



## Class Phone Book: A fun way to encourage students to reach out to one another.

The end of the school year was approaching: the staff, parents, and I were encouraging our seventh and eighth graders to interact outside of school. Several of the high functioning autistic students had established strong friendships in our small classroom setting, but not extending outside our resource room. Most autistic students are rigid about changes in schedules and established environments. My students had informed me that *school is school and home is home*. One eighth grade student had been invited by another to go to a movie over the weekend. He refused the offer, even though he loved the science fiction movie, and the other student was his best friend. The rationale was that this friendship was a school friendship, not for out of class, and after all the friend had a *life*. Of course, the *life* recreation at home was solitary and routine, computer and television super heroes. The parent of the student with *a life* suggested that a class phone book might be one such method to encourage our students to reach out to one another.

Our staff immediately proceeded with the project. I taught a social skills class on phone etiquette and role playing, making a call, taking a call, and handling wrong numbers. Each student typed his address, phone number, and e-mail address. We took digital photos of each student and learned to print them in class. Every student picked his favorite fluorescent colored index card and made 12 identical cards (one for each student in the class). Making the book was a collaborative project with students organizing the putting together of the picture/address pages, complete with instruction pages with sample scripts from the social skill lessons. The students were thrilled to have their own phone books with friends' pictures.

The first day of vacation the same outgoing eighth grader called the more reticent friend, using the phone book. The mother of the hesitant student called to tell me of the excitement this call for her son. The second son, also high functioning autistic, wanted to return the phone call to the first eighth grader. He dialed, waited silently for a period of time, then hung up. The mom said, "What happened? Why didn't you say 'hello'?" The younger son said, "Mrs. Elliott didn't teach us what to do with an answering machine!" Back to the drawing board...

# TO BE USED WHEN INTRODUCING THE PHONE BOOK PROJECT

## Social story for talking to your friends on the phone

Talking with your good friends can be fun. You can talk about your favorite subjects, like your hobbies, collections, or what you like to do for fun. Sometimes your friends are right there with you and sometimes they may be at home or another place. If you know where they are and a phone number where they can be reached, you can call them on phone and talk with them. A phone book has people listed alphabetically with their addresses and phone numbers. Phone companies give people free phone books when they start service with that phone company. Many people like to have their own phone lists to quickly find numbers they use frequently, such as family, friends, business numbers, and other companies. People can keep these numbers in a personal phone book, a day planner book, Palm Pilots, or Rolodex files, so they can find these numbers easily and quickly. You can make your own phone book with numbers that are important to you.

### References:

Gray, Carol. Social Stories (Jenison Press, 1998)

Packer, Alex J. How Rude, The Teenagers' Guide to Good Manners, Proper Behavior, and Not Crossing People Out (Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing, 1997)

## Directions for making a Class Phone Book

### Materials needed:

- Plain paper or card stock
- Pictures of classmates
- Addresses and phone numbers of students
- Sample phone etiquette cards
- Hole punch
- "O" rings

### Note:

For better printing, choose *Page Setup* in your File menu and make sure it is set on 100%, with Printable Area radial button set on *Centered*.

Students can print or type their names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail address on their cards, make as many cards as students. We used our classroom computers, as we had been working on keyboarding skills. The students then glued on their pictures (we had formatted our digital photos to 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" x 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" size) and addresses. The staff had compiled the social skill lesson cards to be placed at the front of the books with the school phone and address card. Each student passed out his cards to the other students to be arranged alphabetically, then put together with phone etiquette card with the "O" ring. You might want to include emergency numbers with appropriate pictures and instructions, such as neighbors, grandparents, or other appropriate emergency contacts (see icons on page 5). The phone social story above may be used to introduce the concept of using the phone to call friends.

**The following pages can be printed out to make your own customized phone books.**









# MY PHONE BOOK



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## Important phone etiquette rules

-  Use good phone manners. Do not call late at night when people might be sleeping or at times when they might be eating a meal.
-  It is impolite to eat when talking on the phone.
-  Do not make prank calls.
-  Give others privacy when they are talking on the phone.  
Do not listen in on their conversations.
-  Make sure that others at your home or work get a chance to use the phone. Do not hog the phone.
-  Have fun and call your friends!

# Making a phone call

1. Dial your friend's phone number.
2. Listen for a greeting, for example, "Hello."
3. Say, "Hello, may I speak to\_\_\_\_\_?"
4. If your friend answers or is called to the phone, start talking when he gets on the phone line.
5. If your friend is not there, thank the person and say that you will call back later. Leave your name and phone number, so your friend can return your call.



# Taking a phone call

1. Say "hello" politely and "This is (your name) speaking." Your parents may have a certain way they want you to answer the phone, for example, "Hello, Smith residence, this is John speaking."
2. If the call is not for you, say, "Excuse me, I'll get\_\_\_\_\_for you." If the person is not there, say, "\_\_\_\_\_, is unable to come to the phone right now. May I take a message?" Write down the message and return phone number, if the person calling gives you a message and a number.
3. Do not give out personal information. For your safety never tell a stranger whether your parents are home or not. Just say that they are unable to come to the phone now, could you take a message.

# Answering Machine

1. Sometimes when the person you are calling is not at home or unable to answer the phone, you may get the answering machine message. Do not hang up.
2. Leave a message. Say, "Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_. Could you please call me back at this number \_\_\_\_\_?" If you would like you could also leave a brief message saying why you are calling.
3. Keep your message short, speaking slowly and clearly.

# Wrong Number

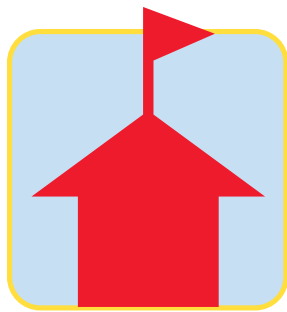
1. If you dial an incorrect number and a stranger answers, do not hang up on that person. Instead ask for the person you intended to call.
2. If the person tells you that you have the wrong number, tell them that you are sorry to have bothered them.



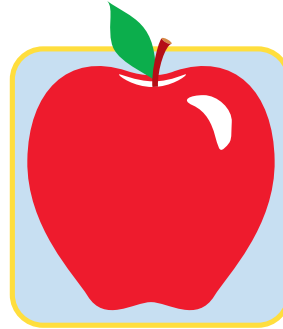
# Icons that may be used for your Phone Book



HOME



SCHOOL



TEACHER



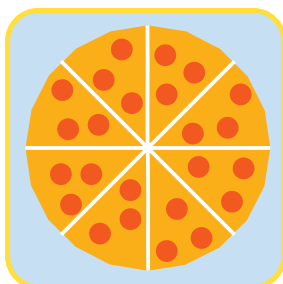
DAD AT WORK



POLICE/FIRE



NEIGHBOR



PIZZA



MOM AT WORK

# Important Phone Numbers

Paste  
photo  
or icon  
here

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip\_\_\_\_\_

email\_\_\_\_\_



# Important Phone Numbers

Paste  
photo  
or icon  
here

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip\_\_\_\_\_

email\_\_\_\_\_