

BACKGROUND

Social skills deficits are one of the hallmark features of adolescents with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders (HFASD). Compared to typically developing peers, adolescents with HFASD are reported to have fewer friends, poorer friendship quality, experience higher levels of loneliness and risks of mental health difficulties such as depression and anxiety (Bauminger & Kasari, 2000; Church, Alisanki, & Amanullah, 2000). Yet there are few social skills interventions developed specifically for them, and even fewer have carried out social skills training in their most naturalistic settings – schools.

To investigate the utility of an abridged cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) based intervention, delivered by trained school personnel, in developing social interaction skills in adolescents with HFASD within a school context in Singapore.

PARTICIPANTS

Nine male adolescents with ASD (no cognitive impairment), aged between 12 – 15 years old, were recruited from four mainstream secondary schools in Singapore

Ethnicity: Chinese ($n = 7$); Malay ($n = 1$); Eurasian ($n = 1$)

No additional diagnosis of adolescent psychiatric disorders and/or was receiving any social skills intervention

Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-2; Constantino & Gruber, 2012) Baseline Total Score: $M = 68.44$; $SD = 4.22$

Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A; La Greca, 1999) Baseline Total Score: M

