Introducing Superheroes Social Skills Program

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Pacific Northwest Publishing
• THIS IS A PROGRAM ABOUT CHILDREN

• and THE RESEARCH THAT SUPPORTS THE PROGRAM
The Purpose of the Research

• Evaluate the effectiveness and generalization of the Superheroes Social Skills Program

  – Pingree Center for Children with Autism-Preschoolers
  – University of Utah Neuropsychiatric Institute (UNI)-Outpatient
  – Public Education Setting-Davis County School District-Elementary
  – Train Parents of ASD Children to Run the Program with SKYPE Support
  – Two Studies In Public School with Externalizers (ADHD, CD, ODD)
  – In Public School with ASD Students Who Are Bullied
Social Skills Training with Children with High Functioning Autism

Globe
Kids In Program

• The Globe
lying the desired developmental gain rather than the resultant behavior. Consideration of the aforementioned issues should lead one to the conclusion that standardized, norm-referenced assessment and curriculum-based assessment can both lead to intelligent testing of infants and young children if they are applied in a thoughtful manner.

REFERENCES


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The Effects of Social Skills Curricula: Now You See Them, Now You Don’t

George J. DuPaul and Tanya L. Eckert
Lehigh University

Reviewed seven empirical studies that evaluated the maintenance and generalization of the effects of commercially available, social skills training programs. Explicit attempts to foster generalization met with at least mixed success in six out of seven studies. The combination of social skills training and alteration of consequences in the natural environment led to the most significant maintenance effects. Mixed generalization results were obtained when training was supplemented by incorporating common physical and social stimuli as well as by the use of self-mediated stimuli. Possible factors accounting for equivocal generalization effects across training curricula include a relative emphasis on skills vs. performance deficits, inconsistent consideration of setting variables, and the degree to which environmental programming is incorporated. The necessity of employing social skills curricula in contrived settings beyond programming in the natural environment is unclear based on the extant literature.

CASE OVERVIEW

Each year the same concerns arise regarding a small group of students who have poor interpersonal skills and who have difficulty getting along with their peers. Although these students receive services in general education classrooms, questions continue to arise whether they would benefit from receiving special education services due to their behavioral problems. Frequently referred to as "trouble-makers" by their teachers and "losers" by their peers, they exhibit similar behavioral characteristics. For example, these students have difficulty establishing and maintaining friendships, are poorly accepted by their peers, and exhibit inappropriate behavior in social situations (e.g., swearing, aggressiveness). In response to these concerns, the guidance counselor has worked with each student in an effort to increase his or her social competence. However, no lasting effects have been reported and very little carryover has been observed by classroom teachers.

Realizing that a more concerted effort is needed, the school psychologist is asked to assist in developing strategies to solve these students' problems. As the school psychologist assesses the situation, it becomes apparent that these students are

The authors express their thanks to Scott McConnell and Hill Walker for providing materials relevant to this review. Correspondence regarding this article should be sent to George J. DuPaul, School Psychology Program, Lehigh University, 111 Research Drive, Bethlehem, PA 18015.
The Major Problem with Social Skills Is:

• THE PROBLEM IS GENERALIZATION

• Transfer of newly learned behaviors and skills into settings in which the intervention procedures have not been implemented
Ways to Overcome Generalization Problems

• Over learn the skill
• Teach the skill in natural environments
• Reinforce the skill in natural environments
• Teach many examples
• Vary the program across people and situations

• A NEW WAY TO GENERALIZE SKILLS
In the late 1960s, a television producer named Joan Ganz Cooney set out to start an epidemic. Her target was three-, four-, and five-year-olds. Her agent of infection was television, and the "virus" she wanted to spread was literacy. The show would last an hour and run five days a week, and the hope was that if that hour was contagious enough it could serve as an educational Tipping Point: giving children from disadvantaged homes a leg up once they began elementary school, spreading prolearning values from watchers to nonwatchers, infecting children and their parents, and lingering long enough to have an impact well after the children stopped watching the show. Cooney probably wouldn't have used these concepts or described her goals in precisely this way. But what she wanted to do, in essence, was create a learning epidemic to counter the prevailing epidemics of poverty and illiteracy. She called her idea Sesame Street.
MADE TO STICK

Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die

Chip Heath & Dan Heath
• Superheroes
• Superhero Voices
• Pokemon Cards
• Comic Books
• Fast Hands Animation (Videos and Video Games)
A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Social Skills Interventions for Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders

Scott Bellini, Jessica K. Peters, Lauren Benner, and Andrea Hopp

Abstract

Social skills deficits are a central feature of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The majority of existing single-subject design studies examined the effectiveness of school-based social skills interventions for children and adolescents with ASD. However, these studies are confounded by the variability in the nature and types of interventions, therefore making it difficult to compare the outcomes of different interventions. The current study systematically reviewed and meta-analyzed the results of 32 studies that examined the effects of school-based social skills interventions on the social functioning of children and adolescents with ASD. The results indicate that social skills interventions are effective in improving the social functioning of children and adolescents with ASD, with a moderate to large effect size. However, the effect size was significantly smaller when interventions were conducted in isolation, suggesting that social skills interventions should be integrated within the context of other educational and behavioral programs for optimal outcomes.

Social Skills Programs are Ineffective When They Are Taught In Isolation From non-ASD Peers

The importance of using non-ASD peers as models for teaching social skills to children with ASD is emphasized. However, the effectiveness of these programs is not well established, and the results are inconclusive. Therefore, this study reviewed and meta-analyzed 15 studies that examined the effectiveness of social skills programs that used non-ASD peers as models. The results indicate that the use of non-ASD peers as models is associated with a smaller effect size compared to programs that used ASD peers or self-modeling strategies.

Effects and Implications of Self-Management for Students With Autism: A Meta-Analysis

Suk-Hyang Lee, Richard L. Simpson, and Karrie A. Shogren

Self-management strategies have been found to be effective in improving the social and academic performance of students with autism. However, the effectiveness of these strategies has not been well established, and the results are inconclusive. Therefore, this study reviewed and meta-analyzed 19 studies that examined the effects of self-management strategies on the social and academic performance of students with autism. The results indicate that self-management strategies are associated with a moderate to large effect size, with self-monitoring and self-recording strategies being the most effective.

Self-Management Helps in Teaching Social Skills Especially Self-Recording

Children and youth diagnosed with autism-related disorders are at risk for developing social skills deficits. However, the effectiveness of self-management strategies in improving social skills has not been well established, and the results are inconclusive. Therefore, this study reviewed and meta-analyzed 14 studies that examined the effects of self-management strategies on social skills development. The results indicate that self-management strategies, especially self-recording strategies, are associated with a moderate to large effect size for improving social skills in children and youth with autism.

Modeling is Effective in Teaching Social Skills Both Peer Models and Self-as-a-Model

In recent years, modeling-based interventions have been widely used to improve social skills in children with ASD. However, the effectiveness of these interventions has not been well established, and the results are inconclusive. Therefore, this study reviewed and meta-analyzed 20 studies that examined the effects of modeling-based interventions on social skills development. The results indicate that modeling-based interventions are effective, with peer modeling being more effective than self-modeling.

Interventions Targeting Reciprocal Social Interaction in Children and Young Adults With Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Meta-Analysis

by

Lindsey A. Miller

Peers Teach Social Skills Better Than Adults

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Educational Psychology
The University of Utah
May 2006
No Adult Talking Heads Talking About Social Skills
So What’s In the Program?
Components shown:

- Facilitator’s Guide
- DVDs
- Role-Play Booklet
- Comic
- Social Game Card
- Scooter and Black Hole Card
- Reward Poster
- Group Rules Poster
- Power Poster
- Power Card

Consumable materials may be reordered or printed from the Reproducibles CD.
What is Superhero Social Skills?

• Designed for children with ASD (or other disabilities) between 5-10 years old

• Incorporates evidenced-based practices and research proven techniques to foster acquisition of distinct social skills

• Consists of 18 lessons taught bi-weekly

• Lasts 30 to 45 minutes

• Uses an enticing multi-media format and high interest material integral component

• Integrates generalization strategies (STICKY)
An evidence-based program that enhances the social competence of elementary students with:
• autism spectrum disorders (ASD)
• behavioral disorders
• developmental delays

William Jenson, Ph.D. • Julie Bowen, Ph.D. • Elaine Clark, Ph.D. • Heidi Block, Ph.D.
Terisa Gabrielsen, M.S. • Julia Hood, M.S. • Keith Radley, B.S. • Benjamin Springer, M.S.
The Skills

Foundation Skills

- Understanding the Group
- Get Ready
- Following Directions
- Anxiety Reduction (Be Cool)
- Participating

Intermediate

- Turn Taking & Playing Cooperatively
- Responding to Questions & Requests
- Conversation Skills (Staying On Topic)

Advanced

- Recognizing Emotions
- Perspective Taking (Understanding Others’ Feeling)
- Appropriate Reporting
- Recognizing & Reporting Bullying
- Responding to Bullying
- Problem Solving/Safety
Program Format
(Lesson are taught twice per week)

• **Check in** (review of the previous week/session)
• **Review** posted schedule and posted group rules
• **Introduce** the social skill by watching the **Superheroes** define skills and demonstrate steps to each skill via DVD
• Watch **Peers** perform the skill on DVD
• **Role-play** the skill with a peer
• Watch the Superhero **Social Narrative Comic Book** on DVD
• Engage in a **Social Game** based on the targeted skill
• **Free time/snack**
• **Mark** Superhero Power Poster with Power Charges earned
• Group **reward-Superhero of the Day**
• Explain and give **Homework** to be done with **Parents**
CHECK-IN 2–3 min.
- Review the Unit 2 Group Poster, Get Ready.
- Have students report on a time they used the skill.
  (Have students who did not use the skill practice.)
- Have students transfer Unit 2 Power Charges from Homework and Classroom Practice sheets to Student Power Posters, and/or use the Superheroes Roster. Assist as needed.
- Collect students’ Unit 2 Comics.

REVIEW DAILY SCHEDULE AND GROUP RULES 2–4 min.
- Post and review the Daily Schedule.
- Review the Group Rules and how to earn Scooter and Black Hole Cards.

INTRODUCE NEW SKILL 1 min.
- Tell students the new skill is Following Directions.
- Explain the rationale.
- Say: Today we’ll be learning a new skill—Following Directions. If you follow someone’s directions quickly, you will make that person happy and you will learn new things faster.
- Show the Unit 3 Group Power Poster and give each student a Unit 3 Power Card.

WATCH DVD 6–10 min.
- Watch the Unit 3 Fast-Hands Animation and Peer Modeling Scenarios (4 scenarios).

ROLE-PLAY 6–10 min.
- Model and discuss. Students watch as you role-play using positive and negative examples. Exaggerate your non-examples and have fun!
  
  Helper’s Role, Classroom Teacher: Give directions.
  Facilitator’s Role, Student: Model the skill steps.
  Helper says: Stand up and line up for recess.
  Facilitator’s Positive Example: Look at the helper, remain seated, and stamp your feet.
  Facilitator’s Negative Example: Don’t look at the helper, remain seated, and stamp your feet.
  Ask students: Did I follow the steps in Following Directions? What did I do right/wrong?
- Model and discuss when not to follow directions. Role-play to help students avoid using the skill in inappropriate situations.
  Helper’s Role, Bully: Give inappropriate directions.
  Facilitator’s Role, Student: Model steps for not following directions.
  Helper says: Give me your lunch money!

WO:
- Watch the Unit 3 Digital Comic.
- Discuss the skill steps for the homework.

SOCIAL GAME 4–5 min.
- Scooter Says (Simon Says)
  Have students take turns being Simon or Scooter. (See Unit 3 Social Game Card for instructions.)

FREE TIME/SNACK BREAK (optional) 3–5 min.
- Have students play simple group games. Explain the games and supervise.

RECORD POWER CHARGES 2 min.
- Have students transfer Power Charges earned during the group lesson from their Power Cards to their Student Power Posters, and/or use the Superheroes Roster.

EXPLAIN HOMEWORK 1–3 min.
- Post the Superheroes Rewards Poster. Then draw a card from the container until a Scooter Card is drawn.
  Black Hole Card: Have the whole group review the Group Rules.
  Scooter Card: The student becomes Superhero of the Day.
  The Superhero of the Day spin the spinner. Award the group reinforcer.

GROUP REINFORCEMENT AND GOOD-BYES 3–5 min.
- Post the Superheroes Rewards Poster. Then draw a card from the container until a Scooter Card is drawn.
- Black Hole Card: Have the whole group review the Group Rules.
- Scooter Card: The student becomes Superhero of the Day.
- Have the Superhero of the Day spin the spinner. Award the group reinforcer.
Program Format
(Lesson are taught twice per week)

- **Introduction and Check in** (review of the previous week/session)
- **Review** posted schedule and posted group rules
- **Introduce** the social skill by watching the **Superheroes** define skills and demonstrate steps to each skill via DVD
- Watch **Peers** perform the skill on DVD
- **Role-play** the skill with a peer
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- Group **reward-Superhero of the Day**
- Explain and give **Homework** to be done with **Parents**
Introduction Superheroes
Kids First Watching the Introduction
By Superheroes
Introduction Peer
Power Charge Card and Power Poster
for Demonstrating a Social Skill
Then Self-Recording It

UNIT 3

SKILL STEPS:
1. Look at the person.
2. Listen to their words.
3. Nod your head or say, “okay.”
4. Do what the person asks right away.
Get Power Charged!
Group Rules and Reward System
Behavior Management System

Superhero Social Skills

Group Rules:
1. Get Ready!
2. Follow Directions!
3. Be Cool!
4. Participate!
Black Hole Card Introduction
• Let’s See a Superhero Teach a Social Skill
“Get Ready”

- Facilitator Says “Get Ready”
- Student Feet on the Floor
- Hands on Your Knees
- Make Eye Contact
- Count to Three
Get Ready
Peer Modeling Get Ready
Heidi’s Group Doing “Get Ready”

• Julia’s Kids Doing Get Ready
Program Format
(Lesson are taught twice per week)

• **Check in** (review of the previous week/session)
• **Review** posted schedule and posted group rules
• **Introduce** the social skill by watching the *Superheroes* define skills and demonstrate steps to each skill via DVD
• Watch **Peers** perform the skill on DVD
• **Role-play** the skill with a peer
• Watch the Superhero **Social Narrative Comic Book** on DVD
Join Scooter and friends in:
Relax, Be cool, and Blast off!

Meanwhile, at Super Social Skills School...:

Today is the first day of Jet-Pack class!

Sometimes teachers give us homework we like to do...

If you ever get nervous like my friend Scooter, relax and imagine some quiet places to help you feel better.

Other times, they might ask us to do something new that makes us want...

1. Stop and count to ten.
2. Tell yourself, "I can be cool."
3. Take deep, deep breaths.
4. Imagine a way to be cool.

Can you help start the new game with the other kids who can do this cool?

Oh-oh! Did another student just get scared? Help Scooter remember the steps to help her relax!

Great job, students!
Digital Comic Social Story- “Get Ready”
Kids Watching the Digital Comic
Program Format
(Lesson are taught twice per week)

- **Check in** (review of the previous week/session)
- **Review** posted schedule and posted group rules
- **Introduce** the social skill by watching the **Superheroes** define skills and demonstrate steps to each skill via DVD
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- **Role-play** the skill with a peer
- Watch the Superhero **Social Narrative Comic Book** on DVD
- Engage in a **Social Game** based on the targeted skill
- **Free time/snack**
- **Mark** Superhero Power Poster with Power Charges earned
- **Group reward-Superhero of the Day**
Superhero of the Day

- As **Scooter Cards** are earned for following the **Group Rules**, the child’s name is written on each one after the card is earned.
- The cards are put into a **Bag**.
- At the end of the day one card is **Randomly** picked out of the bag.
- The **Child’s Name** on the picked out card is the **Superhero of the Day**.
- That child get to spin the **Reward Spinner** for a reward for the **Whole Group**.
Keith’s Kids Superhero of the Day and the Spinner

- Bad Spinner
- He’s Not Following the Rules
What Parents Can Do-Generalization

- The Power Charge Card Goes Home
- The Comic Goes Home
- The Parent Reads the Digital Comic Book with Their Child
- The Parent Provides Opportunities for the Child to Practice the Skill
- The Parent Marks the Power Charge Card
- The Card is Returned to Be Reviewed in the Group
- Power Charges from Home are Self-Recorded
- Following Directions!
Bullying Lesson Example
Boy Being Bullied Baseline
The Superhero Social Skills Program for Children with ASD: Examining its Effectiveness and Generalization in School and Clinical Settings

HEIDI BLOCK, JULIA HOOD, KEITH RADLEY, BEN SPRINGER, BRANDON SEGURA, BILL JENSON, JULIE BOWEN, & ELAINE CLARK
Observational Measures

• Analog Play Setting Right After the Group

• Recess at the Elementary School Site
Mean Effect Sizes for Total Social Engagement for Free Play Period

Mean Effect Sizes for Total Social Engagement by Group

UNI

Pingree

Davis

Total Social Engagement
Generalization Effects for Recess: Davis Group

Effect Sizes for Baseline Recess to Treatment Recess
Davis School District Recess

Percentage of Social Engagement for Participant 1 During Recess

Date

% of Intervals

Davis School District Recess

Percentage of Social Engagement for Participant 4 During Recess

% of Intervals

Date

Boy After Learning Bullying Strategies

• Report to an Adult
But What Really Matters is That it is Used with Children

Dear Superheroes,

I was sitting in a parent training meeting in an autism early intervention school in Philadelphia tonight. As I settled in and looked around, I saw some familiar things on the walls (photos attached). Afterwards, I talked to one of the teachers. It is used in 2 inclusion classrooms for 3-6 year olds. They divided the group (5 kids each) into those who could attend (Get Ready) and those who were not yet able to "Get Ready." Language levels, etc. are similar (higher functioning), the only difference is the attention/compliance with classroom expectations. The attention difficulty group doesn't really "get" the program (which is what I found in my elem. school last year). The classroom-ready group (including 2 typical peers) LOVES it. The teacher I talked to says she likes having an actual program instead of just making stuff up every week.

They are using everything. They have added a few things. You will see the cups in one of the photos. In addition to power charges on the poster, they get gold coins for power charges in their cups. (a la poker-chips-in-cups reinforcement--this is what they are used to already at the school) One of the little boys in the group came in and showed me all his power charges. (While we were busy talking, he dumped all the power charges out of all the cups, so it is a good thing they are recorded in the posters!) In the individual posters photo you will see they are even doing the "notebook" of finished posters. The little boy's mom says he likes to read the comic book every night before bed and in the morning before school. They redecorated the classroom with the spaceship on the wall and changed their frog behavior chart to a solar system behavior chart with lightning bolts. This is another thing they already do and understand at the school, so they just adapted it to be super cool. They do Social Skills Tuesdays and Thursdays, exactly as planned. I didn't see power cards around, but they may be in the classrooms. I saw a stack of black hole cards and the name tags in badge holders. The other teacher apparently knows more about it and they were going to send an email to get us in contact. I asked if they had been collecting any data . . . . Will let you know if she gets in touch with me.
Where is the Proof It’s Used
Summer Camp
Pre-treatment video clip
During treatment video clip
Post-treatment video clip
THANK YOU

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