

Social Cognition in Autism Spectrum Disorder

Resources for Adult Clients/Families

Difficulty with social cognition is characteristic of autism spectrum disorder. Understanding different social settings and communicating effectively can be challenging, even for verbal adults without intellectual disability. The good news is that it is possible to develop and improve social cognitive skills.



What can I do to build my social cognition skills?

- Dr. Paul Ekman's Micro Expressions Training Tools (www.paulekman.com) may be helpful in learning to identify facial expressions in others.
- Ask questions and get clarification when talking to people.
- Observe the social setting. How are people behaving? What subjects are people talking about?
- Pay attention to what people say and their facial expressions. Try to establish eye contact with other people.
- Be careful where you place your trust. Do not assume everyone is honest or trustworthy. Talk with a trusted family member or friend before you give or loan money to others.
- Consider that other people may have perspectives that are different than yours. Remain open to the opinions and interests of others.
- Cognitive Enhancement Therapy - an innovative 18-month comprehensive cognitive remediation approach that targets problems in social cognition. It is a small group approach that integrates training in attention, memory and problem solving with social cognitive group sessions. Opportunities to participate in CET will be coming soon to PA.



Pitt Center for Excellence
in Autism Research

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