

HELPING CUSTOMERS HELP KIDS Through MESH skills!

Welcome! We're excited to share what we've been learning about building Kid's mental health through play.

What's MESH?

MESH stands for Mental, Emotional and Social Health. MESH skills (there are eight, listed on the exec summary included in your packet) strengthen kids' mental health. These are the skills that kids can develop to protect their ability to navigate strong emotions and difficult experiences. Parents and educators are looking for ways to develop these skills and toys and games can do that!



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Point customers towards products that:

Give opportunities for problem solving and perseverance

Encourage storytelling

Present new or increasing challenges over the duration of play

Draw children and their adults to play together.

When to comfort and when to build skills

In the past few years you've seen a big appetite for fidget toys, stuffed animals and other comfort items. Items of comfort are excellent for kids when they are in moments of mild or moderate distress.



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Skill building opportunities build kids abilities. As families try to get into a feeling of "normal" or routine, they are searching more for items that will help their kids feel good and get stronger.

How to talk to customers about this

When customers are looking around for ideas or express concern about a child, the best way to help them is to ask:

"Are you looking for a comfort item to help a child who's having a hard time or looking for skill building to strengthen a child's mental, emotional and social health?"

If a parent is really worried about their child

You can offer empathy

"That sounds hard, I'm sorry that's happening."

And encourage them to get support from their child's doctor or school.



Products that build MESH skills:

Take a look at some ideas of the types of products by age that build MESH skills in your packet. Now it's your turn! Take and find items that you have that build MESH skills for each age.



STEP BY STEP GUIDE

When a customer approaches you asking about MESH, it's great to follow these steps:

1. Greet the customer warmly
2. If the customer doesn't know what MESH is, feel free to let them know that these are items focused on Mental, Emotional, and Social Health
3. Empathize with the customer as much as you can or as appropriate. Excitement for the products should be greeted with excitement and concern should be greeted with understanding. There is never a moment to discuss a diagnosis. Please refer to "That sounds hard. I'm sorry that's happening."
4. Always recommend the consumer to visit MESHhelps.org for further information
5. If you encounter a situation of someone in immediate crisis, please advise them to call 988. This is a 24/7 national mental health crisis hotline.



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