



Community Autism Resources

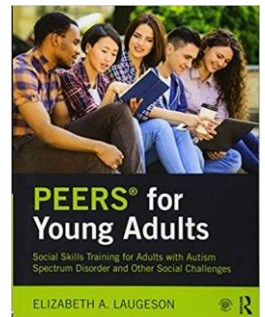
A place to start...A presence on your journey.

Community Autism Resources is excited to announce that our staff member, Mary Fox, is now a certified PEERS® provider. Community Autism Resources will be running PEERS® programs throughout our service region. Each program will meet once a week for 90 minutes over a 16-week period.

Additionally, an abbreviated PEERS® course (with no social coach aspect) will be offered to our GAP College Experience students as a regular part of their curriculum.

What is PEERS®?

PEERS® (Program for Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills) for Young Adults is a 16-week evidence-based social skills intervention for motivated young adults with ASD who are interested in learning skills to make and keep friends and possibly develop romantic relationships. This internationally acclaimed program was originally developed at UCLA by PEERS® Clinic Founding Director, Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson. During each group session, young adults are taught important social skills and are given the opportunity to practice these skills. Young adults must be socially motivated and attend each session with a social coach.



The purpose of PEERS® is to:

- Help young adults learn how to develop and maintain friendships and romantic relationships, and handle peer conflict and peer rejection.
- Teach ecologically valid social skills that are used by socially successful adults.
- Help young adults find a source of friends and potential romantic partners with assistance from social coaches.
- Provide young adults with support through social coaching.
- Ultimately help young adults foster independence in social relationships.

What is the PEERS® method of instruction?

Young adults will attend the 16 week course with a social coach (parent, adult sibling, family member, life coach, job coach, peer mentor). Each week we will go over the lessons with concrete rules and steps of social behavior. Staff will demonstrate role plays to show appropriate vs. inappropriate social interactions. Young adults will participate in behavior rehearsal exercises to practice their newly learned skills in a safe and “judgement free” environment. There will be homework assignments to be completed with the help of the social coach, and the homework will be reviewed to troubleshoot any areas that may need more individualized assistance.

What is the role of the social coach?

It is important that the same social coach attends all 16 weeks with the young adult. If something does come up and you need a “stand in” social coach, we can make accommodations, but the best results are found when the same coach attends the full course.

The social coach will:

- Learn the strategies needed to help support the young adults after PEERS® has been completed
- Help young adults find an accepting and appropriate source of friends outside of PEERS®
- Support young adults as they navigate their new independence in the social world

What NOT to expect from PEERS®

- PEERS® is not a support group
- PEERS® will not solve all of your problems or the challenges you face
- PEERS® is not a “friendship-matching group”
- You should not expect to make lasting friendships with other group members in your course
- You will be discouraged from socializing with group members during the 16 week group. You may choose to socialize with group members after the group has ended, and the other group member(s) agree.

Young adults’ social skills will not improve unless you:

- They voluntarily sign up and are interested in improving their skills
- Attend the groups regularly and come on time
- Attempt to do each homework assignment
- Use the skills outside of PEERS®

For more information or to enroll in our PEERS® program, please contact Mary Fox or mfox@communtiy-autism-resources.com

To learn more about UCLA PEERS® CLINIC visit their website <https://www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/young-adults>