Pragmatic Language Outcomes of Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder After Therapist- and Parent-Delivered Play-Based Interventions: Two One-Group Pretest–Posttest Studies with a Longitudinal Component

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE.
The pragmatic language outcomes of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) were explored across two feasibility studies.

METHOD.
Five children with ADHD (ages 6–11 yr), their parents, and 5 typically developing peers completed an assessment 18 mo after a therapist-delivered intervention (Study 1). Participants then completed a parent-delivered intervention (Study 2). Blinded ratings of peer-to-peer play interactions documented changes in children’s pragmatic language 18 mo after the Study 1 intervention and before, immediately after, and 1 mo after the Study 2 intervention. Nonparametric statistics and Cohen’s d were used to measure change.

RESULTS.
Children’s pragmatic language outcomes were maintained 18 mo after the therapist-delivered intervention and significantly improved from before to 1 mo after the parent-delivered intervention.

CONCLUSION.
Interventions involving occupational therapist and speech–language pathologist collaboration, play, and parent and peer involvement may facilitate children’s pragmatic language skills.