



Soft Skills: Preparing Kids for Life After School



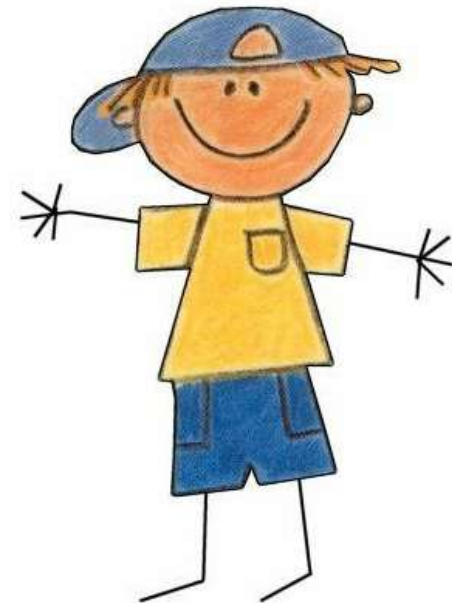
Why we need to teach soft skills ?

- Soft skills increase student performance
- Help decrease child aggression and even crime
- Achieve long-term success
- Employers perceive a lack of *soft skills* among recent graduates
- Better relationships in society



Soft skills include concepts like:

- Social skills
- Empathy
- Confidence
- Patience
- Public speaking
- Time management
- Project management
- Leadership
- Emotional intelligence
- Critical thinking



Projects



- Non-cognitive skills can seem to be impossible to integrate into course design, but project-based learning and other student-driven or self-paced projects can help students, particularly when given some amount of guidance and oversight from teachers.

The opportunity for students to share their work, ideas and skills with their friends, parents and teachers is so important to motivate students.

The projects are powerful tool for developing soft skills such as communication, presentation and leadership skills, critical thinking and decision making, etc.



- Our biggest project was based on our lessons about professions. The task was to organize a “Job Fair” in school’s event hall where different jobs to be presented in interactive and interesting way in front of other students, teachers and parents.





For this project, the pupils worked in teams for about a month – they had to meet and discuss their progress, to work together on posters, search and share information.



In our event hall, the children presented in front of students from other classes different jobs, such as a doctor, archaeologist, chemist, IT specialist, cooks, actors, etc. All the projects were created and realized by the second graders with the invaluable help of their parents.

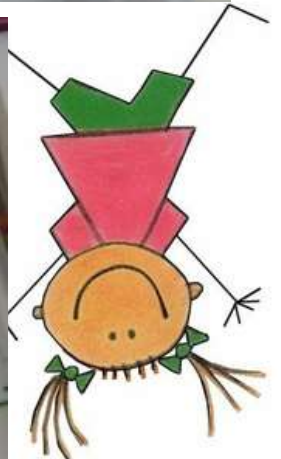


- **Group work** is another arena where soft skills can be easily integrated into the classroom. Problem- or project-based learning can be great opportunities for students to engage in social skills and the smaller units often help quiet or more introverted students to find a voice.



Picture-Go-Round

The purpose of this lesson is to encourage students to understand that being in a group requires working together, getting along, resolving conflicts, and having fun together.



Lesson plan

The class is arranged into small groups. Each group gets a sheet of paper and they have to put their name on the top. The students will have time to make

a picture of anything they want, but when a bell rings they will pass their paper to their right. After about thirty seconds, the teacher rings the bell and have students pass their papers. Students have to add something to the picture that is now in front of them. The teacher rings the bell at one-minute intervals. The exercise finishes when each child has their original drawing. **At the end there's a discussion about the activity. Talk about how they all worked together to create the pictures. Use and define the following words: group, cooperation, contribution**





Conclusion

- The keys to proper and effective implementation of soft skills are giving students opportunities to practicing them and providing immediate and constructive feedback.

