

**Interventions for Elementary  
School-Aged Children with  
Level One or Two Autism  
Spectrum Disorder**

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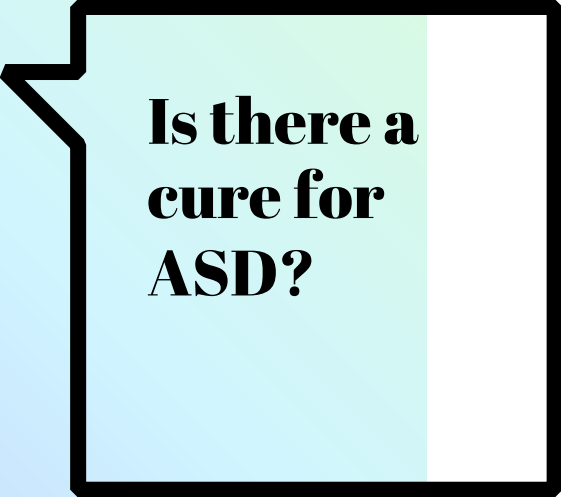


## **What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?**

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder that is persistent throughout the course of one's life (Yates & Le Couteur, 2016).

Characteristics of ASD include abnormalities in behaviors related to social interaction and communication.

Some individuals with ASD may have mild behavioral symptoms, while others may experience more severe behavioral symptoms.



**Is there a  
cure for  
ASD?**

According to the CDC (2019), there currently is no “cure” for ASD.

However, there are several forms of intervention used to minimize certain symptoms and behaviors of individuals with ASD.



## **Thesis**

The aim of the present essay is to explore forms of intervention and their effectiveness in reducing negative behaviors of ASD for elementary school-aged children diagnosed with Level One or Level Two ASD. The hypothesis of the present study is that peer and interventions, play therapy interventions, interventions utilizing electronics, music therapy interventions, and art therapy interventions are useful in improving certain skills in elementary school-aged children with ASD. Observations of a child with ASD are included in this essay in order to support the effectiveness of these forms of intervention.



## **Peer Interventions**

Several studies have found that peer interventions are helpful in increasing social interaction in children with ASD.

For example, Watkins et al. (2018) investigated the use of peer intervention to increase the social interaction of children with ASD. The authors found that there was an increase in responses, initiations, and interactive play for all of the children.



## **Art Therapy**

Art therapy has been shown to improve certain skills of elementary school aged children with ASD. For example, D'Amico and Lalonde (2017) explored how art therapy can help with increasing the social skills of children with ASD. The authors reported that this form of art therapy had a positive impact on the social skills of the children. The therapy reduced the symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity of the children as well.



## **Music Therapy**

Evidence suggests that music therapy is a promising intervention in improving certain skills of children with ASD. For example, Rose et al. (2018) conducted a case study in which they examined how learning a musical instrument could benefit an eight-year-old boy with ASD, ADHD, sensory processing difficulties, dyslexia, and dyspraxia. After one year of learning an instrument, the boy's scores for fluid intelligence and motor skills had increased.



## **Play Therapy**

There is evidence suggesting that play therapy may be useful in improving certain skills of children with ASD.

For example, Nelson et al. (2017) conducted a study examining the use of play with play materials that are preferred, dance activities, and a complex play environment to improve the social and play skills of children with ASD.

The results indicated that the strategies utilized to improve the skills of social play, specific social play, and play complexity were useful in improving all three skills. However, the children did not retain the skills that they had learned.





## **Therapy Involving The Use of Electronics**

Interventions through the use of electronics have also been shown to improve certain skills of children with ASD.

Chung (2019) examined how the use of robots may be helpful in improving the social skills of children with ASD. The participants in the study included fourteen children with ASD between the ages of nine and eleven. The children participated in a social skills program utilizing a humanoid robot.

Chung (2019) reported that the program increased the children's frequency of duration of eye contact and verbal initiation.



## **Research Question**

The main research question of the present essay is to examine the effectiveness of various types of interventions for elementary school-aged children with level one or two symptoms of ASD.

The hypothesis of the present essay is that interventions such as peer therapy, music therapy, art therapy, and therapy utilizing electronics are effective forms of intervention for children with Level One or Two severities of ASD.



## **Observations**

The observations of the child with ASD supported the hypothesis and many of the ideas in the literature review.

It was evident that the use of electronics, the use of play, and the use of peer interaction all had a positive effect on improving certain skills of the child.



## **Implications**

The present research may be beneficial for parents and teachers in trying to figure out which interventions may be most effective for children with Level One or Level Two ASD.

The present observations need further research in order to draw conclusions. Parents and teachers should conduct further research on their own in order to see whether play therapy, peer/parent initiated therapy, music therapy, art therapy, therapy utilizing electronics, or other forms of therapy are most effective for their children.

## References

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