Motivating Young Children to Communicate and Play with Peers

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MARCH 17, 2018
11TH ANNUAL AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS UPDATE
Autism Intervention: Models

Adult directed

Child directed

Who is the LEADER?
Autism Intervention: Models

Structured settings

Daily routines

WHERE does teaching occur?
Autism Intervention: Models

Skill-building

Relationship-building

What is the GOAL?
Frequently Asked Questions

- How do I choose *which skills* are the most important to teach?

- How can I increase meaningful and independent *communication*?

- How can I get my child to *play more with peers*?

- Can I take advantage of *my child’s strong interests* to help him learn?
Pivotal Response Treatment and the Importance of Motivation

“Pivotal”: Results in improvements in untargeted areas

Evidence-based and manualized
  * 1 of 10 comprehensive models  (National Research Council, 2001)
  * 1 of 11 established treatments  (National Autism Center’s National Standard’s Project, 2009)

Goal: Address core deficits in social motivation
Pivotal Area - Motivation

Six individually validated components to enhance motivation for learning

A

B

C

Clear Opportunities
Child Choice
Maintenance/Acquisition

Contingent Reinforcement
Natural Reinforcer
Reinforce Attempts
Improving Communication

- **Step 1:** Identify an item or activity of interest for your child
- **Step 2:** Find a way to gain temporary control of some aspect of the activity or toy
- **Step 3:** Model simple language or ask a clear question
- **Step 4:** Wait for your child to try communicating
- **Step 5:** Reward your child with access to the item or activity

To boost motivation even more?
- use items of high interest and
- practice lots of easy tasks
Randomized Controlled Trial of PRT Group Treatment
(Funded by Autism Speaks; PI: Hardan)

- Fifty-three children with autism
- Age range from 2 to 6 years
- PRT group versus psychoeducation group

(F(2,43)=6.12, p=.005)
Randomized Controlled Trial of PRT Package (PRT-P) (Funded by NIDCD; PI: Hardan)

- Forty-seven children with autism
- Age range from 2 to 5 years
- PRT-P: parent training and clinician-delivered treatment
- DTG: delayed treatment group

**CGI-Improvement (Communication)**

- No Change
- Minimally Improved
- Much Improved
- Very Much Improved

**Frequency of Functional Utterances During 10-min SLO**

- DTG
- PRT-P

*Note: * indicates a significant difference.
Increasing Peer Interaction

- **Step 1**: Identify a time and place to practice peer interaction
- **Step 2**: Plan an activity both children will enjoy
- **Step 3**: Build cooperation into the activity set-up
- **Step 4**: Prompt your child to initiate requests
- **Step 5**: Guide the peer to reinforce your child’s attempts

Adjust the setting, activity and duration to promote successful interactions

*Friendships are most likely to grow from positive experiences playing together*
Cooperative Arrangements
Social Goals in School

- Peer-Peer Interactions
- Who Provides the Intervention?
- Provide Ample Opportunities
- Data Collection
Initiations

- Peer Interactions in the Absence of an Adult

Figure 1. Percentage of 30-s intervals that the participants engaged in social behavior with their typically developing peer(s)

(Koegel, Kuriakose, Singh & Koegel, 2012)
Harnessing Repetitive Behaviors

- **Step 1:** Assessment (interview, observation)
- **Step 2:** Develop social activity with RRB as theme
  - High on reinforcer hierarchy
- **Step 3:** Tweak so it is interesting to all children
- **Step 4:** Program to occur at school
- **Step 5:** Invite a group children to participate
  - Improved affect
  - Valued member of the group

Repetitive behaviors can be strong motivators

*Using repetitive behaviors in treatment will not make the behaviors worse*
Harnessing Repetitive Behaviors

- Physical Exercise
- Self-management
- Video Modeling
- Reward systems
- Alternative/Incompatible behaviors
- Develop activities with the same sensory reinforcer
- Functional Assessment
- Priming
Key Take Aways

- Always account for **motivation** when teaching
- Practice **communication** skills throughout daily routines
- **Cooperative** activities promote social interaction
- **Repetitive behaviors** can be harnessed to improve motivation
Early Support Program for Autism (ESPA)

Provides parent education and assistance with local resources for families of young children with ASD

autismsupport@stanford.edu
650-723-ESPA (3772)

http://espa.stanford.edu

*** FREE of Charge***

*** No Wait List ***
TRAINING MANUALS:

- **Pivotal Response Treatment**: Using Motivation as a Pivotal Response

- Using PRT to **Teach First Words** to Children with Autism

- Improving **Socialization** in Individuals with Autism

- Also see manuals on **Self-Management**, **Priming**, and understanding **Problem Behaviors**
Autism Treatment for Communication SUCCESS

WHO: Parents of children ages 1-6 years, diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders

The Communication SUCCESS group teaches natural ways parents can encourage communication development during daily family routines. The class uses effective developmental and behavioral strategies for autism treatment, such as Pivotal Response Training (PRT)

To request information for group and individual family training sessions or to schedule a behavior consultation call:
Stanford Child Psychiatry Intake
650-723-5511

PRT is a Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Intervention (NDBI) which combines Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) with developmental teaching strategies.

Program led by Grace Gengoux, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Social Skills Group & Parent Training
for children aged 4-6 years

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN STANFORD UNIVERSITY AND ABILITIES UNITED

Will your child benefit from a social group and parent training to learn how to initiate and interact appropriately with peers?

- Do you have a child between the ages of 4 and 6 years with or without an Autism diagnosis?
- Would you like your child to participate in a social group program to help children with high functioning autism learn to initiate and interact appropriately with peers?
- Would you like to learn how to host successful play dates to help your child with ASD make and keep friends?

Stanford University researchers are currently recruiting children, with and without autism, to participate in a research study of a group social skills program designed to improve peer interactions in young children with autism.

For more information, call
Stanford University at (650) 736-1235

For general information about program participant rights, contact 1-866-680-2906.