HELPING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH ASD DEVELOP AND SUSTAIN PEER RELATIONSHIPS

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Purpose: To develop and study a comprehensive high school program for students on the autism spectrum

Worked in 30 high schools implementing peer-based interventions

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FIND CSESA

http://csesa.fpg.unc.edu/
REALITIES OF ASD

“Our kids are alone. They made it through high school somehow – poorly or well. But they are all alone. They don’t go to dances, they don’t go bowling, and it is not because they do not want to.”

-Parent from CSESA focus group

“These students finish high school and then go and sit on the couch...”
WHAT CAN WE DO IN HIGH SCHOOL SETTINGS TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES?

- **Peer Mediated Intervention** involves training peers as interventionists, such as initiating social interaction, providing academic support (e.g., peer tutoring), and serving as responsive social partners for students with ASD.
PEER NETWORK EXAMPLE
PEER SUPPORT EXAMPLE
WHY PMI?

I never understood how social students with disabilities really are. Getting to know Justin has really opened my eyes to my peers with disabilities.

Almost a quarter of students on standard diploma track (22.5%) did not have any social interactions with peers at school during the two week period and almost two thirds (62.8% of students) did not have any regular social partners.

I didn’t think I was going to become so close to this person, but I did, which is cool.

I have a better understanding of Kristine. I know she is smart and has a distinct personality. I feel like I know how to interact with anyone who has a disability.
FIND CHAMPIONS AT THE SCHOOL
SCHOOL CHAMPIONS: STAFF

- Move beyond special education staff
- Staff with a personal interest in ASD
- Personal friends
- Staff with high social capital
- Club facilitators
SCHOOL CHAMPION: STAFF

- Help recruit peers
- Help recruit staff
- Spread the word about the benefits
- Help organize groups
- Help facilitate group

What is a peer network?
- A peer network is created when 4-5 students are partnered together and they socialize. Together they form a peer network.

What does a peer network look like?
- Hanging out together before or after school and having conversations just like you would with any other friend
- Eating lunch together, talking about your day, talking about what you are going to do over the weekend...

Why create peer networks?
- Have fun!
- Make other peer feel comfortable and included
- Meet new people

How can you help other people feel included?
- Say “hi” to your network members in between classes
- Walk with students in your network to their classes
- Hangout with students in your network before or after school or during lunch
- Other suggestions?

What is your role as a peer partner?
- Be kind!
- Make other people feel comfortable and included
- Help students learn the “rules of the road”!

Questions for the Experts!
- What are the social customs at your high school?
- How can we help other students learn those social customs?
- What should you do if you see someone in your network getting bullied?
- What if someone asks you a question about a member in your peer network?

Benefits of being in a peer network:
- Meet new people
- Talk with people who have similar interests as you
- Help make school more welcoming for everyone
SCHOOL CHAMPIONS: STUDENTS

- Look for leadership or service-oriented groups/clubs
- Engage students who are already connected with students with ASD
- High social capital
FIND WHERE INTERACTIONS ARE ALREADY HAPPENING AND FORMALIZE THEM
OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

- Clubs that interest students with ASD (e.g. anime, Harry Potter, games, movies)
- Sports teams with student managers
COMMON INTERESTS

Pokémon Go

Top 10 Disney Songs

COMMON INTERESTS
IN THE CLASSROOM

- Classes that attract students with ASD
- Classes that allow for collaboration
JUMP IN ON EXISTING SCHOOL INITIATIVES
Service-Learning Implementation

Each school will develop a strategy to ensure that all students can fully participate in service-learning projects during their years in high school. For the graduating classes of 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 ONLY schools can choose from among the following options:

- One classroom-integrated service-learning project + 25 individual service hours
- Two classroom-integrated service-learning projects + 15 individual service hours
- Three classroom-integrated service-learning projects
ANTI-BULLYING CAMPAIGNS
CREATE NEW SCHOOL INITIATIVES
LINK TO TRANSITION RELATED GOALS
PARTNER WITH PEERS AT JOBS AROUND THE SCHOOL

Athletic Trainer
CTE Experts
(e.g. auto mechanic, marketing)
Grounds Crew
Resource Officer
Coach
CTE Experts
(e.g., lighting, sound)
Instructional Technology
Teacher
Data Entry
Clerical Staff
How can our students help to make your job easier while gaining valuable job skills? 📜

The team in Room 220 is looking for school-based job opportunities for our students and wants to help you do your job! Our students can:

- Copy
- Collate
- Cut
- Laminating
- Shred
- Stamping
- Staple/hole punch
- Make deliveries on campus
- Sort mail/mailboxes
- Clean (e.g., tables, bookshelves in media center, floors, lockers)
- Package items/stuff envelopes
- Do/fold laundry (for foods, athletics, etc.)
- Wash dishes
- Shelf books or office supplies
- Water plants
- Recycle/trash
- Collecting library books
- Any other ideas you have— we’re open!

We would love re-occurring jobs that we could put in our weekly schedule but we would happily take one-time jobs too. All students will be well supported by staff and jobs will be completed quickly and accurately!

Please contact Ms. Char Rhinehart in Room 220- stop by or email crhinehart@wcps.net with your job ideas!

We’re great workers and would love an opportunity from you.
MICROENTERPRISE

• Ensure campus businesses include students with and without disabilities
TIPS:
TOUT THE BENEFITS FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED
TIPS:
BE CREATIVE IN YOUR GROUPINGS/PAIRING
TIPS:
MAKE ACTIVITIES FUN!
FAVORITE ACTIVITIES

- Jenga (add questions)
- Apples to Apples
- Catch Phrase
- Uno*
- Last Word
- UnGame
- Headbanz
- Quick Cups*
- Suspend*
- Cranium
- Cooking*
- Crafts (tie dye, banners)*
TIPS:
USE TECHNOLOGY TO MAKE THINGS EASIER

Freq varies by user/mo.
Msg&data rates may apply.
Reply STOP to cancel

Jessica Steinbrenner

Remind Updates: You've been added to Mrs. Royster's class!
Try the app rmd.me
Freq varies by user/mo. Reply HELP for help. STOP to cancel. Msg&data rates may apply

Wednesday 8:52 AM

Mrs. Royster: Peer Network during 3rd lunch today! :) We have Apples to Apples!

Today 8:41 AM

Mrs. Royster: Hi Peer Network! We'll do lunch again next Wednesday April 22! ;) See if you guys can get Matthew to say, "Hi" during the week!
TIPS:

EMPHASIZE CONNECTIONS HAPPENING OUTSIDE OF THE GROUP/CLASS
TIPS:

BELIEVE IN THE CAPACITY OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!
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