



# Paediatric Autism Communication Therapy (PACT)

Information for professionals working with autistic children or children showing signs of autism

**Level 1: e-learning**

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‘PACT is currently one of the only early interventions directed at autistic children and families that has demonstrated efficacy’

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Autistica, 2021

## What is PACT?

The Paediatric Autism Communication Therapy (PACT) is a validated intervention supporting connection, celebrating difference, and enhancing communication. It has demonstrated effectiveness and long-term evidence of significantly enhanced child social communication outcomes – and can radically improve services for autistic children.

### Why PACT?

PACT is the only intervention showing robust evidence of sustained enhanced child social communication skills, communication initiation, language, and engagement six years after early intervention; evidence which informs a new Autism Care Pathway. PACT is proven to improve child communication from first identification, through a care pathway, to post-diagnostic intervention and school support, and is suitable for autistic children up to 11 years of age. PACT shares the concepts and terminology of the ADOS-2 autism diagnostic tool, and is thus more aligned to a continuous care pathway. It is efficient and accessible for all children in a range of settings and is adapted to online video conference delivery.

The efficiency of PACT is in working with familiar adults in the child’s daily life to support the alternative ways autistic children learn, building stronger social communication skills, and simultaneously helping parents and carers feel empowered with increased self-efficacy, wellbeing, and family resilience.

PACT draws on individual positive attributes, strengthening relationships in building the basis for better understanding and accommodating of individual differences.

### How does PACT work?

The PACT manual is a tool kit with measurable criteria and strategies individually determined by the child’s profile and adult skill.

In a 12-session staged intervention, the therapist uses specific video feedback techniques to help parents/carers recognise, respond to, and enhance their child’s social communication. PACT is delivered in the child’s natural environment, which is one of the most effective ways of ensuring enduring development in social communication skills.

Within each 60–90-minute session, the therapist reviews short video clips of the adult and child interacting or playing together. This video is jointly reviewed with the adult, using selected moments to identify and discuss the best individual communication strategies for the child. Between sessions, parents/carers are asked to practise their PACT strategies with the child for around 30 minutes a day. Further monthly booster sessions are optional, to continue generalising the communication techniques in daily routines.

PACT can be delivered either online using video conference techniques, in the clinic, home, nursery/school or caregiver setting. Other health, education or social interventions can be continued in parallel.

# PACT professional training

PACT certified training involves two steps; Level 1 followed by Level 2.

## Level 1 PACT Introduction e-learning training

The Level 1 PACT e-learning programme is administered through Hogrefe and supports professionals wishing to learn more about PACT. It does not enable practitioners to deliver PACT but provides an introduction to the method, techniques, and research behind the intervention and provides trainees with the knowledge they need in order to continue to Level 2. Additional resources include published articles about PACT research and development, as well as further guidance for professionals using PACT.


The Level 1 programme takes approximately 90 minutes to complete and consists of six videos illustrating the PACT stages, along with multiple-choice tasks completed by the trainee. The programme also contains a video demonstrating a complete PACT session including parent-child play, the therapist's video feedback with the parent and individualised goal setting for home practice. Level 1 training is required to progress to Level 2 training. A certificate of completion is provided.

1.

### Welcome

PACT is a theory-based, adult-mediated and video-aided intervention designed to improve social communication competencies in children ages 2-10 years with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

The e-learning program from Hogrefe Ltd introduces the techniques and research behind the PACT intervention, and is crucial for those who wish to go on to further training with IMPACT (Interaction Method Paediatric Autism Communication Therapy) in order to administer PACT.



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2.

### Stage 1: Establishing shared attention

Please note there is no video clip for this question.

**Q1: Which statement best describes 'shared attention'?**

- A. The ability to share a common focus, object or action with another person.
- B. Being able to make eye contact with another person while doing an activity.
- C. Getting the child to look and focus on what you are saying.

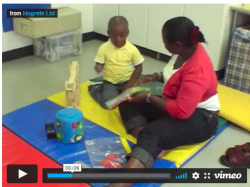
Submit

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3.

### Stage 5: Increasing communication functions

This video shows a play sequence in which the parent creates opportunities for the child to initiate communication and use language for different functions, called pragmatics.




You may replay a short video clip before selecting your answer to the question.

4.

### PACT techniques

When watching the full PACT session, please note there are a number of PACT techniques to identify. Click on each of the rows below to reveal a technique.



One	Six
Two	Seven
Three	Eight
Four	Nine
Five	How these insights are then formed into PACT goals.
How the therapist validates the parent's contribution.	Ten

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# Next steps

## Level 2 PACT professional certified training

Level 2 consists of two days' online training with trainers from the Interaction Method for Paediatric Autism Communication Therapy (IMPACT), and additional post-course work.

Completion of Level 2 and the accompanying post-course work will qualify the professional to administer PACT. A Level 2 PACT accreditation certificate is issued to professionals who complete both Level 1 and Level 2 PACT training.

Full details of the training with IMPACT can be found at [www.pacttraining.co.uk/register](http://www.pacttraining.co.uk/register), or you can email [info@pacttraining.co.uk](mailto:info@pacttraining.co.uk)

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‘[The PACT] Autism intervention is the first to show benefits over the long-term.’

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New Scientist

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Paediatric Autism  
Communication Therapy