Peer-Mediated Instruction and Intervention (PMII) can address social concerns by training peers how to initiate and respond to social interactions of learners with ASD. PMII is useful for learners with ASD who need support with communication skills such as initiating and responding to social interactions with peers without disabilities. PMII can be implemented with students of all ages. The level of support may vary in each grade level.

Steps for Peer-Mediated Instruction and Intervention

How do you plan for it?

There are several questions involved when deciding how to implement your plan.

How many staff members will be involved? The staff members involved should have a flexible schedule to attend the meetings and conduct periodic observations.

How many peers will you select? It is best to select two to six peers who are interested in participating.

When will you meet with the students? How long? A meeting should be scheduled weekly and should last 15-30 minutes. The meeting shouldn’t interfere with academic classes.

What will your meetings look like? The meetings should be structured with general agenda covering student updates/new concerns, successes/challenges, and next steps.

How will you collect data? A progress monitoring form should be available in all settings, where PMII has been implemented. All staff involved with the student should be aware on how to collect the data.

How do you do it?

Select peers who have:

- Excellent social skills
- Positive social history with the student
- Appropriate behavior
- Willingness to participate
- Good attendance
- Parent permission is recommended

Train peers by:

- Informing them how students with ASD communicate, interact with their environment, and learn
- Discussing the focal student’s likes and dislikes
- Explaining the roles of their job
- Identifying target skills for the peers to focus for the students with ASD.
- Role playing how to implement the different strategies
- Educating the peers to record anecdotal notes about interactions with the student.

Support peers by:

- Scheduling weekly meetings to discuss successes and challenges
- Following up with the peers and how they are feeling about their position (overwhelmed, frustrated, optimistic)
- Discussing any new concerns
- Discussing goals for the following week
- Reviewing data from staff members and peer notes
Is your plan working?

The teacher in charge should re-evaluate the program several times throughout the school year. Ask yourself if the program is going the way you planned or if you need to make changes.

- Observe and document the academic progress, behavior, and/or social interaction of the student with ASD.
- Determine if the peer supports are a right fit, if the students with ASD are responding to the peer mediators, and if peers need additional support/training.

Tips for Peer-Mediated Instruction and Intervention

- Consider times of the day (lunch, small groups, and transitions) that would work best for using PMII.
- Select peers who have similar schedules and academic groupings as the student with ASD.
- Use enjoyable, age-appropriate activities that will foster interactions among the student with ASD and peers.
- If the peers have a successful experience with PMII, schedule some of the peers in the same classes as the student with ASD for the following school year.

Case Study

Jake is a 4th grader, who is diagnosed with ASD. He is in a general education class for morning meeting, reading, and social studies/science. Several environmental supports are implemented throughout the day, and he is working on a modified curriculum. Jake socializes with his peers during lunch/recess, but he doesn’t interact much with his peers during instructional time in the classroom. How can PMII be implemented with Jake?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morning Meeting</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Social Studies/Science</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer #1 could assist Jake with his morning routine checklist and review daily schedule with him. Peer #1 could also prompt Jake with visual supports to answer questions asked by the teacher.</td>
<td>Peer #2 could check Jake’s reading homework from the previous night and read the assigned article to him, as he follows along with his adapted copy.</td>
<td>Peer #3 could review the lesson from the previous day with Jake, and help him with his modified study guide throughout the lesson. Multiple peers could also support Jake during small group activities.</td>
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Resources

- Autism Professional Development Center
  - [http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/](http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/)
- Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules (AFIRM)
  - [http://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/](http://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/)