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## RaMP It UP! Training Peer Mentors in Reinforcement and Modeling with Prompting (RaMP)

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# RaMP it UP! Training Peer Mentors in Reinforcement and Modeling with Prompting

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# Challenges of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

(APA, 2015; Carpenter, 2013)

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## Social Interactions

A lack of social reciprocity skills, such as initiating and maintaining conversations by asking and answering questions and making appropriate comments

## Nonverbal Communication

Including not orienting towards a person, maintaining appropriate proximity and eye contact, looking/coming when called, and using nonverbal gestures or cues for communication, such as waving

## Restrictive/Repetitive Interests

Movements such as clapping, twisting, flapping, rocking, swaying, spinning, or picking; fixated on objects or interests and demonstrate repetitive speech.



# Evidence Based Practices

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Early Intervention

## Peer Mediated Instruction and Intervention

PMII is defined as when “typically developing peers interact with and/or help children and youth with ASD to acquire new behavior, communication, and social skills by increasing social and learning opportunities within natural environments” (Wong et al., 2014, p. 20).





Peer Networks  
Circle of Friends  
Buddy Skills  
Special Friends





# Problem Statement

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Children with autism are often ostracized by their peers due to their nonconforming social interaction skills and their limited interactions with others (Mancil et al., 2009; Koegel, 2011). Despite concerted efforts to expand the definition and nature of 'inclusion' in public school systems across the nation, this issue persists and negatively impacts such children even into adulthood (Bottema-Beutel, 2017).



# Problem Statement

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A possible contributing factor to this problem is that their typically developing peers have limited knowledge or awareness of how to support them in attaining and demonstrating appropriate social skills.



# Study Purpose



Autism Focused Intervention  
Resources & Modules

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Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine if providing an explicit training program for peer mentors in [reinforcement and modeling with prompting \(RaMP\)](#) using the research based [Autism Focused Intervention Resources \(AFIRM\)](#) modules (Sam, Griffin, & AFIRM Team, 2015) with an opportunity for [purposeful practice](#) could further support PMII by building a solid foundation of skills that Peer Mentors (PMs) could maintain.





## Evidence Based Practices

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Early Intervention



## Reinforcement

Wong et al. (2014) define reinforcement as “an event, activity, or other circumstance occurring after a learner engages in a desired behavior that leads to the increased occurrence of the behavior in the future” (p. 21).



# Evidence Based Practices

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Early Intervention



## Modeling

Wong et al. (2014) define modeling as the “demonstration of a desired target behavior that results in imitation of the behavior by the learner and that leads to the acquisition of the imitated behavior” (p. 20).

# Evidence Based Practices

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Early Intervention



## Prompting



McClannahan and Krantz (1999) define prompts as “instructions, gestures, demonstrations, touches, or other things that we arrange or do to increase the likelihood that children will make correct responses” (p. 37).



## Mursion

### Purposeful Practice

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Mixed Reality Simulations

Mursion, formerly TeachLivE, is a form of Mixed Reality Simulation (MRS) (Calandra & Puvirajah, 2014; Dieker et al., 2014; Kauffman & Ireland, 2016). TeachLivE™ uses a simulated environment to encourage the application of desired performance in the classroom (Dieker et al. 2018).





## *Definition of Social Reciprocity Skills to be implemented by the Mentees*

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Operational Definition</b>	<b>Examples/Non Examples</b>
<b>Makes comments on topic</b>	Verbal statement that reflects the same topic that is being discussed	I like cards. My favorite game is Minecraft. I would like to go there. Non-Example: I love space when discussing favorite games
<b>Asks questions on topic</b>	Making a statement that begins in “what, why, where, when, or how” in order to receive a response.	How are you? during a greeting. Who is your favorite character? when talking about a show. Non-Example: Do you have any candy? when talking about a show
<b>Answers questions on topic</b>	Verbal (e.g. yes/no or elaboration) response within 3-5 seconds following a question.	The answer is _____. Yes, I would like to _____. Non-Example: Making noises or grumbles in response or responding off topic.

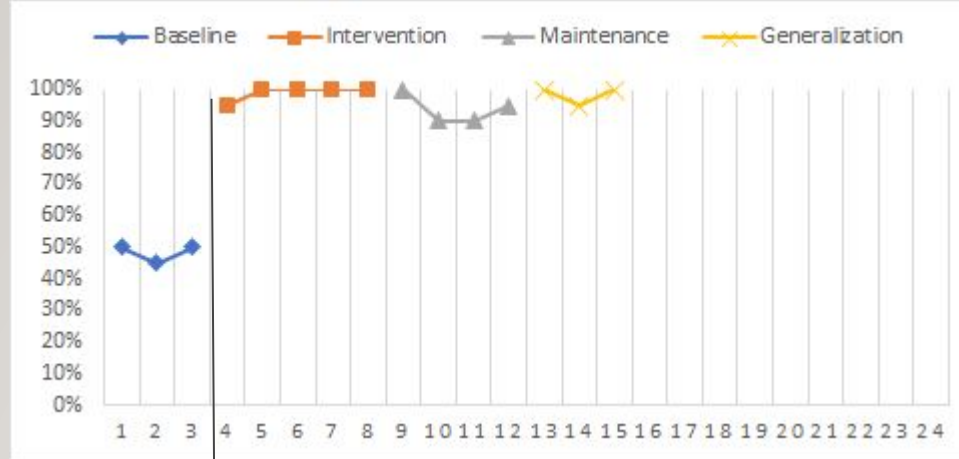


# COVID-19

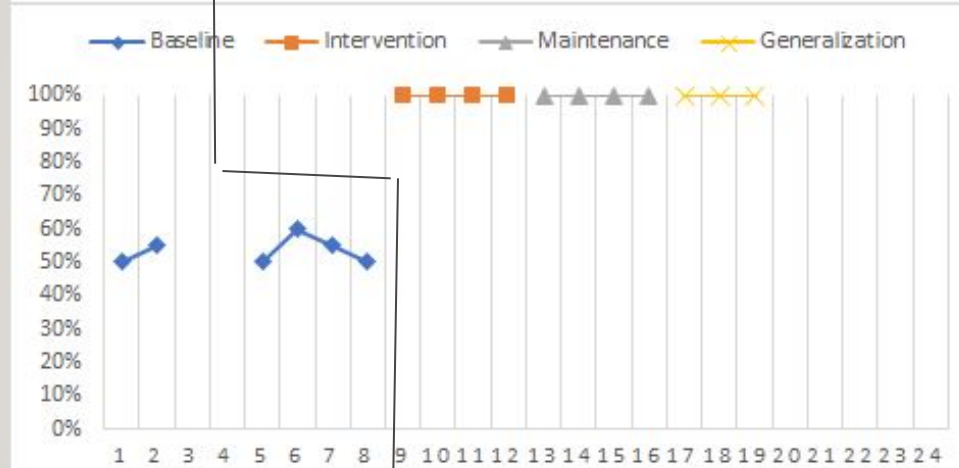
completed over zoom



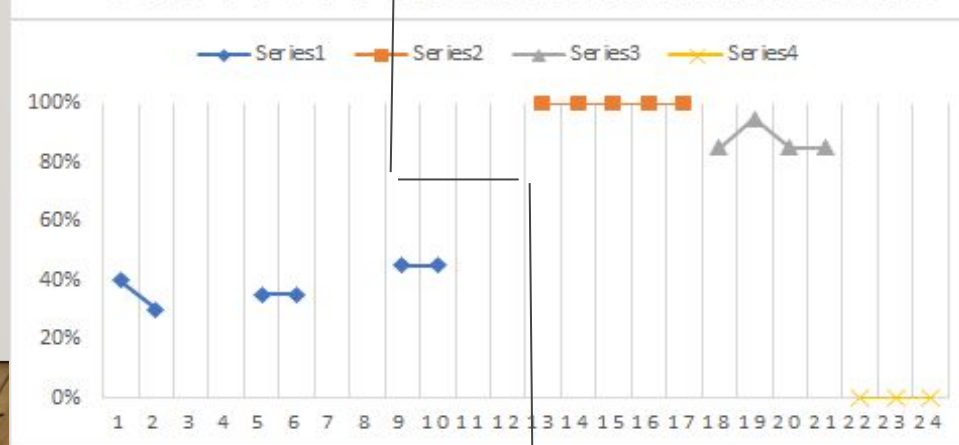
PMA increased from 45-50% at baseline to 95-100% in the maintenance phase.



PMB increased from 50-60% at baseline to 100% in the maintenance phase.



PMC increased from 30-45% at baseline to 85-95% in the maintenance phase.





# Implications for Future Research

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While this study focused on the gap in literature surrounding adolescent peer mentors, the RaMP training program can be provided to students in K-5 as well as at the university level.

