



Board/Authority Authorized Course
Vernon Secondary School
Foundations of Social Communication 12

School District/Independent School Authority Name: Vernon School District	School District/Independent School Authority Number (e.g. SD43, Authority #432): SD#22
Developed by: Andrea Schiiller	Date Developed: March 30, 2016
Superintendent Approval Date (for School Districts only): June 19, 2019	Superintendent Signature (for School Districts only): On course form
Board/Authority Approval Date: June 19, 2019	Board/Authority Chair Signature: On course form
Course Name: Foundations of Social Communication	Grade Level of Course: 12
Number of Course Credits: 4	Number of Hours of Instruction: 120

Board/Authority Prerequisite(s): Foundations of Social Communication 11

Special Training, Facilities or Equipment Required:

One educator trained in The PEERS curriculum for school-based professionals: Social skills training for adolescents with autism spectrum disorder. One behavioral coach (preferably trained in PEERS) e. g. SLP, teacher, educational assistant.
Projector, selection of age-appropriate board games, outdoor sports equipment

Course Synopsis: Foundations of Social Communication 12 is based on the PEERS® Curriculum for School Based Professionals. This full semester course is an evidence-based behavioral social skills intervention for high school students who are motivated to learn how to make and keep friends. Having a friend or a small core group of friends can help students feel more engaged with the school community, feel more supported through life events, reduce anxiety and increase self-esteem and independence. Students will be taught ecologically valid social skills authentic to their age-appropriate peer group. Students will be given many opportunities to practice these skills in class during interactive activities (e.g. role-plays, behavioral rehearsals, games and sports) and in family and inclusive settings through coaches' assistance. Emphasis will be placed on applying the skills learned to real-life contexts, such as friendships, dating, and the workplace.

Goals and Rationale:

Increase students' awareness of their own behavior and to provide them with the required skills for improved social communication and interactions especially in friendships, dating, and the workplace.

Increase in friendship quality and increased frequency of get-togethers with friends.

Increase in successful social interactions in other areas of students' lives, such as part-time work, dating, and the larger school community in preparation for transition.

Indigenous Worldviews and Perspectives:

Many high school students with High Functioning Autism (HFA) and students with similar impairments in social competency, for example Social Communication Disorder (SCD), Specific Learning Disability (SLD), ADHD and FAS -0 report that "they are lonely, have difficulty with establishing friendships, or are bullied by peers (Carter, et al., 2014, p.92). For these adolescents, "impairments in social communication skills can lead to a variety of negative outcomes, including poor academic achievement, social anxiety, and poor self-esteem and depression" (Otero, Schatz, Merrill, & Bellini, 2015). The documented increase in prevalence rates for autism spectrum disorders (ASD), with the most recent reports having 1 in 57 children being diagnosed with ASD, (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018) is reflected in School District 22 by an increased need for effective programming for these students.

In a national study of over 1000 parents of adolescents with ASD, (Wagner, Cadwallader, Garza, & Cameto, 2004) reported that only 6% of youth with ASD frequently saw friends outside of school, only 10% frequently received phone calls from friends, and only 49% were invited to a social event at any time during the previous year

Given the preference for including adolescents with ASD and other social difficulties in regular classrooms, this growing population of students needs more evidence-based social skills interventions than ever before. While the new BC Curriculum does address the development of core competencies including self-regulation, well-being, building relationships, solving problems in peaceful ways, and connecting and engaging with others, research shows that students with ASD need extensive support and explicit teaching order to learn the complexity of social interactions. One of the only evidence-based, manualized programs proven to improve social functioning for youth with ASD and other social difficulties, the PEERS® Curriculum approach applies cognitive behavior therapy methods for effective Social Skills Training. These methods include didactic lessons, role-play demonstrations, cognitive strategies, behavioral rehearsal exercises, performance feedback, homework assignments and review. Results from four randomized controlled trials and one quasi-experimental study support significant improvements in overt social skills, frequency of peer interactions, and social responsiveness (Laugesen, 2014). A promising study by Van Hecke et al., 2015 shows that the PEERS® Curriculum has an impact on neural functioning (via EEG asymmetry readings) in adolescents after taking the course. They demonstrate an increased "left-hemisphere EEG asymmetry" which is associated with more social contacts and knowledge, and fewer symptoms of autism. Adolescents with ASD in PEERS no longer differed from typically developing adolescents in left-dominant EEG asymmetry at post-test" (p. 316).

First People's Principles of Learning:

Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community (Learning the skills for successful social interactions positively impacts mental wellness in students, their families and ultimately their community)

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (Students are supported in a safe environment where they are encouraged to take risks, build relationships with staff and peers, reflect upon their growth, and learn through doing, in the classroom and in the community). Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions (Students learn about "social thinking" and understanding their role in how people respond to them and their behaviors).

Learning involves patience and time (Change takes time, and if habits and skills are entrenched and difficult to let go or relearn, students receive support on their journey).

Learning requires exploration of one's identity (Improving one's social skills and student self-assessment requires inward reflection and willingness to change yet accept themselves for who they are and capitalize on the strengths found in their diverse needs).

BIG IDEAS

Communication and social skills are part of lifelong learning	Communication and social interactions are shaped by the ability to self-regulate .	Positive social interactions are a foundation of safe, respectful, and caring communities	Strong social skills lead to positive career, academic, and relational outcomes	Networks and reciprocal relationships can guide and broaden career- life awareness and options
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Learning Standards

Curricular Competencies	Content
<i>Students are expected to do the following:</i> <u>Examine:</u> Analyze social interactions with careful consideration of the thoughts and feelings of others to make sense of why certain behaviors are socially acceptable or unacceptable (e.g. defined by "expected" and "unexpected") especially as related to workplace/ friendship/ dating contexts Recognize that his/ her behavior impacts the people around them (social cognition and pragmatic communication) Determine and communicate appropriate resolutions to difficult workplace situations, and/ or awkward friendship/ dating scenarios Identify sources of potential friends Distinguish between healthy and toxic workplaces and evaluate how their own behavior might impact their workplace environment Discriminate between consensual and non-consensual relationships Appraise social skills in relation to chosen workplace and set goals accordingly Assess personal transferable skills, and identify strengths and those skills that require further refinement Explore and evaluate personal strategies, including social, and physical, to maintain well-being with a focus on successful transition <u>Interact:</u> Engage in conversation with peers in the context of dating/ friendships/ workplace: Appropriately introduce himself/ herself and others Appropriately enter and exit a conversation with a group of people Ask questions and give responses which are relevant to the context <u>Experience:</u> Help create an atmosphere of safety and respect within the class Describe how his/ her emotions impact social interactions Identify and apply strategies to help him/ her move from an undesirable to a desirable state (e.g. deep breathing, counting, music, positive thought patterns, etc.) Apply learned skills in community (e.g. apply for a job, participate in life skills activities) Dramatize job interview and/ or dating scenarios <u>Share:</u> Reflect on social experiences in school and in the community, Assess development in the Core Competencies, and share highlights of growth	<i>Students are expected to know the following:</i> Guidelines for using humor appropriately Guidelines for finding a source of friends Guidelines for entering and exiting group conversations Strategies for effective and safe electronic communication Strategies for handling direct & indirect bullying Strategies for minimizing rumors and gossip Strategies for handling disagreements Strategies for changing a bad reputation Guidelines for dating etiquette (if appropriate to student) Letting someone know you like them Asking someone on a date Going on dates Dating dos and don'ts Consent and respect Strategies to apply for a job in person and online Strategies for succeeding in job interviews

Big Ideas – Elaborations

Lifelong learning:

Sample questions to support inquiry-based learning

What habits of mind and attitudes help us develop as lifelong learners?

If social skills can be viewed on a continuum, how can we tap into our strengths, interests, and competencies when exploring potential career-life opportunities?

How can we use experiences and reflection about our social interactions to foster our growth as lifelong learners?

Self-Regulate:

refers to how people manage stress, how much energy they expend and how well they recover. Effective self-regulation enhances growth, learning and emotional, social and physical well-being.

Strong Social Skills lead to positive career, academic and relational outcomes:

Sample questions to support inquiry-based learning.

How do we respectfully navigate competing social, familial, and cultural expectations as we pursue our preferred career-life pathways?

How do we capitalize on our strengths and interests to help us make meaningful contributions in the world?

Engaging in networks:

Sample questions to support inquiry-based learning.

How do our social communication and interactions represent who and how we want to be in the world?

In what ways can we collaborate with people from our personal and educational/workplace networks to explore and further meaningful career-life Opportunities?

What communication and collaboration strategies can we use to broaden our networks?

Reciprocal relationships:

With family, social groups, local community, post-secondary education communities, professional communities, digital communities, the global community

Curricular Competencies – Elaborations

Expected" and "unexpected": Doing what is "expected" refers to a range of hidden rules in every situation. We need to learn what those rules are and then follow them to keep other people feeling good about us. Doing what is "unexpected" refers to failing to follow a set of rules, hidden, or stated, in a specific environment, thus not following these rules is "unexpected" behavior (Garcia Winner, 2011, p. 13).

Social cognition: understanding the perspectives of others

Pragmatic communication: understanding the social context and the hidden social rules/ expectations in a given environment, context, or interaction

Healthy and toxic workplaces: A toxic workplace can be defined as any job where the work, the atmosphere, the people, or any combination of those things cause serious disruptions in the rest of your life. Explicit discussion of options and ideas to stay healthy at work will be discussed and applied where possible.

Consensual and non-consensual relationships: Understanding rules and laws; consequences; NO means NO; healthy relationships are based on respect, and affection, and are free from violence, coercion, and intimidation.

Content – Elaborations

Social filter: We can think whatever we want but we do not say everything that comes into our head in the interest of not hurting or offending other people. Our social filter can be different depending upon whom we are with and where we are interacting

The social fake: Being able to listen to someone talk about something you are not really interested in but appearing like you are. Instead of telling people they are boring or walking away, you can fake interest and you may become interested, but more importantly, it's a little social trick we use all the time to help others feel good about us and maintain respectful interactions

Reflect on social experiences in school and in the community: As part of the critical analysis of their learning journey (past, present, and possible futures), students will make sense of their experiences and identify key insights

Recommended Instructional Components:

Didactic lessons using concrete rules and steps
Ecologically valid social skills
Socratic Method Role play demonstrations (inappropriate (adult only) and appropriate)
Perspective Taking Questions
Use of BUZZWORDS - introduce throughout, maintain class visual display g Behavioral Rehearsal Exercises
Coaching with Performance Feedback
Action Homework (Weekly assignments to practice skills with a coach)
Parent Moodie - provide weekly skills overview, updates and action assignment criteria

Recommended Assessment Components: Ensure alignment with the [Principles of Quality Assessment](#)**Pre-Assessment:**

Assess the student's current level of social functioning to establish baseline data and to help determine a direction and focus for programming individualized learning outcomes. This pre-assessment will include:

General Interviews of social functioning with parents, teachers and the student (adapted from: Building Social Relationships:

Systematic Approach to Teaching Social Interaction Skills to Children & Adolescents with ASO and other Social Difficulties, by Scott Bellini, PhD.)

Rating Scales (provided by PEERS UCLA Clinic Coordinator, Elina Veytsman via Dropbox)

SSIS (Social Skills Improvement System) - Teacher, Parent

SRS-2 (Social Responsiveness Scale) - Teacher, Parent

QSQ - Revised (Quality of Socialization Questionnaire) - Parent, Teen

EQ - (Empathy Quotient) - Parent, Teen

TASSK (Test of Adolescent Social Skills Knowledge) - Teen

L & S.D. (Loneliness & Social Dissatisfaction) Rating Scale - Teen

Review attendance data of target students

Throughout the Course (Assessment for Learning):

Observations:

Naturalistic Observations will involve recording the student's behavior in real-life social settings, such as in the hallways, in class and at home. Data will include noting improvement in some of the course content areas, such as having conversations, entering and exiting conversations, and choosing appropriate friendship groups. Note any authentic and spontaneous responses, including efforts to join in or repair interactions. Should occur at regular 2–3-week intervals throughout the semester
Structured Observations involve recording the student's behavior in the classroom environment. This structured environment will be governed by specific rules and norms presented visually that articulate expectations for working within the group

Student Points System:

Teachers will use a class wide points system to encourage student learning through active participation and self-monitoring.

The Socratic Method:

The lessons are designed to support the unique learning style of students with neurodevelopmental delays like ASD. Employing the Socratic Method is meant to elicit student curiosity through questioning and to lead the students "through additional questions" to construct a plausible answer without explaining the answer. The Socratic Method is used to arrive at the rules for handling challenging social situations and empowers students to generate the rules collectively as they are encouraged to access prior knowledge (drawn from their own successes and failures in similar experiences). Teachers assess the quality of responses from the students, noting their progress and sharing their findings with the students during conferencing and through point allocation (timely/consistent feedback).

Weekly Action Homework Assignment:

Each week, students are given specific tasks to be completed outside of class. This is a way to encourage both the growth of new skills and their use in more natural settings.

Behavioral Rehearsal - Mid Point of Course Conference (Rubric)

Students are split into dyads and asked to practice the APPROPRIATE way to act out challenging social behavior. Students are encouraged to use their posted rules to govern their actions and to ensure that they are meeting the success criteria. The Behavioral Rehearsal activity helps the students begin to translate the material into their daily lives by practicing in class. Video is captured on the iPad and shared with the student. Through a Teacher- Student Conference, the teacher and student use the rubric to review the student performance (e.g. performance feedback). The student targets revisions and is given another opportunity to rehearse while being videoed. After the second video the student makes a Reflection Submission that assesses their experience and establishes personal goals. Their responses will be documented through:

1. Journal writing 2. Video journaling 3. Comic Strip 4. Other

Post-Assessment:

Compilation of Observation records, anecdotal records/ conversations with parents and teachers

Rating Scales:

SSIS (Social Skills Improvement System) - Teacher, Parent

SRS-2 (Social Responsiveness Scale) - Teacher, Parent

QSQ - Revised (Quality of Socialization Questionnaire) - Parent, Teen

EQ (Empathy Quotient) - Parent, Teen

TASSK (Test of Adolescent Social Skills Knowledge) - Teen

L & S.D. (Loneliness & Social Dissatisfaction) Rating Scale - Teen

Review attendance data post course and one year follow-up

Learning Resources:

Garcia Winner, M. (2011). Social thinking worksheets for tweens and teens: Learning to read in between the social lines. San Jose, CA: Social Thinking Publishing

Healthy Relationship Plus Program (online). Fourth R. London, ON: Centre for School Mental Health, Western University, Faculty of Education

Laugeson, E. (2014). The PEERS curriculum for school-based professionals: Social skills training for adolescents with autism spectrum disorder. New York, NY: Routledge.

Laugeson, E. (2017). PEERS® for young adults: Social skills training for adults with autism spectrum disorder and other social challenges New York, NY: Routledge.

Nowell, N. (2011). Mike's crush: Understanding high school relationships. Social Signals.

Garcia Winner, M., & Crooke, P. (2011). Socially Curious and Curiously Social: A Social Thinking Guidebook for Bright Teens and Young Adults. San Jose, CA: Social Thinking Publishing

Role Play DVD from The Science of Making Friends: Helping Socially Challenged Teens and Young Adults: Laugeson, E. (2013)

Role Plays from YouTube (Autism Talk TV) demonstrating PEERS skills (e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=az8vpzxZkj4&nohtml5=false>)

Role play videos for teaching the skills from PEERS

References:

Carter, E.W., Common, E. A., Sreckovic, M.A., Huber, H. B., Bottema-Beutel, K., Gustafson, J. R., Dykstra, J. & Hume, K. (2014). Promoting social competence and peer relationships for adolescents with autism spectrum disorders. Remedial and Special Education, 35(2), 91-101. doi: 10.1177/0741932513514618

Otero, T. L., Schatz, R. B, Merrill, A. C., & Bellini, S. (2015). Social skills training for youth with autism spectrum disorders: a follow-up, Child Adolescent Psychiatry Clinical North America, 24(1), 99-115. doi: 10.1016/j.chc.2014.09.002.

Wagner, M., Cadwallader, T. W., Garza, N., & Cameto, R. (2004) Social activities of youth with disabilities. NLTS2 Data Brief, 3(1), 1-4.

Van Hecke, A. V., Stevens, S., Carson, A. M., Karst, J. S., Dolan, B., Schehl, K., McKindles, R. J., Remmel, R., & Brockman, S. (2015) 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. Journal of Autism Developmental Disorders, 45, 316-335. doi: 10.1007 /s 10803-013-1883-y



Ministry of
Education

BOARD/AUTHORITY AUTHORIZED (BAA) COURSE FORM

PART A: BAA COURSE VERIFICATION STATEMENT - To be completed by District Superintendent, Independent School or Offshore School Principal

Prior to submitting the attached BAA Course Framework to the Board/Authority for approval, I Joe Rogers, Superintendent verify that I have reviewed the BAA Course to ensure that it is fully compliant with the *School Act* (if offered by a Board or Offshore School), the *Independent School Act* (if offered by an Independent School Authority), the *Board Authorized Course Order*, policy document *Board/Authority Authorized Courses: Requirements and Procedures*, and for ELL courses the ELL Guidelines: *Template for BAA Language Acquisition/Culture Courses*.

By signing below, I verify that the BAA Course:

- is not preparatory, remedial, or modified
- does not significantly overlap with current provincial curriculum
- name reflects the subject area and includes the grade level
- assigned grade level reflects the appropriate level of instruction
- credit value appropriately reflects the length and scope of the course
- synopsis clearly outlines what a student has gained when the course is completed
- rationale outlines the reasons for wanting to offer opportunities to study the course
- organizational structure outlines the specific topics, units or modules which include the learning outcomes, instruction and assessment components, and time allotments
- learning outcomes are assessable and observable and can be understood by students and parents
- instructional component clarifies learning outcomes and provides a range of pedagogical opportunities
- assessment component provides formative and summative opportunities to assess student achievement
- learning resources are age appropriate, support learning outcomes and diversity of learning rates and styles.

Course Name Foundations of Social Communication Grade 12 Course Code _____

School District Name and Number 22 (Vernon)

Independent School Name and School Number _____

Name of District Superintendent/Independent or Offshore School Principal Joe Rogers, Superintendent of

Signature [Signature] Date 06/19/2019

PART B: BAA COURSE AUTHORIZATION STATEMENT - To be completed by Board/Authority Chair or Designate

A signed copy of this document must be submitted to the Student Certification Branch. The original document and accompanying BAA Course Framework must be retained by the district/school for submission to the Ministry upon request.
(Board Authorized Course Order, M285/04, s. 3; Educational Standards Order, M41/91, s. 5 (2)(c))

Name of Board/Authority Chair or Designate Robert Lee, Board Chair

Signature [Signature] Date 06/19/2019

I declare that this BAA course is approved by the Board/Authority

PART C: FOR INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS ONLY BAA INSPECTOR CONFIRMATION

To be completed by Inspector of Independent Schools or Designate during regular inspection/monitoring visit

A signed copy of this document (Parts A and C) must be retained for submission to the Ministry upon request.

The BAA course noted above is fully compliant with the *Independent School Act* and the BC Ministry of Education requirements outlined in the policy document *Board/Authority Authorized Courses: Requirements and Procedures*. (Educational Standards Order, M41/91, s. 5(2)(c))

Name Inspector of Independent Schools or Designate _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Send Completed Form to Student Certification Branch
Email student.certification@gov.bc.ca

Revised October 26, 2016