions about changes in appearance.
Materials Needed:	Let caregivers of both clients know in advance that some props should be nearby, such as hats, a jacket, or a toy that will balance on a head or shoulder.
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify same and different in static pictures/objects presented simultaneously ● Tact a picture/object that was present within the past minute but is now out of sight ● Tact an adjective that describes a picture/object that was present within the past minute but is now out of sight
Possible Modifications:	Clients can take turns changing something in their environment that is visible on the screen.

Activity: Simon Says	There are two ways this activity can be run. First, the BT can be Simon and the two clients follow the rules as usual. The second option would be to have the clients alternate being Simon and having the other client follow instructions accordingly.
What the BT does:	The BT explains the rules of the game. The BT then makes statements about actions to complete (i.e., "Simon says touch your head, Simon says turn around, shout hooray") and provides reinforcement when clients follow instructions only when "Simon says."
What the clients do:	The clients discriminate between instructions they should follow and those they should not. They should notice when their pal follows instructions correctly or makes an error.
Materials Needed:	None
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow single step directions ● Differentiate between two conditions
Possible Modifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include a speed round in which instructions are given very quickly. ● Let Pals take turns being Simon

Activities



Activity: Works of Art	The BT will present a list of art supplies needed to complete an art activity and together will instruct clients, step by step, how to complete the art project.
What the BT does:	Demonstrate each step of the art project. Give additional instructions as needed.
What the clients do:	Each pal will follow the instructions given by the BT. Each client should also notice when their pal follows instructions well or needs help.
Materials Needed:	Varies
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Imitate gross motor movement ● Imitate fine motor movement ● Follow single step directions
Possible Modifications:	Have one client introduce and model the art activity.

Activity: I Spy	In this activity, clients will observe the environment of their Pal and identify an item that the Pal will have to guess. For example, Client 1 sees a blue toy airplane in the room of Client 2. Client 1 will open the game by saying "I spy something that is blue." Client 2 will then guess an item from the room that is blue until he/she identifies the plane.
What the BT does:	The BT should first model how you play I Spy. The BT then provides prompts and reinforcement as necessary to help each client fulfill the requirements of their role in each round of the game.
What the clients do:	Client 1 can turn the camera so it shows more of his/her environment. Then Client 2 selects an item from Client 1's environment and starts a regular round of "I Spy" (i.e. "I
Materials Needed:	Varies
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recall responses to questions given within the last minute ● Ask questions that build off previous information ● Identify feature, function, and class for dozens, if not hundreds, of objects
Possible Modifications:	Instead of selecting materials from the environment, the BT puts a detailed image on the screen (i.e., a scene from a grocery store or amusement park) and "I Spy" is played in the general way.

Activities



Activity: Charades	Client 1 closes eyes or turns away. Client 2 is shown a word/image by the BT that they will act out. Client 1 opens eyes and watches client 2 act out word/image from card. Client 1 should make guesses based on client 2's actions. They then switch roles.
What the BT does:	The BT will first model how the game is played. The BT should also use words/images prepared by the BCBA prior to the session.
What the clients do:	The clients should provide logical guesses based on the way in which the clue is acted out. If the client is the one acting out the clue, they should adjust how they are acting out the clue based on the responses of their pal. For example, if the clue is "bird" and Client 1 puts his/her hands out and pretends to fly around the room, Client 2 may guess "plane." Client 2 should respond by flapping his/her arms to make them look like wings.
Materials Needed:	N/A
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify abstract representations of common objects or actions ● Ask questions that build off previous information
Possible Modifications:	Make the game more complicated by having clients guess noun-verb combinations, such as "dog running" or guessing proper nouns, titles of books/movies, etc.

Activity: Learning About You	The BT will present a picture to Client 1, who will use the picture to ask Client 2 a question. Client 2 should respond and reciprocate the question. For an extra challenge, remove the pictures or have the clients bring their own pictures to prompt different conversations to learn more about each other.
What the BT does:	The BT will model how to participate in the activity. The BT should also use pictures prepared by the BCBA prior to the session. For example, the BT might hold up a picture of kids playing baseball, which would prompt Client 1 to ask "Do you like baseball?" or "What is your favorite sport?"
What the clients do:	The clients should look at the image and ask a variety of questions based on the topic represented there. They should also respond to questions from their pal and reciprocate questions.
Materials Needed:	Pictures that can prompt different questions (i.e., pictures of a crayon box for asking favorite color, a playground for asking favorite thing to do on playground, etc.)
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The clients must be able to respond to questions and have a strong repertoire of WH questions.
Possible Modifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide textual prompts instead of picture prompts. For example, the card could simply say "baseball" instead of showing two kids playing baseball. ● Provide broad categories and challenge the clients to come up with two or more questions related to that topic.

Activities



Activity: I'm Thinking Of....	
What the BT does:	The BT will model the activity for both clients. The BT will provide prompting and reinforcement as necessary.
What the clients do:	Client 1 will write down a word that they are thinking of out of sight of the screen. Then client 1 will say "I'm thinking of something that ____" (i.e, is an animal, is red, is in the kitchen.) Client 2 makes guesses based on all clues. When client 2 guesses correctly, client 1 holds up the card with the answer and says "good job" or "you got it!" They then switch roles.
Materials Needed:	N/A
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recall responses to questions given within the last minute ● Ask questions that build off previous information ● Identify feature, function, and class for dozens, if not hundreds, of objects
Possible Modifications:	Use proper nouns as the clues so students have to give clues related to a specific person, place, etc.

Activity: Going to the Market	In this game, the two clients and the BT will take turns. The first person says "I'm going to the market and I'm buying a ____." The second person will say "I'm going to the market and I'm buying a ____ and a ____." The second person must remember what the first person says, then add more to it. As each player takes turns, the list gets longer and longer. The first person to forget a word is out, and then either a new round begins or the game is over.
What the BT does:	The BT should model how the game is played. The BT will also be a participant during the game.
What the clients do:	The clients will add to the list and recognize if their pal has responded correctly or made an error.
Materials Needed:	N/A
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe basic sequences ● Remember prior comments made by peers or conversation partners
Possible Modifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make the game related to a specific "market." For example, clients would only name items found in the grocery store, a clothing store, or a pet shop. ● Require the game to be played in alphabetical order: the first person would name an item starting with the letter A, the second person would name an item starting with the letter B, and so on.

Activities



Activity: Hide & Seek	Client 1 will select an item and show it to Client 2. Then Client 2 will close his/her eyes and Client 1 will hide the item somewhere within the room that is visible on the screen. Client 2 opens his/her eyes and asks questions to find the item (i.e., "is it behind the books?" OR "is it under the chair?" Once Client 2 finds the item, the two clients switch roles.
What the BT does:	The BT should model how to perform both roles within the activity. Provide reinforcement and prompts as necessary.
What the clients do:	The clients should be responding within five seconds to either questions or new information based on their role.
Materials Needed:	Varies. Use any materials present in the client's environment.
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Receptive identification of prepositions ● Expressive identification of prepositions ● Use WH questions to mand for information ● Recall responses to questions given within the last minute
Possible Modifications:	N/A

Activity: Where Are We Going To?	Client 1 will say "Today we are going to _____." (i.e., outer space, the mall, or the beach.) Then both clients take turns sharing what they see in this place they're pretending they went to.
What the BT does:	Model how to play the game. Provide reinforcement and prompts as necessary.
What the clients do:	The clients should be suggesting new places to go and suggesting items that are logical for those locations. It is important that different locations are selected each time this activity is introduced to prevent rote responding and rigidity.
Materials Needed:	N/A
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recall responses to questions given within the last minute ● Recall sequences ● Pretend a tangible item is something different during play (i.e., pretend a pot is a hat or pretend a toy broom is a rocket)
Possible Modifications:	Give each client a specific job related to the location they've chosen. For example, if the clients decide to go to the zoo, then one client will be responsible for feeding animals and the other will be responsible for welcoming guests into the zoo. They items they bring should be related to their jobs.

Activities



Activity: Tell Me How	The BT will teach Client 1 how to complete a craft or task individually. In the next session, Client 1 will teach Client 2 how to complete the craft or task. In the next week, the clients will trade positions, and Client 2 will teach Client 1 a craft/task.
What the BT does:	The BT will demonstrate how to complete a specific task to one client. The steps should be clear and visual or textual prompts should be provided if necessary. During the session, when Client 1 is teaching Client 2 how to complete the task, the BT should provide reinforcement and prompts as necessary.
What the clients do:	The client who is teaching the task will provide the clear steps they were taught by the BT, respond to questions from their pal, and give corrections, prompts, and reinforcement when necessary. The client learning the task will follow each step provided by their pal, ask questions when confused, and provide reinforcement to their pal.
Materials Needed:	Varies
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Imitate gross motor movement ● Imitate fine motor movement ● Follow single step directions ● Give single step directions
Possible Modifications:	N/A

Activity: Story Building	The BT will start a story with one sentence (i.e. "One day Lucy was walking to the store when she saw a ____") Client 1 picks up where Lucy stopped and continues with the story (i.e. "she saw a giant bug. The bug was red and started to ____") Then Client 1 stops talking and Client 2 picks up where he/she left off. (i.e. "started to sing a beautiful song.) Client 1 and Client 2 continue taking turns until they have completed telling the story.
What the BT does:	The BT starts the activity, models how to participate, and provides prompts and reinforcement as necessary. The BT also reinforces novel responses.
What the clients do:	The clients should be adding details to the story and incorporating information shared by their pal. For example, if their pal introduces a new character, they should also make statements about that new character.
Materials Needed:	None
Prerequisite Skills:	Recall responses to questions given within the last minute
Possible Modifications:	The BT introduces a problem in the story and the pals have to figure out a way to solve the problem within their additions to the story.

Activities



Activity: Generate a Thought	Client's view BT's screen as well as each other. BT presents a picture scene, and places/ draws a thought bubble above the person in the picture. Client 1 and Client 2 take turns generating thoughts that the character may be thinking. Repeat with new picture scene.
What the BT does:	The BT presents pictures that have been provided in advance by the BCBA.
What the clients do:	The clients should be providing statements that represent the possible perspective of the person in the picture.
Materials Needed:	Picture Scene Cards or Book, Blank Thought Bubble
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Able to identify pictures of emotions ● Able to describe what is happening in a picture
Possible Modifications:	Clients take turns performing an action using a household item, while peers generate what they may be thinking about. i.e. client 1 takes a pen and paper to draw something. Peers guess that client 2 may be thinking "Hmm.. how will I draw a picture of my father?"

Activity: How Do You See It?	The BT will share a picture of an optical illusion on the screen. Clients will write down what they see, then the BT will lead a discussion about perspectives.
What the BT does:	The BT presents an optical illusion on the screen. And says "Look at the picture on the screen. Think about what you see but don't say it. When I say 'go' you will have a minute to write what you see. BT allows clients to view the picture for a minute or so, and then says go, with clients each viewing only their own screen, they write down what they see. Then BT allows all clients to show their responses. Then BT leads a group discussion regarding how one picture can be seen in 2 or more different ways, comparable to people having various perspectives (thoughts, feelings, etc.) regarding the same situation.
What the clients do:	Clients look at the picture, then write down their response. Clients responds to questions posted by BT in discussion.
Materials Needed:	Pictures of optical illusions
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Able to write down what they see in an image succinctly
Possible Modifications:	Use a picture from a newspaper or storybook and have clients write what they think is happening in the image. Clients should then compare their responses and discuss differences in responses.

Activities



Activity: Profile	In this activity, each Pal draws a picture of themselves.
What the BT does:	The BT explains the activity and also draws a picture of himself/herself. The BT guides the discussion as necessary.
What the clients do:	Client 1 is selected to show the picture to his pal and the Behavior Technician. He picks it up and the Behavior Technician and Client 2 collectively notice 3 things about Client 1 that they gather from the picture, ex: has brown eyes/blonde hair/is wearing a sweater. Client 2 then shows his picture and the activity is repeated. The Behavior Tech can show her picture as well and repeat the activity.
Materials Needed:	Paper, crayons/markers, timer
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Independently complete a drawing task ● Describe features of pictures or objects
Possible Modifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add a competitive factor: clients/the BT can make a tally in a client's designated section of the screen each time that client comments on a peer's picture. Count tallies at the end for a winner. ● Add a time factor: Set a timer during the commenting time. See how long it takes to come up with 3 details as a group. ● Change the amount of comments needed, for example from 3 to 5. ● Add a challenge: Instead of the group collectively coming up with three details, each client should come up with three.

Activity: Guess Who?	In this activity, each Pal will formulate clues about the other participants.
What the BT does:	The Behavior Technician acts as a participant in this activity (and should be 'it' first.) She begins by describing 2 physical attributes of a selected client. The clients use these attributes as clues to determine which peer is being referred to. The client that guesses correctly and takes a turn describing another participant. Repeat until all participants have had a turn to describe a peer.
What the clients do:	The clients should be formulating varied clues about their peer and the BT. The clients should also be making appropriate guesses based on the clues.
Materials Needed:	N/A
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify characteristics of other people ● Identify favorite activities/items of other people
Possible Modifications:	Once clients become more familiar with each other, this activity can be done with clients describing peers' preferences, likes, dislikes, family details, etc. in place of using attributes.

Activities



Activity: Compound Words	In this activity, the BT and the Social Pals work together to create compound words.
What the BT does:	The BT starts by explaining that there are compound words/ words that are made up of two different ones. She will draw a picture of one 'part' (ex: cup for cupcake), and clients can copy it onto their own paper. They can then add the other 'part' that they think belongs there on their own papers. The Behavior Tech will give clients some time to draw, and then tell them to pick up their papers. The Behavior Tech will then moderate as the clients compare with their pal and discuss whether their pictures match; did they come up with the same 'whole', or did one of them add a different part that caused their picture to become a different 'whole', etc. The BT can discuss with clients whether this was the 'whole' she had in mind. The BT can then choose a client to draw another 'part' on the screen, and the activity is repeated until all participants have had a turn to initiate the activity.
What the clients do:	The clients should be copying the BTs drawing on their paper and then adding to it.
Materials Needed:	Paper, pencil, crayons
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Independently complete a drawing task
Possible Modifications:	Clients pick up their drawings as soon as they're done, or, instead of having clients draw it on their own, they can simply add to the Behavior Techs drawing as soon as they think of the other 'part'. Then, after the discussion is completed, the client who had added the 'part' is the one to initiate the next round.

Activity: Draw Yourself	In this activity, the clients will each create a drawing the represents something about themselves.
What the BT does:	The behavior technician will model how the activity works. The BT may draw a favorite food, a sport they enjoy playing, etc. The BT then holds up the picture and shares one or more sentences about it.
What the clients do:	The clients should each create their own drawings representing something about themselves. The clients will share their drawing and say one or more sentences about it. The clients should also ask questions to their Pal and respond to any questions from their Pal.
Materials Needed:	Paper, pencil, crayons
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Independently complete a drawing task
Possible Modifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One client can select a topic for the drawings, and then both pals and the BT complete drawings based on that topic, (i.e., draw a place you've traveled to.) ● Everyone creates a drawing. Instead of sharing one to two sentences about their drawing, the peer and BT asks questions about the drawing or tries to guess what the drawing represents. The person who created the drawing responds to their statements and questions.

Activities



Activity: Freeze & Take Over	<p>In this activity, the clients will act out various activities, attend to one another, and identify what their Pal is imitating.</p>
What the BT does:	<p>The behavior technician will send Client 1 a message telling them what to act out (i.e., playing baseball, grocery shopping, or taking a bath). Client 1 will quietly pretend to be completing that activity while Client 2 quietly watches. At some point, the BT will say "Freeze" and Client 1 will freeze mid-action. Client 2 will then copy the action, and when the BT says "continue" Client 2 will continue to act out the activity based on what they believe the activity was.</p>
What the clients do:	<p>The clients will pretend to complete activities, pay close attention to one another, and provide reinforcement for identifying the correct activity. For example, if the BT sends Client 1 a message that says "pretend you are playing baseball," Client 1 will stand up and get into a batter's stance, then pretend to swing a bat. He'll pretend to be upset that he missed the first pitch, then get in batter's stance once more and swing the bat again. The BT then says "Freeze." Client 1 freezes and then Client 2 imitates exactly Client 1's current position. The BT says "continue" and Client 2 might pretend he hit the ball and run towards a base, pretend to be another player catching the ball, or pretend to be upset for missing another pitch. Client 1 might say "You got it! I was playing baseball."</p>
Materials Needed:	<p>N/A</p>
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pretend play skills
Possible Modifications:	<p>N/A</p>

Activity: Show & Tell	<p>In this activity, each client will select an object that they want to share with their pal.</p>
What the BT does:	<p>The behavior technician will introduce the activity and model how to do show and tell. The behavior technician will also provide prompting and reinforcement as necessary.</p>
What the clients do:	<p>The clients will each select an object to share. The clients will share 2 or more sentences about the object and respond to questions from their Pal. The clients will ask their Pal questions about their object.</p>
Materials Needed:	<p>Varies, objects found in each client's home.</p>
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Responds to Wh- questions ● Ask Wh- questions
Possible Modifications:	<p>Each Pal will select an object they see in the room of their Pal and ask questions about it. For example, Client 1 will see a trophy in the room of Client 2 and ask Client 1 to talk about it.</p>

Activities



Activity: Introductions	In this activity, each Pal will learn how to introduce two people.
What the BT does:	The behavior technician will model how to introduce two people or show a video model of how to introduce two people. The behavior technician will provide prompting and reinforcement as necessary.
What the clients do:	Client 1 will bring a family member to the screen and provide an introduction (i.e., “This is my sister. Her name is Sarah. She is two years older than me and likes to ride her bike. This is my Pal Justin. He has two brothers and he likes to build with blocks.”) Client 2 will greet the introduced family member and ask a question. Then Client 2 will introduce one of his/her family members.
Materials Needed:	N/A
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Greetings ● Stating facts about the person
Possible Modifications:	Have the client introduce themselves to the family member. For example, Client 1 would say “This is my sister. Her name is Sarah.” Then Client 2 would say “Nice to meet you, Sarah. My name is...”

Activity: AD LIBS	In this activity, the Pals will have an opportunity to be silly together while building a story with the behavior technician.
What the BT does:	The behavior technician will tell a story, pausing every few sentences to allow the Pals to fill in words. The behavior technician will provide prompting and reinforcement as necessary. The goal is for the novel responses to be reinforced. For example, the behavior technician might say “Johnny is going on a long journey. Before goes, he puts essential items in his backpack, such as food, water, and....” Then Client 1 says “his pet goldfish.” The behavior technician continues the story with the new information the Pals have added.
What the clients do:	Clients pay attention to the story and recognize when the behavior technician is pausing for one of them to fill in the blank.
Materials Needed:	N/A
Prerequisite Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respond to listening comprehension questions about short stories
Possible Modifications:	

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The goals and teaching strategies in Social Pals are evidence-based. Below we have included all references along with a general summary of the key pieces of information from each article.

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About the Authors



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SAM BLANCO, PhD, L-BCBA

Sam Blanco is an ABA provider for school-aged students in Brooklyn, New York. Working in education for sixteen years with students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other developmental delays, Sam utilizes strategies for achieving a multitude of academic, behavior, and social goals. She is also an assistant professor in the ABA program at The Sage Colleges, and she is the Senior Clinical Strategist at Chorus Software Solutions.

MORDECHAI MEISELS, MEd, L-BCBA

Mordechai Meisels is the Founder and Chief Clinical Officer of Encore Support Services, a leading provider in special education and ABA therapy services. Under his leadership, Encore quickly expanded across state lines, servicing thousands of children in the Tri-State area. Mordechai's vast expertise in the behavioral health industry inspired him to fill a critical void with the founding of Hadran Academy, a high school for high functioning autistic youth. In true visionary form, Mordechai combined his background as an expert clinician and passion for technology with the creation of Chorus Software Solutions. As the Founder and CEO of Chorus, Mordechai is committed to creating innovative technology to empower care teams, increase operational efficiency, and ultimately impacting quality of care.

SARA BAUER, PhD, L-BCBA-D

Sara Bauer is the Clinical Director of the Teaneck Division at Encore Support Services and a Lecturer in the Applied Behavior Analysis program at Hebrew University. Prior to these roles, Sara was the Director of the Masters program and Advanced Certificate program in Applied Behavior Analysis at Queens College, The City University of New York. Dr. Bauer has served as a lecturer for the Psychology department at Queens College and has taught at Lehman College and Touro College. She has also been an ABA supervisor to many post-graduate students pursuing their board certification and licensure in Behavior Analysis.

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Sample Consent Form

Informed Consent for Social Pals Telemedicine Services

Patient Name: _____

Date of Birth: __/__/____

Location of Patient: _____

Medical Record #: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Email Address: _____

[Type of Provider] Name: _____

Provider Phone #: _____

Provider Email Address: _____

Location where Providing Services: _____

Date Consent Discussed: __/__/____

INTRODUCTION:

Social Pals Telemedicine involves the use of electronic communications to enable health care providers to facilitate appropriate peer interactions remotely. The information may be used for diagnosis, therapy, follow-up and/or education, and may include any of the following:

1. Patient medical records
2. Medical images
3. Live two-way audio and video
4. Output data from medical devices and sound and video files

Electronic systems used will incorporate network and software security protocols to protect the confidentiality of patient identification and imaging data and will include measures to safeguard the data and to ensure its integrity against intentional or unintentional corruption.

EXPECTED BENEFITS:

1. More efficient medical evaluation and management;
2. Obtaining expertise of different specialists as needed;
3. Can reduce costs to both patient and practitioner;
4. Can reach patients who might not otherwise have access to treatment;
5. Has overall empirical support for outcomes similar to traditional [special education, OT/PT/Speech/ABA services], and
6. Patients report positive experiences with videoconferencing.

Sample Consent Form

POSSIBLE RISKS AND CONCERNS:

1. As with any services, there are potential risks and concerns associated with the use of telemedicine. These risks and concerns include, but are not limited to:
2. Ensuring that patients are able to adequately participate and understand the appropriate uses of videoconferencing;
3. Whether the empirical validation of telehealth methodology is sufficient;
4. In rare cases, information transmitted may not be sufficient to allow for appropriate decision making by the provider;
5. Delays in evaluation and treatment could occur due to deficiencies or failures of equipment;
6. In very rare instances, videoconferencing technology security protocols could fail, causing a breach of privacy of protected health information;
7. In very rare instances, individuals may unlawfully or without consent or authority record telehealth sessions, causing a breach of privacy of protected health information;
8. In rare cases, a lack of access to complete medical records may result in judgment errors; and
9. An inability to contact the provider in the event of a telecommunications failure.

VERIFYING PROFESSIONAL LICENSES:

[Please provide information on how patients can verify licenses and certifications of providers]

By signing this form:

1. I agree to the provision of telehealth for my child, including the provision of individual telehealth sessions as well as the provision of group “Social Pals” telehealth sessions. My provider has explained to me in detail how group Social Pals telehealth is provided and the risks and benefits of such treatment.
2. I understand that the laws that protect privacy and the confidentiality of protected health information also apply to telemedicine, and that no information obtained in the use of telemedicine which identifies me will be disclosed to researchers or other entities without my consent.
3. I understand that I have the right to withhold or withdraw my consent to the use of telemedicine in the course of my care at any time, without affecting my right to future care or treatment.
4. I understand that I have the right to inspect all information obtained and recorded in the course of a telemedicine interaction and may receive copies of this information for a reasonable fee.
5. I understand that a variety of alternative methods of medical care may be available to me, and that I may choose one or more of these at any time. My provider has explained the alternatives to my satisfaction.
6. I understand that telemedicine may involve electronic communication of my personal medical information to other medical practitioners who may be located in other areas, including out of state.
7. I understand that it is my duty to inform my provider of electronic interactions regarding my care that I may have with other healthcare providers.
8. I understand that I may expect the anticipated benefits from the use of telemedicine in my care, but that no results can be guaranteed or assured.
9. I have read and understand the information provided above regarding telemedicine, have discussed it with my provider, and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I hereby give my informed consent for the use of telemedicine in my medical care.
10. I hereby authorize [add name of agency] to use telemedicine in the course of my diagnosis and treatment.

Signature of Patient/Parent/Guardian

Date