

Using TECHNOLOGY in Social Skills Groups to Reduce Social Anxiety in Children

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What We'll Cover Today

- Main points on social anxiety
- Brief overview of LUNCH Groups™ Model for improving social skills
- Video examples showing how we incorporate technology and social skill training
- Live Demos

Learning

Understanding

Negotiating

Communicating

Helping

Brief Review of Social Anxiety

- Second most common of all anxiety disorders
- Can be associated with the following:
 - OCD
 - Autistic Spectrum Disorders
 - Generalized Social Anxiety

Is Group Always Appropriate?

- Must consider symptom severity
- Presence of co-morbid disorders
- Level of client motivation

Target Symptoms to Consider Addressing in Group

- Behavioral rigidity associated with fear
- Reduced eye contact and body orientation
- Limited conversations
- Reduced participation
- Difficulty entering novel situations
- Anxiety when speaking in front of others
- Generalized avoidance
- Panic attacks
- Negative response to autonomic arousal
- Reduced attention
- Excessive self-monitoring
- Exaggeration fear of perceived negative social events



LUNCH GROUPS

Learning Understanding Negotiating Communicating Helping

Our Philosophy

The best way to reduce problem behaviors and interfering anxiety is to **build, strengthen, and maintain positive social, language, and executive functioning skills**



LUNCH GROUPS

Learning Understanding Negotiating Communicating Helping

**Even if you are not dealing with
“classic” social anxiety, many
students have interfering anxiety in
social situations that requires
intervention**

Our Social Skills Model

- Program divided into three tiers:
- Students
 - 7 1/2 to 12
 - 12-17
- Adults
 - 18+ (typically up to 40)

Our Social Skills Model

- **School Year program:** Oct to May (2.5 hours per session, twice monthly, includes meal)
- **Summer Intensive program** (2-3 times per week, 4-5 hours per session, includes snack and meal)
- Up to 14 students per group (1 adults per 3-4 students)
- Parent support (in person, email, tele-conference)
- Ongoing data collection (online, behavior observations)
- Heterogenous population (Externalizers, Internalizers, Mixed)

Main Elements

1. Approximate classroom-type setting
2. Combine academic, behavioral, and social activities
3. Incorporate rapid changes, unexpected elements
4. Create opportunities to handle disappointment and maintain emotional control
5. Behavior generalization component (LUNCH Points)
6. Parent support / progress reporting / meetings
7. Focus on quick decision-making and problem solving
8. Quickly provide brief negative consequence for problem behaviors, followed by opportunities to exhibit positive behavior

Main Interventions

1. Social reinforcement for positive behaviors
2. Raffle tickets (contingent/ noncontingent)
3. Video and Participant Modeling
4. Interspersed Requests
5. Behavioral Rehearsal/ Positive Practice
6. Cognitive reprocessing
7. DRO (Differential Reinforcement of Other Behaviors)
8. Time Away
9. Extinction “on steroids”
10. Social Punishment

Acceptance Criteria

- 2nd grade reading level
- Pedestrian safe
- Follows one-step instructions
- Health issues not a concern
- Remains seated for 5 minutes
- Student has stated they are willing to try program

Exclusion Criteria

1. Mental Retardation
2. Active substance abuse
3. Active psychotic behavior / reality testing impairment
4. Violence at school during past 6 months

None of these automatically disqualify a student from participating, but they do sometimes require further review and occur on a case-by-case basis

Session Structure

- Picking up (next door at local market)
- Walking to office (look for the oval pattern)
- Entering the waiting room (quietly and casually)
- Settling in and orientation (conversational buzz)
- LUNCH Points (online program for parents generated by students)
- Projects (short-term, long-term)
- Switching activities (vary the pace)
- Going out to eat (variety of eating situations)
- Community Activities / BBQs (occur as special events once the group is exhibiting a sense of cohesion and control)
- Dropping off (quick and clean, ask parents **NOT** to ask their kids "how did it go?")

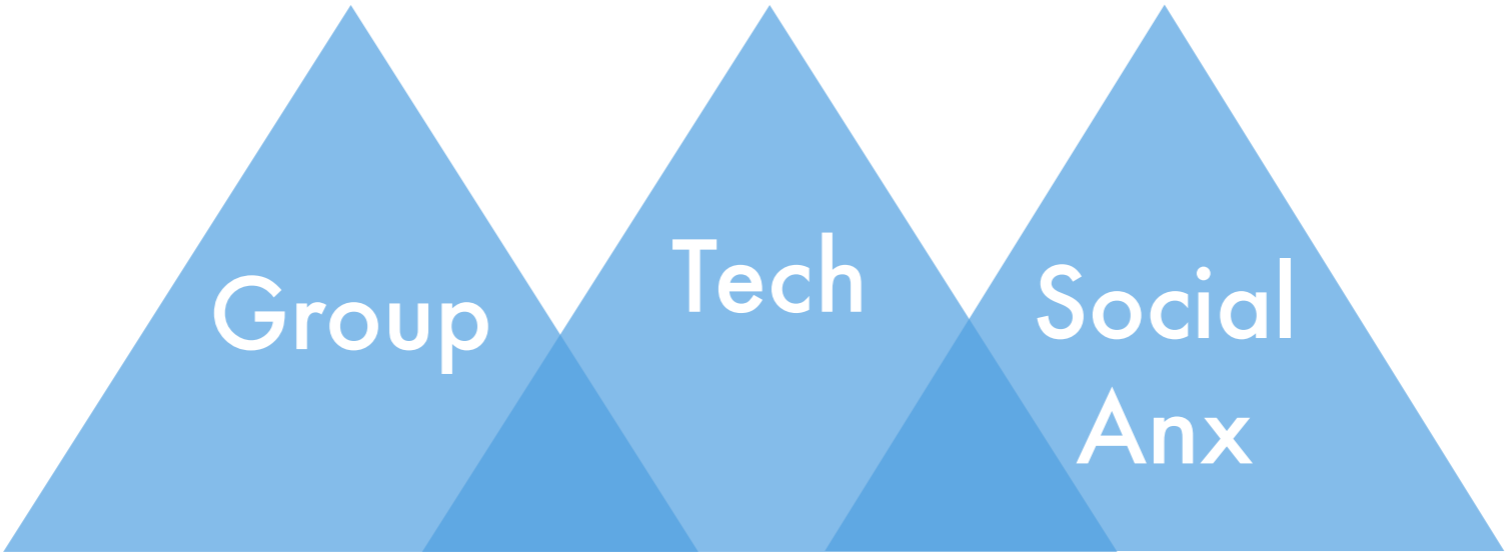
Staffing

- One licensed therapist
- One coordinator
- Trained staff member for every 3-4 students

Parent Support/Reporting

- In office meetings
- Parent dinners
- Telemeetings
- Email consultations
- Blogging (real-time)
- Audio Progress notes
- Pictures and Videos
- Surveys (Rapid Screener™ - an online multi-rater behavioral assessment tool, part of the C-BATT®)

Using Technology Effectively





Group



Tech



Social
Anx

Social Skills Program (LUNCH Groups)

- Focus on the following:
 - Executive Functioning
 - Pragmatic Language
 - Pragmatic Social
 - Academic Readiness/Success
 - Environmental Awareness
- Quickly switching and repeating activities helps with
 - Desensitization to fear cues
 - Opportunities for social reinforcement
 - Problem-solving through challenging situations

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Tech

Acts as a "Hook" and Motivates Students

- Types of Technology:
 - Cartoon-making Programs
 - Narrating animations
 - Filming as Avatars
 - "Feed-forward" video techniques
 - Wii and other video games
 - Outside data collection and progress monitoring (LUNCH Points module)
 - Tele-meetings, blogging, and audio progress notes keep families "in the loop" regarding progress and strategies

Social Anx

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Social Anx

Specific Treatment Enhancements

- Facilitates the following:
 - Role-playing via avatars and story or script writing
 - Allows for participant modeling opportunities
 - Provides in-vivo opportunities to change automatic or unconscious perception of danger or humiliation
 - Process of using technology creates opportunities to participate at variety of levels, i.e., graduated exposure
 - Helps with desensitization to interoceptive conditioned cues

Types of Technology Used

Digital Audio Recorders

- Varies by quality, features, and price
- Computers can record
- Portable Units
- **Never mention last names on recording**



Saitek Bluetooth Speaker



Audio Engine A2 Speakers



Audio Engine Wireless Connectors



Blue - Snowball



Digital Recorders



Digital/Video Cameras

- Digital Cameras take adequate video
- Computers have cameras
- Some cameras have special effects
- **Confidentiality Issues**



Computer Animation

- Hollywood/
Hollywood High
- Logitech Cameras



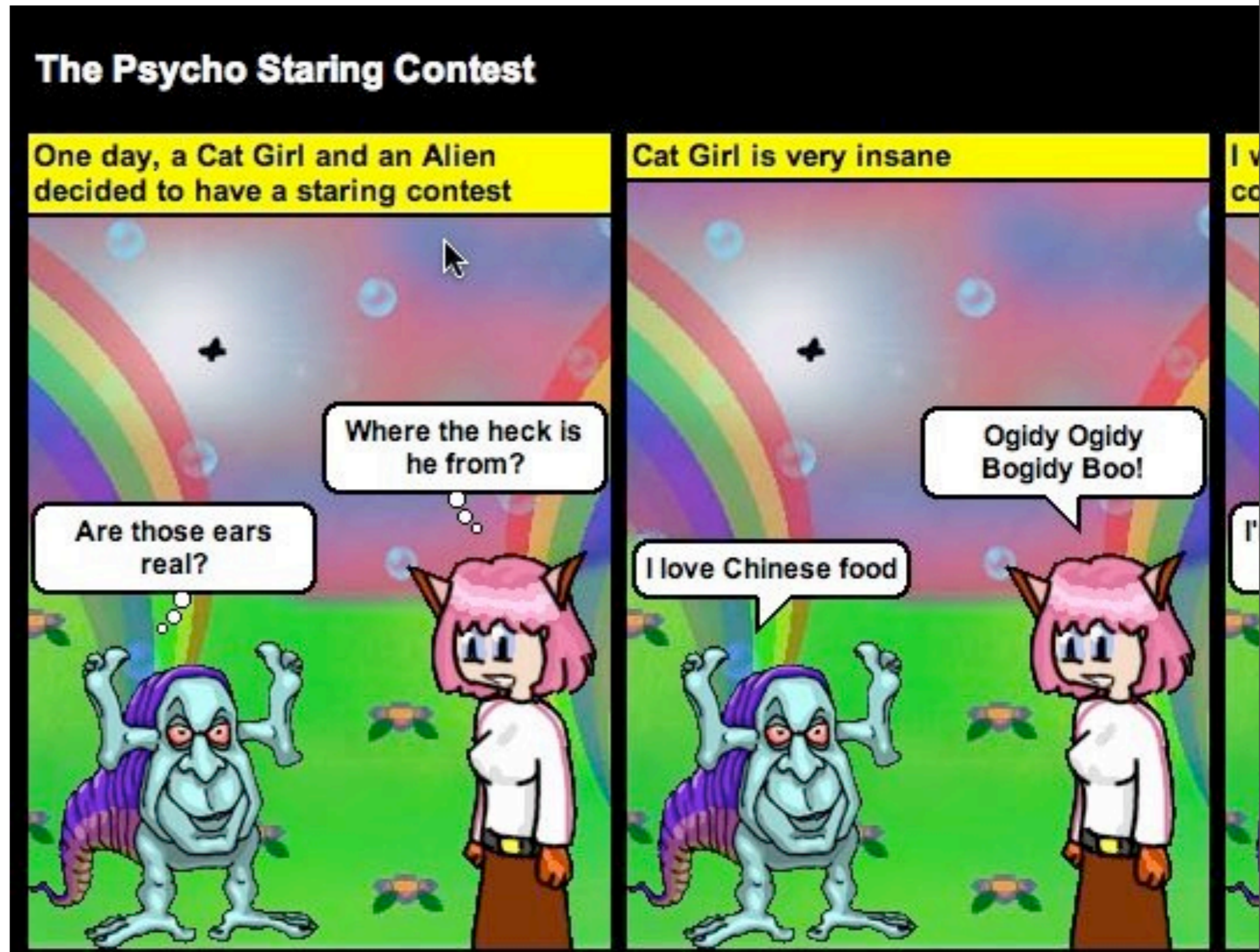
News Casting/TV Commercials

- Visual Communicator (PC)
- Video Cue (Mac)



Comics/Other Animation

- Strip Creator
- Gizmoz
- Morphing Programs (e.g., Morpheus)



Comics/Other Animation

- Screen Capture Software
 - Jing (PC/Mac free)
 - Snapz Pro (Mac)
 - Camtasia (PC, Mac coming this summer - Captioning/508)
 - Snagit (PC - Great!)

Websites/Online PowerPoint

- **Online PowerPoint/Word Processors** - Shows behaviors students are working on (Gdocs, Zoho, Acrobat)
- **Web Sites** - Showcase projects or describe the group (Google Sites / Zoho, Youtube, Screencast)
- **Closed Social Networks** - Create a space for parents to discuss concerns (Ning, PB Wiki, Wiki Spaces, Zoho) - **requires monitoring**

Project Examples

- Show them online cartoons and reinforce for not laughing excessively
- Set up a “rapid fire” cartoon designed for teaching waiting, quick decision-making
- Outing - everything must be shared, made a video of it and have them narrate over it
- Long-term project (to view examples, visit YouTube, type behaviortech) to see bullying project -- be sure to see how we did it at the end)

Technology Demos

Context of Treatment

- Technology is just a “hook”
- Must have solid interventions as core

This video shows how we combine different tasks and edit videos for “Feed Forward.” Also shows an example of effective ways to work with students with SA in group settings

“ADAA Demo”

This student used to become extremely upset if he made a mistake. Listen for the “flub” and how he handles it

Avatar Demo

“A Duck Walks into...”

Example of using cartoon software: Every student gets a part. Scene, characters, voice quality, dialogue, sound effects, facial expressions. Still, needs a story.

Hollywood Demo

"Appear and Disappear"

Live Demos

This is where Bruce remembers to switch computers and move over the his little Netbook to demo "Hollywood"

For more information visit
www.brucegale.com

THANKS!

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technology newsletter at
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