Intervention Name: Social Competence Intervention (SCI)

Setting: Small-group

Focus Areas: Acquisition and Generalization

Function of Intervention:
>The goal of the SCI intervention is to assist youth and adolescents with Higher Functioning Autism (HFA), and similar social skills deficits, in acquiring targeted social skills. SCI is an intervention designed to explicitly teach and reinforce appropriate social behaviors through the use of discussion, role play, and game like activities that can be implemented during the targeted group-based social skills instructions time. SCI incorporates several evidence-based practices in the design and delivery of the curriculum, including Cognitive Behavior Intervention (CBI) and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), as well as the research-based behavioral strategy differential reinforcement of alternative behaviors through dependent group contingencies, token economy, and teacher praise.

Brief Description:
>SCI is a social competence intervention developed by Stichter et al. (2010) that combines both cognitive-behavioral and applied behavior analysis principals within a group-based structure. Specifically, the intervention is designed to enhance the social competence needs of elementary, middle school, and high school youth with social skill deficits. Each version provides structure, consistency, and scaffolding for three specific age ranges (Elementary: 6-10; Adolescent: 11-14; High School: 14-18) to assist in skill acquisition and maintenance. It is best used for the HFA population, and others who exhibit similar social skills deficits. This intervention is structured with scaffolded instruction in the following targeted social skills units: recognizing facial expressions, sharing ideas using the appropriate speaker and listener skills, turn taking in conversations, understanding feelings and emotions, and problem solving.

Procedures:
- **Duration**: Each SCI curricula has approximately five units comprised of 20-32 total lessons, delivered twice a week, 45 or 60 minute each session.
- **Teacher training**: Teachers must read and become familiar with the SCI manual and curriculum. Teachers can also request a formal comprehensive SCI training or read the manual to learn about SCI delivery.
- **Instructional practices**: Teachers follow the instructional delivery, timing, and process guidelines provided within manualized SCI lesson plans. While delivering curriculum content, teachers should consistently provide specific verbal feedback and SCI behavioral system, when necessary.
- **Feedback/Token Economy system**: With SCI, students have the opportunity to earn marbles, paired with specific verbal feedback throughout the lesson. Specific verbal

feedback should be delivered both positively and in relation to curricular content, and is provided within each lesson plan. If the small group reaches the unit goal, they receive the opportunity to participate in a reward lesson at the end of each unit.

- **Behavior System**: The teacher is responsible for using the passes/warnings/strikes system. The teacher reminds the student of how many passes/warnings/strikes they have, how many they have left, and what desired behavior they would like to happen next. The teacher marks the tally of students' passes/warnings/strikes on a behavior tracker.

Critical Components that must be implemented for intervention to be successful:
Teachers are recommended to address the process of delivery components and content stated within lesson plans. Teachers must use the behavior system immediately, with appropriate reminders, and instructional feedback. Also, ensure students in attendance receive positive specific verbal feedback consistently throughout each of the five units. It is important that students are not allowed to use a pass during any of the student collaborative activities, and instead the implementer must allow the student time to think, or observe, and come back to the student's response before moving on to something else.

Critical Assumptions/Problem-Solving Questions to be Asked:
Even though the intervention is manualized, it is helpful for teachers to have materials prepared, know how to explain activity directions, and monitor for students' comprehension. As teachers observe students, prompts should be provided to help students complete an activity, work with others, and participate in discussion.

Materials: Teachers must purchase the appropriate SCI curricular materials by visiting sci.missouri.edu
Materials included in a curricular tub:
- 5 Unit binders (corresponding lesson plans)
- 1 training manual
- Curricular posters
- 1 marble kit, digital timer, and mirror
- 1 flash drive with all saved materials
- 7 dry erase markers and student folders
- 1 game piece bag (bingo chips, pawns, dice, and sand timer)
- 1 tallest tower activity kit

References
Schultz, T. R., Stichter, J. P., Herzog, M. J., McGhee, S. D., & Lierheimer, K. (2012). Social competence intervention for parents (SCI-P): comparing outcomes for a parent education program targeting adolescents with ASD. Autism research and treatment, 2012.
Stichter, J. P., Herzog, M. J., Visovsky, K., Schmidt, C., Randolph, J., Schultz, T., & Gage, N. (2010). Social competence intervention for youth with Asperger syndrome and high-functioning autism: An initial investigation. Journal of autism and developmental disorders, 40(9), 1067-1079.
Stichter, J. P., Laffey, J., Galyen, K., & Herzog, M. (2014). iSocial: Delivering the social competence intervention for adolescents (SCI-A) in a 3D virtual learning environment for

youth with high functioning autism. *Journal of autism and developmental disorders,* 44(2), 417-430.

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