

Supplemental Material S1. Components, materials, and teacher instructions.

I. Components of Peer Training Sessions

Day 1: 45 min

- 5-min sensitization training: review different ways children communicate (e.g., sign language, PECS®, speech-generating device, words)
- 10-min *Stay* with your friend: (a) sit close; (b) when buddy moves you move
- 10-min *Play* with your friend: (a) share with your buddy; (b) take turns playing
- 10-min *Talk* with your friend: *Ask and Tell*—use words to ask for and tell about toys
- 10-min *Talk* with your friend: *Pick and Put*—introduce symbols from PECS® to ask for toys/items and how to put a toy/item in friend's hand when they are given a symbol

Day 2: 30 min

- 15-min *Take–Say–Give*: teach child to *Take* the picture symbol, *Say* the word, and *Give* the toy
- 15-min *Putting it all Together*: combine *Pick and Put* with *Take–Say–Give*

Day 3: 30 min

- 30-min *More Ways to Talk*: discuss social communication skills to (a) gain attention (e.g., tap on shoulder/say friend's name) and comment (e.g., "It's a big ball"); (b) share (e.g., "Here you go"); (c) agree (e.g., "Okay"); and (d) organize play (e.g., "Let's play again")

Day 4: 30 min

- 30-min *Stay–Play–Talk*: review of all steps covered in first three sessions with specific attention given to using picture symbols to initiate and to respond

II. Materials and Teacher Instructions for PECS® and Pals Intervention in the Classroom

Materials:

- _____ PECS® binder with 1–2 symbols on front Velcro for preferred item
- _____ 2 general social phrases on front Velcro that match the activity
- _____ Minimum 1 peer beside focus child with autism
- _____ Reinforcement star card and choice of reinforcer (e.g., bag of toys)
- _____ Cooperative activity to take turns building, making, playing, etc.

Teacher Instructions:

1. Always have peer sitting next to focus child.
2. Place black PECS® book between the two children.
3. Assign peer role of being in charge of parts to the activity (that focus child will request).
4. Say to the peer, "Remember to *Stay*, *Play*, and, *Talk*, (*name of peer*). When (*name of focus child*) gives you a picture, you *Take* the picture, *Say* what the picture is, and *Give* your buddy the toy on the picture. Then you put the picture back on the book."
5. Show peer the *Stay*, *Play*, and *Talk* flag and say, "If you forget to *Stay*, *Play*, and *Talk*, or *Take–Say–Give*, I will wave this flag to help you remember."
6. Once every 30 sec—if necessary—prompt peer to point to symbol and hold out hand expectantly to prompt focus child to use the symbol to make a request; if necessary, prompt focus child to respond to peer prompt by physically guiding elbow/hand to select picture and exchange with peer.
7. Verbally praise the children for asking for toys and playing nicely: e.g., "I liked the way you gave _____ the toy when he gave you the picture, nice job!"
8. At end of session, show the star reinforcement card, and give the selected reinforcer.