

PEERS training improves relationships for those with autism



PEERS training improving relationships for those

Healthworks

By: Deena Centofanti



POSTED: OCT 27 2015 08:08PM EDT
 UPDATED: OCT 27 2015 09:06PM EDT

Parties and social events can be nerve-wracking for any young adult, so imagine what these situations are like for those who have autism. The challenges are real for those who are on the spectrum, but now there might be a very real solution, too.

Meet 25-year-old Joey Juarez. He likes to look his best when he's going out with friends, but because he has autism social situations can be awkward. So, many times he'd avoid them.

But that was before he attended a course at UCLA's Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior. It's a 16-week class that teaches students with autism how to interact in social situations -- and even how to date.

Ad Content

Sponsored Links by Taboola



7 Steps to Earthquake Safety
 California Earthquake Authority



Why Business Insider Loves This Carry-On
 Business Insider | Away



Autism Online Certificate

at Arizona State University - Apply 15-Credit Graduate Certificate.



Popular

New severe thunderstorm warnings issued for Wayne, Washtenaw

Man says he was abducted, raped while walking on Detroit's west side

Surviving woman from double fatal I-75 crash shares her story

Witness: Boyfriend confessed to killing woman and daughter, dumping them in ab...

Ohio woman admits to trafficking daughter, 11, for heroin, gets 51 years in prison

Recent

Coaching made me broke

5 Critical Questions to ask before you start your own coach

PEERS training improves relationships for those with autism

Healthworks

Posted: Oct 27 2015 08:08PM EDT

Updated: Oct 27 2015 09:06PM EDT

Parties and social events can be nerve-racking for any young adult, so imagine what these situations are like for those who have autism. The challenges are real for those who are on the spectrum, but now there might be a very real solution, too.

Meet 25-year-old Joey Juarez. He likes to look his best when he's going out with friends, but because he has autism social situations can be awkward. So, many times he'd avoid them.

But that was before he attended a course at UCLA's Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior. It's a 16-week class that teaches students with autism how to interact in social situations -- and even how to date.

"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," says Elizabeth Laugeson, Psy.D from UCLA's Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior.



The course was developed at UCLA and is the only one of its kind that has clinical research to show it's working. In a recent study, researchers charted the progress of students in the program and found significant social improvement.

"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," says Laugeson.

The program, called PEERS, also teaches parents how to coach their young adult children in social situations. Researchers also created a book and app with tips on social interactions that anyone can use. [Click here](#) for the book.

"Now that we have this knowledge, and I continue being his coach, it has really made my life a lot easier, as a

parent too," says Joey's father, Jose. Joey now enjoys attending parties and feels more confident than ever.

"They taught me how to make and keep friends. Of course, there's many aspects that go into that," he says.

PEERS stands for Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills.

For more information on the course, visit this [site](#)