

FEATURED

Their Voice

Their Voice: Socialization classes coming to Kids on the Move

A Course in Learning Social Skills in Utah Valley

Monica Villar Their Voice Updated Dec 29, 2016



Monica Villar

Courtesy

“There is nothing on this earth more to be prized than true friendship.”

This observation comes from St. Thomas Aquinas and dates back to the 1200s. However, it is still true today that the friendships we make in our lifetime become more valuable as we get older.

Many of us, regardless of our age, can probably remember some of the close friends we made in high school. Some of us are fortunate enough to maintain those friendships as we move on with our lives through graduation, college, marriage, families and careers.

For those who haven't, there is always Facebook, where we can look for them and reconnect. With so much value placed on these adolescent relationships, it is fortunate that there is now training available to assist teens who lack social skills, to learn the techniques to help them develop and nurture them.

The Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills, also known as PEERS, was originally developed in 2005 at UCLA by Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson, founder and director of the UCLA PEERS Clinic, and Dr. Fred Frankel. The program has expanded to locations across the United States and the world.

PEERS is a manualized, social skills training intervention for youth with social challenges. It has a strong evidence-base for use with adolescents and young adults with autism spectrum disorder, but is also appropriate for preschoolers, adolescents, and young adults with ADHD, anxiety, depression, and other socioemotional problems.

We are fortunate in Utah Valley that one of the national locations will be right here in Orem at Kids on the Move Autism Center. The 15-week course will be one night a week from 6:30 to 8 p.m. beginning Jan. 26. A parent or guardian attends the training with the teen, and will learn how to help their teen as he/she works on various skills. Joe Dixon, senior supervisor at Kids on the Move, cited research that states, “teens who participate in the program gain enough skills that they never need to do social skills training again.”

This program is available to teens between the ages of 13 and 18 with autism spectrum disorder. Prior to registering, an assessment will be completed to ensure that each individual is a proper fit for the training. Dixon said that some insurances will cover the cost of the course, but if not, there are other private payment options.

Leslie Lilino is the main contact for this training and can be contacted at llilino@kotm.org or by calling (801) 221-9930, ext 241.

We are fortunate to have such an opportunity locally to have courses like this available. There are many people for whom making friends comes easily. But for the others for whom it is not, I hope that this course can bring the much needed knowledge and confidence to help them enjoy the same social experiences as their peers.

I wish you all a very happy and enlightened new year.

Finding Best Buddies in High School

This is an early release of The World Table comment system. We'd like your [feedback!](#)

sign in    

Their Voice: Socialization classes coming to Kids on the Move



Join the discussion here...



0 comments Best First ▼

The Way of Openness is Practiced Here