

Exploring the Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®): Evidence-based Practice for Adolescents and Young Adults with Autism

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Who are we?



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What is PEERS®?



“Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®) is a **16-week** evidence-based **social skills intervention** for motivated adolescents in middle school or high school who are interested in learning ways **to help them make and keep friends**. During each group session adolescents are taught important social skills and are given the opportunity to **practice these skills in session during socialization activities** (e.g. playing sports, board games, etc.).”

Who is the PEERS[®] curriculum intended for?

- The curriculum has been field tested with:
 - Young adults with Autism Spectrum Autism (ASD)- extensively tested
 - Teens with Intellectual Disabilities (ID)
 - Teens with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)
 - Teens with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- The curriculum is used clinically with teens and young adults with:
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Social Challenges

What is covered in the PEERS® Curriculum for School-Based Professionals?

Week 1: Introduction and Trading Information

Week 2: Two-Way Conversation

Week 3: Electronic Communication

Week 4: Choosing Appropriate Friends

Week 5: Appropriate Use of Humor

Week 6: Starting and Joining Conversations

Week 7: Exiting Conversations

Week 8: Good Sportsmanship

Week 9: Get-Togethers

Week 10: Handling Arguments

Week 11: Changing Reputations

Week 12: Handling Teasing and Embarrassing Feedback

Week 13: Handling Physical Bullying

Week 14: Handling Cyber Bullying

Week 15: Minimizing Rumors and Gossip

Week 16: Final Review, Post-Test Assessment and Graduation

What is included in each weekly lesson?

- **Each weekly topic:**

- Can be divided into 4-5 days of content
- Each day can be 30-60 minutes
 - Day 1: Homework Review
 - Day 2: Didactic Lesson
 - Day 3: Didactic Lesson Review and Behavioral Rehearsal
 - Day 4-5: Teen Activity

- **Material can be presented once per week for 1.5 hours**

- Homework Review (30 minutes)
- Didactic Lesson (40 minutes)
- Teen Activity (15 minutes)
- Homework (5 minutes)

What is included in each didactic lesson?

- **Didactic Lessons:**
 - Utilize the Socratic Method
 - Include Role-play or video demonstrations
 - Buzzwords

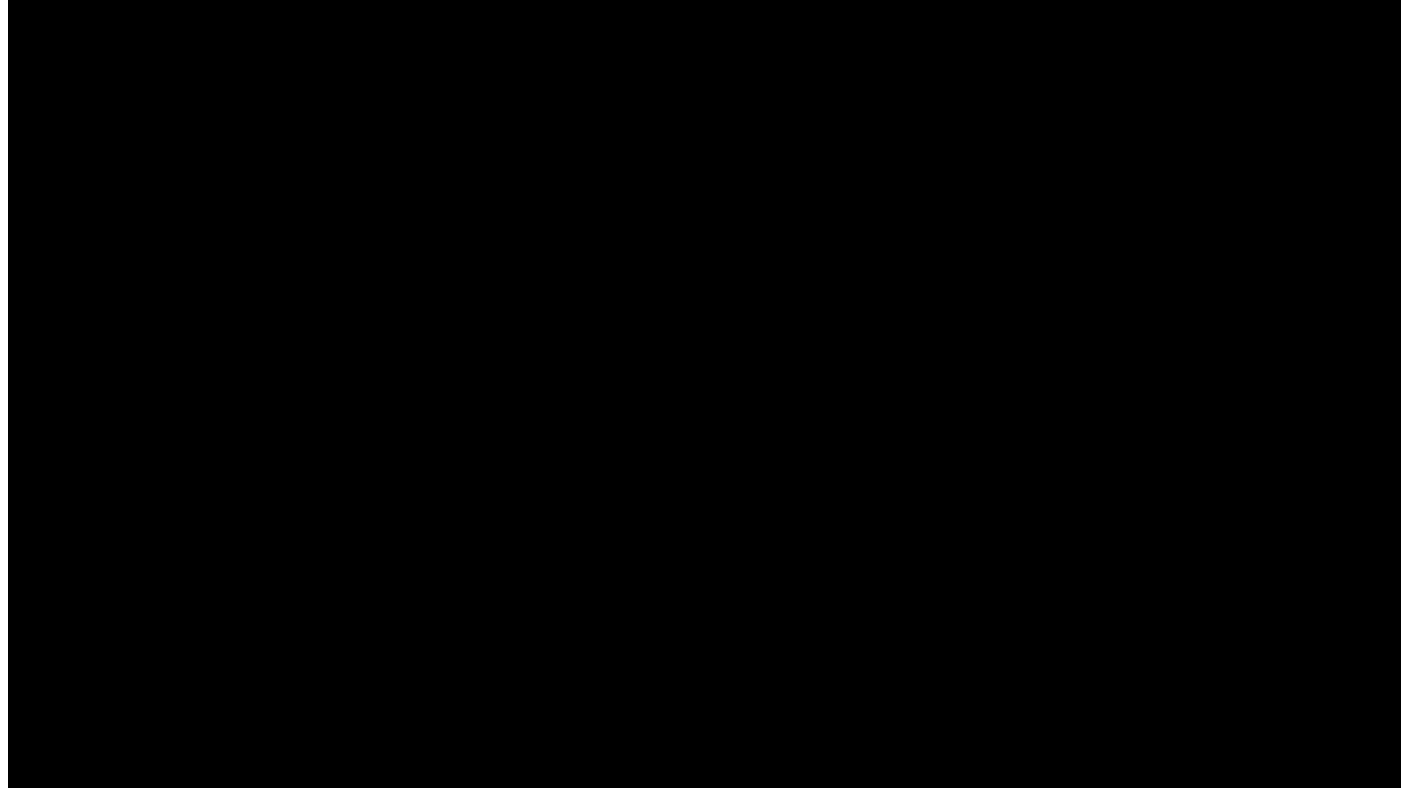
Entering a group conversation (bad example)



What are buzzwords?

- Words that represent social behaviors
- Used to develop a common language between instructors, social coaches, teens and parents
- Written on the board for teens to refer to during each lesson

Example Didactic Lesson: Starting Individual Conversations

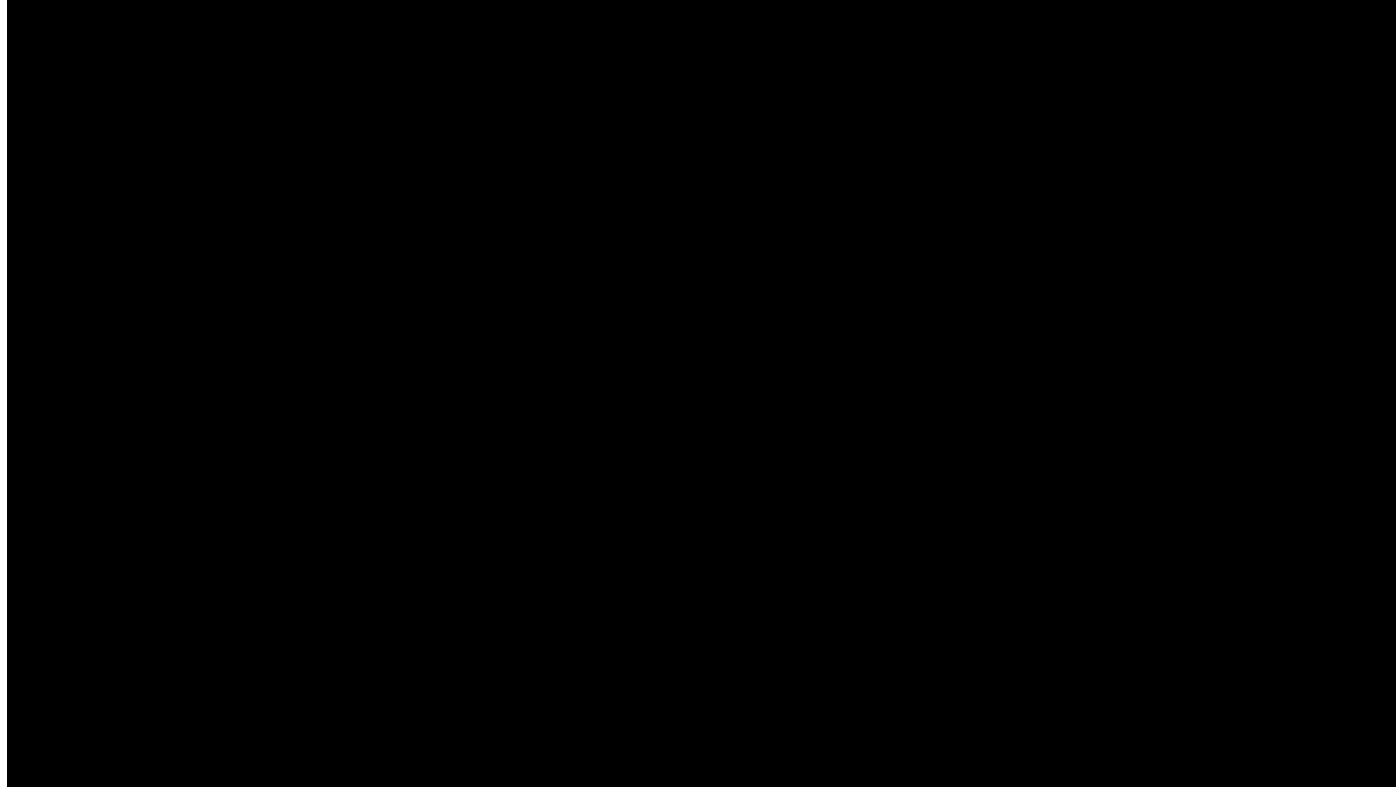


Individual Conversation: Bad

Joining Individual Conversations

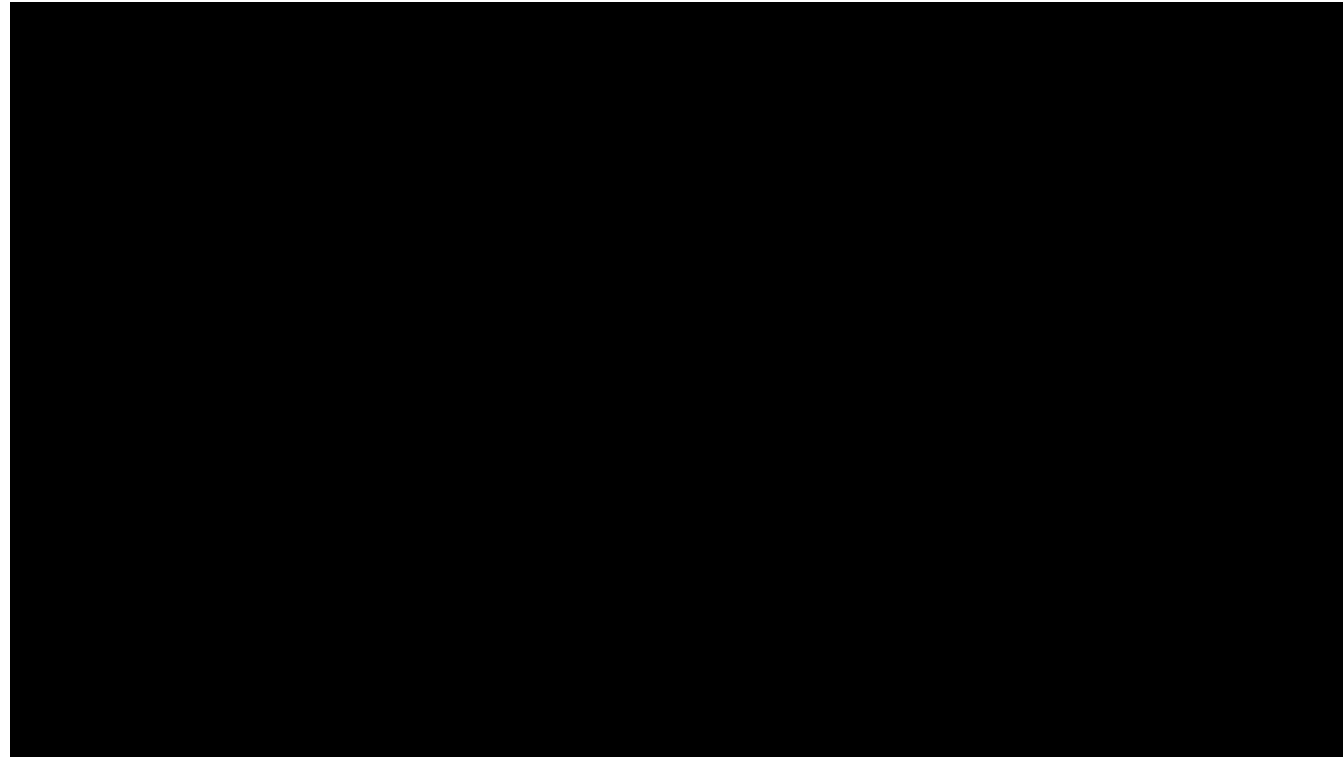
- Casually look over
- Use a prop
- Find a common interest
- Mention the common interest
- Trade Information
- Assess Interest
- Introduce yourself

Example Didactic Lesson: Starting Individual Conversations



Individual Conversation: Good

Example Didactic Lesson: Joining Group Conversations

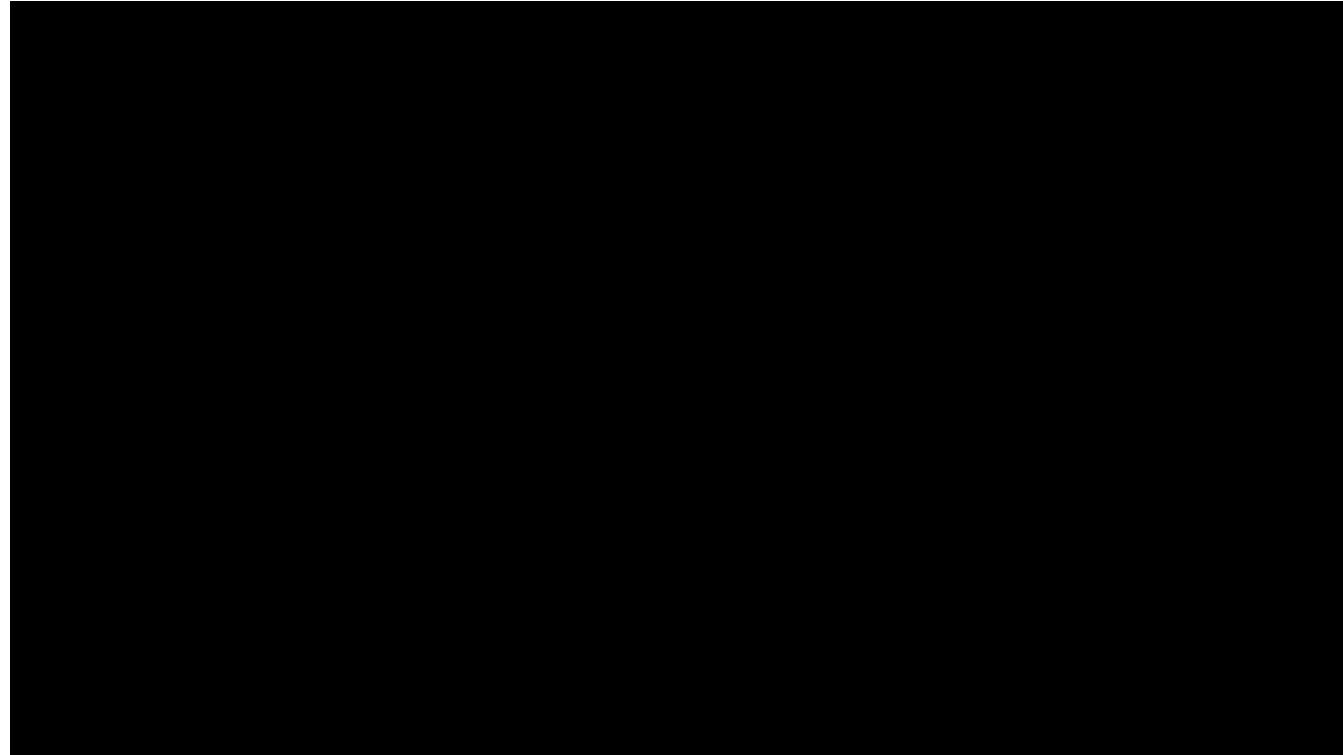


Group Conversation: Bad

Joining Group Conversations

- Listen to the conversation
 - Watch from a distance
 - Use a prop
 - Identify the topic
 - Find a common interest
 - Move closer
 - Wait for a pause
 - Mention the topic
 - Assess Interest
 - Introduce yourself
-

Example Didactic Lesson: Joining Group Conversations



Group Conversation: Good

Questions?

