

Games Club, A Place for Social Skills Development

Games Club was started in February 2006 for students in grades 1 through 8 at Colonial Heights School in Lincoln Unified School District in Stockton California. The goals in founding the club are to encourage students to learn appropriate social skills using a game format and to include all students, specifically those who might be having difficulty forming positive relationships with peers.

It is entirely voluntary and runs 2 days per week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, in the school library during lunch recess. It was designed to be student directed, with minimal adult interaction. The goal is for students to interact with each other, not student to teacher interaction. Attendance is quite variable, but there are typically anywhere from 80 to 100 students who participate each day. Special education students as well as general education students participate.

Board games and card games which have fairly simple rules, such as Connect Four, Checkers, Yahtzee, Sequence, Sorry, Scrabble, Uno and others are available for student use. The object is to give students an opportunity to engage in a board game as a vehicle for developing social skills. Many social skills are emphasized during Games Club such as:

- the ability to participate peacefully and effectively in a group
- the ability to identify and work toward a goal
- patience of those with lesser abilities
- patience with and acceptance of disappointments and set backs
- understanding of playing fairly and the consequences of cheating
- turn taking and initiating
- sportsmanship in winning and loosing
- positive group cooperation and interaction

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