

Peer-Mediated Intervention for Social Communication Difficulties in Adolescents with Autism: Literature Review and Research Recommendations

Authors : Christine L. Cole

Abstract : Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) often experience social-communication difficulties that negatively impact their social interactions with typical peers. However, unlike other age and disability groups, there is little intervention research to inform best practice for these students. One evidence-based strategy for younger students with ASD is peer-mediated intervention (PMI). PMI may be particularly promising for use with adolescents, as peers are readily available and natural experts for encouraging authentic high school conversations. This paper provides a review of previous research that evaluated the use of PMI to improve the social-communication skills of students with ASD. Specific intervention features associated with positive student outcomes are identified and recommendations for future research are provided. Adolescents with ASD are targeted due to the critical importance of social conversation at the high school level.

Keywords : autism, peer-mediation, social communication, adolescents

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