



Young adults with autism learn social skills with PEERS

Featured, Health / Medicine, Lifestyle November 2, 2015 4:15 pm

PRINT EMAIL A- A+



Like Share 94 people like this.

LOS ANGELES, CA. — Any young adult could feel awkward during social situations, or even with dating. Imagine what these situation would be like having autism. ABC 10's Sarah Mac has more on a social skills program that helps those with autism spectrum disorder.



Like most 25-year-olds, Joey Juarez likes to look his best when he goes out with his friends. Since Joey has autism, he didn't go out very often though, because social situations could be awkward.

Joey says, "I was feeling lonely."

Now Joey feels more confident in social surroundings because of a program at UCLA's Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior. The program is called PEERS, which stands for Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills. The 16 week long program teaches social skills, including tips on dating.

Elizabeth Laugeson, Psy.D. of UCLA's Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior says, "Most adults on the autism spectrum really want to have friends and really want to have romantic relationships, but they don't know how to."

Even though people of all ages with autism struggle in social surroundings, most programs target young children. PEERS is one of the few that is for young adults and so far it's the only one that proves effective through research.

Laugeson says, "What we found was not only an improvement in overall social skills – particularly in the areas of cooperation and assertion – but also a decrease in autism symptoms."

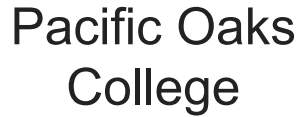
The program also teaches parents how to coach their young adult children.

Joey's dad, Jose Juarez says, "He is going through the program and applying, you know, the techniques. He's able now to have more meaningful relationship that is going to last him for a long time, maybe for life, and that is really, really important."

Joey now attends parties more frequently and says he feels more confident than ever before.

"They taught me how to, like, make and keep friends," Joey added, "of course there's many aspects that go into that."

Researchers also created a book and an app with tips on social interactions for anyone to use when they need it.



Pursue Your Passion for Education. Campus & Online Classes Available. pacificoaks.edu/Online-Degree

POSTED BY SARAH MAC

Sarah Mac is a reporter for ABC 10 UP-CW 5. She is a metro-Detroit native. She graduated from Wayne State University in May 2015 with a BA in Journalism (concentrating in Broadcasting) and a Minor in Theatre. She loves a good adventure, which is how she has ended up working for Walt Disney World, interning for Make-A-Wish Michigan and, most recently, moving the UP. She is a childhood cancer survivor, and loves to share her story. Her interests include health and wellness, and community events. She is an alumna of Kappa Delta Sorority.

TAGGED WITH

- Elizabeth Laugeson
- Joey Juarez
- Jose Juarez
- PEERS
- Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills
- Psy.D.
- UCLA's Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior

Powered by vCita



Send us a news-tip! We are interested in your ideas and feedback. Click here to request a member of the news team to attend an upcoming event. You can suggest scheduling, book to our news calendar, or send us direct message. We're looking forward to connecting.

Send a Message! My Account Send a Message! Call +1 906-204-2436 Suggest Scheduling Got U.P. News?