use prompts (e.g., gestures, models, written text etc) in a prompt-fading style.

Harrower and Dunlap (2001) conducted a systematic review of the empirical research that has addressed procedures for promoting successful inclusion of students with autism. One of the contributing factors in the controversy over inclusion has been the limited number of studies that have focused directly on the procedures for facilitating educational inclusion

demonstrated an increase in the frequency of
initiations and amount of information provided
by the student with ASD, resulting in
interactions that closely approximate those
between non-disabled students.

appear to increase the
motivation to learn by incorporating choices,
reinforcing attempts, using adequate modeling
and providing natural consequences. These
approaches paired with peer-mediated strategies
(i.e., peer tutors) have been documented as a
multicomponent intervention strategy that
resulted in children with ASD engaging in
prolonged interactions, initiated

addressed problem behaviors as a means of facilitating inclusion for school-age students with ASD and identified many limitations. This review offered explicit indications regarding the lack of evidence-based practices that use inclusion as an independent measure. This study offers equivocal evidence of four common themes that are demonstrated to be effective in reducing problem behavior and promote inclusion of students with ASD in inclusive educational settings.

Delano and Snell (2006) used a multiple-probe-across-participants design to evaluate the effects of social stories on the social engagement of three students, ranging from 6 to 9 years old, with autism. Inclusion criteria, academic performance in the general education classroom environment, services received by each participant, and their level of communication skills were provided. Each target student was paired with a non-disabled peer for the intervention sessions, and paired with a second peer for generalization probes. The 6-typical peers that participated in this study were nominated and randomly assigned to serve as either a training or novel peer. The purpose was to examine the effects of social stories on the duration of appropriate social engagement and the frequency of specific social skills. Data were collected on the frequency of 4 social skills: seeking attention, initiating comments, initiating requests, and making a contingent response.

Prebaseline measures of each target student were recorded. This

their general education classroom setting for two participants at one to two week follow-up. Further, during a generalization probe, one participants' duration of appropriate social engagement exceeded the level of typically developing peers. Although all four targeted social skills were in the social stories, the students were found to use comments and make contingent responses most frequently.

This study adds to the growing body of literature evaluating the effects of visual support strategies on social communication of children with autism. Strengths of this study include the generalization of social skills outside of the controlled environment to the participant's classroom setting, social validity procedures, use of time lag between each participant's initial intervention session and a social comparison assessment.

The results of this study are suggestive; caution must be taken when

DeSchryver and colleagues have validated that if the environment is changed, in this specific case through training typical peers on strategies to interact with students with ASD, then the individual's level of participation and activity can be positively impacted as a result.

A multiple baseline design across participants (evidence level 2) was appropriate for this study, as it minimized variations between individuals and within the same individual. Mean interobserver agreement was calculated; initiations 81%-83% and responses 81%-87%.

A limitation was that the participant selection was not explained, and there was selection bias in which participants were recommended by consultants from an agency. The process of selecting the varied sets of typical peers involved in intervention was non-standardized as well as altered during the intervention, which leads to non-reproducibility. The authors did not provide a rationale for choosing inconsistent combinations of gender and number of peers in each participant's set of trained peers. The experimental intervention was not independent of external variables, as this intervention was not conducted in a purely experimental environment. As a result of this pragmatic intervention, untrained peers also participated in the environment, thus the outcomes cannot be definitively attributed to solely the peer training intervention. Further, the sample size was relatively small, therefore it is impossible to show statistical significance and generalizability to the heterogeneous autism population.

The level of evidence offered by this study is suggestive. The selection bias and non-standardized grouping of participants reduce the clinical application of results.

Blair, Umbreit, Dunlap and Jung (2007) employed a single subject multiple base line across activities experimental design. The purpose was to investigate the usefulness of function-based intervention as a tool in supporting inclusive placements. The primary participant was a 6-year-old boy with a duel diagnosis of mental retardation and autism. The participant engaged in disruptive behaviors that included crying, vocalizing, screaming, laying down on the floor, jumping and hitting objects against the floor. In order to examine whether there were changes in peer interactions, a 5-year-old typically developing peer was selected because of frequent negative interactions with

the primary participant. To examine any changes in the teacher's interactions, her behavior patterns were recorded.

The study was conducted in two phases. In phase one, data from a FBA were used to identify components of a function-based intervention that were tested directly with ongoing classroom activities. The FBA involved conducting a structured interview and standardized questionnaire with the participant's mother and ECE staff. A-B-C data collection was obtained through structured observations and clear definitions of the target behaviors were provided. Based on data from the FBA, hypotheses were developed and tested within the context of the typical classroom. In phase two, a multicomponent intervention was derived from the FBA and implemented over time in multiple classroom activities (music, center activities and circle time). The intervention consisted of modifying routines, replacement skill instruction, and effective ways to respond to challenging behaviors. The staff participated in training prior to implementing intervention. Intervention data

Blair and colleagues defined and described the methodology and experimental control in detail allowing for replication and analysis. A social validity questionnaire that was completed by ECE staff resulted in an average rating of 4.5 (out of 5), which indicated strong support for the intervention. This measure is viewed as a strength of this study and of critical clinical importance as introducing a social skills intervention into the general education classroom will require the support of the teacher. IOA was reported to be between 87-100%. Treatment integrity data were collected to assess the degree to which intervention components were implemented with integrity (range= 92% - 96%). Observers used a rating scale (0-low, 1, 2-high) to assess a 10-item checklist

these interventions indicate some beneficial outcomes for children with ASD, more rigorous and controlled replication of these findings in future research studies has the potential to yield significantly more compelling evidence that prosocial training could be an effective intervention for increasing participation of children with ASD.