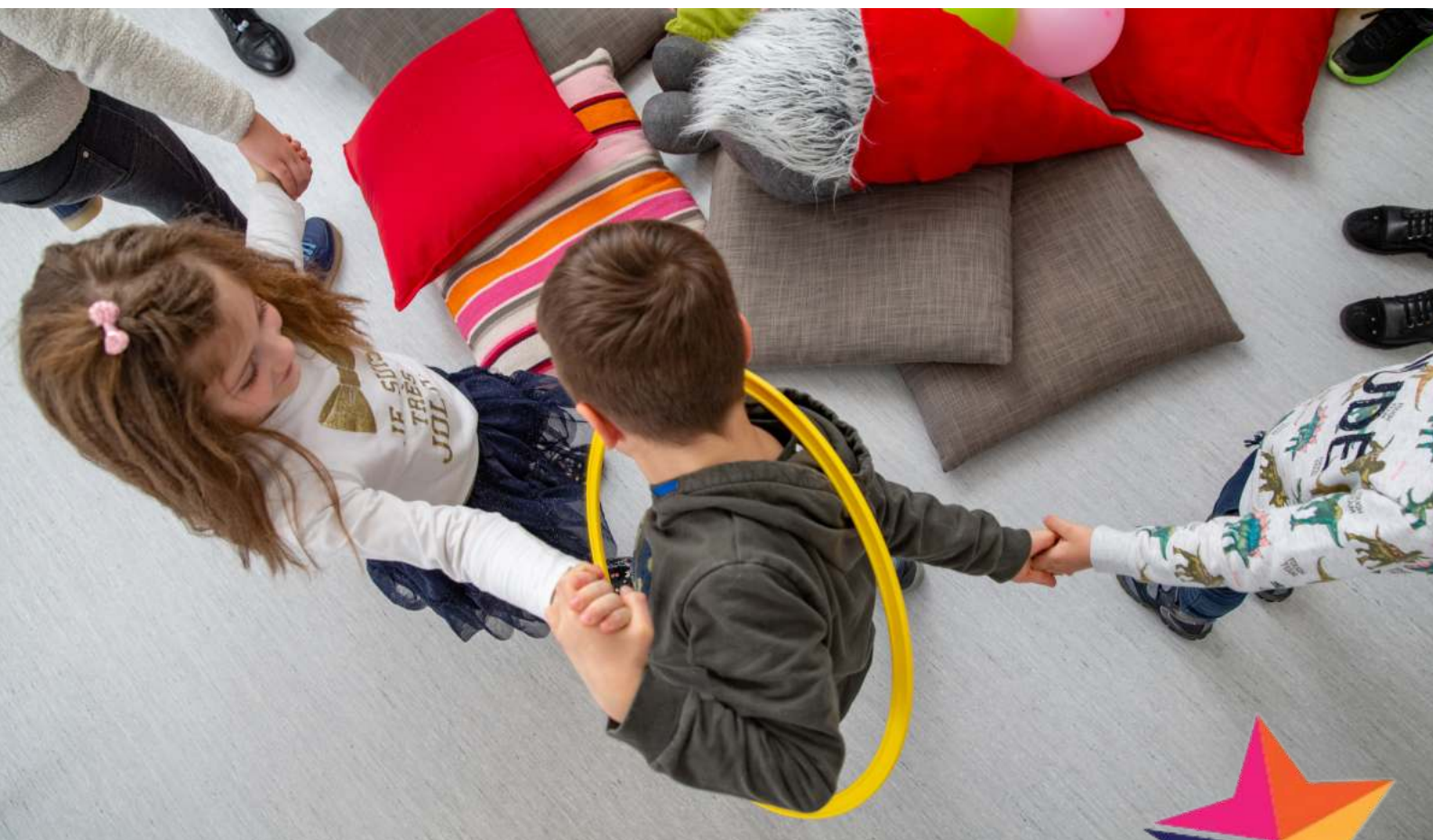




COOPERATION

POSITIVE LIVING SKILLS COOPERATION NEWSLETTER



THE POSITIVE LIVING SKILLS PROGRAM: FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Parents, carers and families are an integral part of the Positive Living Skills Initiative.

The Positive Living Skills program is a universal and practical program designed specifically for children from Preschool to Year 6, and the principles and positive effects of the learning experiences can reach teachers, school staff, parents, families, and wider communities.

The goal is to prevent problems before they develop, by implementing a positive life skills program from an early age. The Positive Living Skills program assists to create habitual positive, healthy supportive behaviours by guiding children to learn to understand and self-direct their own thinking processes, emotions, actions, responses, and outcomes, and build effective social skills.

Human society is a complex network of cooperative activity that in some way links us all together, and human beings have been cooperating since the dawn of human history. We cooperated to promote our survival, and we all have an instinctive need to belong.

In modern times, although how and where we experience a sense of belonging can change, cooperating and belonging remain as key contributors to our social and emotional wellbeing throughout our lives.

When children develop effective cooperation skills, they are building a skill set that will assist them through every area of life, for the duration of their life.

Joy and success within personal relationships and working relationships is dependent on having skills that free us to interact in positive and cooperative ways.



Definitions: For the purpose of the Positive Living Skills program:

Cooperation is:

To work together well and support each other to achieve common goals

Most conflicts at the individual team and societal level occur when people don't have the will or skills for caring and cooperating. The majority of problems we encounter in our families, personal relationships, games, schools, work and communities are related to a lack of genuine caring, respect and cooperation.

Cooperative learning is an educational approach which aims to organise classroom activities into academic and social learning experiences. There is much more to Cooperative Learning than merely arranging students into groups, and it has been described as "structuring positive interdependence"

There are 5 Principles of Cooperative Learning:

1. Positive interdependence - group members perceive they are linked with each other in a way that one cannot succeed unless everyone succeeds.
2. Promotive Interaction - where members share resources, and help support encourage and praise each other's efforts.
3. Individual and group accountability - the group is accountable for achieving its goals, and also each member is accountable for their contribution and learning.
4. Interpersonal and small group skills - are developed through cooperative learning, such as communication, positive reinforcement, constructive feedback and problem solving
5. Group Processing - exists when group members reflect on how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships.

Early Learning:

The philosophy of the Unit of Cooperation at this learning level is to turn traditional games of winning and losing into collaborative learning and fun. In early childhood the focus is on inclusion and being left 'in' rather than competing which promotes further learning, and children learn how they can contribute to common goals, while sharing, respecting others and waiting for their turn.

Cooperative activities get children working together toward a common goal, and as they are playing and working with each other rather than against each other, these activities nurture and reaffirm feelings of confidence, acceptance and value, and eliminate fear.

Through cooperative play, children learn to share, to empathise with others, to be concerned about others' feelings, to help each other, to work together to achieve a common goal, to get along better, and to enjoy each other's company.

If children's early experiences with games and sport are positive, joyful, and uplifting, then more children will become joyfully engaged in physical activity and sport over the course of their lifetime. The focus at this level is that there is no failure or getting it 'wrong'.

As children develop

As children develop, they can begin to see the greater picture of collaborating and cooperating with others, and learn concepts of followership, teamwork, respect, trust.

They can learn to see themselves as part of a greater whole, of a team or family or School community. There will be consequences to some actions and children can be encouraged to negotiate with each other for mutual and individual benefit.

Respectful collaborative and cohesive teams achieve a synergy that enhances results beyond the combined efforts of the individuals, and effective teamwork fosters harmony, builds relationships and enhances confidence, communication skills and overall performance.

Ultimately, cooperative skills are vital to the success of every one of us, and all of our relationships.



Here are some ideas for how to apply the concepts of the Cooperation into your home life:

As well as applying the Highlights lessons within the delivery of the Positive Living Skills program, here are some suggestions for how the concepts within this Unit could be applied at home:

- Applying the concepts of Cooperation will improve the effectiveness of communication and teamwork within the family
- It will also assist to build a more positive, supportive and motivational environment at home
- Working together within an inclusive, non-competitive environment, strengthens bonds and promotes positive relationships
- Allowing siblings to work together to negotiate outcomes can support their self-esteem confidence and relationships
- If children participate in team sports or activities, communicate as a family about why the team works well – i.e., who plays what role, how they support each other, how trust and respect play a part, then apply these same concepts to how they operate at School and home
- Encourage a sense of humour and fun when cooperating at home. Everyone can take turns, everyone misses out on what they want sometimes, and everyone can learn to rely on each other and work together for win-win situations and sometimes cooperation means compromise and trust that your turn will come
- Learning to develop more trust of self and trust of others, will strengthen understanding and application of teamwork, leadership and followership within the home environment

For more information about the Positive Living Skills program, and to access free resources from the Positive Living Skills family link, visit www.positivelivingskills.com.au