

## **Module: Peer-Mediated Instruction and Intervention**

### **Overview of Peer-Mediated Instruction and Intervention**

Neitzel, J. (2008). *Overview of peer-mediated instruction and intervention for children and youth with autism spectrum disorders*. Chapel Hill, NC: National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders, FPG Child Development Institute, The University of North Carolina.

Peer-mediated instructional approaches are used to teach typically developing peers ways to interact with and help children and youth with ASD acquire new social skills by increasing social opportunities within natural environments. With PMII, peers are carefully and systematically taught ways of engaging children and youth with ASD in positive and extended social interactions in both teacher-directed and learner-initiated activities (English et al., 1997; Odom et al., 1999; Strain & Odom, 1986).

#### **Evidence**

PMII meets criteria for being an evidence-based practice within the early childhood and elementary age groups for the social domain (early childhood, n = 5 single subject; elementary, n = 7 single subject). Only one study met criteria in the middle/high school age group.

#### **With what ages is PMII effective?**

PMII can be implemented with pairs or small groups of learners across the age range starting in preschool and extending through high school. With young children (i.e., 3 to 8 years of age), practitioners can use peer-initiation training, or a buddy approach, to help learners with ASD acquire important social skills. Social networking strategies are more appropriate for older learners (i.e., 9 to 18 years of age). PMII has been shown to have positive effects on academic, interpersonal, and personal-social development, and may be the largest and most empirically supported type of social intervention for learners with ASD (Bass & Mulick, 2007; Maheady, Harper, & Mallette, 2001; McConnell, 2002).

#### **What skills or intervention goals can be addressed by PMII?**

PMII targets social skills that include the following: responding to others, reciprocity, understanding others, and interacting with others or in groups.

#### **In what settings can PMII be effectively used?**

PMII has been used effectively in clinical and school-based settings across preschool to high school age groups. PMII is intended to be used as part of the daily curriculum through a balance of teacher-directed and learner-initiated interactions and activities.

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### **Evidence Base**

#### **Preschoolers**

- Garfinkle, A.N., & Schwartz, I.S. (2002). Peer imitation: Increasing social interactions in children with autism and other developmental disabilities in inclusive preschool classrooms. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 22(1)*, 26-38.
- Goldstein, H., Kaczmarek, L., Pennington, R., & Shafer, K. (1992). Peer-mediated intervention: Attending to, commenting on, and acknowledging the behavior of preschoolers with Autism. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 25*, 289-305.
- Kohler, F. W., Strain, P. S., Hoyson, M., Davis, L., Donina, W. M., & Rapp, N. (1995). Using a group-oriented contingency to increase social interactions between children with autism and their peers: A preliminary analysis of corollary supportive behavior. *Behavior Modification, 19*, 10-32.
- Odom, S. L., & Strain, P. S. (1986). A comparison of peer-initiation and teacher-antecedent interventions for promoting reciprocal social interactions of autistic preschoolers. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 19*, 58-72.
- Sainato, D. M., Goldstein, H., & Strain, P.S. (1992). Effects of self-evaluation on preschool children's use of social interaction strategies with their classmates with autism. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 25*, 127-141.

#### **Elementary and Middle School Age**

- Blew, P.A., Schwartz, I.S., & Luce, S.C. (1985). Teaching functional community-based skills to autistic children using nonhandicapped peer tutors. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 18*, 337-342.
- Garrison-Harrell, L., & Kamps, D. (1997). The effects of peer networks on social-communicative behaviors for students with autism. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 12(4)*, 241-255.
- Haring, T. G., & Breen, C. G. (1992). A peer-mediated social network intervention to enhance the social integration of persons with moderate and severe disabilities. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 25*, 319-334.
- Laushey, K. M., Heflin, L. J. (2000). Enhancing social skills of kindergarten children with autism through the training of multiple peers as tutors. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disabilities, 30*, 183-193.

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Lee, S., & Odom, S. L. (1996). The relationship between stereotypic behavior and peer social interactions for children with severe disabilities. *The Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 21, 88-95. (Previously published in Korean.)

Lee, S., Odom, S. L., & Loftin, R. (2007). Social engagement with peers and stereotypic behavior of children with autism. *Journal of Positive Behavior Intervention*, 9, 67-79.

Thiemann, K.S., & Goldstein, H. (2004). Effects of peer training and written text cueing on social communication of school-age children with pervasive developmental disorder. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 47(1), 126-144.

**Additional References**

Bass, J.D., & Mulick, J.A. (2007). Social play skill enhancement of children with autism using peers and siblings as therapists. *Psychology in the Schools*, 44(7), 727-735.

English, K., Goldstein, H., Shafer, K., & Kaczmarek, L. (1997). Promoting interactions among preschoolers with and without disabilities: Effects of a buddy skills-training program. *Exceptional Children*, 63(2), 229-243.

Maheady, L., Harper, G.F., & Mallette, B. (2001). Peer-mediated instruction and interventions and students with mild disabilities. *Remedial and Special Education*, 22(1), 4-14.

McConnell, S.R. (2002). Interventions to facilitate social interaction for young children with autism: Review of available research and recommendations for educational intervention and research. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 32(5), 351-372.

Odom, S.L., McConnell, S.R., McEvoy, M.A., Peterson, C., Ostrosky, M., Chandler, L.K., Spicuzza, R.J., Skellenger, A., Creighton, M., & Favazza, P.C. (1999). Relative effects of interventions supporting the social competence of young children with disabilities. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 19(2), 75-91.

Strain, P.S., & Odom, S.L. (1986). Peer social initiations: effective intervention for social skills development of exceptional children. *Exceptional Children*, 52, 543-551.