

**Application of Reinforcement and Prompting to Develop Assertion,
Empathy, and Engagement in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
(ASD)**

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Abstract

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder characterized by abnormalities in social functioning, language and communication, as well as behaviors and unusual interests. Children with ASD have a core characteristic of a lack of social skills. Early childhood is the age at which children begin to learn basic social behavior, in preparation for entry into the broader social environment. Therefore, this study aims to develop social skills in children with ASD early childhood age. Early childhood age also known as the age of play, so this study apply the settings of cooperative play, which provides an opportunity to initiate social interaction with others. This study is a single case design by using measuring method of pre-test and post-test to measure social skills from subject. Measuring instruments used are Social Skills Improvement System-Rating Scale (SSIS-RS) that divides social skills in seven dimensions, namely cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, self-control, communication and engagement. Pre-test results showed three lowest social skills' dimensions on the subject, which are assertion, empathy, and engagement. The three dimension become the target of social behavior that wants to develop in subject with ASD. Behavior modification techniques such as reinforcement and prompting applied as it provides learning experiences that can be adapted to form a behavior, which directs the emergence of desired behavior. In this case, the subject must be able to show social behavior in the form of assertion, empathy, and engagement while playing cooperatively with other participants. The method of reinforcement and prompting in setting cooperative play be able to develop social skills, in particular assertion, empathy, and engagement of subject with ASD.

Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), social skills, reinforcement, prompting, cooperative play