Challenges in developing successful friendships with other children (peer relationships) is one of the most common problems for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). One way to measure the success of friendship is to have children or their parents complete a rating scale designed to evaluate whether the child feels valued and supported by peers. Researchers who are part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Patient Reported Outcome Measurement Information System (PROMIS®) program have developed a short (8 items or less), publically available (at no charge), measure of peer relationships, but it was not known if this rating scale worked well for children with ASD.

We found that the PROMIS Peer Relationship Measure completed by a parent of 5 to 12 year old children with ASD seemed to work well in the following ways:

- Parents thought the items on the measure were relevant to their child with ASD
- The measure identified some children with ASD who were having success in making friends and others who were having a lot of difficulty
- Results on this measure were similar to results on a much longer (65-item) measure of social skills specifically developed for children with ASD

The PROMIS Peer Relationship Measure may provide a short, freely available way to measure peer relationships in children with ASD. Future research with this measure should be done to determine if the measure detects changes in peer relationships as a result of treatments for ASD.


DBPNet is supported by cooperative agreement UA3MC20218 from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.