

Tea Club (Singapore)-Learning to Navigate the Social World without Fear: Adapted from PEERS® for Young Adults

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Abstract : The growing years in adolescence are often a tumultuous time for both the individual and family; this is especially so for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Social Communication Disorder (SCD). Tea Club, which is adapted from the PEERS® for Young Adults, seeks to address some of the social challenges faced by Singaporean adolescents with ASD/SCD while navigating social situations. Tea club (hybrid) consists of face-to-face sessions and virtual sessions. These sessions work with both the adolescent and their parents to tackle the individual's difficulties with social skills, empathy, and loneliness. Prior to the group intervention, both participants and their parents scored on the Test of Adolescent Social Skills Knowledge (TASSK) and Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ), respectively. The session was spread across four months. At the end of the group based intervention, participants' and parents' scores were collected again and compared. Inputs on the programme and participant's confidence in socialization were also gathered from both participants and their parents and looked at thematically. The findings highlight some of the challenges faced by teens with ASD in Singapore and the benefits of the intervention. Parental sentiments are also examined and discussed.

Keywords : adolescence autism, group intervention, social communication disorder, social skills

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