

**Enaksha Garde**  
Speech Pathology

# **Developing Social Skills with Adults**

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# Introduction

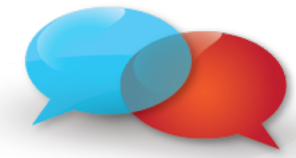
Enaksha Garde:

- Speech pathologist

Emily Churchill:

- Speech pathologist





# Background

People with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Intellectual Disability (ID) experience difficulties with social communication and social interactions (Bundock & Hewitt, 2017)

Social skills:

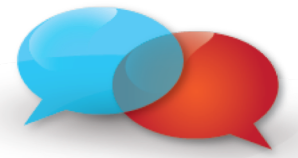
*“specific behaviours that result in positive social interaction and encompass both verbal and non-verbal behaviours”* (Rao et al., 2008, p.353)

Social skills programs aim to:

- increase community and workplace participation, enhance social relationships, and support positive mental health (Tobin, Drager & Richardson, 2014)
- Many social skills interventions are targeted at children and for people with ASD without an ID (Rao et al., 2008).
  - ☐ Need for evidence-based programs for adults with ASD and ID
  - ☐ further research is needed to inform policy and practice

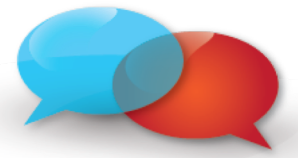
# Aim

To deliver a social skills pilot program, in partnership with an adult day service, for adults with intellectual disability (ID) and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).



# Method

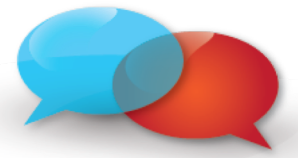
- Eight adults with ASD and/or ID participated in a 26 week pilot (13 speech pathology sessions)
  - Recruited for the program through the day program
  - Group size: 2-3 people
- Group sessions included explicit teaching of the social skill (e.g. greeting), modelling and role play, and video feedback
  - Fortnightly session with speech pathologist
  - Fortnightly session with DSW to follow up on skills and practice
  - Written session notes given to parents to support transition of skills



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# Method- program outline

- Pre-screening of social skills and feedback from family impacted the program outline
- Social skills targeted:
  - personal distance
  - listening
  - interrupting
  - greetings
  - asking questions
  - making comments

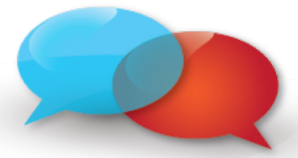


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# Method- measuring outcomes

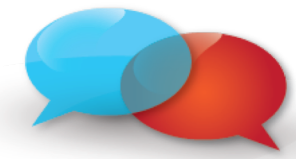
- Communication skills assessment
  - Collected before program started
- Social skills survey
  - Staff and Family completed measures on each person independently pre and post the program
- Pre and post survey data analysis

# Results



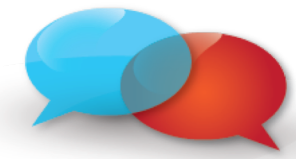
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Survey findings indicate a positive impact in all areas in both parent and staff surveys.



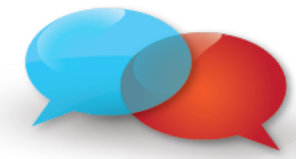
Does \_\_\_\_\_ sit or stand at an appropriate distance?

	PARENT		Staff	
	Pre	Post	pre	Post
Strongly Agree	12.5%	25%		
Agree	50%	62.5%	62.5%	87.5%
Neither agree or disagree	12.5%		37.5	12.5
Disagree	25%	12.5%		
Strongly Disagree				



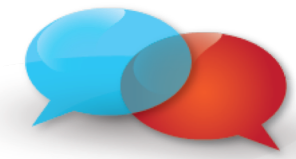
Does \_\_\_\_\_ interrupt appropriately?

	PARENT		Staff	
	Pre	Post	pre	Post
Strongly Agree				
Agree	25%	50%		25%
Neither agree or disagree	37.5%	25%	75%	62.5%
Disagree	37.5%	25%	25%	12.5%
Strongly Disagree				



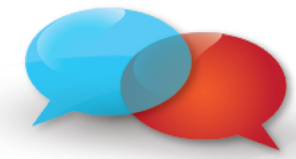
Does \_\_\_\_\_greet you or others? Eg. smile, wave, hello.

	PARENT		Staff	
	Pre	Post	pre	Post
Strongly Agree		37.5%	12.5%	
Agree	37.5%	37.5%	62.5%	100%
Neither agree or disagree	25%		25%	
Disagree	37.5%	25%		
Strongly Disagree				



Does \_\_\_\_\_ initiate conversations? Eg. by starting talking to you or by asking questions

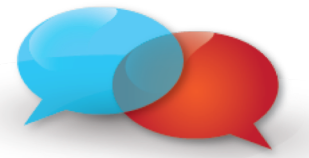
	PARENT		Staff	
	Pre	Post	pre	Post
Strongly Agree	25%	25%		
Agree	12.5%	50%	37.5%	50%
Neither agree or disagree		12.5%	50%	25%
Disagree	37.5%		12.5%	25%
Strongly Disagree	25%	12.5%		



Does \_\_\_\_\_ maintain a conversation? Eg Taking at least 2 turns on the **same topic**

	PARENT		Staff	
	Pre	Post	pre	Post
Strongly Agree				
Agree	25%	37.5%	12.5%	37.5%
Neither agree or disagree	25%	25%	62.5%	12.5
Disagree	25%	37.5%	25%	50%
Strongly Disagree	25%			

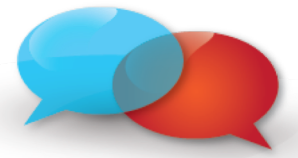
# Qualitative stories about the impact from the pilot



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- a visit to the chiropractor
- independence at the gym
- an NDIS meeting:

*‘Still lots of hard work to go, but we have noticed small improvements in his communication and confidence so this program is having a very positive affect and he really enjoys participating’*



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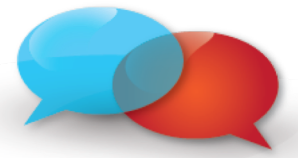
# Facilitators and Barriers

## Facilitators

- The sessions took place in a Melbourne TAFE
- Partnership with day service
- Family investment in pilot
- Information night

## Barriers

- Interruption to participants' programs
- Required NDIS funding
- Short length of program
- Small group sizes
- Potential survey bias



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# Implications

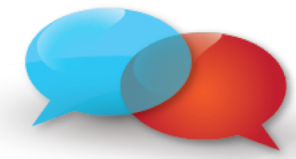
- Outcomes

- Results indicate that the program can assist people to develop social skills
- Insights into building staff capacity
- Delivering group interventions under NDIS
- Positive feedback from staff, families and participants

- Interest from Speech Pathology Australia in the program

- In the future:

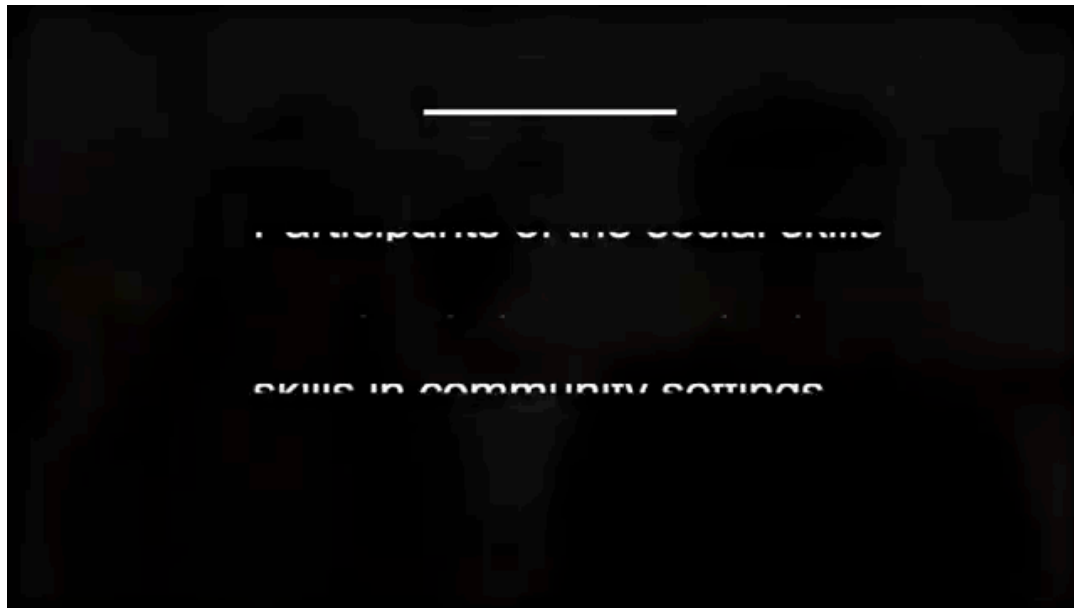
- Continue to run the program
- Expand the program to build on other social skills (e.g. how to terminate a conversation)

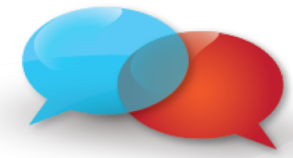


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# Communicating with Confidence!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJox5dujsKU>





# References

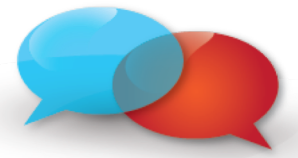
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Thank you- feel free to contact us

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