



Board/Authority Authorized Course
Vernon Secondary School
Foundations of Social Communication 11

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 Schiiler	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: 11
Number of Course Credits: 4	Number of Hours of Instruction: 120

Board/Authority Prerequisite(s): None

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, one behavioral coach (preferably trained in PEERS) e.g. SLP, teacher, educational assistant, projector, selection of age-appropriate board games, outdoor sports equipment, prizes and food for Graduation party.

Course Synopsis: Foundations of Social Communication 11 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. In addition, the skills learned facilitate social competency for successful relationships and interactions at school, in the community and in the workplace. Students will be taught ecologically valid social skills which are 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.

Goals and Rationale:

Develop social skills and apply them in context to support making and keeping friends and managing peer conflict and rejection.

Increase students' awareness of their behavior and provide them with the required skills for improved social communication and interactions.

Decreased peer rejection and social isolation for participants, i.e. increased school connectedness.

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

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 -D 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 (Laugeson, 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 Peoples 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 particular 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).

Indigenous Worldviews and Perspectives:

A positive, learner-centered approach, Teacher preparation/ Learning environment & resources, Role of the teacher, Flexibility and Experiential learning

BIG IDEAS

Communication is a learned skill	Strong Social Skills and managing our emotions enables us to develop and maintain healthy relationship	Healthy relationships can help us lead rewarding and fulfilling lives	Positive and social interactions are a foundation of safe, respectful, and caring communities	Social skills can be learned through coaching and contextualized practice
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Learning Standards

Curricular Competencies	Content
<i>Students are expected to do the following:</i> 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") Recognize that his/ her behavior impacts the people around them (social) cognition and pragmatic communication Engage in conversation with peers: 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/ interest of others Appropriately use technology to support social interactions Appropriately use humor Apply a social filter where necessary for audience Understand and use the social fake where necessary Demonstrate and communicate appropriate resolutions to difficult social situations (i.e. disagreements, teasing, and embarrassing feedback) Identify qualities of a good match for friendships	<i>Students are expected to know the following:</i> Rules for trading information Rules for using humor appropriately Rules for entering and exiting conversations with peers Strategies to handle rejection, teasing and bullying Strategies for minimizing rumors and gossip Strategies for handling arguments and disagreements Strategies for changing a bad reputation Strategies for handling physical bullying Strategies for handling cyber bullying Vocabulary terms used and applied throughout the lessons including: expected, unexpected, social filter, social fake, social thinking

Explain the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships Describe personal attributes, characteristics, and skills in relation to forming friendships Demonstrate good sportsmanship in games and social activities Self-evaluate and further reflect upon awareness of personal strengths, preferences, and skills Try new experiences and take reasonable challenges Help create an atmosphere of safety and respect within the class Interpret the four steps of communication needed to become a social thinker within at leaser two real-life scenarios. Identify and label a range of emotions and describe how the external environment affects his/ her emotions Evaluate whether his/ her emotional regulation impacts social interactions Develop and apply strategies to help him/ her move from an undesirable to a Desirable state. (e.g. deep breathing, counting, music, positive through patterns)	
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Big Ideas – Elaborations

Communication is a learned social skill: Students with autism and other social challenges often require direct teaching and didactic instruction to acquire and apply functional communication skills

Strong social skills and managing our emotions enables us to develop and maintain healthy relationships: The PEERS curriculum for school-based professionals: Social skills training for adolescents with autism spectrum disorder covers the following skills

How to use appropriate conversational skills

How to choose appropriate friends

How to appropriately use electronic forms of communication

How to appropriately use humor and assess humor feedback

How to start, enter and exit conversations between peers

How to organize successful get-togethers with friends

How to be a good sport when playing games/sports with friends

How to handle arguments and disagreements with friends and in relationships

How to handle rejection, teasing, bullying, rumors/gossip, and cyber bullying

How to change a bad reputation

Coaching & contextualized practice: Students will be paired with a coach to support the completion of and to provide feedback for weekly socialization (action) assignments. Parents, teachers, education assistants, other appropriate adults or peer tutors will be considered coaches

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 each environment, context, or interaction

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 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

The four steps of communication needed to become a social thinker: (Garcia Winner, 2011 p. 23)

1 Thinking about people and what they think and feel

2 Being aware of your physical presence as well as the physical presence of others

3 Using your eyes to think about others and what they're thinking about.

4 Using your language to relate to others

Emotional regulation: generally defined as the automatic or intentional modification of a person's emotional state that promotes adaptive or goal-directed

behavior. Individuals with ASD may fail to employ adaptive strategies and instead react impulsively to emotional stimuli with outbursts, tantrums, aggression, or self-injury. Such behaviors are often interpreted as deliberate or defiant but may be due to inadequate management of emotion. Poor emotional regulation is associated with a wide range of negative mental and physical health outcomes.

Content – Elaborations

Each listed skill is taught weekly through a similar repetitive structure, and each build upon the last skill, sample outline:

1. Review of previous week's skill
2. Didactic lessons with concrete rules and steps
3. Role play demonstration
4. Student behaviour rehearsals
5. Action homework assignment
6. Coaching with performance feedback
7. Socialization Activity

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

Behavioural 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

Is fair, transparent, meaningful and responsive to all learners

focuses on all three components of the curriculum model - knowing, doing, understanding

provides ongoing descriptive feedback to students

is ongoing, timely, specific, and embedded in day-to-day instruction

provides varied and multiple opportunities for learners to demonstrate their learning

involves student in their learning

promotes development of student self-assessment and goal setting for next steps in learning

allows for a collection of student work to be gathered over time to provide a full profile of the learner and learning

Communicates clearly to the learner and parents where the student is, what they are working towards and ways that learning can be supported

Examples of 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 student (adapted from: Building Social Relationships: Systematic Approach to Teaching Social Interaction Skills to Children & Adolescents with ASD 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 behaviour in real-life social settings, such as in the hallways, in class and at home. Data will include noting improvement in some/ all 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 behaviour 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 system of points 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 it. 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

Behavioural Rehearsal (Mid-Point of Course Conference)

Students are split into dyads and asked to practice the APPROPRIATE way to act out challenging social behaviour. Students are encouraged to use their posted rules to govern their actions and to ensure that they are meeting the success criteria. The Behavioural 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:
Journal writing, Video journaling, Comic Strip, 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

Additional Information:

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, 8., 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/s10803-013-1883-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 11 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