SOCCSS: Situation, Option, Consequences, Choices, Strategies, Simulation

SOCCSS was developed by Jan Roosa to help develop children and young people's understanding of social situations and interactions. The structure of SOCCSS allows the generalisation and development of social skills to be made. It enables skills to be developed in context rather than hypothetically.

The approach enables children and young people to develop the skills without judgement and enables self-regulation. The approach works best when a positive relationship is already formed between the adult and child/young person.

The approach is best used when the child is calm and can be reflective. They need to be open to discussing options and this will not happen if in a heightened state or directly following an incident. It can be used to discuss a previous incident or pre-teach skills needed for future events.

How this approach is recorded is completely up to the individual. Some might like to draw and create a flowchart type design whilst other might prefer a table of some kind. Choose a method which is achievable and preferable for the child/young person.

The approach is broken down on the next page to add clarity.

SOCCSS

S: Situation- identify the situation that is causing difficulty and identify those involved and the reasons for the situation.

O: Option- Encourage the child/young person to think about the options available to them when dealing with the situation. The adult should record all options discussed and not discourage or evaluate the options given by the child/ young person. It is important that the child's voice is depicted throughout. This stage enables the child/young person to recognise that they have a choice in how they respond to situations. The child/young person will then identify their 3 favourite options, this can be engineered by the adult to include the most appropriate option if needed.

C: Consequence- Discuss with the child/young person the consequences of each of the three options identified previously. These could include behavioural, social or emotional consequences and may relate directly to the pupil. The adult is a facilitator in this process and should enable the child/young person to develop their own thoughts about consequences. It is important these are recorded accurately.

C: Choice- Through discussion the child/young person will choose the most appropriate option previous identified based on which has the most desirable consequences for them or the easiest to manage.

S: Strategy- The adult should encourage the child/young person to think about what they can do next time if in this situation. The adult should record the child/young person's thoughts. The adult needs to be mindful about whether the child/young person will have the skills needed to achieve the outcome identified, if others need to be aware of the plan and any other support mechanisms are needed.

S: Simulation- This is the key part to the approach and should be given the time it needs. At this point the child/young person needs to simulate the strategy they have created. This can be done by role play, peer discussion, adult discussion or a written plan. The strategy can then be adapted if needed. The plan may need to be simulated in multiple settings or occasions to ensure the child/ young person can practise their skills and feel competent within the strategy identified. This provides the child with ownership of the task and a positive outlook on its success.