



# Autism: Promoting Success in the Classroom

Patricia Wright  
National Director, Autism Services  
Easter Seals



# Autism

HELP, HOPE AND ANSWERS FOR FAMILIES LIVING WITH AUTISM TODAY



# Introduction

- Schedule
  - Introduction
  - Social Skill Development/Peer Relationships
  - Challenging Behavior and Communication
  - Quality On-Line Resources



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# Introduction

- Presenter
  - Patricia Wright
  - Easter Seals
- Participants



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A decorative graphic in the top-left corner consists of several overlapping squares in shades of purple, blue, and red. Below these squares are two small, semi-transparent photographs: the top one shows a young child looking down, and the bottom one shows a smiling man's face.

# Introduction

- Learning Objectives
  - Identify effective strategies to promote social skill development and peer relationships for learners with autism.
  - Connect the relationship of challenging behavior to communication and develop initial strategies in how to address challenging behavior
  - List two quality resources to increase knowledge of effective instructional strategies for learners with autism



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# Strategies to Support Social Skills and Peer Relationships



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# Social Skills/Peer Relationships

- Children and youth with autism can show improved behavior and social skills when provided appropriate antecedent conditions and other planned intervention programs

- Matson, 1994 and Donnellan & Killman, 1986



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# Introduction

- Quick Write:
  - I can promote social skill development in my classroom by:



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# Social Skills/Peer Relationships

- Good social skills in early childhood predict:
  - Peer approval (Bierman & Montminy, 1993)
  - School adjustment (Eisenberg, et al., 1996)
  - Attention skills (Eisenberg, et al., 1996)
  - Coping skills (Eisenberg, et al., 1996)
  - Mental health in later life (Denham & Holt, 1993; Parker & Asher, 1987)
  - School placement, job opportunities (Rey & Putnam, 2002)
  - Overall quality of life (Howlin & Goode, 2000)



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# Social Skills/Peer Relationships

- Peer relationships/children with autism:
  - Difficulty initiating play
  - Stressful and anxiety provoking
  - Lack understanding of social hierarchy
    - Bauminger & Shulman, 2003
    - Lawsom, 2001
    - Carrington, Templeton & Papinczak, 2003)
    - Sainsbury, 2000



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# Social Skills/Peer Relationships

- Peer relationships
  - 40% of children with autism are reported to experience bullying
    - Bauminger & Kasari, 2000
    - Bauminger & Shulman, 2003
    - Rowley, et al, 2012



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# Social Skills/Peer Relationships

- Children with ASD desire social relationships and identify feelings of loneliness more than typically developing peers

– Bauminger & Kasari, 2000



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# Social Skills/Peer Relationships

- Social relationships reported as pivotal by adults with autism
  - Hurlbutt & Chalmers, 2002



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# How do you teach a child:

- To read
- To recognize numbers
- To tie their shoes
- To wash their face
- To say hello to a friend
- To share a toy
- To take turns
- To give a compliment



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# Social Skills/Peer Relationships

- Social Skills are:
  - Learned behaviors
  - Deficits that can be either due to an acquisition or performance deficit
  - Highly contextual & best taught in natural settings
  - Skills should be taught systematically



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# Social Skills/Peer Relationships

- Instruction
  - Select valid method of instruction
  - Use skilled personnel
  - Schedule frequent (daily) instructional sessions
  - Use frequent, progress monitoring

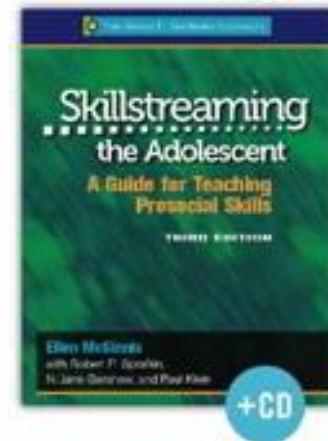
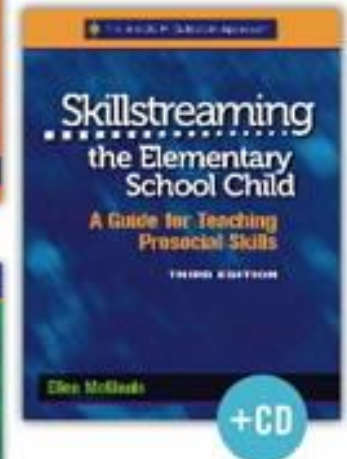
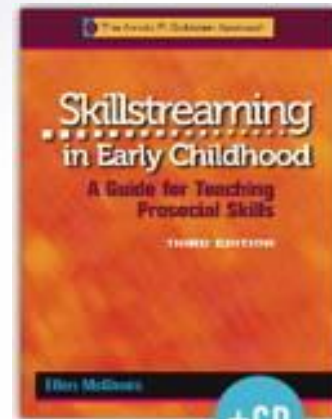


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# Strategies: Skillstreaming

- Skillstreaming:  
Systematic curriculum  
to teach pro-social  
behaviors
- Includes:
  - Initial skill assessment
  - modeling
  - role-playing
  - performance  
feedback
  - transfer of training



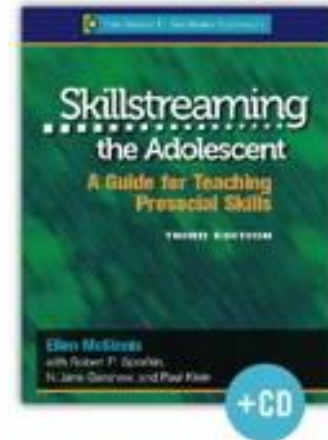
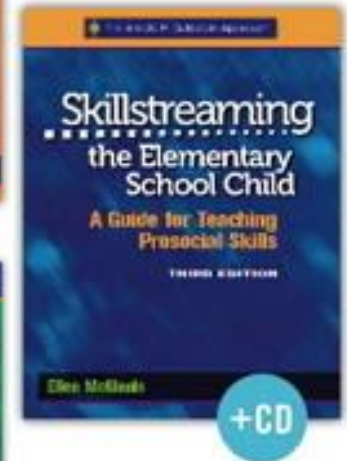
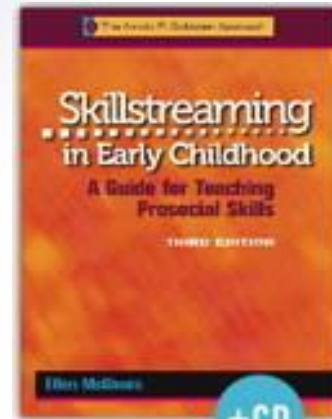
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# Strategies: Skillstreaming

- Sample Skills:
  - Listening
  - Asking a Favor
  - Joining In
  - Deciding on Something To Do
  - Saying Thank You
  - Asking for Help
  - Apologizing
  - Asking Permission



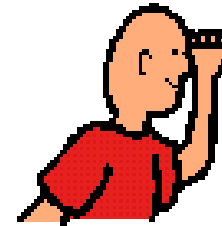
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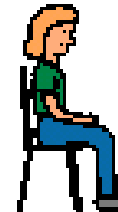
# Strategies: Skillstreaming

- Look at the person who's talking
- Remember to sit quietly
- Think about what is being said

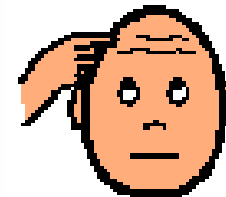
look



sit



think



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# Social Skills: Skillstreaming

- Define the skill
- Model the skill
- Establish student skill need
- Select role-player
- Set-up role play
- Conduct the role-play
- Provide performance feedback
- Assign skill homework
- Assign next role-player



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# Strategies: Skillstreaming



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# Strategies: Perseverative Interests

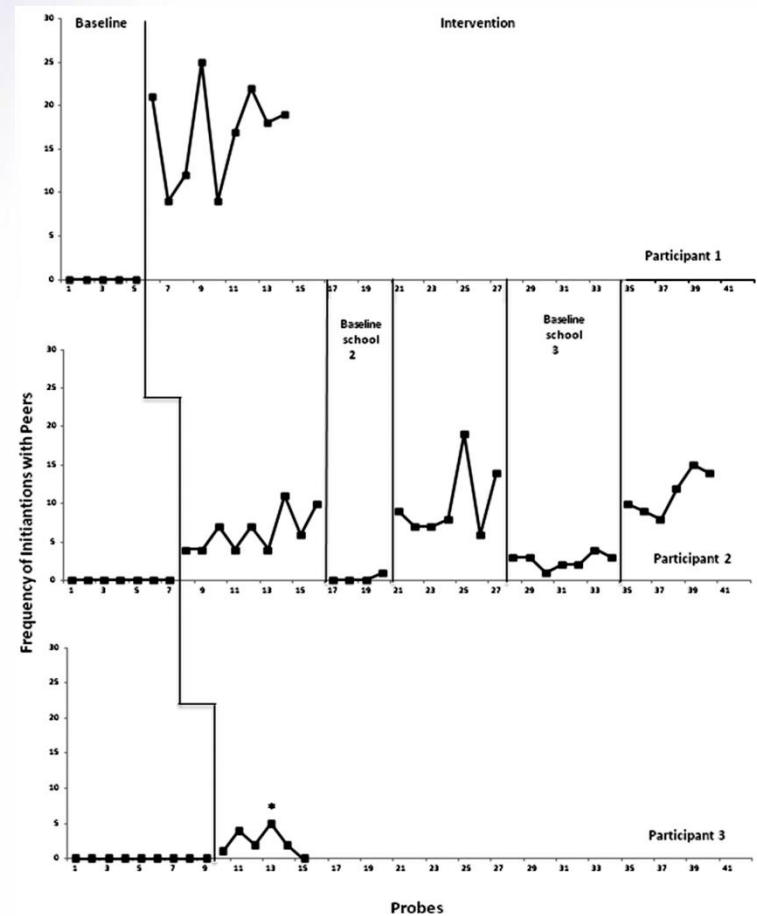
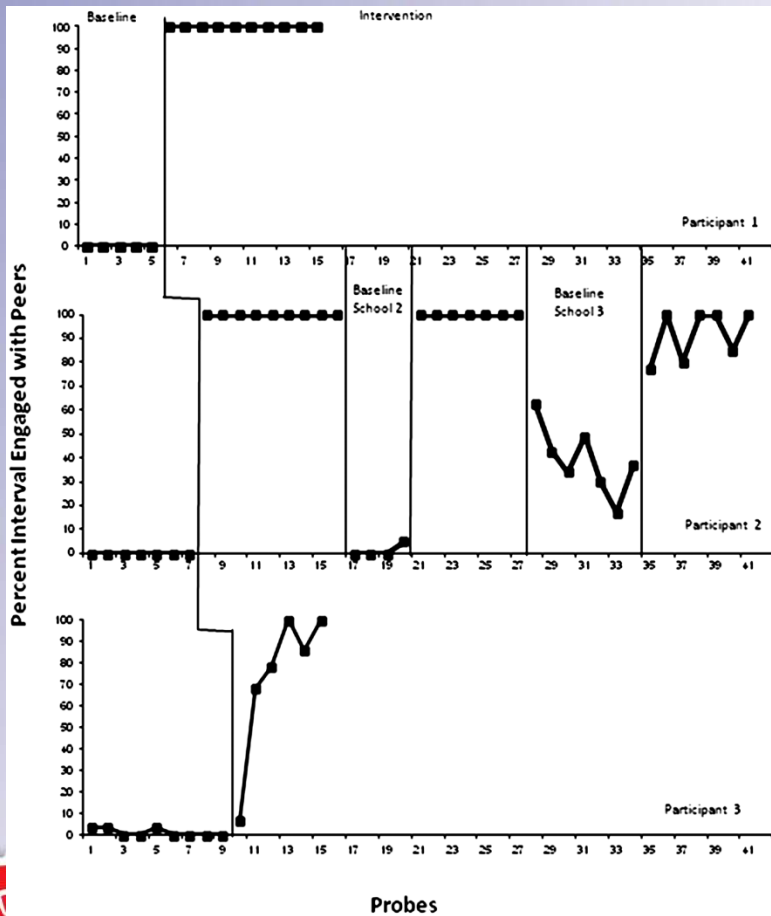
- Adolescents (11-14 y.o.)
- Lunch clubs organized around perseverative interests
  - Movie trivia
  - Comic books/cartooning
  - Card game
    - Koegel et al, 2012



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# Strategies: Perseverative Interests



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# Activity: Perseverative Interests

- Come up with a lunch club activity that addresses the following perseverative interest:
  - Cooking Shows
  - Trains
  - U.S. History



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# Strategies: Symbol-Based Communication

- Preschool aged Children
- Symbols promoted peer interaction in preschool children with autism
  - Johnston, Nelson, Evans, Palazolo, 2003



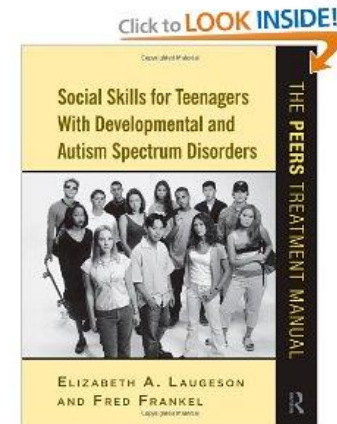
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# Strategies: UCLA Peers Program

- Teens/Young Adults
- 14 weeks – 90 minutes
- Parent engagement
  - Laugeson, Frankel, Mogil & Dillon, 2009



Variable	Group				<i>p</i>
	Treatment ( <i>n</i> = 17)	Delayed Treatment Control ( <i>n</i> = 16)			
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	<i>p</i> <
Teen measures:					
TASSK	13.3 (2.4)	19.6 (1.4)	12.6 (3.6)	13.3 (3.8)	0.001
QPQ Host	1.1 (1.4)	3.2 (2.2)	0.6 (0.9)	1.1 (1.3)	0.025
FQS	16.8 (3.4)	17.2 (4.0)	18.1(3.9)	16.6 (4.6)	0.05
Parent measures:					
SSRS social skills	80.2 (8.8)	89.7 (12.1)	77.9 (12.1)	79.8 (11.7)	0.05



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# Challenging Behavior and Communication



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# Challenging Behavior and Communication

## Functional Communication Training

Assessment of the function of the challenging behavior and the teaching of a more appropriate form that serves the same function

*(Durand, 1990)*



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# Challenging Behavior and Communication

- Four Functions of Behavior
  - Escape
  - Attention
  - Tangible
  - Automatic / Sensory



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# Challenging Behavior and Communication

- The individual is doing biting (behavior) to communicate escape (function)



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# Challenging Behavior and Communication

## Activity

- The individual is doing (*behavior*) to communicate (*function*).



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# Challenging Behavior and Communication

- There is a better way to communicate the message/function
  - It's not the message that's inappropriate it's the method
  - What is a “better” way that you would like the individual to communicate the message.



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# Challenging Behavior and Communication

*Individual could use a break card (communication replacement) instead of biting to communicate escape.*



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# Challenging Behavior and Communication

## Activity

*Individual could*  
replacement behavior  
instead of behavior to  
communicate function.



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# Effectiveness of Functional Communication Training

- Remember. . It is most important to find-out what the behavior is communicating. If you want to **decrease** behavior challenges you must **increase** communication.



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# Quality Resources



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# Quality Resources

1. National Standards Project
2. National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders



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# Quality Resources: NSP

- National Standards Project
- Released in 2009
- [www.nationalautismcenter.org/about/national.php](http://www.nationalautismcenter.org/about/national.php)
- Scientific Merit Rating Scale
  - Research design, measurement of dependent and independent variable, participants ascertainment, generalization of tx effect
- Educational and behavioral interventions
- Individuals below age 22



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# Quality Resources: NSP

- National Standards Project
- Strength of Evidence
  - Established: 11 treatments
  - Emerging: 22 treatments
  - Unestablished: 5 treatments
  - Ineffective/harmful: 0 treatments



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# Quality Resources: NSP

1. Antecedent Package
2. Behavioral Package
3. Comprehensive Behavioral Treatment for Young Children
4. Joint Attention Intervention
5. Modeling
6. Peer Training Package
7. Pivotal Response Treatment
8. Schedules
9. Self-management
10. Story-based Intervention Package
11. Naturalistic Teaching Strategies



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# Quality Resources: NPDC on ASD

- National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders
  - **UNC Chapel Hill**, Waisman Center, and M.I.N.D.
  - <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~autismpdc/>



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# Quality Resources: NPDC on ASD

- Professional Development Center
- Goals
  - Promote optimal development and learning of infants, children, and youth with ASD and provide support to their families through the use of evidence-based practices
- 24 Evidence Based Practices Identified



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# Quality Resources: NPDC on ASD

- Antecedent Based Intervention
- Computer Aided Instruction
- Differential reinforcement
- Discrete Trial Training
- Extinction
- Functional Behavior Assessment
- Functional Communication Training
- Naturalistic Intervention
- Parent Implemented Intervention
- Peer Mediated Instruction
- PECS
- Pivotal Response Training
- Prompting
- Reinforcement
- Response Interruption
- Self Management
- Social Narratives
- Social Skills Groups
- Speech Generating Devices
- Structured Work Systems
- Task Analysis
- Time Delay
- Video Modeling
- Visual Supports



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# Quality Resources: NPDC on ASD

**THE NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER ON AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS**

A multi-university center to promote the use of evidence-based practice for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders

**EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES** EBP Briefs Functional Communication Training

Home

About the Center

Evidence-Based Practices

- Comparison with National Standards Project
- Autism Internet Modules
- EBP Briefs
- Updating the EBPs

Early Identification of ASD Module

Manual of Procedures (MOP)

Coaching

Additional Resources

News and Events

Working With States

State Partners Login

User name:

Password:

Log In

Forgot password?

### Evidence-Based Practice: Functional Communication Training (FCT)

#### Overview of Functional Communication Training (FCT)

Functional communication training (FCT) emerged from the literature on functional behavioral assessment (FBA) as a systematic practice to replace inappropriate behavior or substitute communicative acts with more appropriate and effective communicative behaviors or skills. FCT is always implemented after an FBA has been conducted to identify the function of an interfering behavior. When using FCT, teachers/practitioners analyze the interfering behavior to determine what the learner is trying to communicate. For example, is the learner biting peers when she wants a toy that another child has? Or is the learner yelling out in class so that he will be sent out of the room? After teachers/practitioners have identified the function of the interfering behavior, they then implement FCT to identify and teach a replacement behavior that is easy for the learner to use and serves the same purpose as the interfering behavior, but in a more appropriate way.

**Evidence**

FCT meets the evidence-based practice criteria with five single-subject design studies, demonstrating its effectiveness for promoting appropriate behavior and communication skills for children at the preschool and elementary school levels.

**With what ages is FCT effective?**

FCT can be used effectively with children with ASD, regardless of cognitive level and/or expressive communicative abilities. The evidence base shows that FCT is an effective intervention for learners at the early childhood and elementary levels. It is reasonable to assume that it would be an effective practice for older learners as well.

**What skills or intervention goals can be addressed by FCT?**

FCT targets skills that help children and youth with ASD effectively communicate with others in a variety of situations and settings. In the evidence base, FCT was used to decrease the incidence of interfering behaviors and to replace subtle, less-clear communicative forms (e.g., leading an adult by the hand to a desired item) with clearer communicative forms (e.g., pointing).

**In what settings can FCT be effectively used?**

The evidence-based studies were conducted in clinical, school-based, and home environments. While the research did not demonstrate use of FCT in community settings, it might be ideal for teaching to occur in community settings if interfering behaviors regularly occur there. Teaching in varied and/or more natural environments has been demonstrated to promote generalization of skills.

**Brief Package:**

- FCT\_brief\_pkg.pdf [PDF, 56777KB] 10/01/2010

**Brief Components**

**Overview:**

- FCT\_Overview.pdf [PDF, 88226KB] 10/01/2010

**Evidence base:**

- FCT\_EvidenceBase.pdf [PDF, 86496KB] 10/01/2010

**Steps for Implementation:**

- FCT\_Steps.pdf [PDF, 178952KB] 10/01/2010

**Implementation Checklist:**

- FCT\_Checklist.pdf [PDF, 192796KB] 10/01/2010

**Data Collection Forms:**

- FCT\_DataSheets.pdf [PDF, 86180KB] 10/01/2010

The NPDC on ASD is a multi-university center that operates through three sites: the **SPDS Child Development Institute** at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the **W.I.N.A.D. Institute** at University of California at Davis Medical School, and the **Waisman Center** at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

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- Overview
- Evidence Base
- Steps for Implementation
- Implementation Checklist
- Data Collection Forms



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# Quality Resources: NPDC on ASD

- What you Do
- What you Know About
- What you Might Want to Learn More About

Do	Know	Learn
////	//////////	Extinction Parent implemented Time Delay



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# Quality Resources: NPDC on ASD

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Autism Internet Modules website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: [http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/mod\\_intro.php?mod\\_id=13](http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/mod_intro.php?mod_id=13). The website header features the title "AUTISM INTERNET MODULES" in large blue letters. Below the header, there is a navigation menu with a "MODULE MENU" section containing links for Introduction, Pre-Assessment, Overview, Module Objectives, What is Peer-Mediated Instruction and Intervention (PMII)?, Who Can Use PMII and How Does it Work?, PMII for Early Childhood: Peer Initiation Training, Late Elementary through High School: Peer Social Networking, Summary, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), Evidence Base for PMII, Citation and References, and Post-Assessment. The main content area displays the title "PEER-MEDIATED INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION (PMII) FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS / INTRODUCTION" and a video player. The video player shows a woman with short blonde hair, identified as Jennifer Neitzel, speaking. Below the video player are controls for playing, stopping, skipping back, skipping forward, and starting over. A "MOVIE TRANSCRIPT" section below the video shows the text: "Hello, my name is Jennifer Neitzel." On the right side of the page, there is a "TEXT SIZE" section with buttons for increasing, decreasing, and resetting text size, and a "PARTNERS" section listing various organizations including OCALI, Ohio Department of Education, The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders, Nebraska Autism Spectrum Disorders, Geneva Centre for Autism, and the Autism Society. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications: Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Outlook, and the Autism Internet Modules browser window. The system tray in the bottom right corner shows the time as 1:59 PM and the Internet connection status.



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# Wrap-Up

- Learning Objectives
  - Identify effective strategies to promote social skill development and peer relationships for learners with autism.
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Patricia Wright  
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