

RESEARCH SUMMARY:

Brief, Publically Available, Parent Report Measure of Peer Relationships May Be Valid for 5 to 12 Year-Old Children with ASD

Challenges in developing successful friendships with other children (peer relationships) is one of the most common problems for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). One way to measure the success of friendship is to have children or their parents complete a rating scale designed to evaluate whether the child feels valued and supported by peers. Researchers who are part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Patient Reported Outcome Measurement Information System (PROMIS) program have developed a short (eight items or less), publically available (at no charge), measure of peer relationships, but it was not known if this rating scale worked well for children with ASD.

We found that the PROMIS Peer Relationship Measure completed by a parent of 5- to 12-year-old children with ASD seemed to work well in the following ways:

- Parents thought the items on the measure were relevant to their child with ASD
- The measure identified some children with ASD who were having success in making friends and others who were having a lot of difficulty
- Results on this measure were similar to results on a much longer (65-item) measure of social skills specifically developed for children with ASD

The PROMIS Peer Relationship Measure may provide a short, freely available way to measure peer relationships in children with ASD. Future research with this measure should be done to determine if the measure detects changes in peer relationships as a result of treatments for ASD.

Reference:

Toomey M, Schwartz J, Laverdiere M, Tucker C, Bevans K, Forrest CB, Blum NJ. Preliminary Validation of the PROMIS Pediatric Parent-Proxy Peer Relationships Measure in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A DBPNet Study. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*. 2016 Nov-Dec;37(9):724-729. PMID: 27801722