

## **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, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, The University of North Carolina.

Peer-mediated instruction is used to teach typically developing peers ways to interact with and help learners with ASD acquire new social skills by increasing social opportunities within natural environments. With PMII, peers are systematically taught ways of engaging learners with ASD in 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 promoting communication/language and social skills. 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. With young children (i.e., 3 to 8 years of age), practitioners can use peer-initiation training to help learners with ASD acquire communication/language and 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.

#### **Evidence Base**

The studies cited in this section provide the basis upon which this practice was determined to meet the NPDC of ASD's criteria as an evidence-based practice. This list is not exhaustive; other quality studies may exist but were not included.

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### **Preschool**

- 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.
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### **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.
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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.

### **Selected Additional References**

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Carter, E. W., & Hughes, C. (2007). Social interaction interventions: Promoting socially supportive environments and teaching new skills. In S. L. Odom, R. Horner, M. Snell, & J. Blanche. (Eds.), *Handbook of developmental disabilities* (pp. 310-328). NY: Guilford Press.

Carter, E. W., & Kennedy, C. H. (2006). Promoting access to the general curriculum using peer support strategies. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities, 31*(4), 284-292.

Dugan, E., Kamps, D., Leonard, B., Watkins, N., Rheinberger, A., & Stackhaus, J. (1995). Effects of cooperative learning groups during social studies for students with autism and fourth-grade peers. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 28*, 175-188.

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