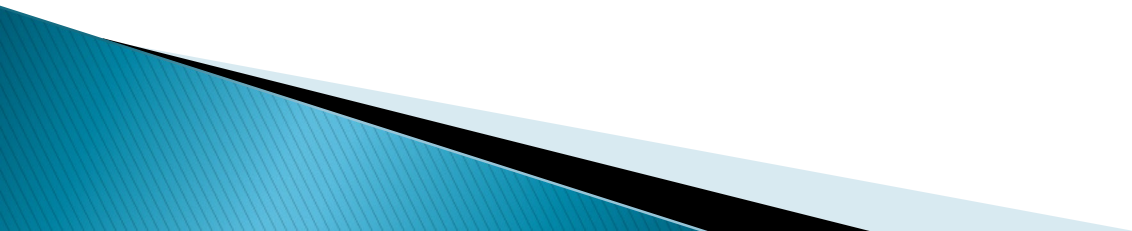


# Social skills training in ADHD


AADPA conference 27 July 2019

Rick Jarman

# Learning objectives

- ▶ To discuss the importance of social competence as a developmental task of middle childhood and adolescence
  - ▶ To understand the determinants of social competence
  - ▶ To address simple role-playing strategies in the office for helping children make friends, handle teasing, and control anger
- 

# What builds self esteem

- ▶ Secure early emotional attachment
  - ▶ Unconditional love and affection
  - ▶ Reliable, dependable, consistent parenting
  - ▶ Clear rules, limits and consequences
  - ▶ Opportunities to shine
  - ▶ Opportunities to feel useful
  - ▶ Opportunities to make choices
  - ▶ Opportunities to accept responsibility
  - ▶ Encouragement to take risks
  - ▶ Encouragement to feel OK about failure
  - ▶ **Feeling valued by one's peer group.**
- 



# ELTHAM JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB UNDER 10 DIV.2 - 2003



**FOURTH ROW**  
**THIRD ROW**

**SECOND ROW**

**FRONT ROW**

**ABSENT**

Max Kirwan, Ben Jackson, Tyrone Lang, Daniel Krmpotic.

Peter Lamont (Auskick Co-Ordinator), Dennis Hemphill (Boundary Umpire), Lauren Brazzale, Drew El Moussalli, Aaron Lombardo, Nick Vlastuin, James Hawking, Michael El Moussalli (Trainer), Max Kirwan (Sponsor).

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Dave Jackson (Runner), Ben Smith, Mark Gaylard, Oliver Hemphill, Trevor Chrimes (Team Manager), Rick Jarman (Coach), Ian Sargent (Coach), Rohan Bansal, Lachlan Stuckey, Matthew Chrimes, John Gaylard (Water Person).

Robert Reid.

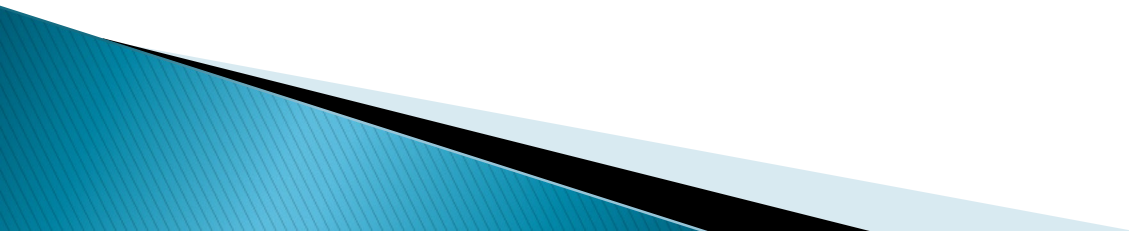
© Photographed by: Impact Photography & Imaging Ph 0418 128 578

**MORRISON KLEEMAN ESTATE AGENTS - PROUD MAJOR SPONSOR OF ELTHAM JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB**



- ▶ Social acceptance, the quest for friendship and popularity, face saving, and looking good almost always takes precedence over academic stardom
- ▶ Social mastery affects and is affected by self esteem, self confidence, and self image

Not all children with  
social skills deficits  
have Autism Spectrum  
Disorders



# Social Ability – Classification

## ▶ CONTROVERSIAL

- Highly liked by some, highly disliked by others

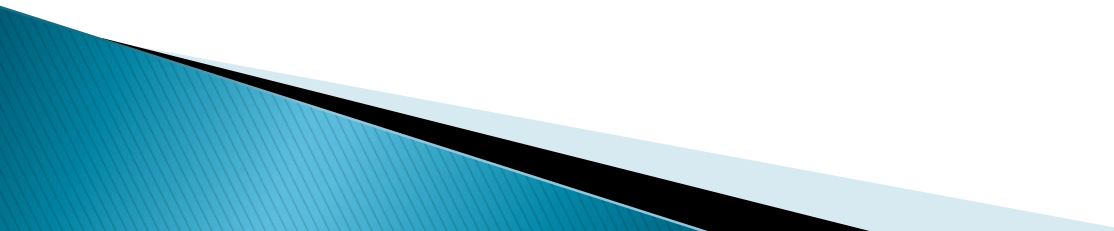
## ▶ POPULAR

- Acceptable, sought after, respected

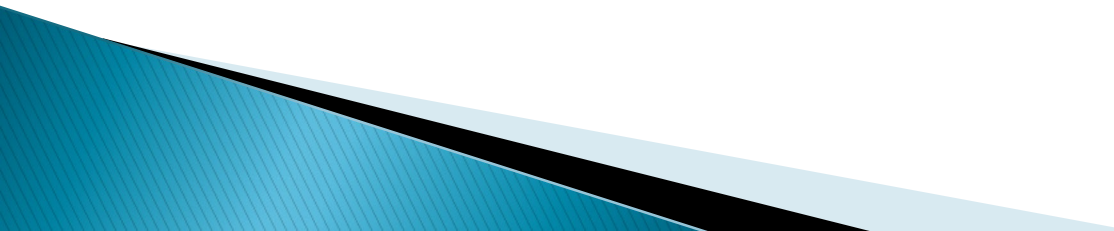
## ▶ NEGLECTED

- Inconspicuous, withdrawn

## ▶ REJECTED

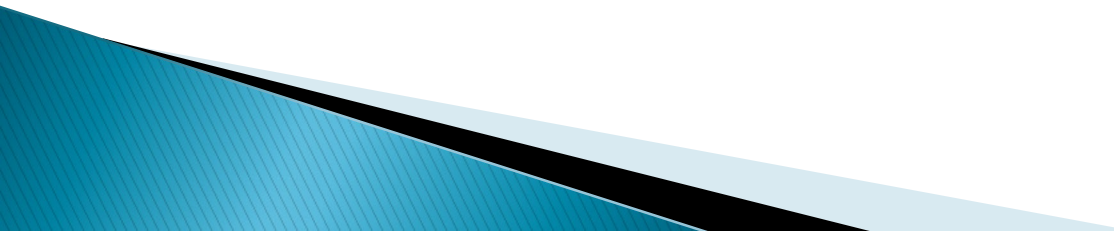
- Actively excluded, alienated, ostracized
- 

# Popular children

- ▶ Outgoing
  - ▶ Cooperative in play and social conversation
  - ▶ Good eye contact and listening skills
  - ▶ Show interest in other people
  - ▶ Good at affective matching
  - ▶ Initiate interactions but positively responsive to initiations of others
  - ▶ Resolve conflict without aggression
  - ▶ Ability to recover, learn from social errors
- 



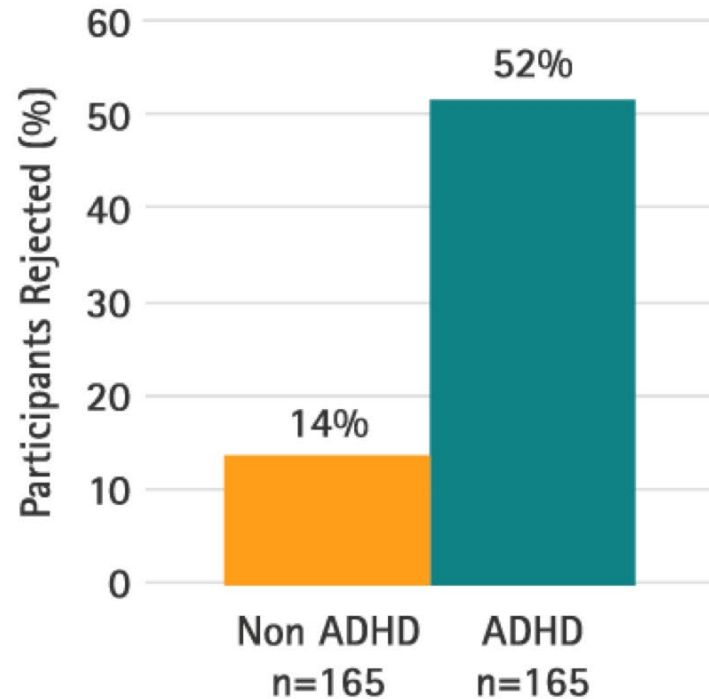
# Rejected children

- ▶ Bossy
  - ▶ Aggressive, insulting, exclusionary
  - ▶ Poor listening skills
  - ▶ Interrupts and intrudes
  - ▶ Poor eye contact
  - ▶ Disruptive in play
  - ▶ Do not or cannot read feedback
  - ▶ Can't compromise
- 

# ADHD AFFECTS FRIENDSHIPS<sup>1</sup>

- Children with ADHD: lower on social preference, fewer friendships, higher on social impact, less well liked and more often rejected<sup>1,2</sup>

## PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN REJECTED BY THEIR PEERS



Statistical significance not provided  
Adapted from Hoza et al, 2005



1. Hoza B et al. J Pediatr Psychol 2007; 32(6): 655-63; 2. Hoza, B et al. J. Consult. Clin. Psychol. 2005; 73: 411-423

“You can’t pull up your  
socks if you don’t know  
what socks are”

From “The Coodabeen Champions”  
The Football Wisdom of Guru Bob 1998

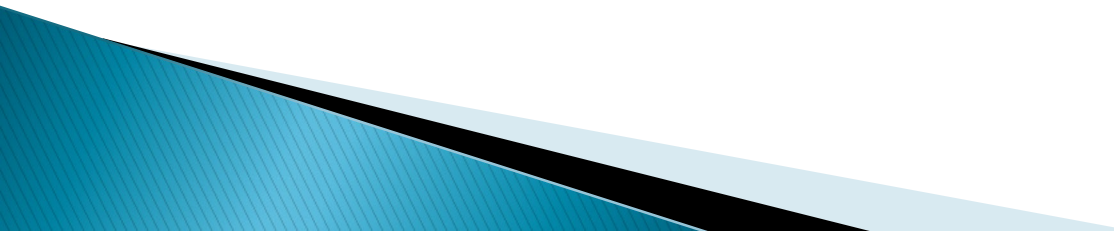
# Social skills training

- ▶ How to make friends
  - ▶ How to handle teasing
  - ▶ How to control anger
- 



▶ Parent assisted  
transfer of children's  
social skills training

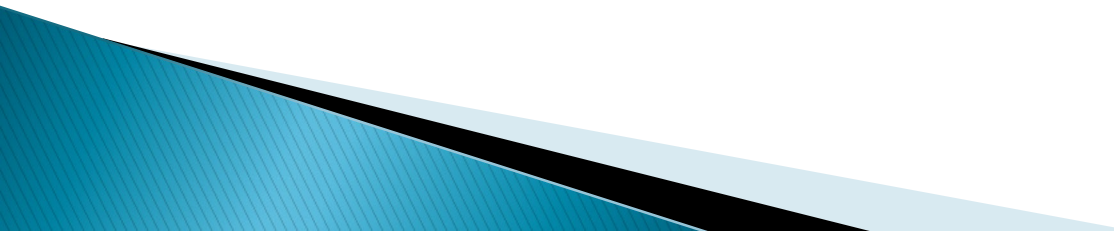
# How to make friends (1)

- ▶ Eye contact
  - ▶ Listen
  - ▶ Take an interest in others
  - ▶ Ask questions
  - ▶ Initiate social interactions
  - ▶ Respond warmly
  - ▶ Compliment others
  - ▶ Tag along and join in
  - ▶ Phone calls, text messages, internet chat
  - ▶ See kids face to face
  - ▶ Maintain contact during holidays
- 

# How to make friends (2)

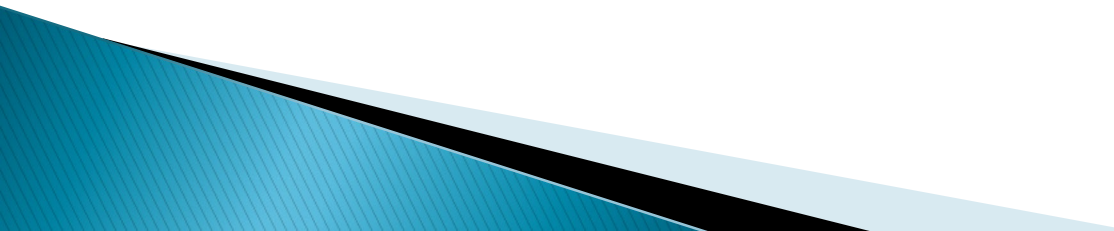
- ▶ Facebook
  - ▶ Kick
  - ▶ Instagram
  - ▶ Snapchat
  - ▶ Twitter
- 
- ▶ Risks and benefits

# How to handle teasing

- ▶ Stay calm
  - ▶ Pretend you're not upset
  - ▶ Say something to deflect the taunt
    - “Brush off” statements
    - “Self deprecatory” comebacks
  - ▶ Walk away
- 

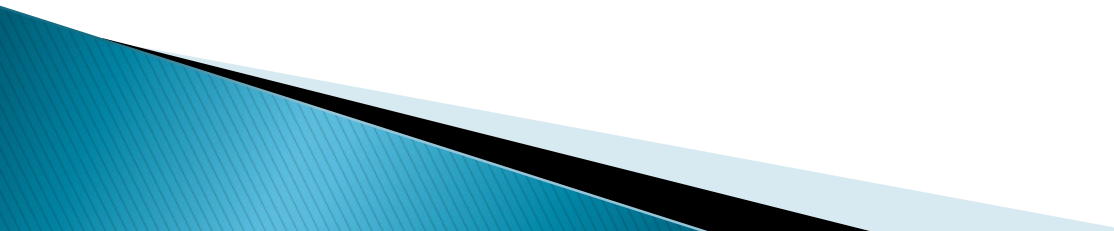


# How to control anger

- ▶ Learn to recognise the temporal associations of anger
  - ▶ Learn to recognise the somatic warning signs of anger
  - ▶ Signalling
  - ▶ Self talk
  - ▶ Relax hands
  - ▶ Slow deep breaths
  - ▶ Walk away and stay away until calm
- 

# Does it work?

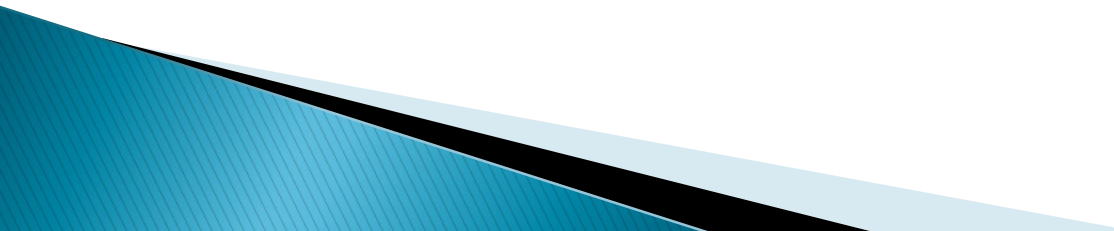
Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019 June 21;6:CD008223

- ▶ Randomised clinical trials investigating social skills training versus no intervention or waiting list control, with or without pharmacological treatment of both comparison groups
  - ▶ Metanalysis 25 trials over 45 reports 2690 participants 5–17 years
  - ▶ Duration of intervention 5 weeks to 2 years
- 

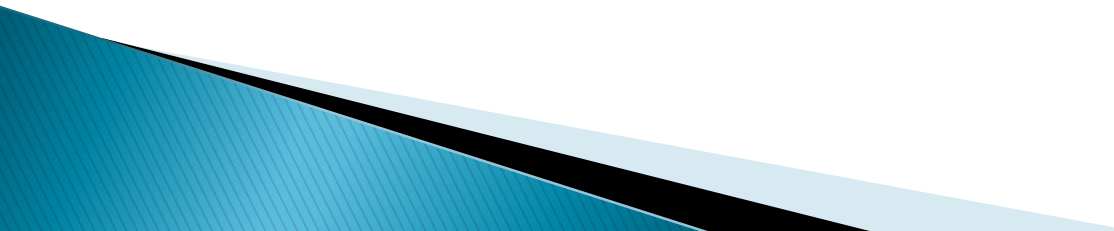
# Social skills interventions described as:

- ▶ Social skills training
- ▶ Cognitive behaviour therapy
- ▶ Multimodal behavioural psychosocial therapy
- ▶ Child life and attention skills treatment
- ▶ Life skills training
- ▶ The challenging horizon program
- ▶ Verbal self instruction
- ▶ Metacognitive training
- ▶ Psychosocial treatment

Cochrane reviewers considered the content of the social skills interventions to be comparable and based on a CBT model



# Conclusion

- ▶ Statistically significant differences in favour of social skills training on the primary outcome measure: teacher rated social skills for all eligible trials
  - ▶ BUT questionable clinical significance
  - ▶ AND high risk bias, high heterogeneity
- 



# What may predict better outcomes

- ▶ Sibling mediated program

- ▶ Daffner MS DuPaul GJ, Kern L, Cole CL, Cleminshaw CL. Behav Modif 2019 Apr 11:145

- ▶ Providing increased reinforcement and reminders of appropriate social behaviour in real life peer situations

- ▶ Cordier R, Vilaysack B, Doma K, Wilkes-Gillan S, Speyer R. Biomed Res 2018 Mar 18:2018

- ▶ Encouraging peers to be more socially accepting

- ▶ Mikami AY, Smit S, Khalis A. Current Psychiatry Rep 2017 Oct 30;19(12):93

# What is the Secret Agent Society Program?

- Multi-media social skills program for 8 to 14 year-olds with Asperger's Disorder/High-Functioning Autism, Autism Spectrum Disorder DSM -5
- Espionage-themed activities to teach emotion recognition, emotion management and social skills
- Involves child group sessions, parent group sessions, teacher support, and a computer game!
- Previous research into effects of social skill training programs for ASD and Asperger's indicates that skills do not generalize to non- training domains



# Research Trial

- This initial randomised controlled trial of 49 children (age 8-12) with ASD matched for IQ, severity of ASD, Social Competence
- Measures
  - Spence Social Skills Questionnaire Parent Version & Teacher forms (Spence 1995a)
  - Childhood Asperger Syndrome Test (CAST) Scott et al 2002,
  - Emotion regulation and Social Skills Questionnaire ERSSQ designed for this study
  - WISC – 1V short form,
  - Assessment of perception of emotion from facial Expression (Spence 1995b)
  - Assessment of perception of emotion from Posture Cues (Spence 1995c)
  - James and the Maths test (Attwood 2004a)
  - Dylan is Being Teased (Attwood 2004b)
- Beaumont, R., & Sofronoff, K. A multi-component social skills intervention for children with Asperger Syndrome: The Junior Detective Training Program. *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 2008, 49, 743–753.



# How Effective is the Program?

- Results from the study
  - ✓ Children's social skills significantly improved
  - ✓ From parent rating 76% children improved from having severe social difficulties to showing social skills within normal range and maintained at 5 months post.
  - ✓ Improvements made at home and at school
  - ✓ Program equally effective regardless of age, IQ or co-occurring disorders (e.g. ADHD)
  - ✓ Weekly home missions ➡ Better treatment outcome
- Beaumont, R., & Sofronoff, K. A multi-component social skills intervention for children with Asperger Syndrome: The Junior Detective Training Program. *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 2008; 49, 743–753.





“All the world’s a stage,  
and all the men and  
women merely players”

*William Shakespeare*





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**THIRD ROW**

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**FRONT ROW**

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## POLL: SOCIAL ABILITY OF AADPA MEMBERS

HOW DO YOU CLASSIFY YOUR OWN SOCIAL ABILITY

- CONTROVERSIAL: HIGHLY LIKED BY SOME, HIGHLY DISLIKED BY OTHERS
- POPULAR: ACCEPTABLE, SOUGHT AFTER, RESPECTED
- NEGLECTED: INCONSPICUOUS, WITHDRAWN
- REJECTED: ACTIVELY EXCLUDED, ALIENATED, OSTRACIZED
- [LINK FOR RESULTS](#)