

Cary Office (main): 130 Preston Executive Drive., Suite 202, Cary NC 27513

Telephone: (919) 467-7777

Raleigh Office: 9207 Baileywick Road, Suite 203, Raleigh, NC 27615

Greensboro Office: 2709-B Pinedale Rd, Greensboro, NC 27408

Social Skills Group Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Thank you for considering social skills group services with Wynns Family Psychology. We understand contacting a therapist can be an intimidating but important step towards getting help for your child. We developed these FAQs to answer some of your initial questions and provide reassurance that you're in expert hands and on the right path to a fresh and positive start. After reviewing this material, if you would like to sign up for a group or have any further questions, call 919-467-7777 or email us at groups@WynnsFamilyPsychology.com. We're always happy to help!

Q: What if my child is the only boy (or girl)? Will there definitely be children his or her age?

A: While some parents are concerned this may be a problem for their child, we find that the most important predictor of a successful group is not a balanced ratio of boys to girls, but a balance of personalities, energy levels, identified problems, and attention skills. We find a child can be successful in our social skills group, even if the participants have different disorders or difficulties, are older/younger, or higher/lower functioning. One aspect that makes our groups successful is that children and teens with strengths in a particular area can model their skills and provide a positive example for kids who might be struggling with similar skills. (And it's always a thrill for us when group participants become friends and socialize outside of the group.)

Q: How large is the group? Will my child get lost in the shuffle?

A: Our groups typically range in size from four-eight members, but occasionally will go up to ten members. In order to keep ratios small, we have interns assist the group leader as needed. We find that there are benefits to each group size. For example, our smaller groups allow for more 1:1 interaction with the group leader and allow the group leader to really customize the group experience, and more in depth group conversations. With our larger group size, our group members still receive individualized attention with break out groups, while also enjoying the experience of unique larger group activities.

Q: How will I know if my kid is the right fit (Or what if they aren't!?)

A: That is partly why we make a registration form with background questions and a parent-child interview a mandatory part of our groups. We believe spending a little time getting to know the parent and child before the group starts, ensures success for the child and the group. If for some reason, your child is struggling with the expectations of the group, or their behavior is chronically disruptive to the group, we will work with you on a plan (e.g., moving the child to individual sessions for awhile, having a specific incentive or behavior plan for the child, etc.)

Q: How do I know group is working?

A: We get overwhelming positive feedback about our group. Most parents notice that their children are behaving and socializing better at home and at school. Although it's not always easy to see the skills generalize immediately outside of the group setting, over time, as children get more and more practice, parents and teachers notice improvement in behavior, self-control, social skills etc.

Q: What do the kids work on? Do they sit and listen to lectures?

A: The social skills group your child participates in will be both fun and educational. Core strategies for teaching these skills will be (1) modeling, (2) practicing, and (3) feedback. Games, crafts, videos, music, and role-play are some of the typical activities each week. Each session will cover a different social skill, but children will be encouraged to continue utilizing skills from previous weeks. Children will be rewarded for their success in learning and practicing new skills both during the group and at home.

Q: How much is the group and what's included in the fee?

A: In order to join a group, a 45 minute parent-child consultation must be held with the group leader. The parent-child consult allows us to obtain more detailed background information and goals for each child. To register, you must pay for the first session of group in advance to reserve your spot. A 10% discount is available to who pay in full for all weekly sessions. All fees are non-refundable. Refer to the current group flier for fees about your specific group.

Q: What if I want additional information about my child's progress?

A: Most group leaders will provide a brief written summary following the end of group. The feedback will review your child's individual strengths and areas to further practice. If you would like additional information, then you can schedule an individual appointment with the group leader (additional fees apply). We also encourage you to ask your specific group leader during the consultation about other methods of communication during the group experience.

Q: How can I help the skills at home? Why is homework important?

A: Research shows that social skills tend to generalize best with lots of practice and positive reinforcement. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to complete the homework suggestions as recommended by your group leader. The homework can also be a helpful way for you, your child, and the group leader to track progress.

Q: If our child changes their mind and won't agree to come, can we get our money back?

A: Please note the deposit for the group is nonrefundable. We often have full groups with a wait list. Therefore, the deposits (and any other advanced payments) are nonrefundable in order to ensure the group members have officially confirmed their participation. The consultation fee is also non-refundable.

Q: If I've paid in advance and my child is sick, can I get a refund for that session?

A: We are not able to give refunds for specific sessions missed if you've paid in advance. The discount you received for paying in advance would typically come close to covering the "cost" of one missed session.

Q: What if I really want my child or teen to come, but they refuse?

A: If your child is socially awkward, anxious, or defiant, they may insist on NOT coming (or coming back) to the group. Our groups encourage your child to confront his or her social fears, which can be anxiety provoking. Please commit to bringing your child to all sessions so that they can get the most out of them and maximize success. A critical component in conquering fears is to face them "head on." We encourage parents to make attendance at the group "mandatory" but explain that you believe this will really help improve their lives if they will come to it with an open mind.

Q: How is disruptive behavior addressed during group?

A: During the consultation, the group leader can speak with you about group specifics. In general, our groups utilize behavior management strategies such as redirection, planned ignoring and/or positive reinforcement methods. Some groups incorporate a behavior system in which group members are able to earn points/ stars for positive behaviors (e.g., participating in group, following directions, demonstrating use of skills, respecting others, etc.) to trade in for a prize at the end of group. Such systems may also incorporate the loss of points/ stars for misbehavior. As we want the group to be a positive experience for all members, significantly disruptive behavior may be addressed through the use of a time-out to allow the child an opportunity to calm down without impacting

the experience of others. Should this become a pattern, the group leader will speak with you to problem solve for additional solutions/ strategies. If you ever have a question or concern about the group, please reach out directly to the group leader.

Q: Can parents sit in the room to observe?

A: In order to allow group members the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings freely, our groups are kids only! Parents will receive feedback halfway through the group and following the last session. If your child has difficulty separating, please let the group leader know during the consultation so they can help you problem-solve ahead of time.

Q: What is the first night of group like?

A: As you might imagine, the first night can be somewhat anxiety provoking for new group members. Because of nerves, excitement, and checking in children/teens for the first time, it may feel a little chaotic on night one. During group, leaders recognize some members may be feeling nervous or excited, and typically plan activities to help group members feel more comfortable and get to know one another. Group rules are reviewed and then the specific skills of the day are taught. Since change can sometimes be difficult for some individuals, especially as we are getting to know others, we strongly encourage you to return the following week as tweaks are often made to help improve the group experience based upon the specific group dynamics.

Q: When do we get receipts?

A: Parents will get a receipt (also known as a superbill) for all sessions at the end of the group.

Q: How much one-on-one feedback do we get from the group leader?

A: As noted above, the group leader will provide you with individualized written feedback at the halfway point and at the end of group. One reason we keep the groups small is so your child can receive frequent one on one “in the moment” feedback from the group leader(s). Please know that if there is a concern regarding your child’s behavior and/or fit within the group, the group leader will consult with you and attempt to problem solve for solutions.

Q: My child has already done a group at WFP and we loved it! We want to do another one? Will it be the same?

A: We often get “repeat” members who want to continue to fine tune social skills and learn more advanced applications of the skills. Therefore, we change the curriculum and activities each time to keep it “fresh” and engaging for repeat attendees.

Please Note:

- Cell phones and electronic devices are not allowed in the group. If you have a teen who is dropped off and has to have their phone, ask them to keep it in their pocket or purse during the course of the group.
- If the waiting room is crowded, feel free to sit in the secondary lobby (Feel free to ask the front office for more information).
- Food and drinks are not allowed in the waiting room. The terrace at the Cary office is available if you’d like to bring a snack or food for yourself or siblings to have during the group.

Thank you for trusting your child and teen with us! We have been offering social skills groups and camps in the Triangle for over a decade. We have gotten many positive reviews from parents (and kids) who see exciting improvements and progress made after attending one of our groups and camps!