

Teaching Social Skills in the Classroom for Teenagers with ASD: The PEERS Program



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Social Deficits Among Adolescents with ASD

- Poor social communication
 - Problems with topic initiating
 - One-sided conversations
 - Perseverate on restricted interests
 - Difficulty providing relevant information
 - Make unexpected leaps in topics
 - Difficulty interpreting verbal and nonverbal social cues
- Poor social awareness
- Poor social motivation
 - Less involvement in social activities
 - Lack of peer entry attempts
- Poor social cognition
 - Difficulty understanding the perspectives of others
 - Poor theory of mind

Photo of PEERS courtesy of Associated Press



(Volkmar & Klin, 1998; Bauminger & Kasari, 2000; Orsmond, Krauss, & Selzner, 2004; Koning & Magill-Evans, 2001; LeCoulter et al., 1989; Marks, Schrader, Longstaffer, & Levine, 2000; Ghaszoulin & Gordon, 1990; Twachtman-Cullen, 1998; Hemphill & Spence, 1990; Church, Aisanki, Amanullah, 2000; Constanino, 2005)

PEERS

Program for the Education & Enrichment of Relational Skills
(Laugeson & Frankel, 2010)

- Manualized intervention
- Teacher-facilitated
 - Teachers were trained and received ongoing consultation on PEERS
- Parent handouts were provided
- Class addressed core deficits for ASD
- Focused on friendship skills
- Taught ecologically valid social skills
- 14 week curriculum
 - 30 minute daily lessons in the classroom
- Conducted at The Help Group's Village Glen Middle School
 - High-functioning ASD
 - Asperger's Disorder
 - PDD-NOS



Use of Effective Methods of Social Skills Instruction

- Small group format
 - 10-14 students per class
- Parent handouts
 - Assist with homework completion
 - Expand social opportunities
 - Social coaching
- Didactic instruction
 - Structured lessons
 - Concrete rules / steps of social etiquette
- Role-playing / modeling
 - Appropriate and inappropriate demonstrations
- Behavioral rehearsal
- In class coaching
 - Performance feedback
- Real-life practice
 - Homework assignments
 - Parent assistance

Photo of PEERS courtesy of Associated Press



(Matson, 1984; Davies & Rogers, 1985; Fleming & Fleming, 1982; Mesibov, 1984; Gresham, Sugai, & Horner, 2001; Gralinski & Kopp, 1993; Rubin & Slomkin, 1984; Frankel & Myrnes, 2003; Rao, Beidel, & Murray, 2008; Laugeson et al., 2008)

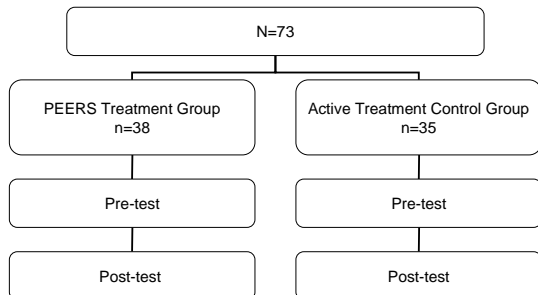
Overview of the Curriculum

- Conversational skills
- Electronic communication
- Choosing appropriate friends
- Appropriate use of humor
- Peer entry strategies
- Peer exit strategies
- Get-togethers
- Good sportsmanship
- Peer rejection
 - Teasing, bullying, bad reputations
- Peer conflict
 - Arguments, rumors and gossip
- Graduation

Photo of PEERS courtesy of Associated Press



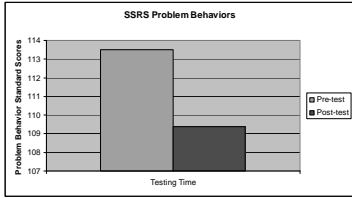
Study Design



Teacher-Report

Social Skills Rating System (SSRS-T)

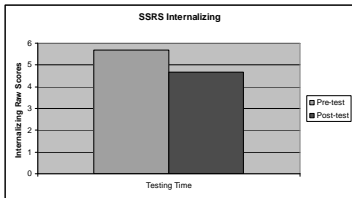
SSRS-T
Problem Behaviors Scale
(Standard Scores)
 $p = 0.03$



Teacher-Report

Social Skills Rating System (SSRS-T)

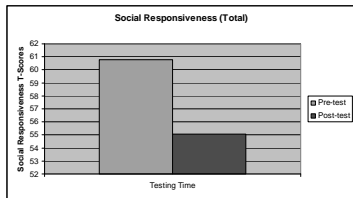
SSRS-T
Internalizing Subscale
(Raw Scores)
 $p = 0.03$



Teacher-Report

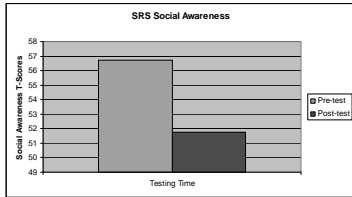
Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-T)

SRS-T
Social Responsiveness Total Score
(T Scores)
 $p = 0.01$



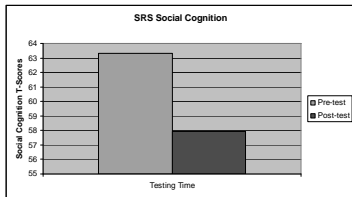
Teacher-Report Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-T)

SRS-T
Social Awareness Score
(T Scores)
 $p = 0.02$



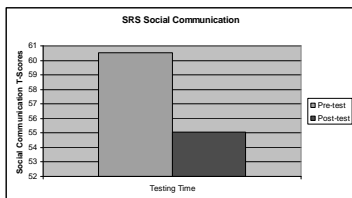
Teacher-Report Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-T)

SRS-T
Social Cognition Score
(T Scores)
 $p = 0.02$



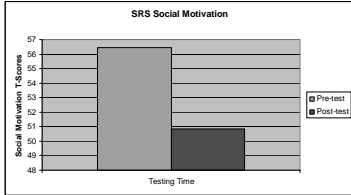
Teacher-Report Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-T)

SRS-T
Social Communication Score
(T Scores)
 $p = 0.01$



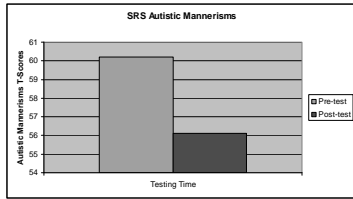
Teacher-Report Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-T)

SRS-T
Social Motivation Score
(T Scores)
 $p = 0.01$



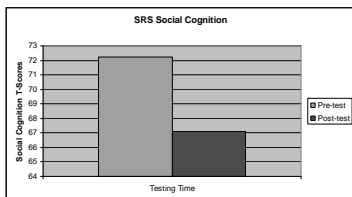
Teacher-Report Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-T)

SRS-T
Autistic Mannerisms Score
(T Scores)
 $p = 0.05$



Parent-Report Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-P)

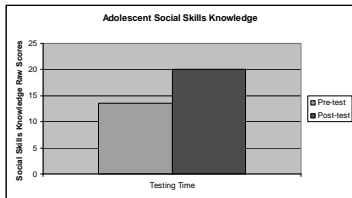
SRS-P
Social Cognition Score
(T Scores)
 $p = 0.04$



Teen Self-Report

Test of Adolescent Social Skills Knowledge (TASSK)

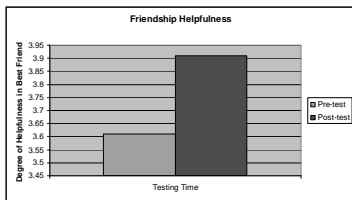
TASSK
Adolescent Social Skills Knowledge
(Raw Scores)
 $p = 0.01$



Teen Self-Report

Friendship Quality Scale (FQS)

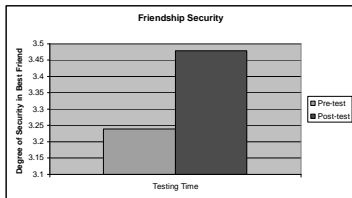
FQS
Friendship Helpfulness
(Raw Scores)
 $p = 0.03$



Teen Self-Report

Friendship Quality Scale (FQS)

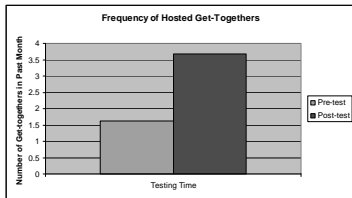
FQS
Friendship Security
(Raw Scores)
 $p = 0.03$



Teen Self-Report

Quality of Socialization Questionnaire (QSQ)

QSQ
Frequency of Hosted Get-togethers
(Raw Scores)
 $p = 0.03$



PEERS Training and Publication Information

- Publication of PEERS Manual
 - Routledge Taylor & Francis Group
- PEERS Training
 - October 26-29, 2010
 - March 8-11, 2011
 - Four-day training
 - (4-8 hours per day)
 - 20 hours total
 - Including 4 hour parent and teen group observation
 - Includes PEERS manual and research material
 - Held at the UCLA Semel Institute
 - (310) 26-PEERS
 - www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/
 - socialskills@ucla.edu



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