

# Key Competencies – Related to Seder Girsa

*Prepared for Yeshiva educators and students*



## KEY COMPETENCIES - RELATED TO SEDER GIRSA

### Why We Need to Explain These Skills

The large goal is for boys to learn on their own in the long run. But that takes time.

Listing the skills boys are building, gives teachers a clear plan for what to work on right now. It shows what boys should practice today to grow step by step.

This turns big dreams into simple actions. It helps boys gain the skills, habits, and ways of thinking they need to keep learning Torah even after they leave the Yeshiva.

When we spell out these skills clearly, Yeshivos can better spot the difference between beginners and experts. They can match teaching to growth goals and make tests that show real progress and readiness for learning alone. This helps boys move from needing help to doing it on their own.

For the boys, clear skills remove confusion. They get a map for getting better and see how their hard work matters for the future outside Yeshiva.

### **Skills List**

**1. “Productive Struggle”**

**2. Self-Regulation**

**3. Time Management**

**4. Cognitive Complexity**

5. Connectedness with Teachers

6. Interpersonal Relations with Peers (Chavrusa)

## 7. Future Orientation (thinking ahead and getting ready for the future, including learning on your own after Yeshiva)

### Short Look at Each Skill

- Productive struggle means tackling a hard task even when you know it will be tough. You keep trying with real effort, and that leads to getting better and winning in the end. For boys who want others to think they are smart, this can feel scary. It means risking looking bad for a bit if things don't go right at first.
- Boys get better at self-regulation when they feel like they belong in the Yeshiva. This gives them the push to skip selfish or fun-but-wrong actions. Self-regulation is like self-control, but it means matching your actions to the Yeshiva's rules. This includes sticking to study times, showing respect in class, and building thinking habits for learning Torah alone.
- Time management is a key skill for learning on your own. It's not just about being neat—it's needed to turn plans into real, ongoing study. You have to guess how long things take, put steps in order, and change plans if needed.
- Handling cognitive complexity means dealing with tough ideas, especially in Torah. You need to focus long, switch thoughts easily, and think through unclear parts. This includes reading texts on your own, breaking them down, and figuring out meanings, even in chavrusa or without a teacher.
- Building connectedness with teachers is basic for boys' school success and growth. Good ties with adults make boys care more about learning. They stay motivated even when it's boring or hard. Not all boys know how to make teachers like them. They build this by joining in often, showing respect, preparing well, and using advice. This helps now in Yeshiva and later when they need help for learning alone.

- Good relations with peers, especially in chavrusa, means making respectful and helpful friendships. You listen well, handle fights nicely, and join in group learning. This builds smart feelings, talking skills, and knowing how to get along. It's key for Yeshiva and later life like leading, teamwork, and good behavior.

- Future orientation means picturing a good future and taking steps to get there. For example, seeing yourself as a dad who learns Torah or shares ideas in the community. This makes you work hard now. It's not something you are born with. It grows from steady friends, adult examples, and a Yeshiva that shows future paths are real and exciting. Boys link daily work to big dreams. This builds planning, self-control, and inner drive for lifelong Torah and helping family, community, and all Jews as grown-ups.

Learn More About the Skills

## **Productive Struggle**

Boys can get better at productive struggle over time. It means facing failure and keeping going through tough spots. You know a task is hard but push on with effort to grow. For boys who care most about looking smart, this feels bad. It risks others seeing mistakes. They might see struggle as a danger, not a way to improve.

Productive struggle stresses being okay without quick answers. For example, hard problems need you to hold back fast guesses and think deeper.

It takes long brain work, which is hard for boys who like to finish fast. They might think slow work is a waste, especially if quick ways worked before.

Boys who think "It'll happen somehow" struggle more. Productive struggle forces you to face hard tasks and the fear of failing in front of others. Fear of failing when watched can come from worrying about important people, avoiding mess-ups, unsure results, or too much

self-worry.

## **Self-Regulation**

Boys self-regulate better when they feel connected to the Yeshiva. This helps them skip selfish fun. Belonging pushes good choices. It makes boys follow Yeshiva ways, even if it means giving up quick pleasures.

Self-regulation means changing actions to fit rules. Here, rules are Yeshiva norms and always thinking deep.

But always thinking hard can backfire. Boys might feel okay breaking rules sometimes as a reward. Non-stop control tires the brain. Too many choices in a day can freeze them. Young boys like fewer choices at first. But later, making your own choices is key for growth and learning alone outside Yeshiva.

If boys don't grow this, they might feel lost in open worlds after Yeshiva. They could zone out or miss what's around them. Smart self-regulation saves energy: stay alert for big choices, but use habits for easy stuff. Good self-regulation beats problems with planned steps. Auto habits work fast without thinking.

We often think self-regulation is hero-level control. But it's best when good choices become automatic. Use cues from around you to trigger them. Link actions to events, like "if-then" plans. This pre-sets your brain to act right with less effort.

Boys need these cues to stay on track. Without them, focus slips—from no want, but no reminders. Clear signals help turn actions into habits. For learning alone, cues bridge from teacher help to self-help. Good cues are easy to spot, always there, and tied to one action. Peer promises work well. Teacher check-ins set expectations. Plans like "If stuck, reread" give steps for common problems.

The main point: Do boys have if-then plans for study habits when alone or with a friend? Study habits are big mindsets for hard learning, not just tricks like underlining. They include views and actions for school duties.

Top boys stay focused even when bored. They credit wins to effort, not luck or being smart. This builds strong habits and solo learning.

## **Time Management**

Time management is the base for all this. It's a must for learning alone. Without time sense, good plans drift. You need to pick time on purpose: guess lengths, order steps, fix mistakes. Bad time sense leads to wrong guesses, late starts, or short focus. Growing this is key for freedom and smart growth.

**Boys practice by setting real goals, checking speed, and thinking about time use. It leads to more control, less stress, and steady learning. Some tips:**

- It's a Skill, Not Who You Are

Boys think "I'm messy," but you can learn it. See it as growth, not fault.

- Plan from the End

Boys guess short on big ideas. Start at the due date and work back for steps.

- **Break Big Jobs**

Big tasks scare and delay. Split into small parts for clear next moves.

- **Check Real Time Use**

Think how time really goes vs. what you think. Quick notes show hidden wastes.

- **Smooth Switches**

Boys waste time changing tasks. Short lists or resets keep flow.

- Inside vs. Outside Push

Boys like teacher nudges but need self-push too.

- Feelings and Avoiding

Bad time can hide worry or fear of mess-ups. Fix feelings kindly for better habits.

- Show and Guide

Adults sharing plans, priorities, and fixes (even flops) make it real.

- Tie to Your Goals

Link time to wants, like guilt-free fun. Make the reason clear.

## **Handling Cognitive Complexity**

Boys need to handle tough thinking along with time and self-control. Torah is hard stuff. Mastery needs deep understanding, holding many ideas, and bending thoughts for unclear parts. This means solo text work: read close, break structure, reason meanings—in chavrusa or alone. Without it, even eager boys get stuck or quit. It's must-have for deep Torah alone.

In Torah, this means finding, checking, and mixing info from texts, comments, and charts. Look at many views, weigh with proof, make smart ends. Mix old and new ideas. This builds flex thinking, respect for different rules, and use in new spots.

Hard part: Hold opposite ideas at once without picking too soon. Torah keeps conflicts. This builds better understanding and humble smarts. Boys new to abstract need practice to avoid simple yes/no. It grows reasoning in fuzzy areas.

Easy fixes to hard problems are often wrong. This skill is about decisions in messy, risky spots.

### **Building Connectedness with Teachers**

Boys get drive from adults. But they won't control themselves without good teacher ties. Ties make them care about knowledge. They keep

going when bored.

## **Ways to build:**

- Join In Often: Talk to teachers outside class—ask questions, share thoughts, get advice. Builds trust.
- Show Respect: Listen well, don't cut in, value their time and Torah.
- Be Ready: Review before class, have questions. Shows you care.
- Use Feedback: Take advice seriously and change. Shows growth.

Good ties boost school now and build support for later. Some boys float without one close teacher. Their learning feels empty. Help them connect to spark purpose.

Later, solo learning needs smart help-seeking: books, guides, classes, online. Build your own support net after Yeshiva.

## Interpersonal Relations with Peers (Chavrusa)

This means making and keeping good, respectful ties in groups or one-on-one. Chavrusa shows your relation style. Prep, listen, disagree nice—trains for all ties.

Includes good chavrusa work, value others, handle differences, join community. Build rapport by listening to words and feelings, respond kind. Talk clear, take turns, restate for sure, fight fair. Key for Yeshiva and life: lead, team, behave well.

Yeshiva groups like projects or tasks build talk skills. Test ideas, dive deep, make friends in respect. Grows self in group and community tie. Without, shy boys miss out.

Good talk builds confidence to stop bad acts or guide friends kind. Peer ties aren't born—they need practice in listening, calm feelings, fair fights, real friends. In Yeshiva, chavrusa and community make them core.

## **Future Orientation**

Boys' future thinking can change. Yeshivos shape it with words, ties, think times. Help see roles in learning, family, community, Jews—now and as adults.

It builds base for solo learning after: think, feel, drive for ongoing growth. Seeing Torah life—like deep study, honest living, community help—makes now purposeful. Boosts inner want, plans, stick-to-it.

Hurt boys might stick in past, can't act for future. Overwhelmed now blocks goal steps. Future focus means long goals over past or now pulls. Yeshivos build this, self-control, action with belonging. Belonging boosts brain skills: plan, set goals, control urges, pick important—all for unstructured learning.

Part is owning learning: inner duty and wonder, not just follow rules. Preps for loose settings. Link even "boring" to big success.

Stable adults give steady patterns for future ties in choice-filled world.

## **## Improvements Summary**

- Simplified words and sentences: Used short, everyday 7th-grade language (e.g., "tackling a hard task" instead of "engaging in a challenging task") to make it easier to read without losing ideas.
- Broke up long parts: Added more short paragraphs, bullets, and simple lists for better flow and less overwhelm.
- Cut repeats and fluff: Removed extra explanations that said the same thing twice, keeping the length about the same but clearer.
- Kept the voice and all key points: Stayed true to the original meaning, structure, and educational tone while making it engaging for younger readers.