



Social Skills Groups

Talk Together is a private specialist social skills group provider.

Our mission is to equip students with social skills to succeed at school, in their wider communities, in friendships & in all relationships with others.

We support kids with mild to moderate social communication challenges.

"He is absolutely loving this course. Thank you so much, it is so nice to see him happy and engaged like this, it has helped his self-confidence immensely."

Parent

Who are our groups for?

If you feel your child struggles with some of the below, Talk Together is for them! We support kids who:

- Struggle to make friends
- Find it hard to keep friends
- Feel shy, anxious or worried in social situations.
- Have lots of arguments with others
- Don't like working in a group
- Find it hard to stay on topic in conversations
- Can't start (or carry on) conversations with others.
- Find it hard to read the social situation.
- Find it hard to tell when someone is joking or being sarcastic or takes things the 'wrong way'.
- Are disruptive in class or a group.
- Act like a 'clown' or the 'funny one' as a way to start an interaction with someone.
- Find it hard to understand how their actions or words might effect others.
- Must be honest and speak the truth at all times or could be described as very "black & white" (things are right or wrong).
- Are described as 'quirky' by family & friends.



What the Research tells us

- We need to be social to learn social skills! New social skills need to be learnt & practised together in a group.
- Social skills groups are great for kids who are not developing social skills as quickly as their peers- for whatever reason.
- The correct intervention can be really effective in supporting social skills development.
- Generalisation of skills into everyday life is key to social skills success!
- Community based and parent-professional collaboration are important factors to help kids generalise skills.

The below overarching themes are focused on throughout all of our programmes:

- Communication skills
- Forming & maintaining friendships
- Conflict resolution skills
- Reading social cues
- Seeing things from others perspectives (Theory of mind)
- Resilience & confidence development
- Emotional intelligence (recognising and managing our emotions in healthy ways)
- Team work
- Leadership skills

Each and every group is tailored to the children attending. Student's participation, comfort and achievements are constantly assessed and plans are altered throughout the term (even within sessions!) to cater for the specific children in front of us.

We do a range of activities in our groups. These are always changing and are based on the children's goals and interests.

We also utilise LEGO Therapy in some sessions (usually 2 sessions per term) this is a really effective way to practise social skills

Facilitators and Ratios

Our groups are organised, planned, run & evaluated by a professional multidisciplinary team.

Our experts are "on the ground" with the students at Talk Together every single session.

We are a team of experienced speech language therapists, a paediatric counsellor & educator with further training in child & adolescent psychology. You can find out more about us here:

<https://www.talktogether.co.nz/our-team>

Each group is run by at least 2 facilitators with a maximum ratio of 1 facilitator to 5 children. In reality most of our groups are run with a 1:4 ratio.

Group Locations

Our groups are held across 4 locations: **Rolleston, Halswell, Rangiora & online.**

Due to the specialist nature of our groups and our compact team not all groups are run at all locations. Check out our current timetable to find the closest group to you! Feel as if our groups are too far away? Join us online! Our online groups are attended by children throughout New Zealand.

"She was so excited she says she wished Talk Together could last all day!"

Parent

Group ages

We run groups for different age ranges. These are a guide only and fit for group is considered when placing children in groups.

5-9yrs

Setting social skills up for life is our aim here! Children learn to recognise their role (and contributions) to group tasks, navigate friendship dynamics, see and understand things from others perspectives & develop skills to work effectively in a group.

10-13yrs

This is the age where things get complicated! There is often a need to 'read the social scene' in situations that in the past were very 'black & white'. Our focus here is a smooth transition for kids through this phase and robust skills for making friends and 'keeping up' with the social challenges faced while building self confidence.

14+ years

This group has a big social focus with the students having lots of input into the groups direction & content. Half of each session is a more structured facilitator led topic area and the other half focuses on friendship building, maintaining & navigating different social contexts through a variety of activities. For those in the middle to second part of high school.

What do groups feel like?

- We know you need to be in a social situation to learn social skills and kids need to be engaged and having fun to learn!
- What kids say about Talk Together:
- "It's a safe environment, everyone is open about stuff."
- "It's actually stuff that's helping me!"
- "I like how chill it is, no people trying to show off"
- "I can always make friends no matter the group."
- "I actually don't hate it" (said by surprised teen)

Our groups feel like a social gathering, kids find them fun with the right level of challenge for them. The intervention over lay is woven into everything we do by the team while maintaining a social & exciting vibe. Student's individual goals are supported (& achieved!)

Returning Students

Our programmes are perfect for returning students!

While you are welcome to attend one programme at Talk Together in isolation many of our students are returning. We see the biggest successes and changes in returning students. Mastering social skills takes practise and returning students are extended as their skills develop within our programmes. Our programmes are perfect for returning students as overall themes stay the same but how we achieve these are always changing. Fun fact- 1/2 to 3/4 of the students in any Talk Together group are returning students! We are so proud of our returning students who are always so welcoming to new students and friendships!

Timetable & Enrolments

Groups are run each term and most school holidays. Enrolments open for groups in the following term/holidays a few weeks before the end of each school term.

Please email info@talktogether.co.nz to be added to our enrolment list if you think you may like to enrol in a Talk Together Programme now or in the future. This ensures you are alerted via email when enrolments open. Many groups full up quickly just from our returning students & enrolment list.

Timetables can be viewed & enrolments completed via our website www.talktogether.co.nz or by emailing info@talktogether.co.nz



Parental Involvement & Safety

Parents are welcome to stay, drop and go or a mix of both during group sessions. If parents observe we ask they 'hang back' to allow kids to fully engage in the social context (& be supported by facilitators when needed) this is so kids can get the most out of the groups and the group can feel as social as possible.

It is the facilitators role to deliver social communication intervention, and the parent/caregivers role to ensure their child is safe to stay independently in the environment where Talk Together groups are held OR you or a support person is required to stay for the duration of the sessions with them. For example, if there is a chance your child may wander off, leave the space where others are or if there is any chance they may hurt themselves or others if emotions were to build then a support person is required to stay.

"I see so many benefits in self confidence, working together, friendship skills, communication and many more. She really enjoys being part of it and I've noticed her pulling her brother up occasionally- "What did we learn at Talk Together...you need to use it!" We are winning!"

Parent

Student Pathways & Pricing

New Students

1:1 Session with the Talk Together Team

All NEW students enrolling at Talk Together have an initial 30 min 1.1 session with one of our team. This is a stand alone screening & intervention session in one with tangible next steps to walk away with and action. It ensures kids get the absolute most out of their time with us & gives them a chance to start building a relationship with a facilitator so if they then join us in a group it makes coming along on the first day a little easier!

We will cover:

- Students current challenges and set some next step goals to smash.
- Provide families & teams with ideas and ways to support the student straight away.
- Assist with any other referrals the student may need.
- Assess correct fit for one of our social skills group (we know how hard it is to come along to a group for the first time and we want it to feel right). If a student is not a good fit for our programmes we will tell you! And help you find the supports you need.

The value packed into the session is insane!

Price \$65 +gst online, \$90 +gst in-person.

We encourage you to take notes from the session. If you would like us to send notes to you instead there is an additional charge of \$25 + gst.

Returning students are welcome to book a 1.1 session at anytime but it is not a requirement.

Term Time Social Skills Group Programme

New & Returning Students

What's included?

- 6x 1 hour in-person OR 6x 45mins online group sessions.
 - Support for parents & school teams.
1. Text messages sent at the end of weeks 2 & 4 outlining areas covered in the sessions and a 'challenge' to complete or a discussion point to support generalising the skills being learnt in the programme.
 2. A full summary of the programme including 2-3 next steps tailored to the group- this is perfect to share with your child's school team.
 3. Individual feedback on your child outlining achievements & successes, highlighting areas to continue to focus on and specific next steps to support them.
 4. An invitation to attend our on-line mid term parent & teacher workshop FREE. These workshops can be attended by others (e.g. your child's teacher or yourself if you have gifted your registration) for \$25. The topic changes each term but include areas such as- supporting your child to make friends, teaching theory of mind skills, positive intent, bullying, dealing with social conflicts, supporting kids to regulate their emotions.

Price

In-person \$32 +gst per session (\$192 + gst total for the term)

Online \$24 + gst per session (\$144 + gst total for the term)



"School feedback from our Behaviour Plan meeting is that he is using techniques from Talk together effectively and overall he is in a much better place socially at school"

Parent

School Holiday Programmes

New & returning Students

We run a range of different school holiday programmes including outdoor adventure education programmes & 2-4 day intensive programmes on specific topics. Great for new & returning students. Make sure you are on our enrollment list to hear about our next group!

What's Included?

- School holiday programme session/s (length of time and number of sessions determined by the type of programme).
 - Support for parents & school teams.
1. A full summary of the programme including 2-3 next steps tailored to the group- this is perfect to share with your child's school team.
 2. Individual feedback on your child outlining achievements & successes, highlighting areas to continue to focus on and specific next steps to support them.

Price

School holiday programmes range from \$85-\$300 +gst + an initial 1.1 session for new students.

Additional Supports Provided by Talk Together

Generalisation of skills out of our group sessions and into real life is key and it's a main focus of what we do at Talk Together. Some children need more support with this than others or want to achieve this faster.

We also provide:

- In school support. This maybe in the form of a social skills group with classmates, friends or potential friends or any other type of support required by the student. For example, attendance at an IEP to bridge learning between school & Talk Together.
- Speech Language Therapy services for all communication needs. A number of students who attend our group sessions also receive speech language therapy support from one of our speech language therapist team members.
- Parent and Teacher workshops-. There are a number of workshops on our website that can be viewed at anytime. These are packed with valuable information to support your kids social & communication development. They are \$17 or FREE depending on the workshop.

<https://www.talktogether.co.nz/resources>

For more information and pricing please reach out

info@talktogether.co.nz

Payment

A \$50 deposit is required to secure your child's space in the group.

The balance is due 1 week before the start date of the program.

Payment can be made via internet banking or credit card.

Funding: there are a number of different funding streams that can be used to attend Talk Together. Unsure if you can use your child's funding? Have a chat to us.

Payment plans: We get it! It's often really tough to pay for additional support for kids. Although we run our groups at cost, it is still a significant cost for many families. We offer a payment plan as follows:

1. \$50 deposit at time of enrolment,
2. 7 weekly payments for the remaining balance (from one week before the group starts until the end of the 6 week programme). This works out to approx \$24.50 per week for term time programmes.

Let us know if you want to jump onboard!



"The skills are definitely transferring - I had L come up to me the other day and say "I need to have a discussion about A, he is farting on my lunchbox and I don't like it." Last year that would have involved a lot of screaming and possibly someone getting hurt!"

Principal

Cancellations & Missed Sessions

Talk Together works extremely hard to run our social skills groups at cost. This is a challenge and is based on families that sign up attending the program as we keep our groups small.

For this reason we are not able to provide refunds for missed sessions or change of mind except under exceptional circumstances (and at Talk Together's discretion). The alternative would be prices rising for everyone- A road we hope to not have to venture down.

We can't wait for you to join us!

The Talk Together Team