

PEERS®

Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relationship Skills (PEERS) is a manualized, social skills training intervention for adolescents and young adults, developed at The Semel Institute at UCLA. It has a strong evidence-base for use with teens and young adults with autism spectrum disorders, but is also appropriate for teens and young adults with ADHD, anxiety, depression, and other socio-emotional problems.

PEERS is a 14-week, evidence-based social skills intervention for motivated teens ages 13-19 who are currently enrolled in school and interested in learning ways to help them make and keep friends. During each group session teens are taught crucial social skills and are given the opportunity to practice these skills in session during role-play and play activities (e.g. sports, board games, etc.).

Parents are taught how to assist their teens in making and keeping friends by providing feedback through coaching during weekly socialization homework assignments designed to build on skills practiced in the sessions.

Topics of Instruction:

- How to use appropriate conversational skills
- How to find common interests by trading information
- How to appropriately use humour
- How to enter and exit conversations between peers
- How to handle rejection, teasing, and bullying
- How to handle rumours and gossip
- How to be a good host during get-togethers
- How to appropriately use electronic communication
- How to choose appropriate friends and identify social groups
- How to be a good sport
- How to handle arguments and disagreements
- How to change a bad reputation

What are the participation requirements?

- Teen must have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Have difficulties establishing and / or maintaining friendships
- Demonstrates emerging social skills (interest in engaging with peers, attempts to verbally communicate, manages emotions in a non-aggressive way) and an interest in building relationships with same-aged peers
- Teen must be in Grade 8 or higher
- Teens must be interested in attending the program and must agree to participate in the program voluntarily
- Both the teen and 1 designated parent must commit to attending the entire 12 week program (consideration will be given if someone is ill)

When will PEERS run?

- We are currently assessing program interest. If there is enough interest, then we will run a program.
- **TENTATIVE DATES:** *Wed. Oct. 3 – Wed. Dec. 19, 2018*

Where will PEERS take place?

Autism Ontario Simcoe County Chapter
80 Bradford Rd.
Suite 105
Barrie, Ont.

What is the cost of PEERS?

- A non-refundable fee of \$200 will be charged to families.

How do I register for the PEERS program?

- An initial telephone interview will be completed to assess the appropriateness of the program for your teen. An in-person intake visit will be scheduled following the initial phone screening if the program is appropriate.
- Please note that only teens who meet the participation requirements will be eligible for the program
- Please complete the online interest form if you are interested in having your teen enrolled in PEERS:
 - <https://goo.gl/forms/FAi6QvAP9PvjLeg82>
- For additional information, please contact:
Jamie Read, Autism Ontario
905-780-1590 ext. 102
jamie@autismontario.com