PIRATES

An Early-Years Group Program for Developing Social Understanding and Social Competence for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Related Challenges

> Dr. Margaret Anne Carter and Josie Santomauro

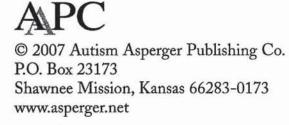


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Autism Asperger Publishing Co. P.O. Box 23173 Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66283-0173 www.asperger.net



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Pages 26, 28, 32, 33, 34, 40, 41, 49, 55, 57, 65, 71, 73, 79, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 93, 94, 102, 103, 104, 108, 109, 110, 117, 118, 119, 126, 127, 128, 129, 136, 137, 138, 145, 146, 154, 155, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 172, 174, 175, 182, 183, 184, 188, 189, 190, 196, 198, 199, 207, 208, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 228, 229, 230, 238, 239, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 257, 259, 260, 268, 269, 270, 274, 275, 276, 277, 284, 285, 286, 296, 297, 304, 305, 313, 314, 315, 322, 323, 324, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 342, 343, 344, 345.

Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication

Carter, Margaret.

Pirates : an early-years group program for developing social understanding and social competence for children with autistic spectrum disorders and related challenges / Margaret Carter and Josie Santomauro. – 1st ed. – Shawnee Mission, Kan. : Autism Asperger Pub. Co., 2007.

p.; cm.

ISBN-13: 978-1-931282-34-5 ISBN-10: 1-931282-34-X LCCN: 2006935955

An 8-week program designed for children aged preschool through third grade. Includes bibliographical references.

Autistic children–Behavior modification. 2. Autism in children.
Social skills in children. 4. Social interaction in children.
Santomauro, Josie. II. Title.

RJ506.A9 C37 2007 618.92/85882-dc22

0611

This book is designed in Adobe Caslon and Windlass.

Printed in the United States of America.

WE APPRECIATE ...

The following kindergarten, preschool and school communities have participated in the *Pirates* pilot program. We appreciate their professional commitment to testing the program and their insightful feedback. We sincerely thank the children for their enthusiasm and engagement as they participated as learners in the *Pirates* program.

Mary Mackillop Catholic School, Brisbane, Queensland Condy Park Community Kindergarten, Pialba, Queensland The Range Community Kindergarten, Mapleton, Queensland St. Laurence's Catholic School, Forbes, New South Wales Mueller Christian College, Brisbane, Queensland St. Brendan's Catholic School, Brisbane, Queensland Jinibara State School, Jinibara, Queensland

WE DEDICATE ...

We have written the *Pirates* program to help children with social-cognitive challenges, including autism spectrum disorders (ASD), learn constructive social interaction skills in the area of friendship making, social problem solving and emotional expression.

As educators and advocates in the field of ASD, we are of the opinion that it is important to teach children these concepts and the accompanying skills so that they continue to broaden their social understanding repertoire. *Pirates* is intentionally designed to make a difference in the lives of young children with ASD, children who find the social world perplexing and mystifying. The program is dedicated to children across the early years as they grow and develop their competencies and capabilities as social individuals.

- Dr. Margaret Anne Carter and Josie Santomauro

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview of the Program
Orientation
Preparing for the Voyage
Behavior Expectations for the Voyage
References
Resources
Pirates
Preschool and Kindergarten
Grade 1
Grade 2
Grade 3
Appendix

