The Science of Making Friends During COVID-19: The UCLA PEERS® Program

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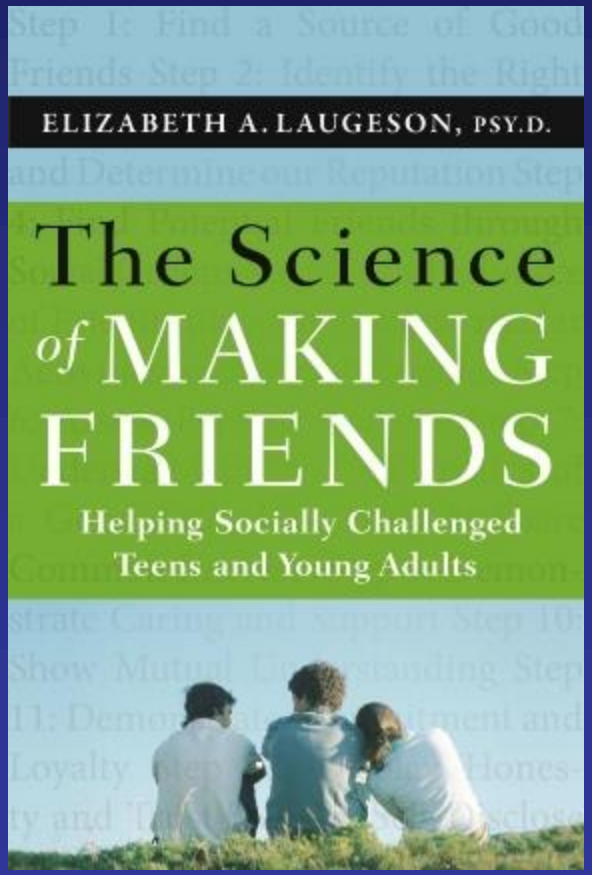
Training Director, UCLA Tarjan Center UCEDD
Program Director, UCLA Autism Center of Excellence, Core D

Overview of Lecture

- Social deficits among young people with ASD
- Importance of improving friendships
- Consequences of peer rejection
- Overview of PEERS curriculum
- PEERS intervention strategies
  - Finding a source of friends during COVID-19
  - Starting conversations online
  - Joining conversations online
  - Getting together with friends during COVID-19
- Overview of research
- Resources



Social Deficits Among Young People with ASD

- Poor social communication
  - Problems with topic initiation
  - Use repetitive themes
  - One-sided conversations
- Poor social awareness
  - Difficulty understanding social cues
- Poor social motivation
  - Less social engagement
  - Less involvement in social activities
  - Lack of peer entry attempts
- Poor social cognition
  - Difficulty understanding the perspectives of others

Photo of PEERS® courtesy of Associated Press

(Volkmar & Klin, 1998; Bauminger & Kasari, 2000; Orsmond, Krauss, & Seltzer, 2004; Koning & Magill-Evans, 2001; LeCouteur et al., 1989; Marks, Schrader, Longaker, & Levine, 2000; Ghaziuddin & Gerstein, 1996; Twatchman-Cullen, 1998; Hemphill & Siperstein, 1990; Church, Alisanki, Amanullah, 2000; Constantino, 2005)

Why Target Friendships?

Having one or two close friends:

- Predicts later adjustment in life
- Can buffer the impact of stressful life events
- Correlates positively with:
  - Self-esteem
  - Independence
- Correlates negatively with:
  - Depression
  - Anxiety

Photo of PEERS® courtesy of LA Times

(Buhrmeister, 1990; Matson, Smiroldo, & Bamburg, 1998; Miller & Ingham, 1976)

Consequences of Peer Rejection During Adolescence

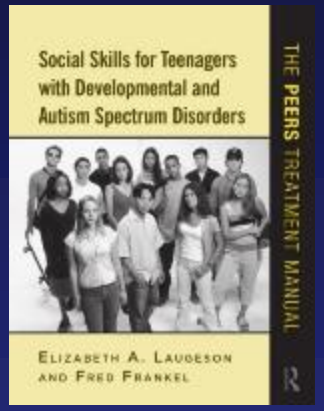
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Loneliness
- Low self-esteem
- Substance abuse
- Poor academic performance
- Early withdrawal from school
- Suicidal ideation and attempts

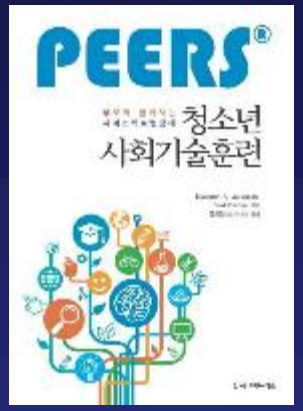
Photo of PEERS® courtesy of Associated Press

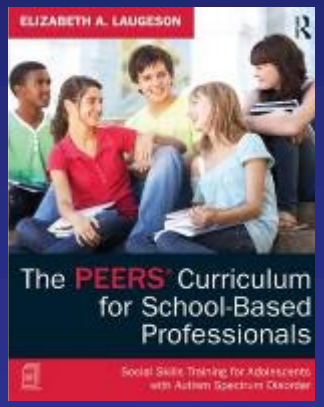
(Hawker & Boulton, 2000; Nansel et al., 2001; Buhrmeister, 1990; Matson, Smiroldo, & Bamburg, 1998; Miller & Ingham, 1976)

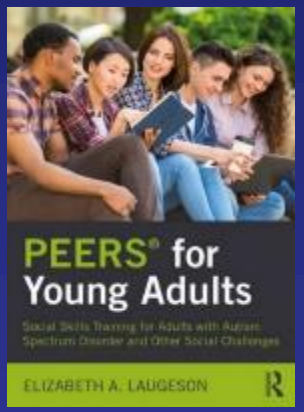
Background about PEERS®

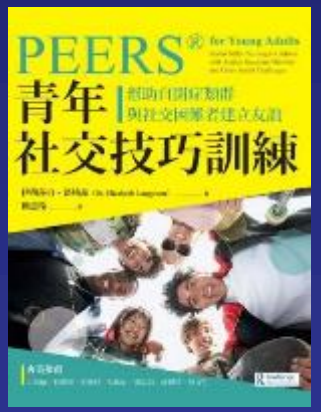
- International program
  - Developed at UCLA in 2004
  - Adolescent program has been translated into over a dozen languages
  - Used in over 85 countries
- Evidence-Based Social Skills Programs:
  - PEERS® for Preschoolers
  - PEERS® for Adolescents
  - PEERS® for Young Adults
- Research Programs:
  - PEERS® for Careers
  - PEERS® for Dating
  - PEERS® L Dopa

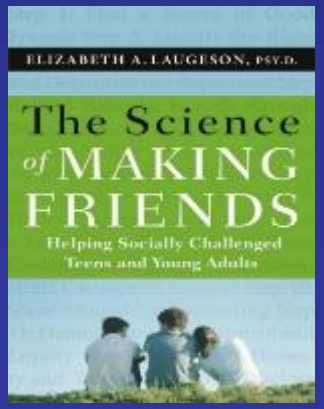






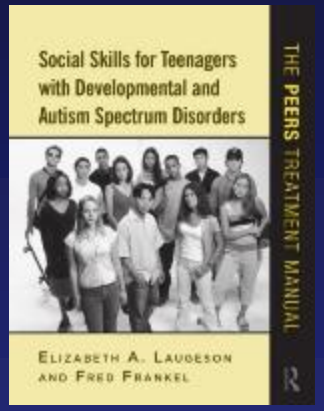


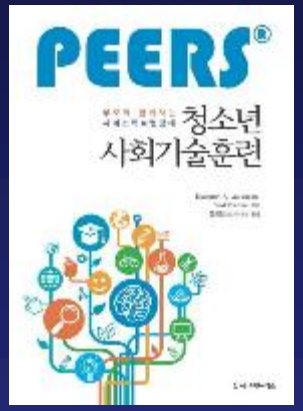


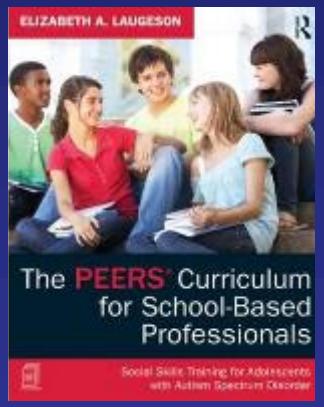


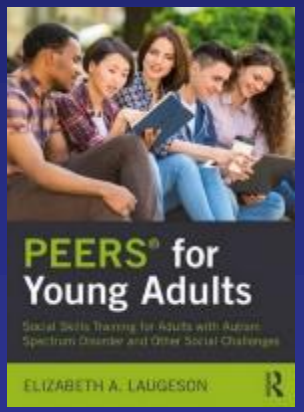
Unique Aspects of PEERS®

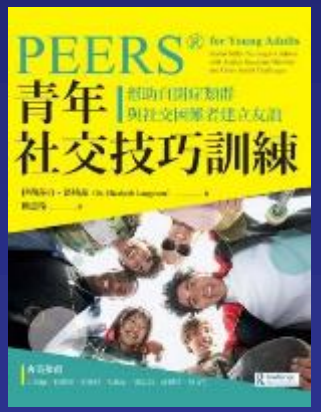
- One of the only evidence-based social skills programs
  - ONLY evidence-based social skills program for teens and adults with ASD and other social challenges
- Parent or caregiver assisted
  - Parents and other caregivers are trained as social coaches
- Only teaches ecologically valid social skills
  - Teaches rules and steps followed by socially successful people
- Cross-culturally adapted across the globe
  - Seven scientific papers published outside of the U.S.

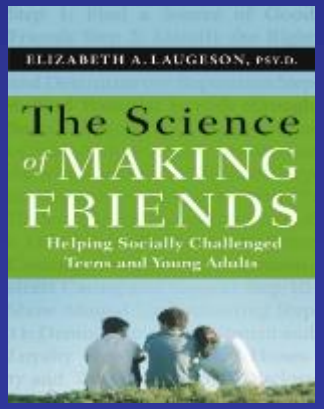








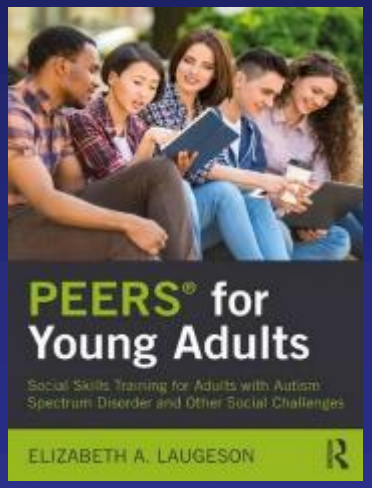


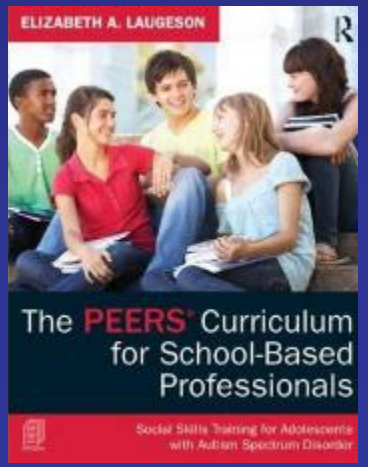


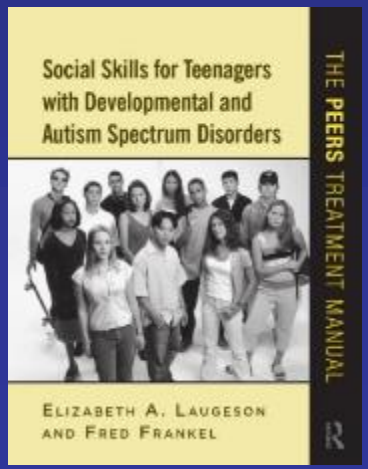
PEERS® Targeted Social Skills

<u>Friendship and Romantic Relationship Skills:</u>

- Finding and choosing good friends and romantic partners
- Conversational skills
- Starting and entering conversations
- Exiting conversations
- Electronic communication
- Appropriate use of humor
- Get-togethers
- Good sportsmanship
- Dating etiquette
  - Letting someone know you like them
  - Asking someone on a date
  - Organizing and planning a date
  - General dating do's and don'ts



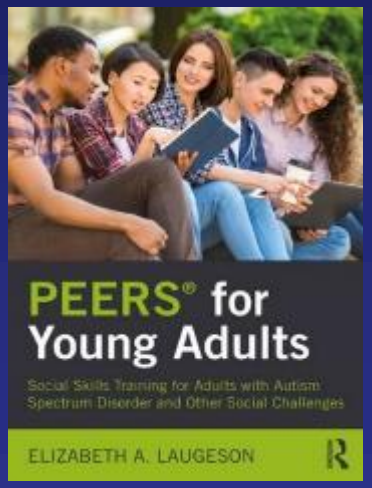


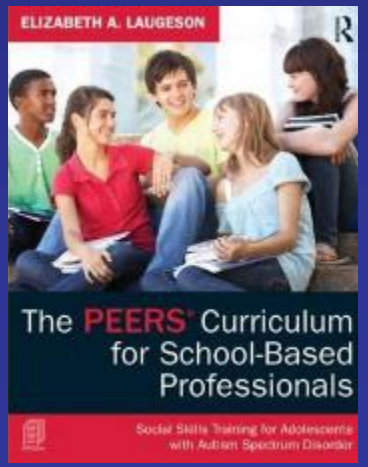


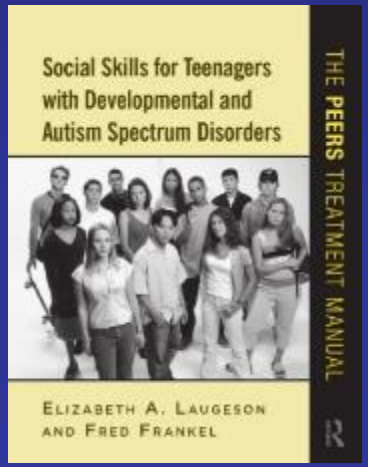
PEERS® Targeted Social Skills

Managing Conflict and Rejection Skills:

- Dating etiquette
  - Taking no for an answer
  - Politely turning someone down for a date
  - Handling unwanted sexual pressure
- Handling arguments
- Changing a bad reputation
- Handling direct bullying
  - Teasing and embarrassing feedback
  - Physical bullying
- Handling indirect bullying
  - Cyber bullying
  - Rumors and gossip







Finding and Choosing Friends

- Friendships are based on COMMON INTERESTS
- People often affiliate with specific peer groups or crowds based on their interests
- Peer groups and crowds are important for:
  - Giving us a source of friends
  - Finding potential friends with common interests
  - Protecting us from individual bullying

(Laugeson & Frankel 2010; Laugeson 2013; Laugeson 2014; Laugeson 2017)

Identifying Peer Groups

QUESTION:

What are the different peer groups or crowds for young people?

Different Peer Groups

Jocks/athletes	Computer geeks/techies	Gamers/video game geeks
Sports teams	Science geeks/IT	Nerds
Sports fans	Robotics club	Brains
Cheerleaders/pep squad	Sci-fi geeks	Hip hop
Popular	Trekkies	Metalheads
Greeks/fraternities/sororities	Comic book geeks/anime geeks	Skaters
Student government	Cosplayers	Surfers
Drama/theater arts	LARPers	Hipsters
Choir/chorus/Glee club	Math geeks/mathletes	Hippies/granolas
Musicians	Newsies	Debate club/debate team
Artists	Movie buffs/movie geeks	Political groups
Ravers/partiers	Band geeks	Military groups
Preppies	Bronies/Pegasisters	Ethnic groups/cultural groups
Bookworms	Chess club/chess team	Religious groups
History buffs	Goths	LGBT
Animal lovers/pet lovers	Emos	Majors (source of college study)
Equestrians	Scenesters	Departments (work settings)
Motorheads/gearheads	Bikers	Industries (work settings)

(Laugeson 2017)

Finding a Source of Friends

QUESTIONS:

How can you tell which peer group someone is in?

Where can you find people from these different peer groups?

Finding a Source of Friends with Common Interests

- Extra curricular activities
- Social activities
- School clubs
- Work clubs
- Community clubs
- Sports leagues
- Work
- School
- Volunteer programs

Table 4.2 Possible Social Activities

Interests	Related Social Activities
Computers/technology	Take computer classes; attend events through computer/IT department; join a technology related meet-up group; join a technology club; join a computer meet-up group; join a computer club
Video games	Go to adult video arcades with friends; go to gaming conventions; visit gaming stores; join a gaming meet-up group; join a gaming club
Science	Go to science museum events; take science classes; join a science-related meet-up group; join a science club; join a robotics club
Comic books/anime	Attend comic book conventions (i.e., ComicCon); go to comic book/anime stores; take comic book/anime drawing classes; join a comic book/anime meet-up group; join a comic book/anime club
Chess	Visit gaming stores where they play chess; attend chess tournaments; join a chess meet-up group; join a chess club
Cosplay (costume play)	Attend comic book conventions (i.e., ComicCon); take sewing classes to make costumes; join a cosplay meet-up group; join a cosplay club
LARPing (live action role playing)	Attend comic book conventions (i.e., ComicCon); take sewing classes to make costumes; attend LARPing events; join a LARPing meet-up group; join a LARPing club
Movies	Join an audiovisual club; join a movie-related meet-up group; join a movie club
Sports	Try out for a sports team; play sports at community recreation centers or parks; join a sports league; go to sporting events; attend sports camps (e.g., spring training); join a sports-related meet-up group; join a sports club
Cars	Go to car shows; visit car museums; take auto shop courses; join a car-related meet-up group; join a car club
Music	Go to concerts; join the college band; take music classes; join a music-related meet-up group; join a music club

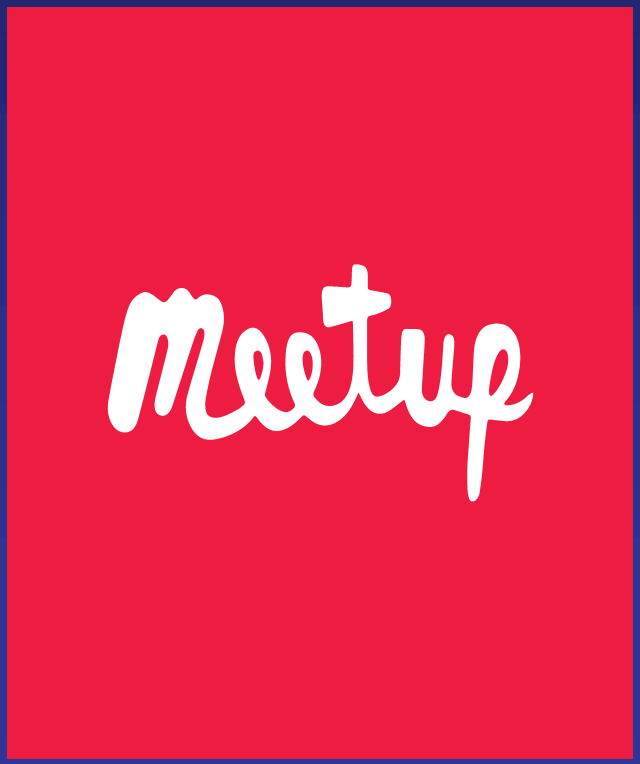
(Laugeson 2017)

Finding a Source of Friends in K-12 During COVID-19

- Outschool.com provides online groups for youth K-12
- Traditional subjects:
  - Math, language arts, writing
- Pop culture topics:
  - Dungeons & Dragons, Wings of Fire, Stranger Things
- STEM classes:
  - Coding, engineering, physics, videogames
- Enrichment activities:
  - Cooking, dance, art, music, yoga, meditation

Finding a Source of Friends for Adults During COVID-19

- Meetup.com provides in-person and online groups for adults
- Groups are regional and based on common interests
- Activities are primarily recreational
- Examples of meetups:
  - Movie meetups
  - Gaming meetups
  - Anime meetups
  - Sports fan meetups
  - Alumni groups
  - Cosplay
  - LARPing



Starting and Joining Conversations

QUESTION:

What are most young people told to do to meet new people?

Starting Individual Conversations

QUESTIONS:

How do you start a conversation with another person?

What are some social errors people make when starting conversations?

Role play videos: www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/resources

PEERS® Steps for Starting Individual Conversations

1. Casually look over
2. Use a prop
3. Find a common interest
4. Mention the common interest
   - Make a comment
   - Ask a question
   - Give a compliment
5. Trade information
6. Assess interest
   - Are they looking at you?
   - Are they facing you?
   - Are they talking to you?
7. Introduce yourself (optional)

Role play videos: www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/resources

Modified Steps for Starting Individual Conversations Online

1. Casually look over
2. Find a common interest
3. Mention the common interest
4. Trade information
5. Assess interest
6. Introduce yourself (optional)

(Laugeson & Frankel 2010; Laugeson 2013; Laugeson 2014; Laugeson 2017)

Joining Group Conversations

QUESTIONS:

How do you join group conversations?

What are some social errors for joining group conversations?

Role play videos: www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/resources

PEERS® Steps for Joining Group Conversations

1. Listen to the conversation
2. Watch from a distance
3. Use a prop
4. Identify the topic
5. Find a common interest
6. Move closer
7. Wait for a pause
8. Mention the topic
   - Make a comment
   - Ask a question
   - Give a compliment
9. Assess interest
   - Are they looking at you?
   - Are they facing you?
   - Are they talking to you?
10. Introduce yourself (optional)

Role play videos: www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/resources

Simplified Steps for Joining Group Conversations

1. Watch and listen
   - Use a prop
   - Identify the topic
   - Find a common interest
2. Move closer
3. Wait for a pause
4. Mention the topic
5. Introduce yourself (optional)

(Laugeson & Frankel 2010; Laugeson 2013; Laugeson 2014; Laugeson 2017)

Modified Steps for Joining Group Conversations Online

1. Watch and listen
   - Identify the topic
   - Find a common interest
2. Wait for a pause
3. Mention the topic
4. Introduce yourself (optional)

(Laugeson & Frankel 2010; Laugeson 2013; Laugeson 2014; Laugeson 2017)

Get-Togethers

QUESTIONS:

How do you develop close meaningful friendships?

How do you organize get-togethers with friends during COVID-19?

Online Get-togethers

- Get-togethers and social activities are taking place online due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Popular platforms for online get-togethers include:
  - Facetime
  - Google hangouts
  - House party
  - Video chat through social media apps
  - Skype
  - Zoom
  - Discord

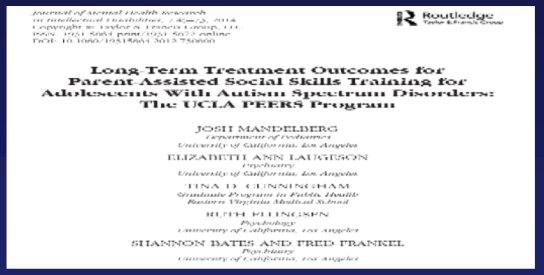
Common Activities for Online Get-togethers

Interest	Activity
Movies / TV shows	Netflix viewing party
Art	Play Pictionary
Anime	Watch anime online
Food	Make a meal together
Sports	Watch sports together
Videogames	Play online videogames
Fitness	Do a YouTube Workout together
Books	Create an online book club
Games	Play games on Houseparty
STEM	Take an Outschool class

Online Get-togethers & Social Activities

- A list of online get-together ideas and virtual social events is currently under development at UCLA PEERS CLINIC:
  - https://docs.google.com/document/d/116KqNyuT1c9T1PbD5IYsBovXN0PiqVQevCLYoQP0mmc/edit?usp=sharing

PEERS® Research Evidence within the United States

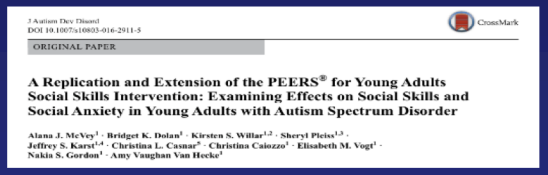


Long Term Treatment Outcomes for Parent Assisted Social Skills Training for Adolescents With Autism Spectrum Disorders: The UCLA PEERS Program

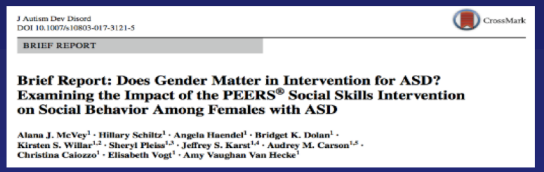
JOSH MANDELBERG
ELIZABETH ANN LAUGESON
TINA D. CUNNINGHAM
RUTH ELLINGSEN
SHANNON DATES AND FRED FRANKEL

Parent-Assisted Social Skills Training to Improve Friendships in Teens with Autism Spectrum Disorders

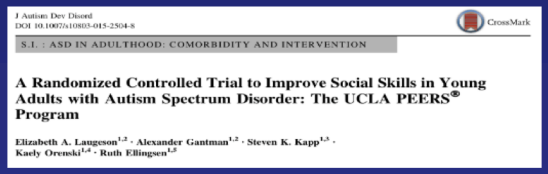
Elizabeth A. Laugeson · Fred Frankel · Catherine Mogil · Ashley R. Dillon



A Replication and Extension of the PEERS® for Young Adults Social Skills Intervention: Examining Effects on Social Skills and Social Anxiety in Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder

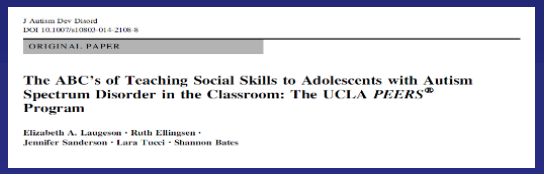


Brief Report: Does Gender Matter in Intervention for ASD? Examining the Impact of the PEERS® Social Skills Intervention on Social Behavior Among Females with ASD

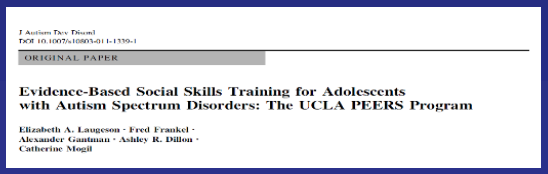


A Randomized Controlled Trial to Improve Social Skills in Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder: The UCLA PEERS® Program

Measuring the Plasticity of Social Approach: A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Effects of the PEERS Intervention on EEG Asymmetry in Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders

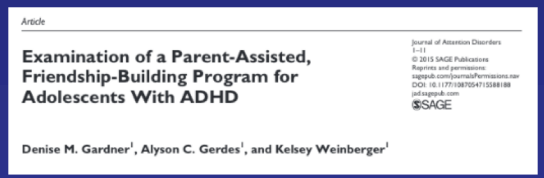


The ABC's of Teaching Social Skills to Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Classroom: The UCLA *PEERS*® Program



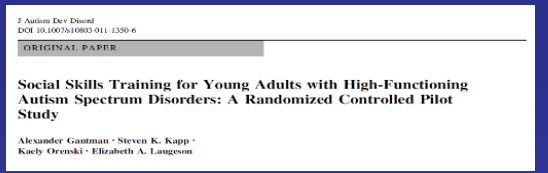
Evidence-Based Social Skills Training for Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders: The UCLA PEERS Program

Parents Perceive Improvements in Socio-emotional Functioning in Adolescents with ASD Following Social Skills Treatment



Examination of a Parent-Assisted, Friendship-Building Program for Adolescents With ADHD

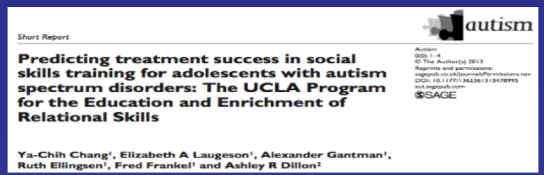
Denise M. Gardner, Alyson C. Gerdes, and Kelsey Weinberger



Social Skills Training for Young Adults with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Randomized Controlled Pilot Study

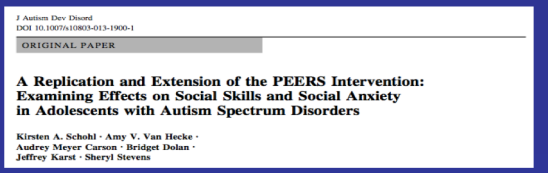
Alexander Gantman · Steven K. Kapp · Kaely Orenski · Elizabeth A. Laugeson

Exploring the Effectiveness of a Peer-Mediated Model of the PEERS Curriculum: A Pilot Randomized Control Trial

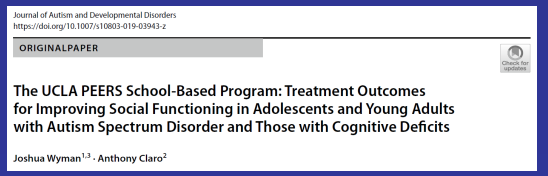


Predicting treatment success in social skills training for adolescents with autism spectrum disorders: The UCLA Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills

Ya-Chih Chang, Elizabeth A Laugeson, Alexander Gantman, Ruth Ellingsen, Fred Frankel and Ashley R Dillon



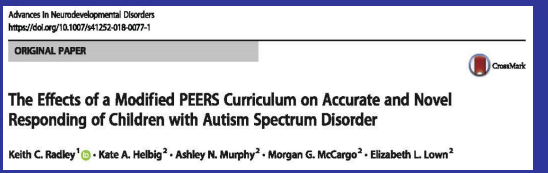
A Replication and Extension of the PEERS Intervention: Examining Effects on Social Skills and Social Anxiety in Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders



The UCLA PEERS School-Based Program: Treatment Outcomes for Improving Social Functioning in Adolescents and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Those with Cognitive Deficits

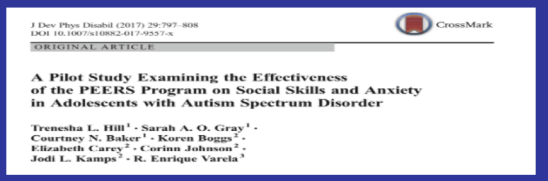
Joshua Wyman · Anthony Claro

Changes in Depressive Symptoms Among Adolescents with ASD Completing the PEERS® Social Skills Intervention

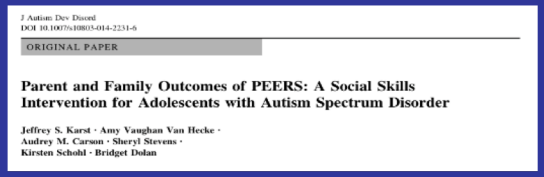


The Effects of a Modified PEERS Curriculum on Accurate and Novel Responding of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Keith C. Radley · Kate A. Helbig · Ashley N. Murphy · Morgan G. McCargo · Elizabeth L. Lown



A Pilot Study Examining the Effectiveness of the PEERS Program on Social Skills and Anxiety in Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder



Parent and Family Outcomes of PEERS: A Social Skills Intervention for Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Jeffrey S. Karst · Amy Vaughan Van Hecke · Audrey M. Carson · Sheryl Stevens · Kirsten Schohl · Bridget Dolan

PEERS® Research Evidence Outside of the United States

Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (2020) 50:976–997
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-019-04325-1

ORIGINAL PAPER

Examining the Treatment Efficacy of PEERS in Japan: Improving Social Skills Among Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Tomoko Yamada[1,2] · Yui Miura[3] · Manabu Oi[1,2] · Nozomi Akatsuka[1,2] · Kazumi Tanaka[4] · Naotake Tsukidate[5] · Tomoka Yamamoto[1] · Hiroko Okuno[1] · Mariko Nakanishi[1] · Masako Taniike[1] · Ikuko Mohri[1] · Elizabeth A. Laugeson[6]

Published online: 10 December 2019
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Korean Version of the PEERS® Parent-Assisted Social Skills Training Program for Teens With ASD

Hee-Jeong Yoo, Geonho Bahn, In-Hee Cho, Eun-Kyung Kim, Joo-Hyun Kim, Jung-Won Min, Won-Hye Lee, Jun-Seong Seo, Sang-Shin Jun, Guiyoung Bong, Soochurl Cho, Min-Sup Shin, Bung-Nyun Kim, Jae-Won Kim, Subin Park, and Elizabeth A. Laugeson

Journal of Education & Social Policy *Vol. 3, No. 4; October 2016*

Examining the Efficacy of an Adapted Version of the UCLA PEERS® Program with Canadian Adolescents

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Randomized Controlled Trial evaluating the Hebrew Adaptation of the PEERS® Intervention: Behavioral and Questionnaire-Based Outcomes

Shai Joseph Rabin, Sandra Israel-Yaacov, Elizabeth A. Laugeson, Irit Mor-Snir, and Ofer Golan

Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-018-3728-1

ORIGINAL PAPER

Learning How to Make Friends for Chinese Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Hong Kong Chinese Version of the *PEERS*® Intervention

Kathy Kar-Man Shum[1] · Wai Kwan Cho[2] · Lourdes Mei Oi Lam[2] · Elizabeth A. Laugeson[3] · Wai Shan Wong[2] · Louisa S. K. Law[2]

EMPIRISCH ONDERZOEK

Nederlandse hertaling van de PEERS-training

GABRINE JAGERSMA, SAKINAH IDRIS, SOPHIE JACOBS, BJORN JAIME VAN PELT, KIRSTIN GREAVES-LORD

Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-018-3859-4

ORIGINAL PAPER

Age as a Moderator of Social Skills Intervention Response Among Korean Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Jung Kyung Hong[1] · Miae Oh[2] · Guiyoung Bong[1] · Ju-Hyun Kim[1] · Geonho Bahn[3] · In-Hee Cho[4] · Hee Jeong Yoo[1,5]

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Multicentre, randomised waitlist control trial investigating a parent-assisted social skills group programme for adolescents with brain injuries: protocol for the friends project

Rose Gilmore,[1,2] Leanne Sakzewski,[1] Jenny Ziviani,[3] Sarah Mcintyre,[4] Hayley Smithers Sheedy,[4] Nicola Hilton,[2] Tracey Williams,[5] Kirsten Quinn,[6] Anne Marie Sarandrea,[5] Elizabeth Laugeson,[7] Mark Chatfield[1]

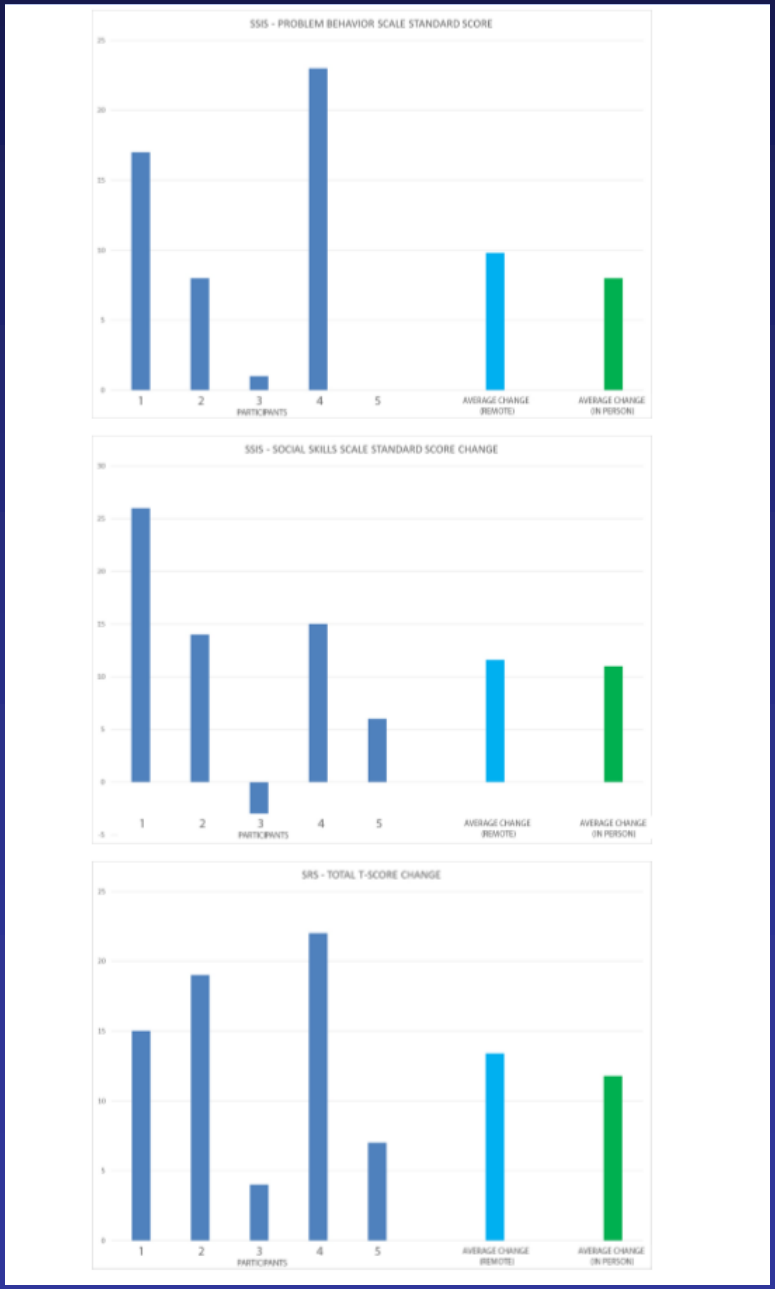
Pelt *et al. BMC Psychiatry* (2020) 20:274
https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-020-02650-9

BMC Psychiatry

STUDY PROTOCOL Open Access

The ACCEPT-study: design of an RCT with an active treatment control condition to study the effectiveness of the Dutch version of PEERS® for adolescents with autism spectrum disorder

B. J. van Pelt[1,2*], S. Idris[1,3], G. Jagersma[2], J. Duvekot[1], A. Maras[2], J. van der Ende[1], N. E. M. van Haren[1] and K. Greaves-Lord[1,2,4,5]



PEERS® Telehealth Pilot Research Outcomes

- Results of the pilot study showed that the treatment outcomes of teens receiving PEERS in-person compared to PEERS via telehealth were equivalent in the areas of:
  - Decreased problem behaviors on the Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS)
  - Increased social skills on the SSIS
  - Improved social responsiveness on the Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS)

PEERS® Telehealth Pilot Research Outcomes

Effectiveness of the Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®) Delivered Via Telehealth

Christopher Miyake, Marlena M. Novack, Esther Hong, Dennis Dixon
Center for Autism and Related Disorders, Inc.

INTRODUCTION

- Advances in technology have made the remote delivery of treatment via telehealth more versatile and accessible to the public, opening the door for its use in autism intervention.
- The Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®) is a parent-assisted social skills intervention specifically aimed to teach middle school or high school adolescents how to make and keep friends.
- Existing research demonstrates the effectiveness of PEERS® when administered in in-person group training sessions in university settings (Laugeson et al,. 2009); however, logistics involved in conducting training in community settings (e.g., family availability, clinician training, geographical restrictions, etc.) can make administering such training difficult.
- The purpose of this study was to investigate whether remote delivery of a social skills training program can improve outcomes in adolescents with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

PARTICIPANTS

Inclusion Criteria

- Within age range of 12 and 18 years old
- Consistent computer access and high-speed internet
- Have near-average hearing and vision
- English was the primary household language for all participants.
- Must pass an intake interview to determine willingness to participate, awareness, and to collect background information on current social skills.

Results

- 5 adolescents met criteria.
- Mean age: 13.8-years-old (range 12-16 years old)
- Gender: 3 males/ 2 females

OUTCOME MEASURES

Outcome Measures

Parent Measures	Teen Measures
Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS) Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) Empathy Quotient - Parent (EQ-P) Social Anxiety Scale - Parent (SAS-P)	Test of Adolescent Social Skills Knowledge (TASSK) Social Anxiety Scale (SAS-A) Friendship Quality Scale (FQS) Piers Harris 2 (PHS-2)

PROCEDURES

- The 14-week curriculum was split into two nights, a parent night followed by a teen night the day after. Each session lasted approximately 90 minutes. In person PEERS® groups are traditionally held on the same night, but for this model the groups were separated into two nights as some families only had access to one reliable computer with a webcam.
- The PEERS® curriculum covers 14 topics: Trading Information, Two-Way Conversations, Electronic Communication, Choosing Appropriate Friends, Appropriate Use of Humor, Entering a Conversation, Exiting a Conversation, Get-Togethers, Good Sportsmanship, Teasing and Embarrassing Feedback, Bullying and Bad Reputations, Handling Disagreements, Rumors and Gossip.
- The class was delivered via a HIPAA compliant video chat room that used an online white board for discussions.

Changes to the Teen Sessions:

- In-person groups utilize a combination of live role play and video examples of appropriate and inappropriate social interactions. The telehealth model only used video examples.
- All PEERS® topics were discussed in the telehealth model. However, in order to address more complex social cues and skills (e.g., body positioning, distance to speaker, and practicing get-togethers) extra homework was assigned to parents to practice with their teen.

Parent Sessions:

- Due to the structure of the parent sessions they remained largely unchanged in format from in-person PEERS® groups.

RESULTS

DISCUSSION

- The results of this pilot study suggest that remote delivery of a social skills program can improve outcomes in adolescents (ASD).
- Telehealth may be an effective delivery model in teaching social skills to children with ASD.
- While telehealth shows promise of being an effective form of delivery, the technology required to participate is a limitation for many families.
- Due to the changes made in the remote program, additional research is needed to evaluate the effects of these changes.

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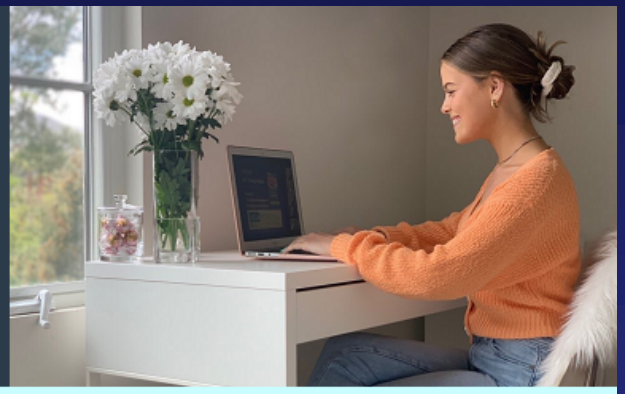
- Findings suggest telehealth may be an effective delivery model for teaching social skills to youth with ASD.
- While telehealth shows promise of being an effective form of delivery, the technology required to participate is a limitation for some families.
- Due to the changes made in the remote program, additional research is needed to evaluate treatment outcomes.

Teens will learn about:

- Using social media and online platforms to develop and maintain friendships
- Conversational skills
- Entering & exiting conversations
- Electronic communication
- Using humor appropriately
- Organizing get-togethers
- Being a good sport
- Handling disagreements
- Changing a bad reputation
- Handling teasing and bullying



PEERS® Social Skills Group for Adolescents

- PEERS® for Adolescents is an evidence-based social skills intervention for motivated teens in middle and high school who are interested in making and keeping friends and/or handling conflict and rejection.
- Teens and parents attend 16 weekly telehealth sessions over Zoom for 90-minutes each week.
- Teens are taught social skills through didactic lessons and role-play demonstrations, and practice these skills during online socialization activities.
- Parents attend separate telehealth sessions simultaneously and are taught how to assist their teens in making and keeping friends.
- Parent participation is required.

Telehealth groups available NOW!

To enroll, please contact
(310) 267-3377
peersclinic@ucla.edu

For more information, visit
www.semel.ucla.edu/peers

UCLA PEERS® Adolescent Telehealth Groups

WEDNESDAYS

4:30–6:00 PM PST

6:30–8:00 PM PST

UCLA PEERS® Young Adult Telehealth Groups

MONDAYS

4:30–6:00 PM PST

6:30–8:00 PM PST

UCLA PEERS® Educational Classes

TUESDAYS

4:30 – 6:00 PM PST

6:30 – 8:00 PM PST

Participants will learn about:

- Using social media and online platforms to develop and maintain friendships
- Conversational skills
- Friendship skills
- Organizing get-togethers
- Conflict resolution
- Good sportsmanship
- Changing a bad reputation
- Handling teasing and bullying

PEERS® Online Social Skills Class

Plus optional dating lessons!

- PEERS® is an evidence-based social skills intervention for motivated teens and young adults who are interested in making and keeping friends and/or handling conflict and rejection.
- Teens and/or young adults attend 16 weekly classes over Zoom for 90-minutes each week, plus an optional 4 weeks of dating skills.
- Participants are taught social skills through didactic lessons and role-play demonstrations, and practice these skills during online socialization activities.
- Social coaches attend separate classes simultaneously and are taught how to assist their teens in making and keeping friends.
- Groups for adolescents and groups for young adults are now enrolling!

Now enrolling families worldwide!

To enroll, please contact
(310) 267-3377
peersclinic@ucla.edu

For more information, visit
www.semel.ucla.edu/peers

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UCLA PEERS® Virtual Boot Camp

- 35 episodes
- Covers ALL the skills taught in PEERS®
- Go at your own pace
- Available on the UCLA PEERS YouTube Channel
- Access never expires

UCLA PEERS® for Careers

- College to career transition program
- 20-week program for college students with ASD

THURSDAYS

5:00 – 7:30 PM

UCLA PEERS® for Dating

- 16-week program
- Dating skills for young adults with ASD

TUESDAYS

5:30 – 7:00 PM

UCLA Treatment Study for Individuals with Autism

The purpose of this 16-week study is to examine the combined effects of medication (L-DOPA or placebo) plus a specialized behavioral intervention aimed towards increasing social skills.

You are eligible to participate if you:

- Are between 13-30 years
- Have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

Participants will receive:

- PEERS (social skills training) (1 session/week for 16 weeks)
- Comprehensive diagnostic & cognitive evaluation
- Neurological testing
- L-DOPA or placebo (inactive medication)
- Questionnaires, interviews, psychological and laboratory testing
- Brain scan (pre and post)
- Up to $550 if complete all visits

For more information, contact UCLA at 310 26-PEERS or 310 267-3377; semel.ucla.edu/PEERS

UCLA CART
CENTER FOR AUTISM RESEARCH AND TREATMENT

James McCracken, M.D.; Elizabeth Laugeson, Psy.D
www.semel.ucla.edu/PEERS

Protocol ID:IRB#17-001168 UCLA IRB Approved Approval Date: 10/10/2019 Through: 7/24/2020 Committee: Medical IRB 3

UCLA PEERS® L-Dopa Research Study

Return Start Date:

TBD

UCLA PEERS® Clinic

Find us on Facebook

www.semel.ucla.edu/peers

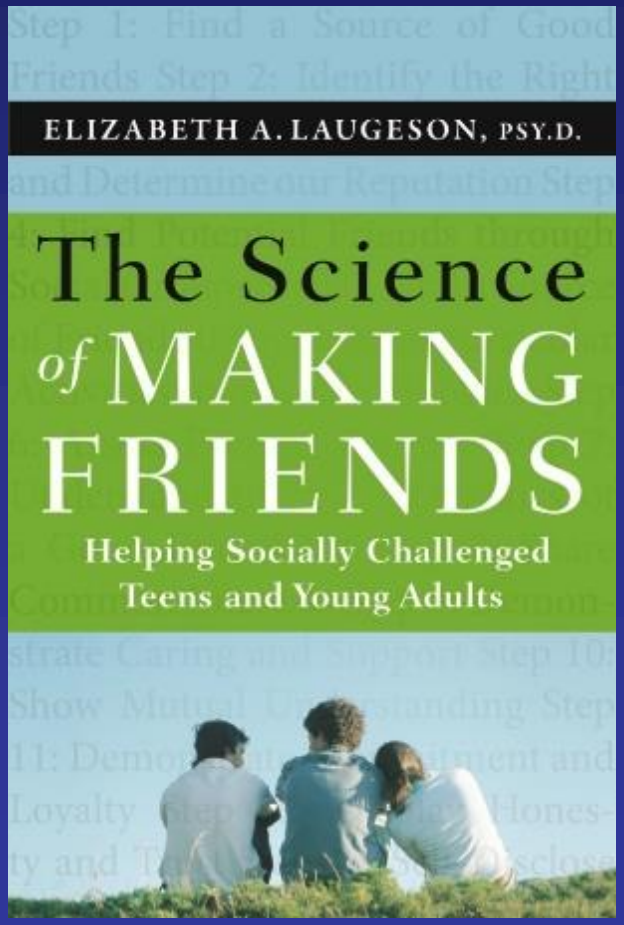
Role-Play Video Library

www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/resources

www.routledge.com/cw/laugeson

The Science of Making Friends:
Helping Socially Challenged Teens and Young Adults

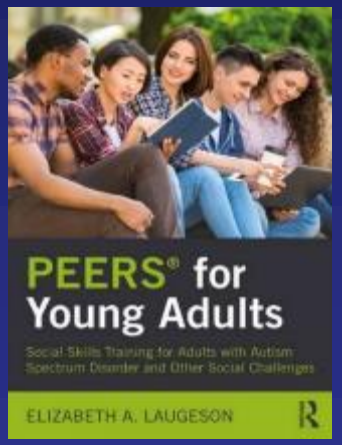
- Parent book
- Friendship skills
- Handling peer rejection and conflict
- Parent section
  - Narrative lessons
  - Social coaching tips
- Chapter summaries for teens and young adults
- Chapter exercises / homework
- Companion DVD
  - Role-play videos



PEERS® for Young Adults Teleconferences for Professionals

- Certified Teleconferences at UCLA:
  - September 21-23, 2020
  - April 19-21, 2021

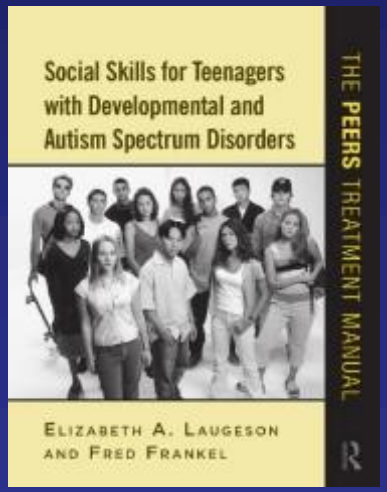
- 16-week curriculum
- Weekly 90-minute young adult sessions and caregiver sessions
- Social coaching handouts
- Addresses core deficits for ASD
- Focuses on friendship and relationships skills and handling peer rejection and conflict
- Teaches ecologically valid social skills

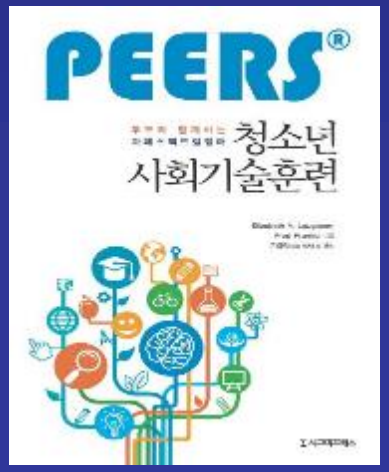


PEERS® for Adolescents Teleconferences for Professionals

- Certified Teleconferences at UCLA:
  - November 4-6, 2020
  - February 3-5, 2021

- 14-week curriculum
- Weekly 90-minute teen sessions and parent sessions
- Parent handouts
- Addresses core deficits for ASD
- Focuses on friendship skills and handling peer rejection and conflict
- Teaches ecologically valid social skills

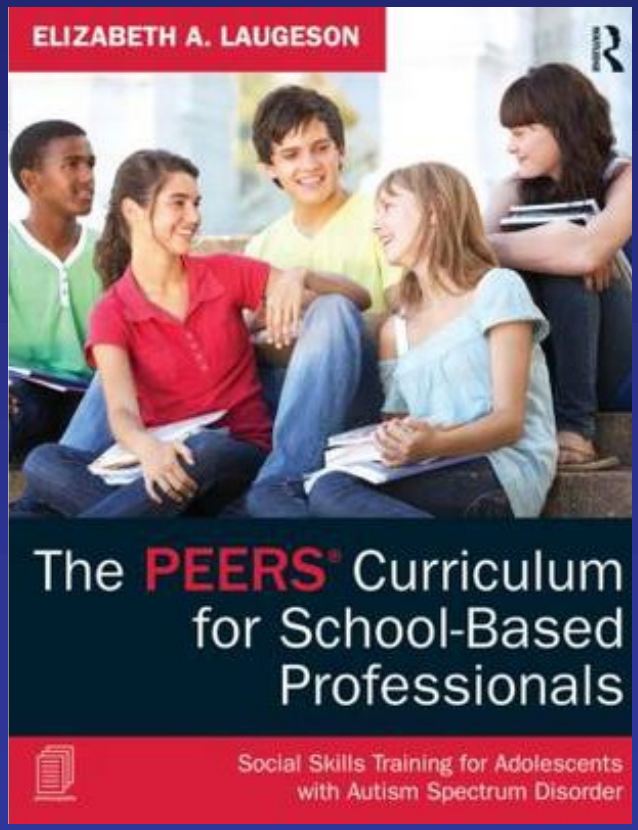




PEERS® for Adolescents School-Based Certified Training

- Certified Trainings at UCLA
  - June 23-25, 2021

- Teacher-facilitated curriculum
- 16-week program
- Daily lesson plans
- Focuses on friendship skills and strategies for handling peer rejection and conflict
- Includes weekly comprehensive parent handouts



Acknowledgements

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