

# Social Cognition in Autism Spectrum Disorder

## Resources for Professionals

### How to Help:

Difficulties with social cognition are hallmark characteristics of autism spectrum disorder and lead to significant functional impairment, even in verbal adult clients without co-occurring intellectual disability.



### Strategies/Interventions that could help:

- Dr. Paul Ekman's facial emotion training: [www.paulekman.com](http://www.paulekman.com)
- Being clear and direct, people with autism have trouble picking up on subtle cues
- Avoiding complex sentences - Break sentences down into smaller main points or 'gists'
- Difficulty understanding the intentions of others and poor social context appraisal can put individuals at risk to be taken advantage of. Caution your clients about 'lending' money to others; as well as phone or internet scams
- 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 neurocognitive training and social cognitive group sessions. Training in CET will be coming soon to PA.



**Pitt** Center for Excellence  
in Autism Research

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