



PEERS SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAMS



At GC Therapy Hub, we understand that developing and utilizing social skills can be particularly difficult for teenagers and young adults on the autism spectrum. However, effective communication is essential for almost every aspect of daily life. The journey of acquiring social skills is continuous and often lasts throughout one's lifetime.

Social Skills and Autism – Evidence-Based Best Practices

According to the DSMV, autism spectrum disorder is characterised by two primary characteristics:

- Challenges with social communication
- The presence of repetitive behaviours and/or restricted interests.

The challenge of social interaction has always been a defining characteristic of autism. Social skills impact all areas of life, including our ability to collaborate with others, study alongside peers, live together, and achieve social independence. Our GCTH PEERS programs are designed to provide opportunities for teenagers and young adults on the autism spectrum to cultivate the skills necessary for social independence. As a result, participants will gain better access, engagement, and authentic inclusion in the broader community and workplace.

The PEERS® program is a research-backed initiative aimed at helping teens and young adults enhance their capacity to form and sustain friendships while confidently navigating social settings. Originally created by Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), this program has been tailored at GC Therapy Hub to align with contemporary Australian society. Our emphasis lies in teaching essential social skills that enable young individuals to manage their emotions—rather than “MASK” —in social situations. We focus on the importance of setting and respecting boundaries, making new friends, and nurturing existing relationships.

Everyone starts their journey in the PEERS Foundation program, where foundational concepts and basic social skills are introduced. Once these skills are mastered, individuals can advance to our PEERS Plus and PEERS Employment programs, which provide enhanced training in areas such as reputation building, developing workplace relationships, independence, and navigating intimate connections.

We create and implement innovative, evidence-based social skills programs specifically for teens and young adults on the autism spectrum. GC Therapy Hub's mission is to offer opportunities for access, participation, and genuine inclusion in the wider community, ultimately empowering individuals to take charge of their social decisions.

Contact: 07 5564 1460 /0431 584 093

50 Fairway Drive, Clear Island Waters

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PEERS SOCIALSKILLS PROGRAMS

PEERS Foundation - Youth (8yo-12yo - Primary School)

PEERS Foundation - Teens (12yo-16yo -High School)

PEERS Foundation - Teens and young adults (16yo -25yo)

PEERS Plus - Youth (8yo-12yo - Primary School)

PEERS Plus - Teens (12yo-16yo -high school)

PEERS Plus - Teens and young adults (16yo -25yo)

PEERS Employment - Teens and Young adults (15yo -25yo)

NDIS Codes - Group therapy - 10 week Social skills development program:

Community Participation Activities

09_011_0125_6_3 Community Participation Activities

Core

04_210_0125_6_1 Community Social and Recreational Activities

Therapy Supports (7 or older)

15_621_0128_1_3 Assessment Recommendation Therapy or Training - Social Worker



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PEERS Foundation

Overview



Week 1

Parent Session and Introduction to PEERS

During our session for parents and students, we will review the course content, provide parents with handouts, and explore student workbooks. Additionally, we will discuss the significance of social skills and address questions such as: Why are they necessary? Where can we apply them?

Week 2

Mastering Conversations

Focus on how to start, maintain, and exit conversations, including using humour appropriately in social interactions. These skills are important because conversations are the foundation of friendships and connections. Effective conversations reduce misunderstandings and social isolation, helping us feel more connected and understood.

Week 3

Choosing Appropriate Friends

Explore the importance of friendship, how to identify good and bad friends, and how to handle changes in friendships. Choosing appropriate friends is essential because the people you surround yourself with can significantly influence your well-being, behaviour, and personal growth.

Week 4

Understanding Boundaries

Personal boundaries define what we are comfortable with and how we expect others to behave toward us. They act as an invisible bubble that protects us physically and emotionally. Boundaries can vary depending on the situation and relationship, but they are always essential for self-respect and healthy interactions.

Week 5

Emotional Regulation

Emotional regulation is the ability to understand, manage, and respond to emotions in a healthy way. It is a critical skill for maintaining relationships, navigating social situations, and handling life's challenges.

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PEERS Foundation

Overview



week 6

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is how we view and value ourselves. It affects our confidence, how we interact with others, and how we respond to challenges. Healthy self-esteem helps us navigate life with resilience, build meaningful relationships, pursue our goals, and manage social interactions.

week 7

Communicating Online

Online communication is a central part of everyday life, especially for teens. It enables us to connect with friends, share our interests, and learn new things. However, online communication differs significantly from face-to-face interaction. Without body language, facial expressions, or tone of voice, messages can easily be misunderstood. Learning the rules of online communication can help you navigate these interactions confidently and safely, making your online experience more positive and rewarding.

week 8

Handling Disagreements

Disagreements are a natural part of any relationship. For teenagers and young adults, misunderstandings can arise often, especially during times of change and growth. Learning to handle disagreements effectively is crucial for maintaining healthy relationships, preventing unnecessary conflicts, strengthening friendships, and promoting an effective work or school environment.

week 9

Teasing and Bullying

Teasing and bullying are common social experiences that can either strengthen or harm relationships. While teasing can be playful and affectionate when done respectfully, it can also cross the line into bullying when it becomes repetitive, hurtful, or malicious. Understanding the difference between teasing and bullying, as well as learning strategies to respond effectively, is crucial for maintaining healthy relationships, protecting emotional well-being, and promoting positive interactions with others.

week 10

Assessment and Graduation Party

You will complete a multiple choice assessment and a celebration.

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