

From Play Dates to Romantic Dates: Social Skills Training for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder Across the Lifespan



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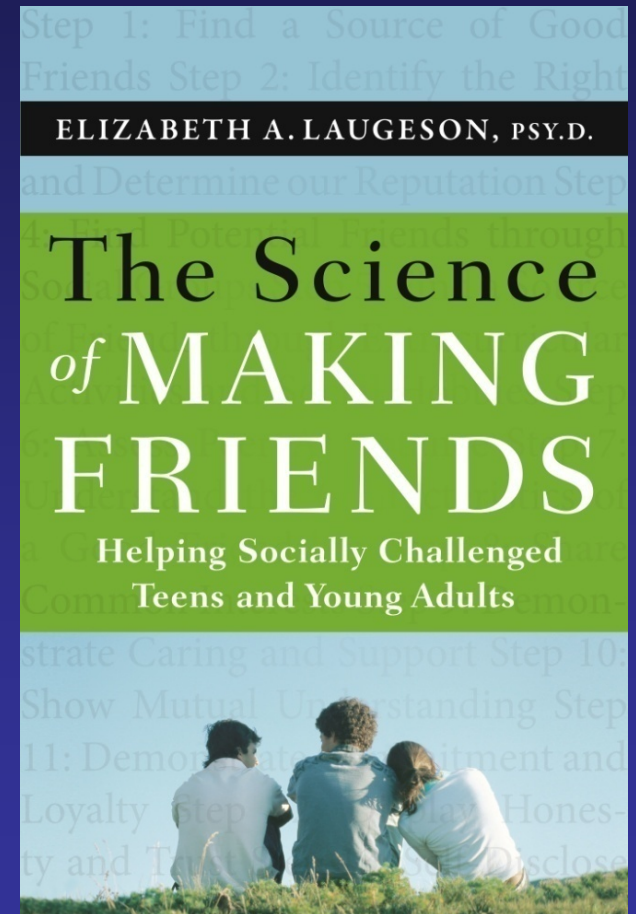
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Overview of Presentation

- Social deficits among individuals with ASD
- Consequences of poor social skills
- Overview of PEERS[®] method
- PEERS[®] for Preschoolers
 - Example: Joining Play
- PEERS[®] for Adolescents
 - Example: Entering a Conversation
- PEERS[®] for Young Adults
 - Example: Flirting and Dating
- Research for youth with ASD
- Resources



Social Deficits Among Youth with ASD

- Less social initiation
 - Fewer peer entry attempts
- Poor play skills
 - More parallel play
 - Less interactive and imaginative play
- Poor social motivation
 - Less engagement with peers
- Poor social awareness
 - Difficulty understanding social cues
- Poor social communication
 - Problems with conversations
- Poor social cognition
 - Difficulty understanding the perspectives of others



(Bauminger & Kasari, 2000; Carter, Davis, Klin, & Volkmar, 2005; Chamberlain, Kasari, & Rotheram-Fuller, 2007; Paul, 2003; Rao, Beidel, & Murray, 2008)

Consequences of Social Deficits

- Significant impact regardless of cognitive functioning and language abilities
 - Pervasive and persistent
 - Worsen as social demands and expectations increase with age
- Consequences:
 - Peer rejection
 - Social neglect
 - Lack of reciprocal relationships
 - Loneliness and isolation
 - Co-morbid mood and anxiety symptoms
 - Academic and employment underachievement later in life



(Volkmar & Klin, 1998; Bauminger & Kasari, 2000; Orsmond, Krauss, & Seltzer, 2004; Koning & Magill-Evans, 2001; LeCouteur et al., 1989; Marks, Schrader, Longaker, & Levine, 2000; Ghaziuddin & Gerstein, 1996; Twatchman-Cullen, 1998; Hemphill & Siperstein, 1990; Church, Alisanki, Amanullah, 2000; Constantino, 2005)

Social Skills Treatments in ASD

- Emphasis on early intervention
 - Few evidence-based social skills treatments
 - Emphasis on language delays rather than social skills
- Limitations of existing treatments
 - Not tailored for youth without intellectual disabilities
 - Few treatments for teens and adults
 - Lack of active parent or teacher involvement
 - Limited generalization to naturalistic social settings
 - Rarely focused on friendship skills



(DeRosier, Swick, Davis, McMillen, & Matthews, 2011; Frankel & Whitham, 2011; Matson, Matson, & Rivet, 2007; Frankel, Myatt, Sugar, Whitham, Gorospe, & Laugeson, 2011; Rao, Beidel, Murray, 2008; Rogers, 2000; White, Keonig, & Scahill, 2007)

Evidence-Based Methods for Teaching Social Skills

- Small group format
- Didactic lessons
 - Concrete rules and steps of social etiquette
 - Ecologically valid social skills
- Role-play demonstrations
 - Model social behavior
 - Appropriate and inappropriate demonstrations
- Behavioral rehearsal exercises
 - Practice with coaching
- Homework assignments
 - Practice in natural social settings
 - Helps generalize skills
- Parent social coaching



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

Background about PEERS®

- International program
 - Adolescent program has been translated into six languages
 - Used in over a dozen countries
- NICE
 - National Institute for Health and Care Excellence - UK
 - Best example of an evidence-based social skills intervention for youth with ASD
- Cochrane Reports
 - Reichow, Steiner, & Volkmar (2012)
 - 1 of 5 evidence-based social skills interventions for individuals 6-21 years of age with ASD
- Evidence-Based Social Skills Programs:
 - PEERS® for Preschoolers
 - PEERS® for Adolescents
 - PEERS® for Young Adults

PEERS[®] for Preschoolers

(Sanderson & Laugeson, PIs)

(Park & Laugeson, PIs)

- 16-week manualized social skills program
- 4-6 year old children with ASD without intellectual disabilities
- Puppet-facilitated lessons
- Teaches ecologically valid friendship skills
- Parent-assisted
- Parents act as social coaches to increase generalizability and durability of gains



PEERS[®] for Preschoolers Curriculum

- Listening and following directions
- Meeting and greeting friends
- Sharing and giving a turn
- Asking for a turn
- Keeping cool
- Being a good sport
- Showing and telling during play
- Asking a friend to play
- Joining a game
- Playing something different
- Helping friends and asking for help
- Body boundaries
- Using an inside voice
- Using polite words



[Topic in WHITE will be covered in the lecture]

PEERS® Social Skill:

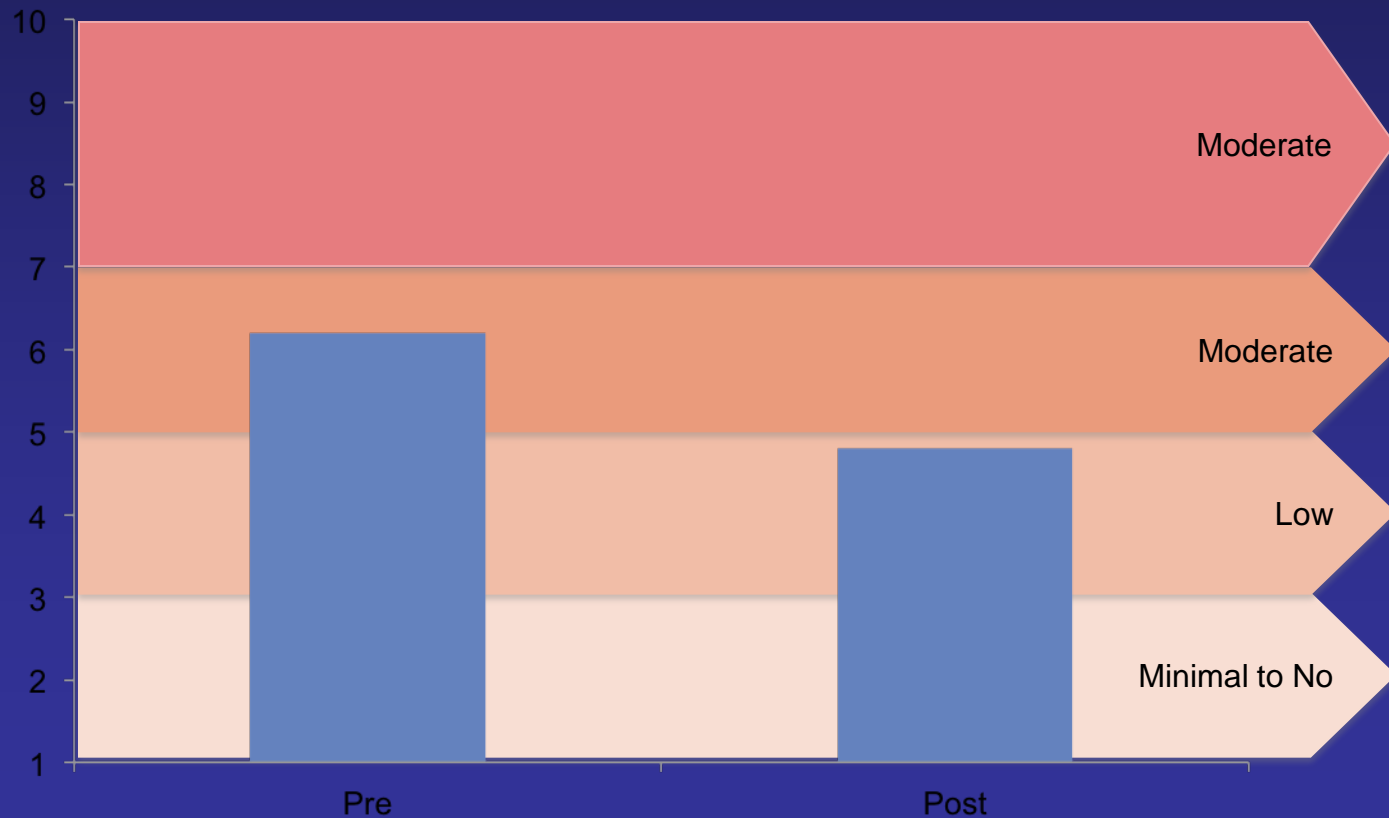
Joining a Game

1. Watch the game
 - Figure out what they're playing
 - Know the rules
2. Move closer
3. Ask to play
 - Look at your friend
 - Smile
 - Say, "Can I play?" using names
 - If your friend says yes:
 - Join the game
 - If your friend says no:
 - Keep cool and find something else to do

INSERT VIDEO

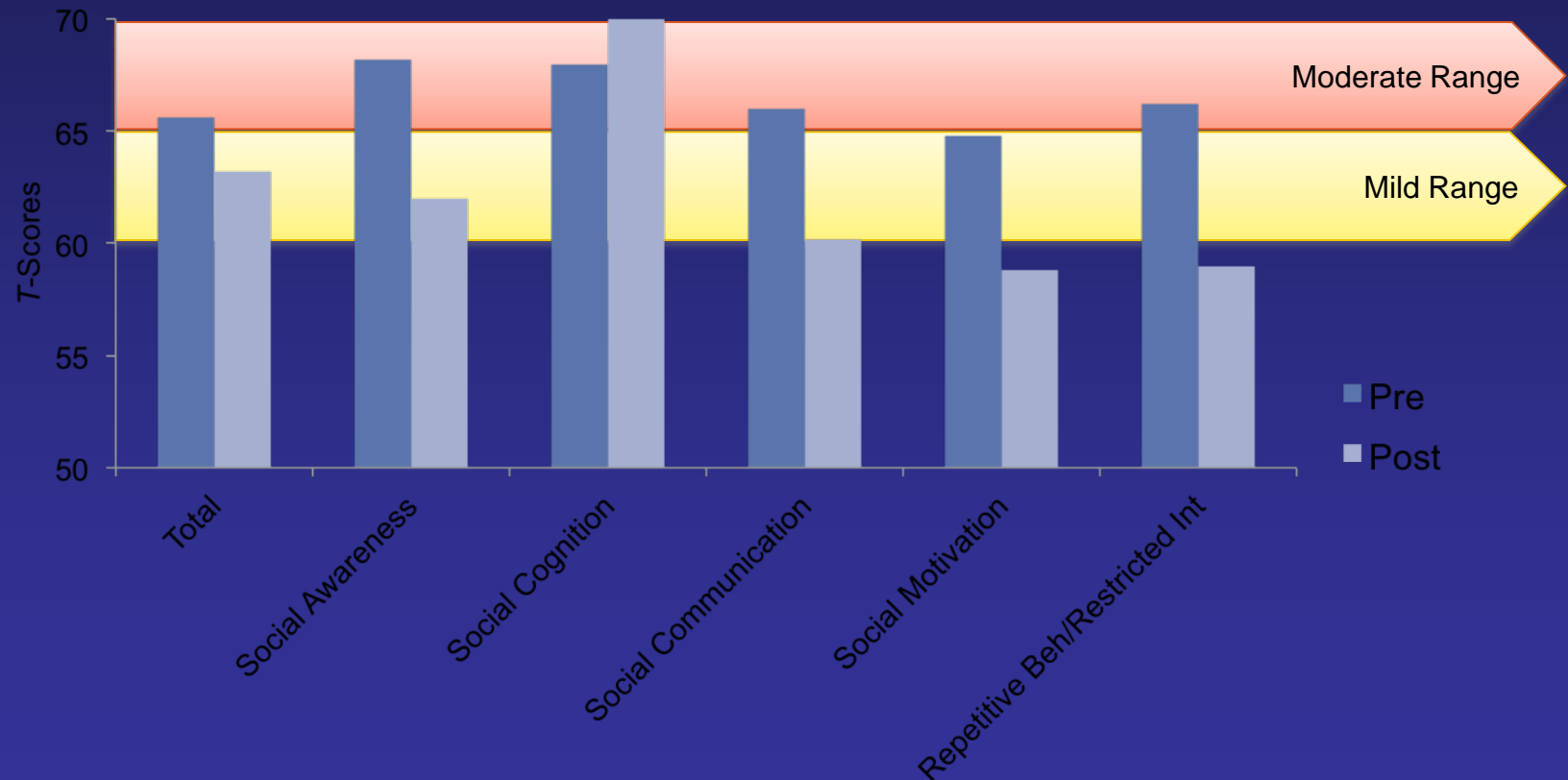
Open-Trial Results: Autism Diagnostic Observation Scale-2

Higher scores indicate *more* autism-related symptoms

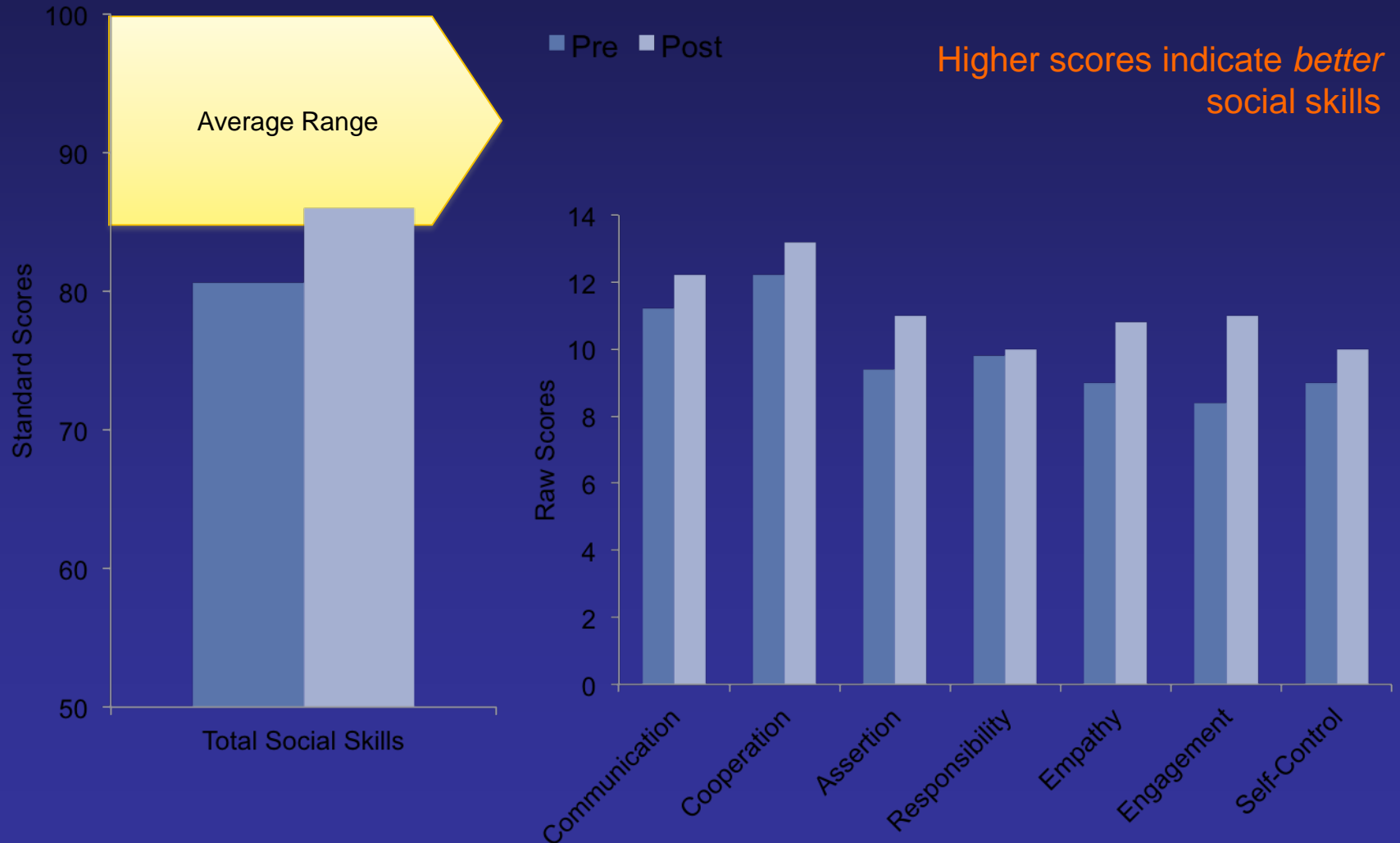


Open-Trial Results: Social Responsiveness Scale-2

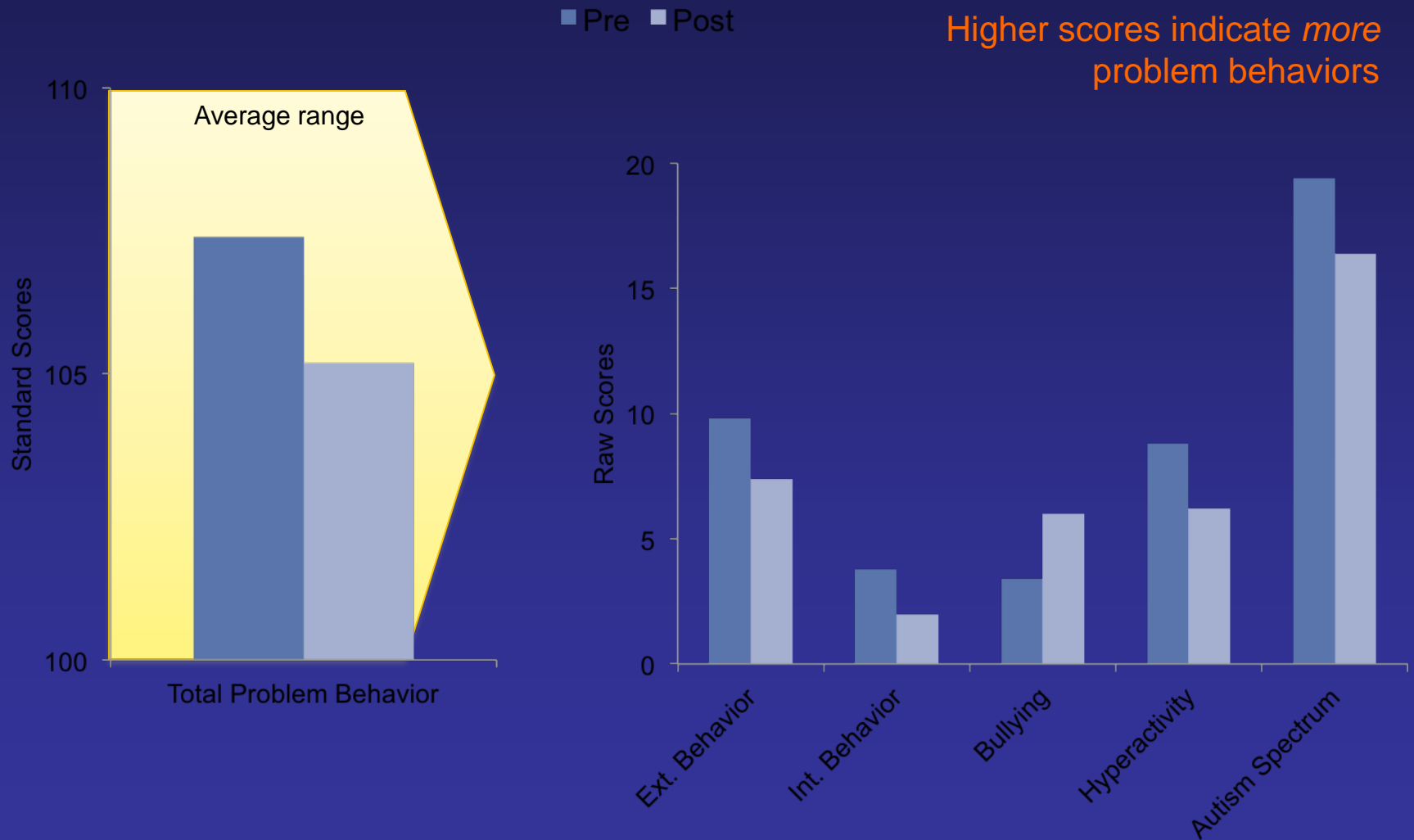
Higher scores indicate *more* social impairment



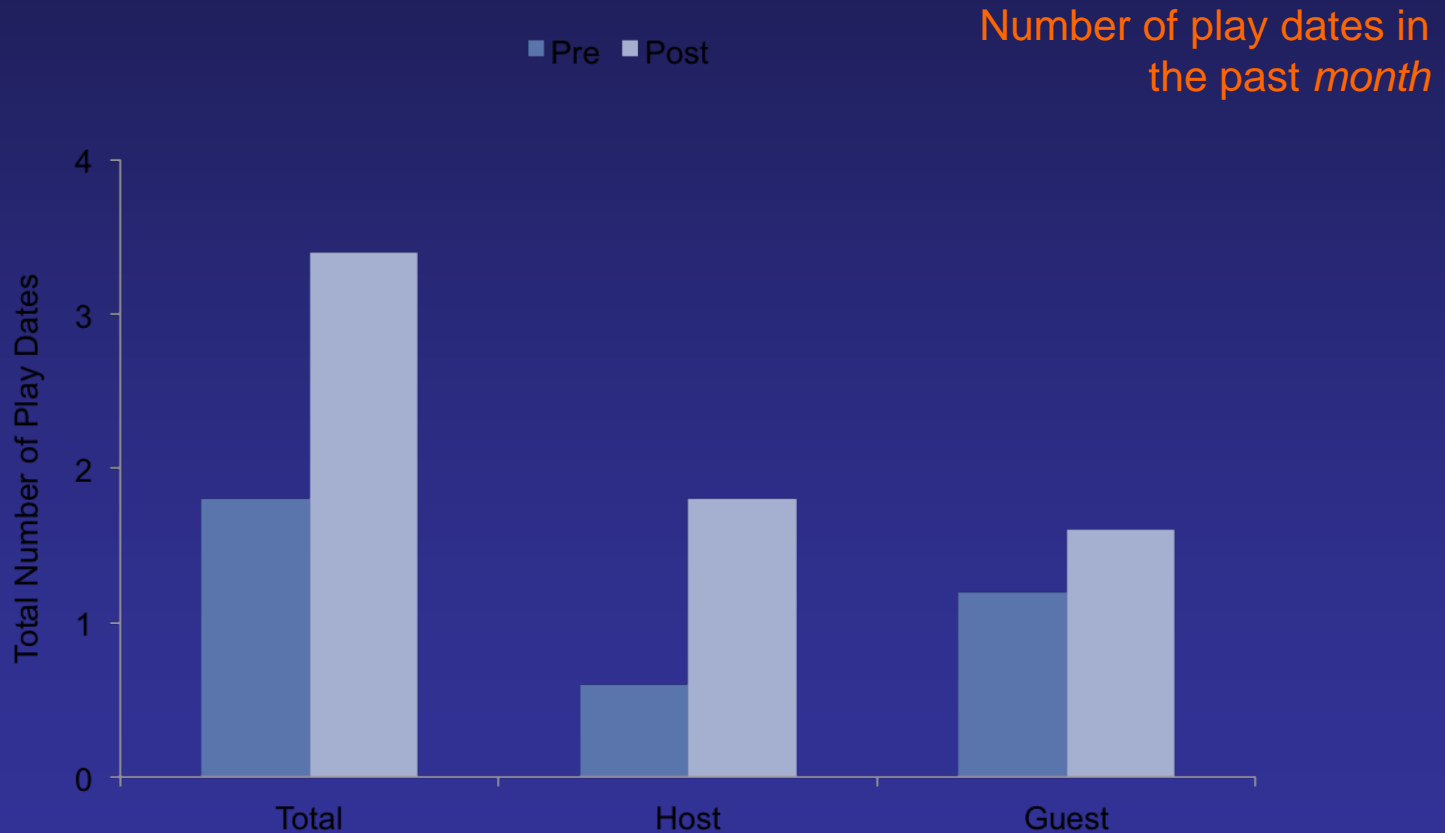
Open-Trial Results: Social Skills Improvement Scale



Open-Trial Results: Social Skills Improvement Scale

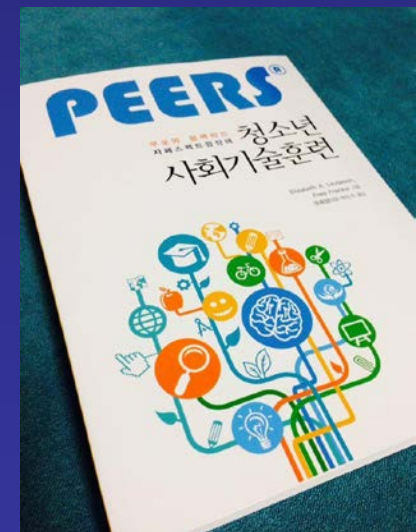
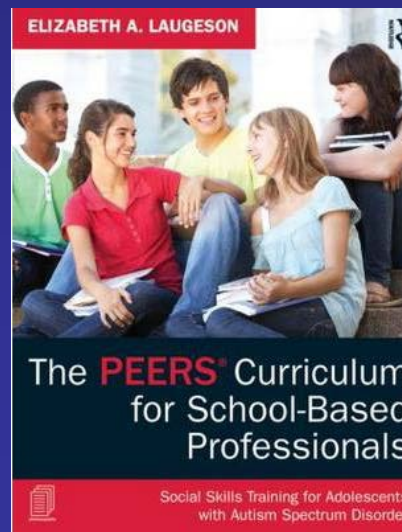
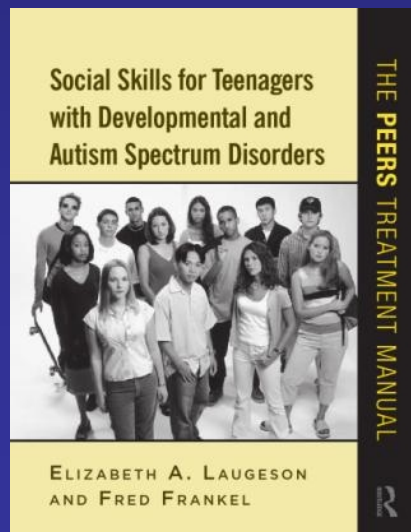


Open-Trial Results: Quality of Play Questionnaire



PEERS[®] for Adolescents

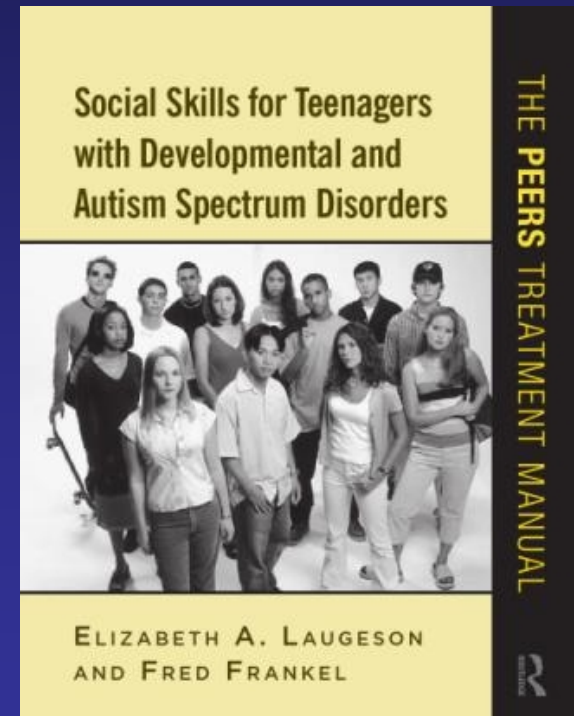
- Parent-assisted 14-week program
 - 90 minute weekly concurrent parent and teen sessions
 - Published Korean manual
- Teacher-facilitated 16-week program
 - Daily 30-50 minute lessons with comprehensive parent handouts
- Focuses on friendship skills and handling peer conflict and rejection
- Teaches ecologically valid social skills



Summary of PEERS® Social Skills

Friendship Skills:

- Finding and choosing friends
- Conversational skills
- Starting and entering conversations
- Exiting conversations
- Electronic communication
- Get-togethers
- Dating etiquette (adults only)
 - Letting someone know you like them
 - Asking someone on a date
 - Organizing and planning a date
 - General dating do's and don'ts
 - Taking no for an answer
 - Politely turning someone down for a date

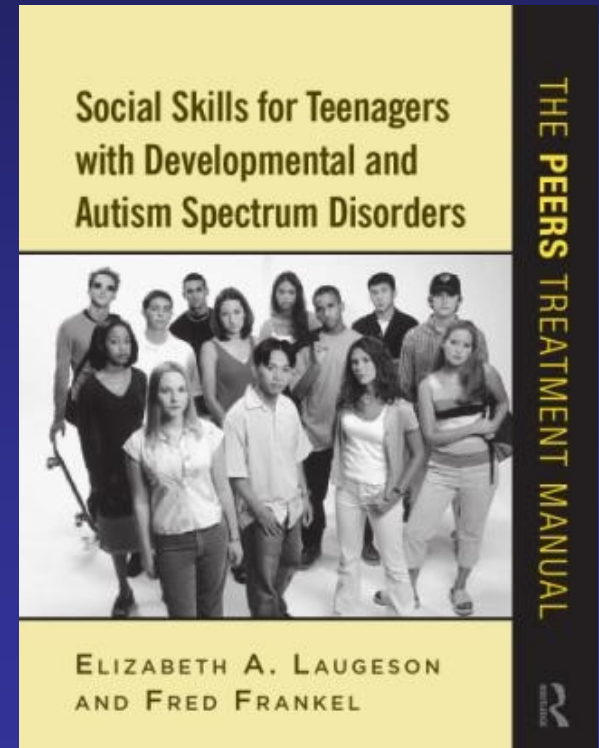


[Topics in WHITE will be covered in the lecture]

Summary of PEERS® Social Skills

Managing Conflict and Rejection:

- Handling arguments
- Handling teasing and embarrassing feedback
- Managing chronic bullying
- Minimizing rumors and gossip
- Handling cyber bullying
- Changing a bad reputation
- Handling peer pressure (adults only)



Clinical Example

QUESTIONS:

What are most teens told to do when trying to meet a new group of people?

What is a common social error made by teens with ASD when entering group conversations?



Bad Role-Play: Entering Group Conversations

Perspective Taking Questions:

- What was that like for the group?
- What did the group think of Yasamine?
- Will the group want to talk to Yasamine again?

INSERT VIDEO

PEERS® Social Skill:

Steps for Entering Group Conversations

1. Watch / Listen

- Watch from a distance
 - Using a prop is helpful
- Listen for the topic
- Identify common interests
- Make periodic eye contact
- Watch to see if you know someone
- Make sure they're talking nicely

2. Wait

- Wait for a pause in the conversation

3. Move closer

- Arm's length away

4. Join the Topic

- Make a comment or ask a question that is ON TOPIC



The Science of Making Friends
(Laugeson, 2013)

Good Role-Play: Entering Group Conversations

Perspective Taking Questions:

- What was that like for the group?
- What did the group think of Yasamine?
- Will the group want to talk to Yasamine again?

INSERT VIDEO

Clinical Example

QUESTIONS:

What are most people with autism told to do to let someone know they like them romantically?

What do people with autism often do to let someone know they like them?



PEERS[®] Social Skill: Letting Someone Know You Like Them

Flirt with them

1. Make eye contact
2. Give a slight smile
 - Not a big smile
 - No teeth
3. Look away
4. Repeat



PEERS® Social Skill: Letting Someone Know You Like Them

Speak to a mutual friend

- Ask if the person is dating anyone
- Ask if the person might be interested in you
- Ask if they think the person might go out with you
- Casually mention that you like them



PEERS® Social Skill: Letting Someone Know You Like Them

Give compliments

- SPECIFIC compliments for people you don't know well
 - Example: “That was really interesting!”
- GENERAL compliments ONLY if you know them well
 - Example: “You’re so smart!”
- Avoid too many physical compliments
- Physical compliments should be from the neck-up



PEERS® Social Skill:

Asking Someone on a Date

1. Trade information
2. Mention your common interests
3. Ask what they're doing at some general time (e.g., this weekend)
4. Assess their interest
5. Use common interests as a cover story for going out
6. If interested:
 - a. Choose a day and general time
 - b. Exchange contact information
7. Contact them to finalize plans
8. If NOT interested:
 - a. Keep your cool
 - b. Casually say, "Okay"
 - c. Change the subject

INSERT VIDEO

Video courtesy of www.wrongplanet.net

PEERS[®] Evidence-Base

J Autism Dev Disord (2009) 39:596–606
DOI 10.1007/s10803-008-0664-5

ORIGINAL PAPER

Parent-Assisted Social Skills Training to Improve Friendships in Teens with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Elizabeth A. Laugeson · Fred Frankel ·
Catherine Mogil · Ashley R. Dillon

J Autism Dev Disord
DOI 10.1007/s10803-011-1339-1

ORIGINAL PAPER

Evidence-Based Social Skills Training for Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders: The UCLA PEERS Program

Elizabeth A. Laugeson · Fred Frankel ·
Alexander Gantman · Ashley R. Dillon ·
Catherine Mogil

J Autism Dev Disord
DOI 10.1007/s10803-014-2108-8

ORIGINAL PAPER

The ABC's of Teaching Social Skills to Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Classroom: The UCLA *PEERS*[®] Program

Elizabeth A. Laugeson · Ruth Ellingsen ·
Jennifer Sanderson · Lara Tucci · Shannon Bates

J Autism Dev Disord
DOI 10.1007/s10803-011-1350-6

ORIGINAL PAPER

Social Skills Training for Young Adults with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Randomized Controlled Pilot Study

Alexander Gantman · Steven K. Kapp ·
Kaelly Orenski · Elizabeth A. Laugeson

PEERS[®] Evidence-Base

J Autism Dev Disord
DOI 10.1007/s10803-013-1900-1

ORIGINAL PAPER

A Replication and Extension of the PEERS Intervention: Examining Effects on Social Skills and Social Anxiety in Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Kirsten A. Schohl · Amy V. Van Hecke ·
Audrey Meyer Carson · Bridget Dolan ·
Jeffrey Karst · Sheryl Stevens

J Autism Dev Disord
DOI 10.1007/s10803-013-1883-y

ORIGINAL PAPER

Measuring the Plasticity of Social Approach: A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Effects of the PEERS Intervention on EEG Asymmetry in Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Amy Vaughan Van Hecke · Sheryl Stevens · Audrey M. Carson ·
Jeffrey S. Karst · Bridget Dolan · Kirsten Schohl · Ryan J. McKindles ·
Rheanna Remmel · Scott Brockman

Short Report



Predicting treatment success in social skills training for adolescents with autism spectrum disorders: The UCLA Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills

Ya-Chih Chang¹, Elizabeth A Laugeson¹, Alexander Gantman¹,
Ruth Ellingsen¹, Fred Frankel¹ and Ashley R Dillon²

Autism
0101 1–4
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DOI: 10.1177/1362361313478995
aut.sagepub.com
SAGE

RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Korean Version of the PEERS[®] Parent-Assisted Social Skills Training Program for Teens With ASD

Hee-Jeong Yoo, Geonho Bahn, In-Hee Cho, Eun-Kyung Kim, Joo-Hyun Kim, Jung-Won Min,
Won-Hye Lee, Jun-Seong Seo, Sang-Shin Jun, Guiyoung Bong, Soochurl Cho, Min-Sup Shin,
Bung-Nyun Kim, Jae-Won Kim, Subin Park, and Elizabeth A. Laugeson

PEERS[®] Research: Long-term Follow-up Study

*Journal of Mental Health Research
in Intellectual Disabilities*, 7:45–73, 2014
Copyright © Taylor & Francis Group, LLC
ISSN: 1931-5864 print/1931-5872 online
DOI: 10.1080/19315864.2012.730600



Long-Term Treatment Outcomes for Parent-Assisted Social Skills Training for Adolescents With Autism Spectrum Disorders: The UCLA PEERS Program

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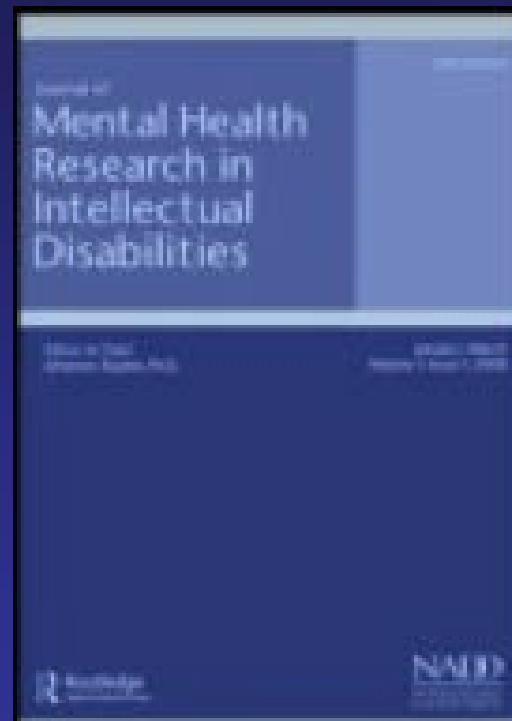
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*Psychiatry
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Long-term Follow-up Study

(Mandelberg, Laugeson, Cunningham, Ellingsen, Bates, & Frankel, 2013)

- Data was collected 1-5 years post-treatment
- 53 of 82 potential subjects
 - 64% response rate
- No significant differences between participants and non-participants at baseline
- Mean age at follow-up:
 - 17.5 years old
 - 11.4 grade level
- Mean time to follow-up:
 - 29 months

Test 1 →

**PEERS Treatment
(N=82)**

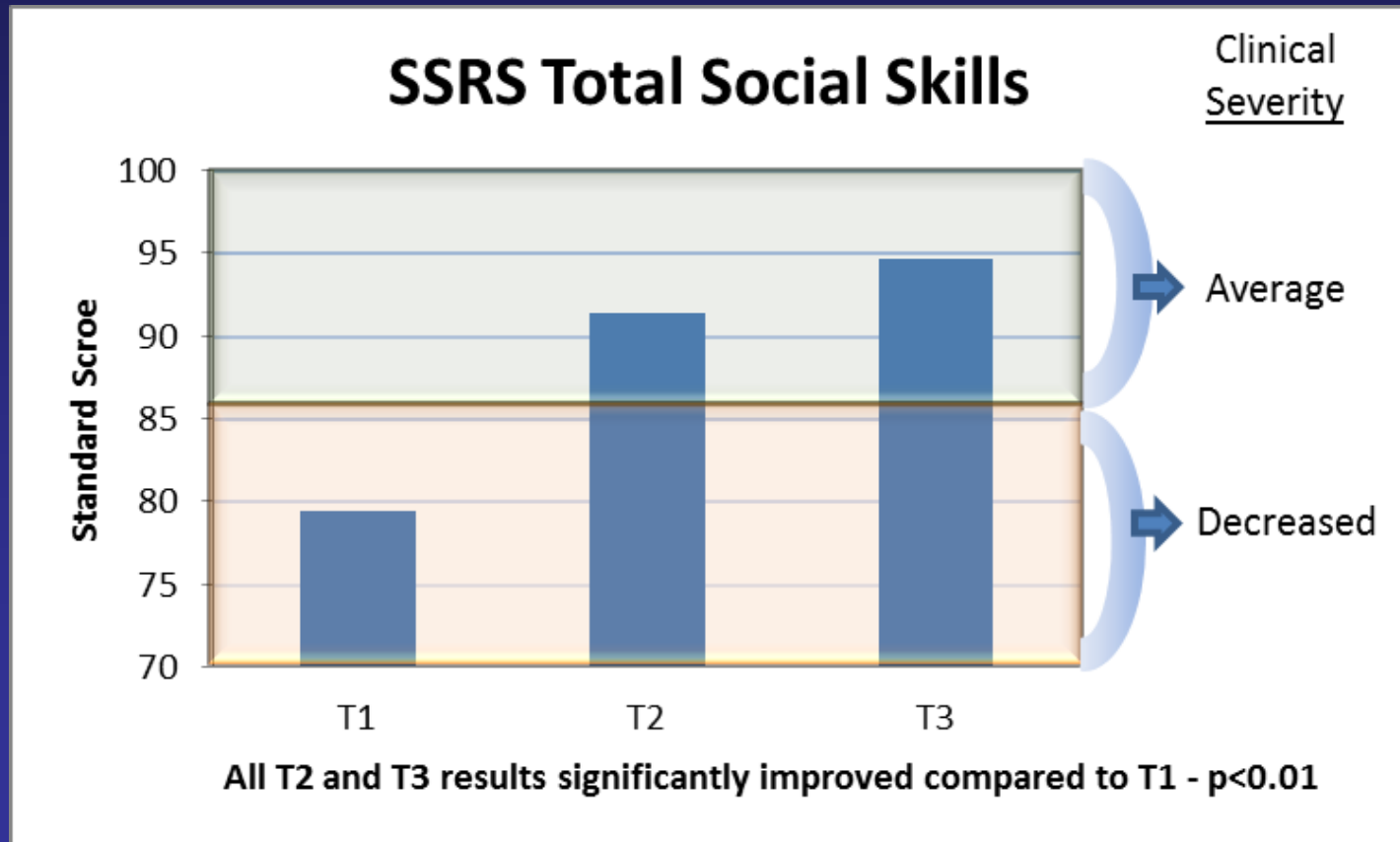
Test 2 →

**1 - 5 Year Follow-up
(N=53)**

Test 3 →

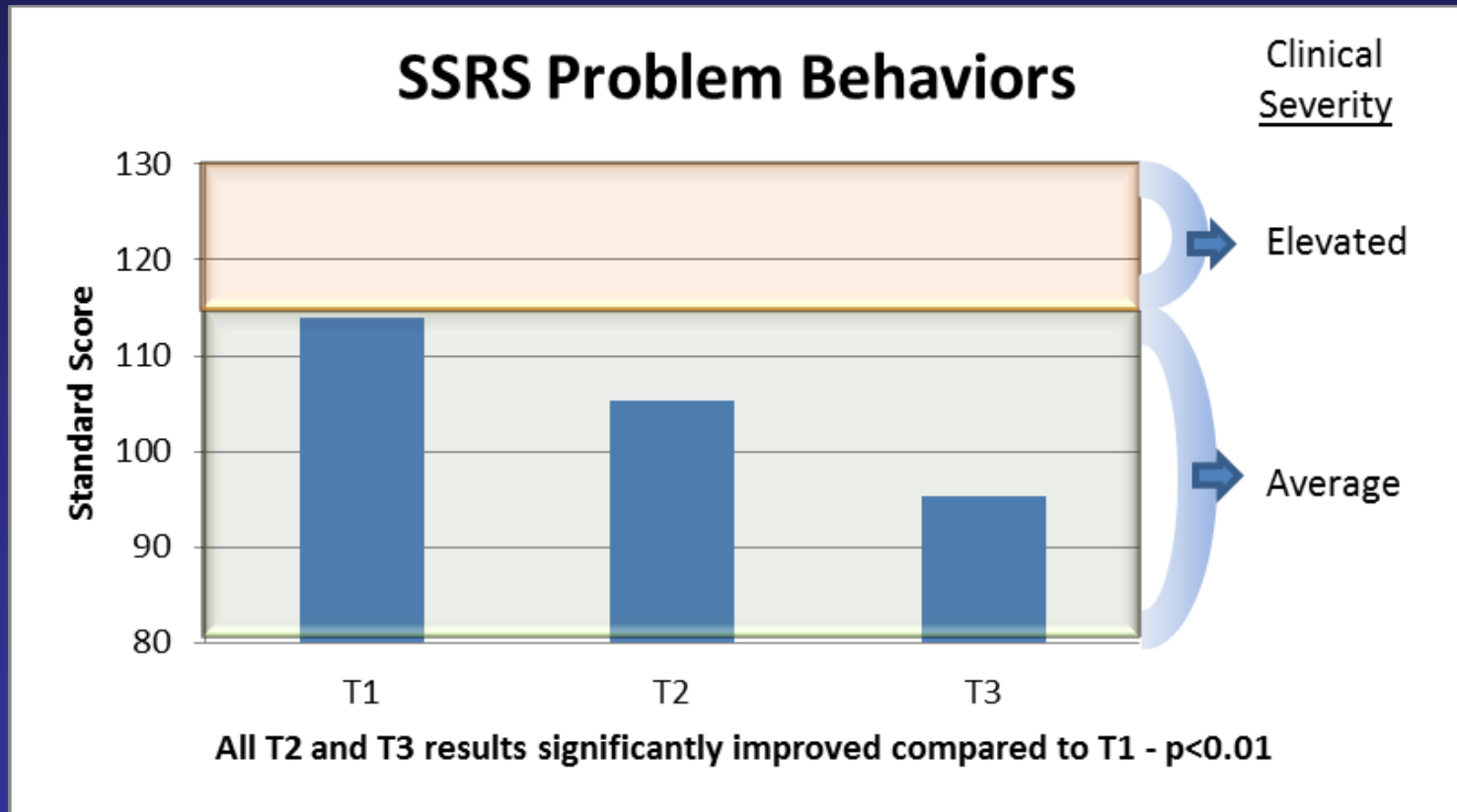
Long-term Follow-up Study

(Mandelberg, Laugeson, Cunningham, Ellingsen, Bates, & Frankel, 2013)



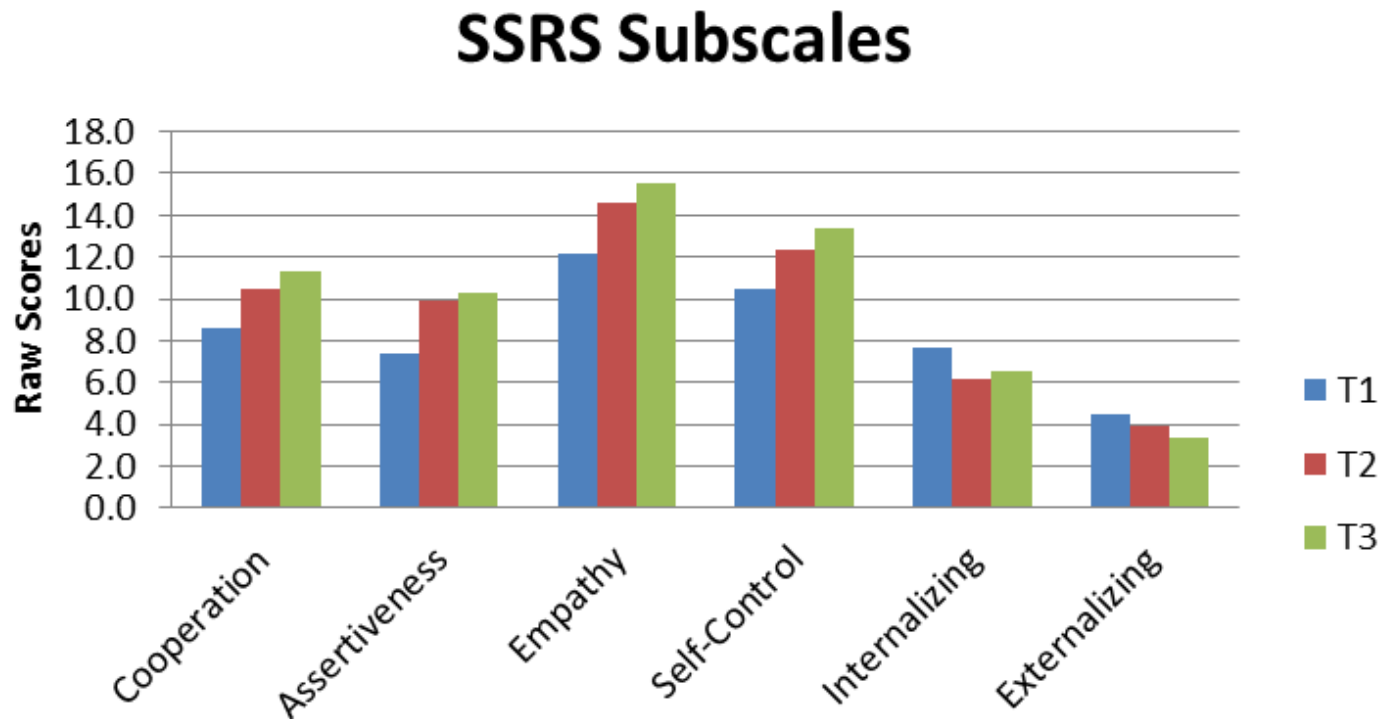
Long-term Follow-up Study

(Mandelberg, Laugeson, Cunningham, Ellingsen, Bates, & Frankel, 2013)



Long-term Follow-up Study

(Mandelberg, Laugeson, Cunningham, Ellingsen, Bates, & Frankel, 2013)

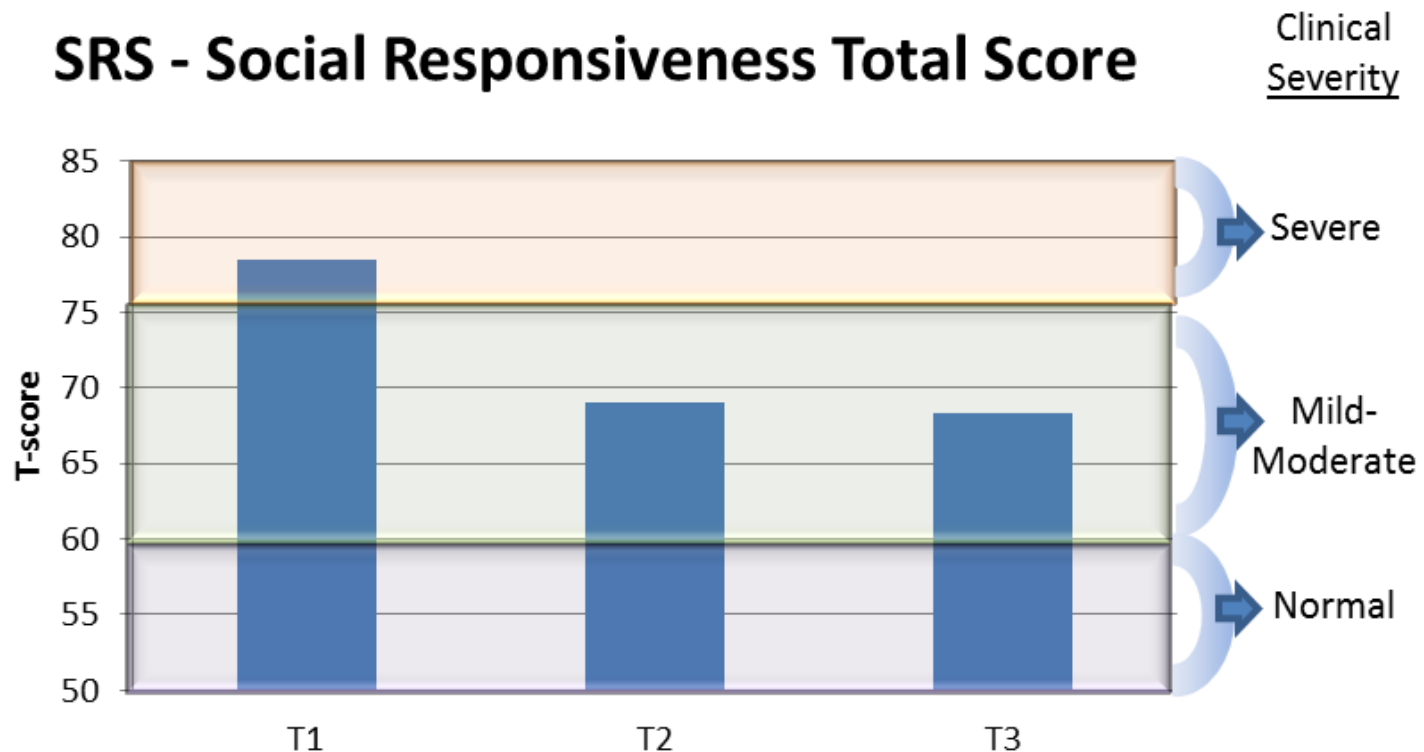


All T3 results significantly improved compared to T1 - $p < 0.01$

Long-term Follow-up Study

(Mandelberg, Laugeson, Cunningham, Ellingsen, Bates, & Frankel, 2013)

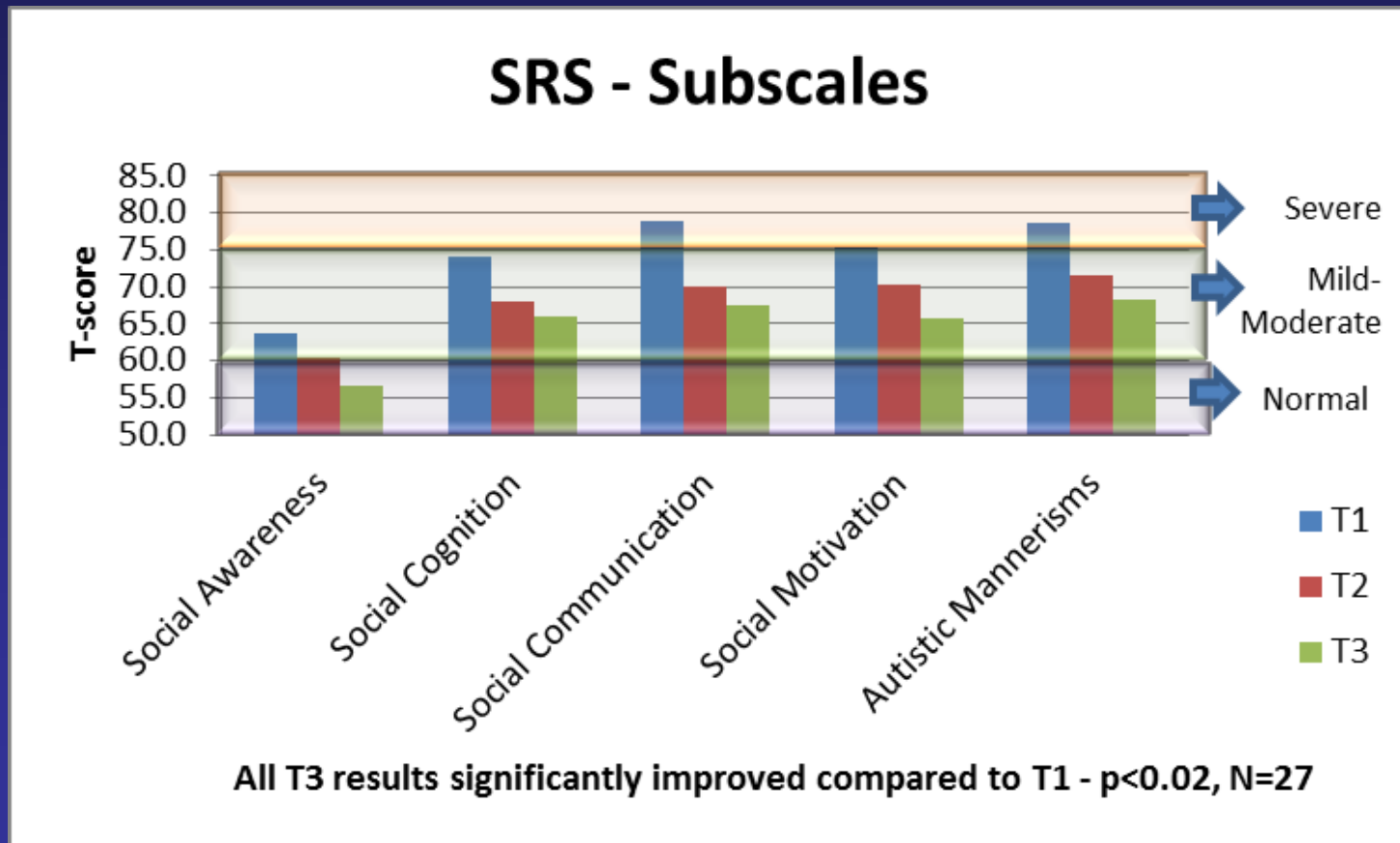
SRS - Social Responsiveness Total Score



All T2 and T3 results significantly improved compared to T1 - $p < 0.01$, $N = 27$

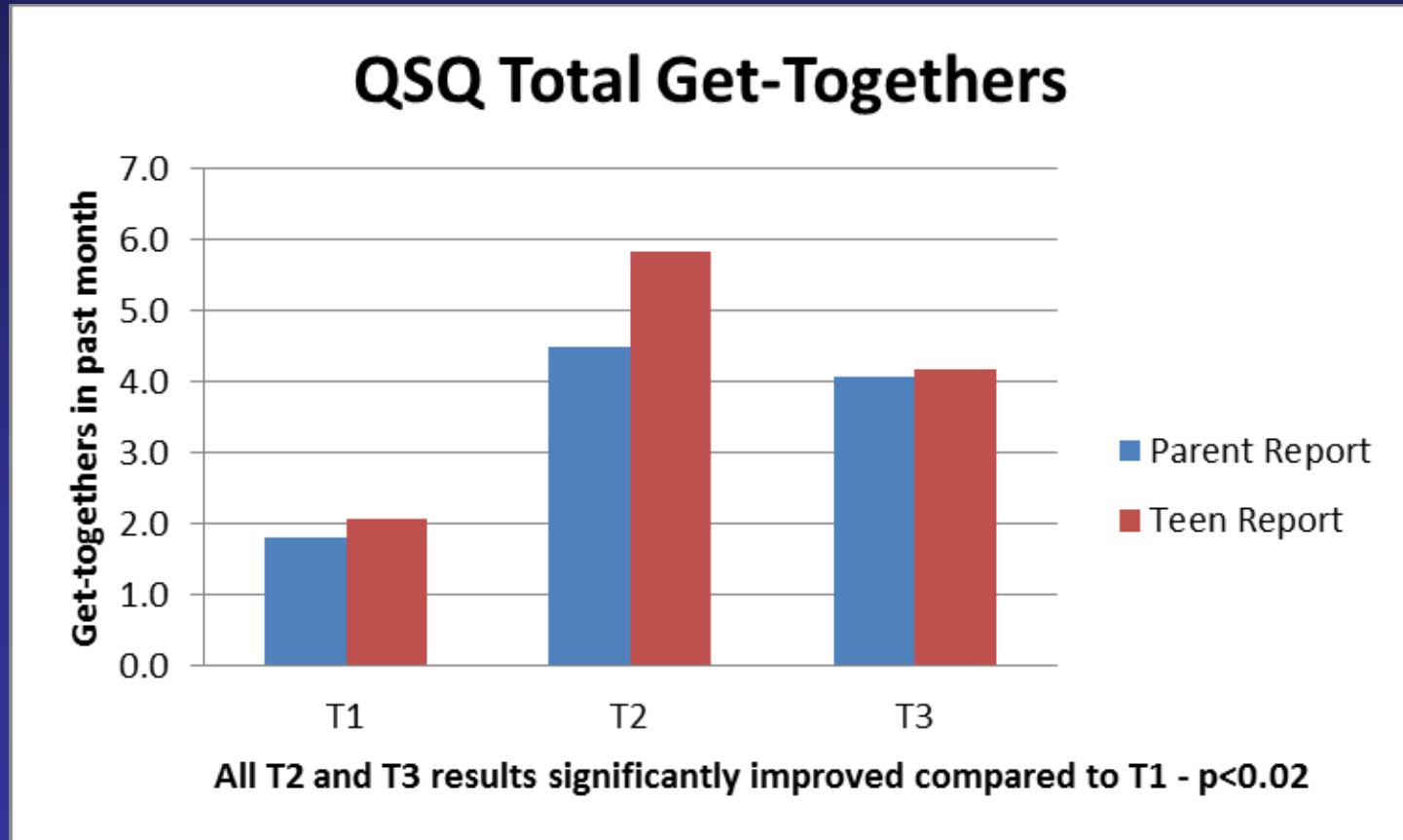
Long-term Follow-up Study

(Mandelberg, Laugeson, Cunningham, Ellingsen, Bates, & Frankel, 2013)



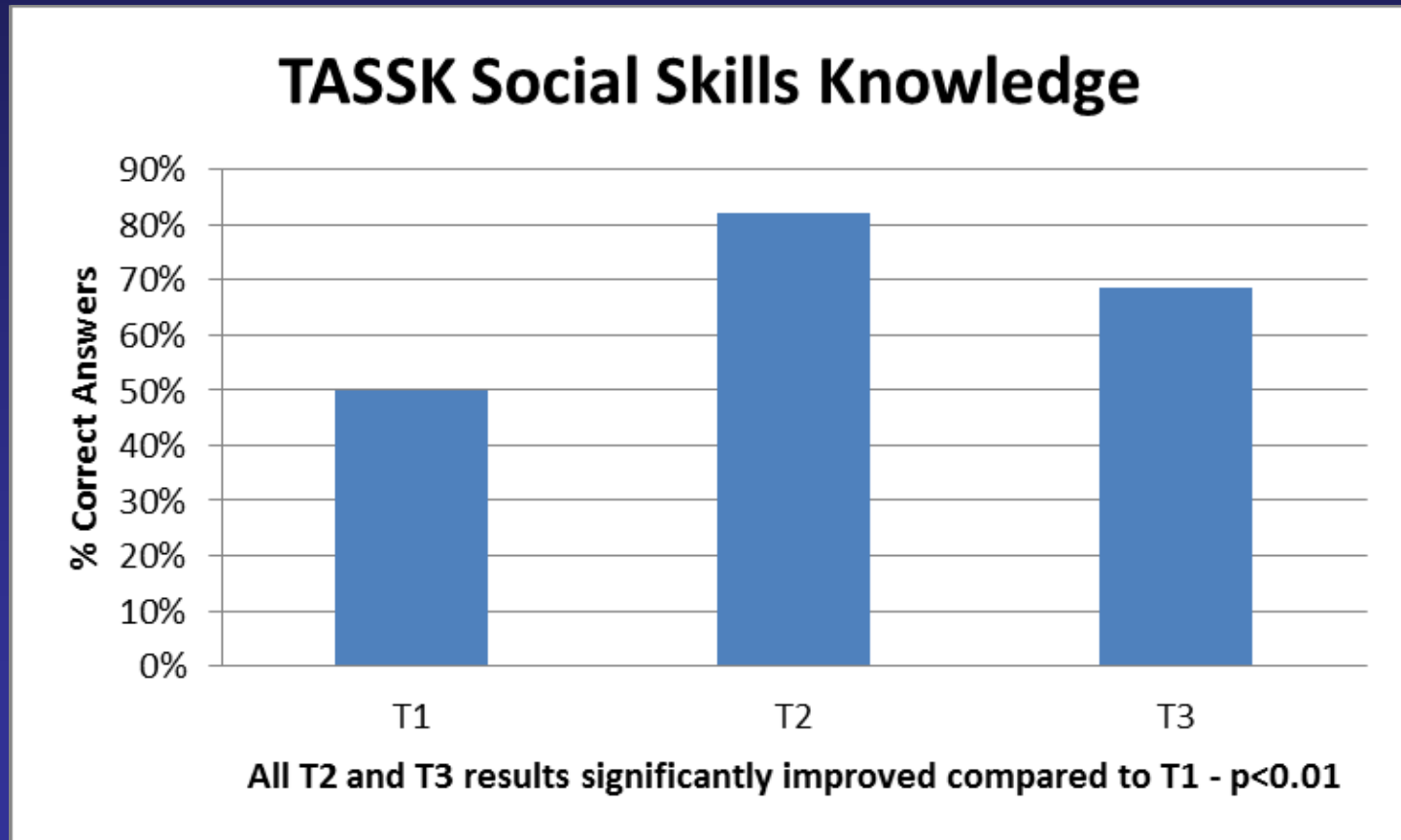
Long-term Follow-up Study

(Mandelberg, Laugeson, Cunningham, Ellingsen, Bates, & Frankel, 2013)



Long-term Follow-up Study

(Mandelberg, Laugeson, Cunningham, Ellingsen, Bates, & Frankel, 2013)



UCLA PEERS[®] Clinic

- **Preschool Groups**
 - Tuesdays 3:30 – 5:00 PM
 - Children 4-6 years of age
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder
- **Adolescent Groups**
 - Middle and high school
 - Wednesdays 4:30 – 6:00 PM
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - Wednesdays 6:30 – 8:00 PM
 - ADHD, depression, anxiety, etc.
- **Young Adult Groups**
 - Mondays 6:00 – 7:30 PM
 - 18-30 years of age
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder

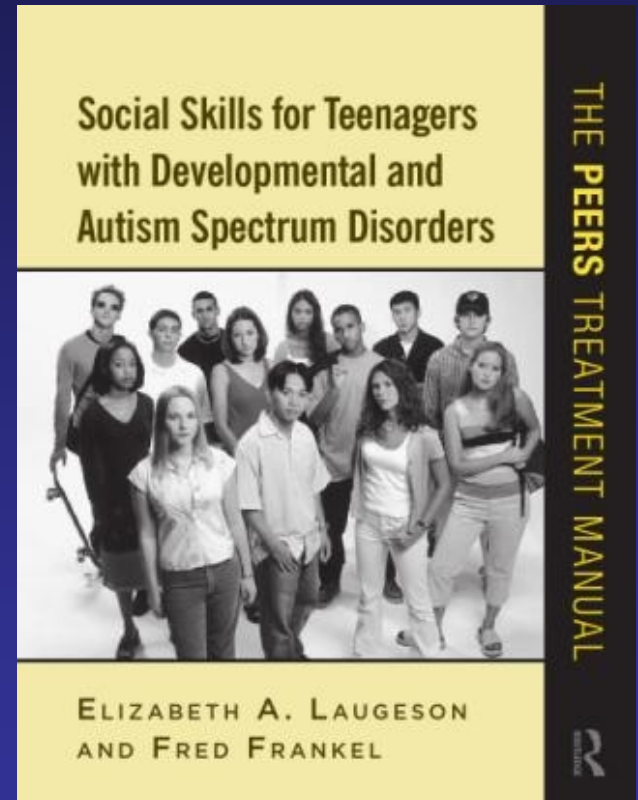


UCLA PEERS[®] Clinic
(310) 26-PEERS

peersclinic@ucla.edu
www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/

PEERS[®] Manual and Training

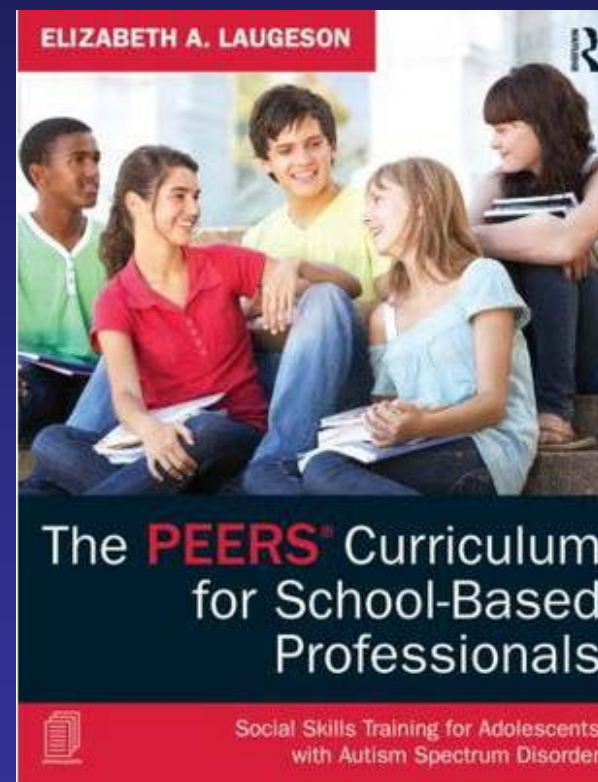
- Published manual
- PEERS[®] Certified Training
 - 3-4 day training (20 hours total)
 - UCLA
 - MARCH 25 – 27, 2015
- UCLA PEERS[®] Training Research Scholarships
 - Graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and research faculty
 - 2-3 scholarships awarded each training
 - Submission: CV and 2 page LOI
 - Held at the UCLA Semel Institute
 - (310) 26-PEERS
 - peersclinic@ucla.edu



(Laugeson & Frankel, 2014)

PEERS® School-Based Manual

- Evidence-based treatment for ASD
 - Middle school
 - High school
- 16-week curriculum
- 30-50 minute daily lesson plans
- Teacher-facilitated in the classroom
- Focuses on friendship skills
- Strategies for handling peer rejection/conflict
- Includes weekly comprehensive parent handouts

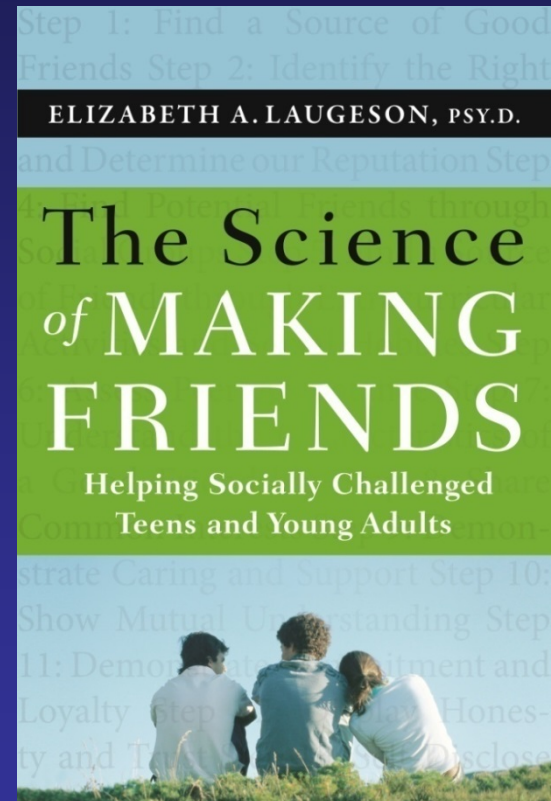


(Laugeson, 2014)

The Science of Making Friends:

Helping Socially Challenged Teens and Young Adults

- Parent book
- Friendship skills
- Handling peer rejection and conflict
- Parent section
 - Narrative lessons
 - Social coaching tips
- Teen and young adult chapter summaries
- Chapter exercises
- Companion DVD
- Mobile App: *FriendMaker*



(Laugeson, 2013)



Find us on
Facebook

PEERS[®] Clinic

www.semel.ucla.edu/peers

For more information:

www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/

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www.facebook.com/uclapeers