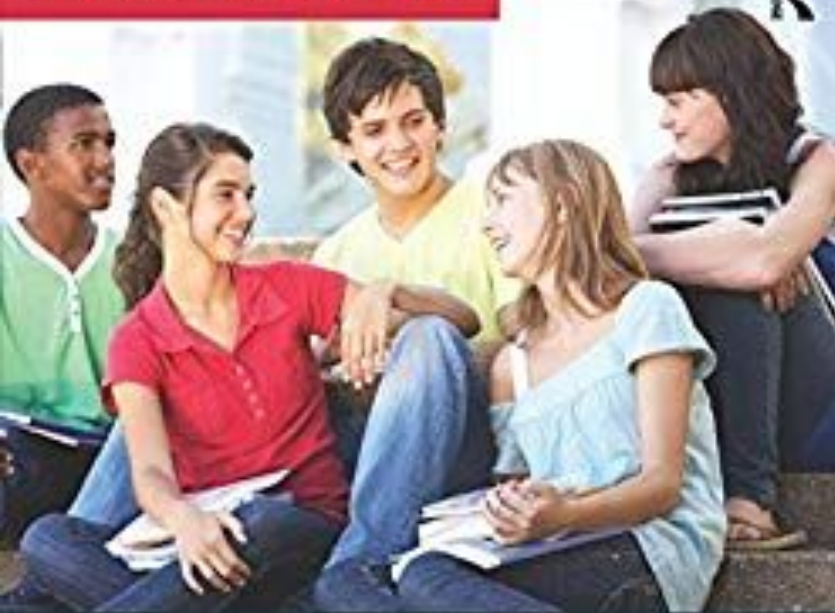


ELIZABETH A. LAUGESON



# The **PEERS** Curriculum for School-Based Professionals



Social Skills Training for Adolescents  
with Autism Spectrum Disorder

# The PEERS Curriculum

2018-2019

# Introductions

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Megan Sullivan: Work at Tilden Middle School in the Aspergers Program

Jana Coffey: Churchill High School in Bridge

Sarah Lobien: Ridgeview Middle School  
Aspergers Program

# Basic School-Based Curriculum Information

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- Targets friendships and friendship skills
- Teacher facilitated within school
- 16 week curriculum
- Each lesson is designed to be 30-60 min.
- Evidence-based
- Parent handouts and HW assignments
- Variety of teaching methods including do's and don'ts, steps, role play, social coaching

# Topics Covered in PEERS

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- ▣ Trading information
- ▣ Two-way conversations
- ▣ Electronic Communication
- ▣ Choosing appropriate friends
- ▣ Appropriate use of humor
- ▣ Starting and joining conversations
- ▣ Exiting conversations
- ▣ Good sportsmanship
- ▣ Get-togethers
- ▣ Handling arguments
- ▣ Changing reputations
- ▣ Handling teasing and embarrassing feedback
- ▣ Handling physical bullying
- ▣ Handling cyberbullying
- ▣ Minimizing rumors and gossip

# Application: Aspergers Program

**Teachers:** Megan Sullivan and Sarah Lobien

- During social skills, we typically serve between 6--10 students at each grade level. There is paraeducator support.
- Our social skills classes are in the morning (1st period) for 45 minutes. We implement the PEERS curriculum as well as other, related applied activities (7th grade).
- We also provide social coaching on an as needed basis throughout the school day.

# Why We Like the PEERS Curriculum

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- Researched and Evidence Based
- Socratic Method
- Ecologically Valid
- Engaging

# How We Apply Peers Curriculum

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**Monday:** Group activities with a reflection component

**Tuesday:** Direct Instruction in PEERS (introduction activity, rules)

**Wednesday:** Direct instruction in PEERS (role play, [video modeling](#), game)

**Thursday:** Peer talk/focused discussion



**Bridge**



# Application: Embedded into the Curriculum

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- ▣ English 11/12
  - ▣ Unit, Literature, or Topic
    - Examples: Satire → Humor Do's and Don'ts
- ▣ Literacy in the Digital Age (5th year seniors in Bridge Program)
  - ▣ Finding a Source of Friends, Get together
  - ▣ Bullying → Physical, Verbal, Cyber
    - Staying Safe with Technology → Cyber bullying

# Application: Lunch/Club

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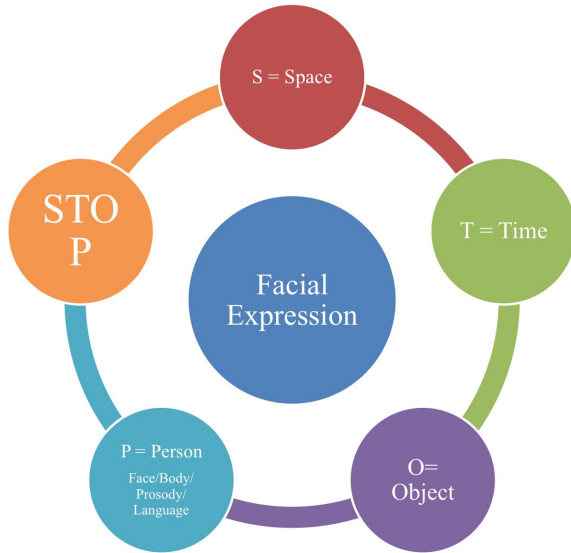
- 2-3 students who showed interest (important)
- Began at the beginning of the curriculum
- Show [videos](#) instead of two people role-playing

# Application: Bi-Monthly Group (Bridge)

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- ▣ Go over the Do's and Don'ts
- ▣ Role Play

# Application: Speech & Language



# Coffey's Takeaways

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- ▣ “You don’t want to be everyone’s friend. Not everyone wants to be your friend.” (that’s okay)
- ▣ “What could be the problem with...” (we don’t say what is wrong-we encourage students to think about the potential problems with the answer students suggest)
- ▣ Practice is important for moving the information from short term memory to long term memory
- ▣ Fostering independence

# Takeaways

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- ▣ Friendship skills can be built step-by-step
- ▣ Friendships are built on common interests
- ▣ Importance of finding opportunities to meet people with common interests (clubs, extra curricular activities)
- ▣ Short social coaching using PEERS vocabulary
  - ▣ “Great job trading information. Next time be careful not to be a conversation hog”

# Lesson Sample: Tilden



[Sportsmanship](#) Lesson

Videos of Students Performing Role Play  
(permission has been obtained):

# Lesson Sample: Bad Winner





# Lesson Sample: Play by the Rules



# Sample Lesson: Ridgeview



## Appropriate Use of Humor

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# Questions and Contact Information

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Sarah Lobien: [Sarah\\_Lobien@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Sarah_Lobien@mcpsmd.org)

Jana Coffey: [Jana\\_Coffey@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Jana_Coffey@mcpsmd.org)

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