

# PEERS

Teenagers with high-functioning autism gain social skills by partnering with their parents in the new PEERS program offered by SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center, Knights of Columbus Developmental Center.

PEERS is the first dual teenager-parent social skills program offered in St. Louis.

## What is PEERS?

PEERS, or **P**rogram for the **E**ducation and **E**nrichment of **R**elational **S**kills, is a 14-week evidence-based social skills program for motivated teens in middle and high school.

During sessions teens are engaged in learning real-life skills for connecting, building, and maintaining friendships. They are also given the opportunity to practice these skills during socialization activities while in session.

Parents attend separate sessions at the same time and are taught how to assist their teens in:

- making and keeping friends
- expanding their social network
- providing feedback through coaching during weekly socialization homework assignments.

## What skills do teens learn?

- Conversational skills
- How to find common interests by trading information
- Using humor appropriately
- How to enter and exit conversations with peers
- Handling rejection, teasing and bullying
- Being a good host during get-togethers
- How to handle rumors and gossip
- Making phone calls to friends
- Choosing appropriate friends
- Being a good sport
- Handling arguments and disagreements
- Changing a bad reputation

## Why is parent participation important?

Active parental participation helps teens complete the program – each weekly session builds upon skills learned the previous week.

Parents acting as coaches ensure consistent results – they are available “in the moment” to offer the right support at the right time, as well as provide opportunities for social interaction.



### Who

Motivated teens, ages 12 – 18 and his/her parent. Appropriate for teens with ADHD, Asperger's disorders, depression, high-functioning autism, pervasive developmental disorder, anxiety, and other social and behavioral problems.

### Format

Small groups of 8 participants

### When

Spring 2012

### Where

SSM Cardinal Glennon  
Children's Medical Center

### Fee

\$1050/teen-parent pair

### Eligibility

In order to respond well to treatment, teens must be able to understand language, speak fluently and think through situations. PEERS instructors meet with each teen-parent pair prior to the start of the program to determine their eligibility for treatment using a cognitive/linguistic assessment.

### Enrolling

A parent must enroll with his/her teen. Enrollment is required for the entire 14-week session.

To enroll, please call Colleen at 314-268-2700 ext. 3399, or email her at Colleen\_M\_Dolnick@ssmhc.com. **Enrollment is limited.**