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**New Study Validates Skills® Assessment for Designing Customized Curricula to Help Children with Autism**

*The study validates the online Skills® Assessment, offering clinicians a state-of-the-art means to individualize treatment plans and maximize skill acquisition for children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.*

LOS ANGELES (Jan. 30, 2014) - In a new study published in the journal *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders* on Jan. 9, 2014, researchers at Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD) find value in the comprehensive Skills® Assessment, which helps clinicians develop individualized treatment plans for children with autism. Accurate assessment is vital to curriculum planning and skill acquisition for children with autism as it establishes a foundation from which treatment will be implemented. A comprehensive assessment allows clinicians to gain a thorough understanding of how a child functions across all areas and helps the clinician design the most customized treatment program based on the child's needs, thus maximizing results. The results of the study found that the Skills® Assessment has excellent concurrent validity between parent report and direct observation, allowing treatment to be more individualized, targeted and efficient.

The comprehensive Skills® Assessment addresses over 3,000 skills across every domain of child development, including language, social, play, adaptive, executive functions, cognition, motor and academic. In the study, a child's parent or guardian was asked to answer the assessment questions, and those answers were compared to direct tests of the skills with the children. The study showed that the Skills® Assessment accurately portrayed the unique strengths and deficits of the children who participated.

"The Skills® Assessment has great potential to help those treating children with autism by saving time and giving a more accurate picture of the skills that a child actually needs to learn than was ever available from previous assessments," said Jonathan Tarbox, PhD, BCBA-D, CARD

director of research and development. “This tool makes treatment plans more customized and provides the clinicians with a wealth of information that can be used to treat children with autism.”

According to the study, little to no published research has evaluated the validity of an assessment of skills for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and the most commonly used assessments for applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy treatment planning have not undergone psychometric evaluations.

“We tested every skill in the assessment with each participant, which amounted to over 30,000 trials conducted over the course of the study,” said Angela Persicke, MA, BCBA, CARD research and development supervisor.

The Skills® Assessment is a web-based component of the Skills® program, a larger tool based on the scientifically-proven principles of ABA that is used to assess an individual’s strengths and weaknesses; design individualized and comprehensive treatment, teaching and intervention plans; and track progress.

To read the study, visit [www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S175094671300250X](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S175094671300250X).

About Skills®: The Online Autism Solution is a web-based tool that gives users the ability to assess an individual’s strengths and weaknesses, design individualized and comprehensive treatment teaching and intervention plans, and track progress. The program is based on the scientifically-proven principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA). Although Skills® will automate lessons, it also allows users the flexibility to tailor the program to an individual’s unique needs. Each of the nearly 4,000 lessons also includes worksheets, visual aids, tracking forms, and video lessons. Launched in 2011, Skills® is used in over 14 countries worldwide, in several school districts and by autism treatment providers and insurance companies nationwide. For more information, visit [www.skillsforautism.com](http://www.skillsforautism.com).

About Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD)

CARD treats individuals of all ages who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) at its 26 treatment centers around the globe. CARD was founded in 1990 by leading autism expert and clinical psychologist Doreen Granpeesheh, PhD, BCBA-D. CARD treats individuals with ASD using the principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA), which is empirically proven to be the most effective method for treating individuals with ASD and recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the US Surgeon General. CARD employs a dedicated team of over 1,000 individuals across the nation and internationally. For more information, visit [www.centerforautism.com](http://www.centerforautism.com).

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