Understanding the Relationship between Social Anxiety and Bullying against Others in Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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BACKGROUND

Bullying is an epidemic that currently affects over five million adolescents in the U.S., often resulting in prolonged negative outcomes for perpetrators and victims (Fried & Sosland, 2009).

Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS; Gresham & Elliot, 2008) The present study examines the relationship between bullying behaviors against others and social anxiety, specifically fear of negative evaluation by peers, in adolescents with ASD.

PROCEDURES

• To assess for bullying behaviors against others, parents of the participants also completed the Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) prior to intervention.
• The Bullying subscale was utilized to determine the frequency at which adolescents were bullying others.
• Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the relationship between parent-reported social anxiety, including fear of negative evaluation, and parent-reported bullying behaviors against others prior to treatment.

RESULTS

• Results suggest that adolescents with higher parent-reported total anxiety on the SAS demonstrate significantly higher frequency of bullying others as reported by parents on the SSIS (p<.05).

Participants presented for social skills treatment through the UCLA PEERS Clinic, which is an evidence-based social skills intervention for adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) without intellectual disabilities (Laugeson & Frankel, 2010).

In order to confirm a diagnosis of ASD, participants completed the Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS).

Parents completed the Social Anxiety Scale (SAS) at baseline, rating the level of social anxiety and fear of negative evaluation that they perceived in their adolescents prior to intervention.

REFERENCES


CONTACT INFORMATION

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For further information about PEERS, please visit our website at: http://www.semel.ucla.edu/peers

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