



## KIDS IMPROVING TOGETHER (K.I.T.) CLUB

### Social Skills Intervention for High Functioning Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their Parents

#### Who we are:

Autism Spectrum Assessment Clinic (ASAC) is affiliated with University of Miami & Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (UM-NSU CARD). Our state-of-the-art 9-week curriculum-based social skills intervention program teaches children age appropriate social skills. Simultaneously, parents learn how to cultivate these pro-social behaviors in their children. Our groups are led by advanced psychology practicum students and interns, and are supervised by a post-doctoral level clinician and/or licensed psychologist.

#### How our services are unique:

- The KIT Club curriculum<sup>1</sup> is based on clinical best practices; we use a combination of teaching methods, including didactics (i.e., direct instruction), visual supports, video modeling, role play/practice, and home activities.
- Children are taught basic social skills such as how to maintain a conversation and read subtle social cues (e.g., gaze aversion, body language), deal with frustration and anger, and understand what it means to be a good friend.
- Our program includes a parent group that teaches parents how to foster generalization of their child's skills. Parents will learn how to coach their child during social interactions, how to reinforce appropriate social behaviors, and how to navigate difficult social situations. Parents will be directed toward a number of helpful resources. While group content follows the topics covered in the child group, there is flexibility to tailor discussion to individual needs.

#### Findings of evaluation surveys:

95% of parents stated they were satisfied or *highly satisfied* with our program and that they would *recommend* our program to others.

#### From parents:

- "Alex is more aware of social cues than before. He will go back and reference something from KIT Club in certain situations. He seems to have developed certain coping skills that were absent before." –*Grethel, mother*
- "Jack has truly enjoyed KIT Club. He feels very comfortable with the new peer group and has been applying all of his new strategies weekly." –*Arlene, mother*
- "I found the interaction with other parents valuable; getting the perspective and experiences of families in similar situations." –*Anonymous*
- "The topics covered are useful and met our needs. I felt that we had a resource at our disposal and that I could bring my questions and they would be addressed." –*Anonymous*

#### From children:

- "I have made so many friends recently; it's all because of you!" –*Anonymous*
- "I learned how to calm myself down when I get mad." –*Anonymous*
- "I improved waiting; I fixed loudness; I learned how to deal with bullying" –*Anonymous*
- "I learned how to enter a group; I learned when and when not to tell on someone." –*Nick, age 9*
- "[KIT Club helped] The way my mom understands me." –*Anonymous*

#### If interested in participating:

Call Dr. Meaghan Parlade at 305-284-1122 for more information and to begin the screening process ([www.umasac.org](http://www.umasac.org)).

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<sup>1</sup>Designed for children between **9 and 12 years old** who are able to **communicate in fluent complex sentences** for a variety of purposes.