Social communication in the classroom. A journey to inclusive practices.

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What is social communication?

Using communication to initiate, respond or engage with others \textit{in order to sustain a social interaction}
Why is social communication important?

Relationships ♦ Language ♦ Cognition
Examples of social communication difficulties

Monologues

Difficulty initiating

Difficulty responding

Difficulty engaging
Needs of the individual child
Pull-out approaches

Clinic based
Pull-out at school

Benefits:
Quiet, calm place to learn

Research:
“contrived, restricted and decontextualized” (Gresham et al., 2001, p. 340).

Pull-out approaches were less effective and less likely to generalise compared to in-class approaches (Bellini et al 2007)
Involve peers

Social Skills Groups

**Benefits:**
Practice with other children

**Research:**
“tentative support” (Reichow & Volkmar, 2010).

May improve some specific skills, but show poor generalisation to other settings (Williams White, Keonig & Scahill 2007)
Natural social setting

Natural settings with peers: playground
Natural settings with peers: playground

Children need a break, classroom teachers are not available, teachers on duty need to supervise (Kamps, Potucek, Lopez, Kravits, and Kemmerer, 1997)

Short term programs conducted by external professionals
Adequate Dosage

Responsibility for intervention at school

- Therapist
- Teacher
- Teacher Aide
- Specialist Teacher
Classroom Based
Adult mediated

Direct Instruction
Prompting
Rewarding
Modelling
Pivotal Response Training
Social Stories™
(child mediated)

Popular with teachers
(Hess, Morrier & Heflin, 2008)

Books are a resource found in classrooms

Low level of effectiveness
(Brunner & Seung, 2009; McConnell, 2002; Rogers, 2000)
Video Modelling
(child mediated)

Not used by teachers (Hess, Morrier & Heflin, 2008)

Video equipment becoming more available in classrooms (mobile devices)

A recommended intervention (Reichow & Volkmar, 2010; Wang & Spillane, 2009)
Self Monitoring
(child mediated)

Not used by teachers (Hess, Morrier & Heflin, 2008)
Effectiveness shown in classroom setting (Morrison, Kamps, Garcia & Parker, 2001)
Peer mediated interventions

Peers may also benefit academically, socially and emotionally from participation.

Brunner & Seung (2009); Matson et al., (2007); McConnell (2002); Rogers (2000); Weiss & Harris (2001)
Peer mediated in class with one peer

Instruction
Prompting
Rewarding
Modeling
PRT
Resources available in classroom
Embedded into curriculum

Korinek & Popp (1997); Schoenfeld, Rutherford, Gable, & Rock (2008); Fentry, Miller, & Lampi (2008)
Embedded into rotations

Banda, Hart & Liu-Gitz (2010)
Embedded into reading

Co-operative learning groups during Social Studies

Embedded utilising iPads???
An inclusive approach

- Interventions with typical peers
- Natural social setting
- Adequate dosage
- Resources in classroom
- Embedded in curriculum

? Responsibility for intervention
References


