STAY–PLAY–TALK

Teacher Implementation Checklist Part 2

Supporting & Monitoring Play

After the peer buddy/buddies has been trained to use Stay–Play–Talk, begin providing opportunities for the peer buddy and focal child to play together. During these play sessions, support the peer buddy as needed and gradually reduce your support as the children become more successful interacting together.

1. Setting Up the Play Session for the Peer Buddy & Focal Child

□ I selected a natural time for peer play, such as free play, centers, sensory play, or outdoor play.

□ I selected play materials that both children enjoy and that encourage playing together.

□ When possible, I offered the children a choice of play materials or activities.

□ Before play began, I briefly reminded the peer buddy to Stay, Play, and Talk using the visual.

2. Supporting Play & Interaction

□ I stayed nearby to check in with the play group while giving the children opportunities to interact independently.

□ When the children were not interacting, I first used the **Stay–Play–Talk** visual to remind the peer buddy of a certain strategy by pointing to the picture.

□ If the peer buddy needed more help, I added a brief verbal prompt or instruction.

For example:

- **Stay:** “Stay with your friend in the kitchen area.”
- **Play**: “Show your friend how you can play together with the blocks.”
- **Talk**: “Ask your friend a question.” or “Give your friend a choice.”

□ If the focal child needs help responding to the peer buddy, I provide brief support as needed (e.g., allow more time, repeat or simplify the peer buddy's message, offer a choice, or model a response or play action).

□ I provided specific positive feedback when the peer buddy used the strategies successfully.

□ I avoided stepping in when the children were already interacting successfully.

3. Reviewing the Play Session

□ At the end of play, I briefly reviewed Stay–Play–Talk with the peer buddy.

□ I helped the peer buddy reflect on their strategy use using the visual:

- Did I stay with my friend?
- Did I play with my friend?
- Did I talk with my friend?

□ I gave the peer buddy specific feedback and praise about what they did well.

□ When needed, I gave the peer buddy one simple suggestion to try during the next play opportunity.

4. Monitoring Progress & Fading Support

□ I watched for whether the focal child was interacting and playing more with the peer buddy, not just whether the peer buddy used the strategies.

□ As the peer buddy used the strategies more independently, I reduced my prompts and support.

□ I continued providing opportunities for the children to use Stay-Play-Talk during the school day.

Part2: Reflection & Adjusting

- Were the focal child and peer buddy playing and interacting together?
- Which Stay–Play–Talk strategies did the peer buddy use successfully? Which may need more support?
- Did the focal child interact and play with the peer buddy?
- Could I reduce my support during the next play session?
- Are the pairing, activity, and materials working well for both children?
- What is one small change I can try next time?

Adapted from: Fedewa, M. P., Watkins, L., Carden, K., & Grbac, G. (2025). Effects of a teacher-facilitated peer-mediated intervention on social play of preschoolers with autism. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 55(5), 1595-1614 and Milam, M. E., Velez, M. S., Hemmeter, M. L., & Barton, E. E. (2018). Implementing peer-mediated interventions in early childhood classrooms. DEC Recommended Practices Monograph Series-Instructional Practices, 77-90.