System of least prompts, peer models, visuals, and contingent reinforcement led to increased unprompted correct game play behaviors of preschool children with disabilities.

INTRO

• Children with or at risk for disabilities often have deficits in play skills and social communication (Oppenheimer-Leaf, Leaf, & Call, 2012; American Psychiatric Association, 2000).
• Play provides a context for expanding social communication and interaction skills (Davis-Temple, Jung, & Sainato, 2014) and the opportunity to form relationships with peers, siblings, and caregivers (Lifter, Mason, & Barton, 2011).
• Board games also provide multiple and varied opportunities for children to understand and follow rules, how to give peers complements, how to help peers, and how to share (Arntzen, Halstadro, & Halstadro, 2003; Davis-Temple et. al., 2014).

METHODS

1. 4 target participants at risk for or with disabilities, and 4 four peer participants
2. One target participant and peer, played developmentally appropriate board games
3. Multiple-probe across participants design

RESULTS

• We observed a functional relation between the system-of-least prompts procedure and an increase in game play behaviors among preschool children with disabilities.
• We did not observe a functional relation between the onset of intervention and an increased rate in game play related social communication.

DISCUSSION

• Systematic instruction can be used to increase and promote play between peers.
• Thinning of reinforcement is necessary to maintain game play behavior.
• Salient reinforcers are needed to maintain motivation and game play behaviors.