

**Critical Review:**

**In children with Autism, does peer support lead to more positive communication outcomes?**

Rebecca Lepore

M.Cl.Sc. (SLP) Candidate

University of Western Ontario: School of Communication Sciences and Disorders

The following literature review examined seven relevant research articles whose purpose was to determine the effectiveness of involving typically developing (TD) peers in communication intervention programs for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The search yielded six studies that employed a multiple baseline design across participants



week and duration of the study were not specified. Social interactions and initiations were recorded using a partial-interval recording method, involving 15 s of observation and 15 s of recording. Momentary time sampling was used to measure academic engagement, proximity to others and class

**Katz & Giolametto (2013)** investigated if PMI promoted longer and more frequent social interactions for children with ASD, and if PMI was feasible in a daycare setting. The researchers also wanted to know whether outside observers noticed positive communication outcomes due to intervention. Across three childcare centers, three preschool children with ASD aged 5-6 (one per center), six TD peers (two per child with ASD) and three Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) were selected. All observations, including baseline measures, took place in the preschool classroom for 20 minutes and were videotaped over the course of four months. At 4-5 weeks post-intervention, two more 20-minute play sessions for each child with ASD and each trained peer were videotaped to collect data on maintenance of social skills.

The intervention involved two training sessions for the ECEs, five half hour social skills training sessions taught by the first author and the ECE to the child with ASD and the T

Overall, the reported findings of this study suggest that PMI can be an effective technique to increase interactions between students with ASD and their TD peers, as responses and initiations from both groups increased. The reported results also suggest that

and time consuming, and can come with ethical concerns, especially when the control condition receives no treatment (Bondemark & Ruf, 2015).

**Kasari, Rotheram-Fuller, Locke & Gulsrud (2012)** investigated if PMI is a more effective social skill intervention than direct intervention provided by an

In addition, when follow-up or generalization probes

hhhspectrum disorder. *Remedial and Special*  
hhhh*Education*, 38(4), 207-221. Doi:  
hhhh1177/0741932516672067