While there is significant research to support a correlation between baseline social communication skills and baseline social anxiety in young adults with ASD, very little is known about the relationship between verbal social communication skills and social anxiety in young adults with ASD. These findings are important because they provide useful information about who may be more likely to benefit from targeted treatment to decrease social anxiety and improve social communication skills. Improving social communication skills may lead to decreased social anxiety in young adults with ASD, just as decreasing social anxiety may also lead to greater social communication.

### Participants

- **N=38 young adults diagnosed with ASD**
- **Age:** M=19.84, SD=1.76; Range: 17-24 years of age
- **Gender:** 68% male (n=26); 32% female (n=12)
- **Ethnicity:** Caucasian 47% (n=18); Latino/Hispanic 13% (n=5); Asian 21% (n=8); Middle Eastern 3% (n=1), Other 16% (n=6)
- **Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS; Constantino 2005)**
  - Baseline Total Score: M=70.19, SD=9.54

### Measures

- **Social Anxiety Scale (SAS; La Greca 1999)**
  - Measure of social anxiety.
- **Social Skills Inventory (SSI, Riggio 1986)**
  - Measure of social communication skills.

### Methods

- Under the auspices of The Help Group – UCLA Autism Research Alliance, thirty-eight young adults with ASD ranging from 17-24 years of age presented for treatment through the UCLA PEERS for Young Adults program, an evidence-based social skills intervention for individuals with ASD (Laugeson & Frankel, 2010).
- In order to examine the relationship between self-reported social communication skills and social anxiety, young adults completed baseline measures including the Social Skills Inventory (SSI; Riggio 1989) and the Social Anxiety Scale (SAS; La Greca 1999).
- Pearson correlations were calculated to examine the relationship between baseline social communication skills and baseline social anxiety prior to treatment.
- Results suggest that young adults with ASD with greater overall social anxiety are more likely to have poorer overall social skills, poorer social expressivity, and poorer social control. Young adults with ASD with greater overall social anxiety are also more likely to exhibit greater social sensitivity, perhaps due to greater self-consciousness in social interactions (Riggio 1989).
- These findings are important because they provide useful information about who may be more likely to benefit from targeted treatment to decrease social anxiety and improve social communication skills.
- Improving social communication skills may lead to decreased social anxiety in young adults with ASD, just as decreasing social anxiety may also lead to greater social communication.

### References


### Contact Information

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