

SOCIAL ISOLATION

Every child is different and will have **his own perception** of the social situation. A child may have many relationships, but sense that they are superficial or shallow.

AS SOON AS THEY SHOW DISTRESS, IT'S TIME TO HELP.

What to watch for?

Action should be taken if you notice your child exhibits:

- Signs of anxiety
Consult the Info Sheet : Managing Stress and Anxiety
<https://rapcotenord.ca/gestion-stress-et-anxiete/>
- At-risk behaviours
(substance use, drinking alcohol, using drugs, addictions, excessive screen time, self-harm)
Consult the Info Sheet: Substance Use
<https://rapcotenord.ca/la-consommation/>
- Excessive Irritability
(extreme anger, verbal and physical aggression)
- Social withdrawal



YOUR CHILD IS DOING WELL SOCIALLY IF HE ...

- Is able to make friends and maintain friendships
- Is able to talk with others independently
- Enjoys social activities
- Likes to try new activities
- Can play alone or with other children
- Likes to be creative and share ideas
- Is optimistic about the future
- Has a sense of humour
- Is involved in various spheres of life (school, extracurricular activities, work, family, etc.)



CAUTION

Don't pressure your child to make friends. It is important to give him time to develop a desire to reach out to others on his own.

ISOLATION BEHAVIOURS

- He does not feel like going out
- He withdraws and does not share emotions or opinions
- He no longer interacts with friends or family members
- He prefers to be alone and not participate in social activities he used to enjoy
- He avoids social interaction
- He has fewer relationships with others
- He tends to disconnect from the rest of his surroundings
- He does not want to leave his comfort zone
- He favours silence, becomes suspicious and refuses to communicate



ADVICE AND TIPS



DEVELOPING SELF-CONFIDENCE

A confident child with good self-esteem is better able to integrate socially

- **Encourage** your child and point out his **strengths and qualities**
- Remind him that it **takes time and practice** to be comfortable with others
- As a family, consider opportunities to help in **the community** (volunteering, picking up litter, helping the elderly, etc.)
- **Listen and offer to help** when your child voices concerns about reaching out to others
- Take an interest in his **ideas, opinions and feelings** They may differ from yours, but they are real
- Set up a personal **meeting** with him

BE A ROLE MODEL

Your child develops social skills with others by watching you

- **Spend time with him:** invite him to participate in your activities
- **Involve him** in some daily chores
- Talk about your **successes and failures**, and what you have **learned from them**
- Establish and maintain **family routines**
For example, eat a meal as a family without television
- **Set a good example**, show your child what it means to interact socially
- Invite your **friends and family** over!



CAUTION

Don't pressure your child to make friends and don't constantly mention it. It is important to give him time to develop a desire to reach out to others on his own.

ADVICE AND TIPS

ACCOMPANY HIM AS HE DEVELOPS IDENTITY

Your child has to develop self-awareness to feel socially adept

- **Take an interest** in his activities, projects and problems
- Encourage him to try **new activities** and tell him you are **proud of him**
- Help your child find an **activity he likes** and does well at
- **Understand and respect** that he will be very good at some activities but not others
- When he tries something new, **remind him of past successes**, the effort he put in and the perseverance he showed



COMMUNICATE WITH THE SCHOOL

Your child spends a large part of time at school and it is a place where he develops

- Talk with teachers to find out if your child seems to be doing well at school; or if he seems isolated, what the cause could be
- Discuss your concerns with the teaching staff about steps that could be taken to help your child

IMPORTANT REMINDER

- **Limit screen time (see the Info Sheet : Healthy Lifestyle Habits) and time on social media.**
- **Access to social media exposes your child to violent stories, disturbing images and videos, and gives the illusion of having a social life. This can cause feelings of insecurity leading to isolation.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Parent Help Line (Ligne Parents - in French only)

<https://www.ligneparents.com/LigneParents/Tous-les-themes/Communications-et-relations/Habiletes-sociales-de-l-enfant-et-de-l-adolescent%C2%B7e>

Guide for parents with teens (in French only)

<https://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2983738>



Réussite - Accomplissement - Persévérance