


PEERS®

The Ins and Outs of Dating




UCLA PEERS® Clinic
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Background about PEERS®

- International program
 - Developed at UCLA in 2004
 - Adolescent program has been translated into over a dozen languages
 - Used in over 70 countries
- Evidence-Based Social Skills Programs:
 - PEERS® for Preschoolers
 - PEERS® for Adolescents
 - PEERS® for Young Adults
- Research Programs:
 - PEERS® for Careers
 - PEERS® for Dating



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Evidence-Based Methods for Teaching Social Skills

- Small group format
 - 10-12 adolescents or young adults
- Didactic instruction
 - Structured lessons
 - Concrete rules / steps of social behavior
 - Ecologically valid social skills
 - Socratic method of teaching
- Parent/caregiver assistance
 - Social coaching
 - Expand social opportunities
 - Maintenance of treatment gains
- Role-playing / modeling
 - Appropriate and inappropriate demonstrations
- Perspective taking questions
 - Targeting social cognition
- Behavioral rehearsal
- Social coaching
 - Performance feedback
- In vivo homework assignments
 - Parent/caregiver assistance
 - Generalization to other settings




Photo of PEERS courtesy of Associated Press

(Malson, 1984; Davies & Rogers, 1985; Fleming & Fleming, 1982; Messinger, 1984; Gresham, Sugai, & Horner, 2001; Gralinski & Kopp, 1995; Rubin & Sireman, 1984; Franks & Myant, 2003; Rao, Beidel, & Murray, 2008; Laugeson et al., 2008)

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Choosing Appropriate People to Date

- Dating is a choice
 - We don't get to date everyone
 - Everyone doesn't get to date us
- There are GOOD choices and there are BAD choices when it comes to dating



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Do you want to date someone who...

- ...you actually like?
- ...seems interested in you?
- ...has common interests with you?
- ...is around the same age?
- ...is likely to say yes?



- ...doesn't seem interested in you?
- ...doesn't know you?
- ...ignores you?
- ...is mean to you or makes fun of you?
- ...takes advantage of you or uses you?
- ...has rejected you before?
- ...has a boyfriend or girlfriend?

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Dating Sources

QUESTION:

Where do people find potential partners to date?



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Appropriate Dating Sources

Mutual friends	Internet dating sites
Friends of family members	School, college, adult classes
Parties and get-togethers	Meet-up groups
Social activities and gatherings	Work place
Sporting events	Neighborhood
Dog parks and local parks	Sports clubs, private gyms, recreational centers
Recreational activities (e.g., sports leagues and clubs)	Church, synagogue, mosque, temple, religious gatherings
Community gatherings (e.g., concerts, fairs, farmer's market)	Public places (e.g., coffee houses, bars, clubs)

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Appropriate Online Dating Sources

QUESTIONS:

What are some appropriate online dating sites and apps?

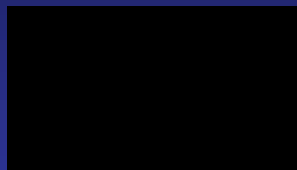
What are some inappropriate online dating sites?



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PEERS® Rules for Talking to Mutual Friends

- Tell your friend you like that person
- Ask your friend if the person is dating anyone
- Ask your friend if they think the person would go out with you
- Ask them not to say you said anything



Role play videos: www.peersclub.com/peersresources/

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Letting Someone Know You Like Them

QUESTION:

How do people who don't know each other flirt in real life?



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Flirting with Your Eyes (Bad Example)



Role play videos: www.youtube.com/watch?v=9m3388888888

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PEERS® Steps for Flirting with Your Eyes

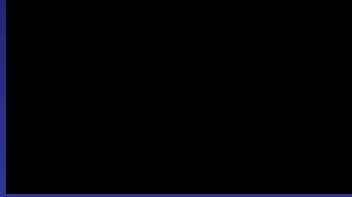
1. Make eye contact
2. Give a slight smile
 - Not a big smile
 - No teeth
3. Look away
4. Repeat



Role play videos: www.youtube.com/watch?v=9m3388888888

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Asking if They're Dating Anyone (Bad Example)

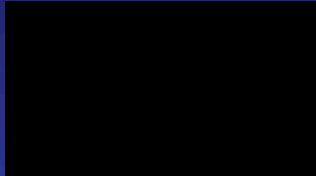


Role play videos: www.amsel.com/role-play-videos

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PEERS® Steps for Asking if They're Dating Anyone

1. Trade information and find common interests
2. Ask about social activities related to the common interest
3. Casually work dating into the conversation
 - Example: "...did you go with your boyfriend/girlfriend?"
4. Give a cover story for asking
5. Shift the conversation back to the common interest



Role play videos: www.amsel.com/role-play-videos

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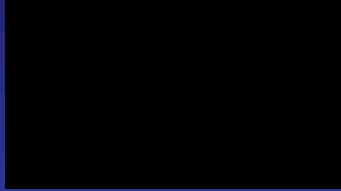
PEERS® Rules for Giving Compliments

- SPECIFIC compliments for people you DON'T know well
 - Examples:
 - "You have a nice smile."
 - "That was really interesting."
 - "That was a funny joke."
- GENERAL compliments ONLY if you know them well
 - Examples:
 - "You're so beautiful!"
 - "You're so smart!"
 - "You're so funny!"
- Avoid too many physical compliments
- Physical compliments should be from the neck-up



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Giving Compliments (Bad Example)



Role play videos: www.youtube.com/watch?v=...

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Giving Compliments (Good Example)



Role play videos: www.youtube.com/watch?v=...

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Asking Someone on a Date

QUESTIONS:

How do you know when you're ready to ask someone on a date?

How can you tell if someone wants you to ask them on a date?



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PEERS® Rules for Asking Someone on a Date

BEFORE ASKING THEM OUT:

- Figure out their dating status
- Let them know you like them
 - Talk to mutual friends
 - Ask them if they are dating anyone
- Flirt with them
 - Flirt with your eyes
 - Give compliments
- Show interest in them
 - Trade information multiple times
 - Find common interests
 - Smile when appropriate
 - Laugh at their jokes
- Assess their romantic interest in you



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Asking Someone on a Date

BEFORE ASKING THEM OUT:

Consider your dating activity options using the FIVE W's:

- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- How



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Asking Someone on a Date (Bad Example)



Role play videos: www.youtube.com/watch?v=388888888888

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PEERS® Steps for Asking Someone on a Date

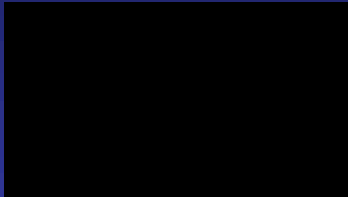
1. Wait for an appropriate time to ask
2. Trade information
3. Mention your common interests
4. Ask what they're doing at a certain time (e.g., this weekend)
5. Assess their interest
6. Use common interest as a cover story for going out
7. Exchange contact information
8. Tell them when you'll follow-up



Role play videos: www.pearsoned.com/peers/resources

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Accepting Rejection (Bad Example)



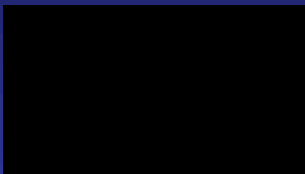
Role play videos: www.pearsoned.com/peers/resources

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PEERS® Steps for Accepting Rejection

1. Keep your cool
2. Make a casual statement of acceptance
 - "Okay, that's fine."
 - "Okay, no worries."
3. Shift the subject back to the common interest
4. Use a cover story before exiting

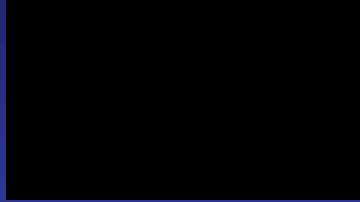
- Other rules for accepting rejection:
- Keep it friendly
 - Don't pressure them to go out with you
 - Don't ask for an explanation



Role play videos: www.pearsoned.com/peers/resources

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Turning Someone Down (Bad Example)



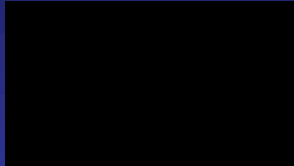
Role play videos: www.pearsoned.com/peers

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PEERS® Steps for Turning Someone Down

1. Keep your cool
2. Politely turn them down
3. Give a cover story for turning them down
4. Thank them for asking you out
5. Shift the subject back to the common interest
6. Use a cover story before exiting

- Other rules for turning someone down:
- Keep it friendly
 - Don't say yes just because you don't know how to say no
 - Don't say yes because you feel sorry for them
 - Don't laugh at them or make fun of them
 - Don't tell others they asked you out



Role play videos: www.pearsoned.com/peers

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PEERS® Rules for Electronic Communication

- Identify yourself when contacting someone new
- Use cover stories for contacting someone you don't contact regularly
- Don't call or text before or after double digits
- Don't get too personal
 - Anyone can see, read, or hear what you sent
- Use the two message rule
- Avoid cold calling
- Give as much as you get
- Use emoji's to convey tone
- Avoid excessive emoji's



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PEERS® Rules for Planning and Preparing for a Date

Planning the Date

- Follow up using the two day rule
- Use the five W's to finalize the date
- Confirm the plans right before the date

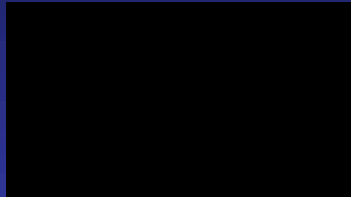
Preparing for the Date

- Make your space presentable
- Put away anything you don't want your date to see, touch, or share
- Use good hygiene
- Dress appropriately
 - Your clothing should match the activity
 - Try to look your best



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Beginning a Date (Bad Example)



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PEERS® Rules for Beginning a Date

1. Greet your date
2. Invite them in
3. Introduce them to anyone they don't know
4. Show them around
5. Offer them refreshments
6. Ask about your plans



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PEERS® Rules for During a Date

- Show interest in your date
 - Smile and make good eye contact
- Give your date compliments
- Laugh at their jokes
- Be polite and respectful
- Avoid risky topics
- Avoid risky places
- Ask your date what they want to do
 - Don't make all the decisions
- Go with the flow, but remember dating is a choice



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PEERS® Rules for During a Date

- Don't flirt with other people
- Don't invite people unexpectedly into your date
- Don't ignore your date
 - Don't ignore your date to talk to other people
 - Don't text or make phone calls during your date
 - If you're expecting an important call or text, let your date know in advance and apologize
- Suggest a change if you or your date gets bored
- Keep it short and sweet at first



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PEERS® Rules for Making Conversation on a Date

- Ask questions
- Answer your own question
- Ask follow-up questions
- Find common interests
- Don't be a conversation hog
- Don't be an interviewer
- Don't get too personal at first
- Don't police
- Don't be brutally honest



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PEERS® Rules for Making Conversation on a Date

- Don't brag
- Don't be argumentative
- Use good volume control
- Use good body boundaries
- Use good eye contact
- Talk and trade information at least 50% of the time



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PEERS® Rules for Staying Safe on Dates

- Don't give out your personal contact information at first
- Google your date before you meet
- Let friends and family know where you are and who you're with
- Drive yourself to and from the date
- Meet your date in a public place
- Don't go anywhere alone with your date at first
 - Don't get in the car with your date at first
 - Don't take your date home at first
 - Don't go to your date's home at first
- Check in with friends and family before and after the date
- Can ask bartender for an "angel shot"



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Paying on a Date

QUESTIONS:

Who should pay on a date?

How do you determine who should pay on a date?

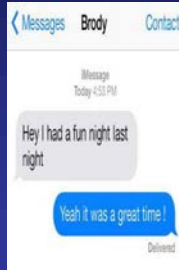
Should the same person pay every time?



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PEERS® Rules for After a Date

- Make a follow up call or text the next day
 - Doesn't matter who makes contact
- Thank them for going out or taking you out
- Tell them you had a good time if you did
- Ask them out again if you like them
 - Avoid bread crumbing
 - Avoid ghosting
 - Avoid zombiewing
 - Avoid love bombing
- If you don't want to go out with them again and they contact you, be honest and kind
 - Example: "You seem very nice, but I didn't really feel a connection."



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PEERS® Dating Do's

- DO remember that dating is a choice
- DO move on if YOU are not interested
- DO move on if THEY are not interested
- DO be polite and respectful
- DO be honest and truthful
- DO define the relationship (DTR) when it's time
 - Four DTR conversations:
 - Not dating other people
 - Not sleeping with other people
 - Boyfriend/girlfriend/partner
 - You are in love
- DO keep in touch
- DO ask permission for any physical contact



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PEERS® Dating Don'ts

- DON'T get too personal at first
 - Don't ask too many personal questions at first
 - Don't share too much personal information at first
 - Don't disclose any diagnoses at first
- DON'T talk about your dating history at first
 - Don't share lack of dating experience at first
 - Don't share bad dating experiences at first
 - Don't talk about your ex's at first
- DON'T talk about your feelings at first
- DON'T rush the relationship
- DON'T assume you're a couple
- DON'T kiss and tell
- DON'T be a player
- DON'T pressure them



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Role-Play Video Library

www.semel.ucla.edu/peers/resources

www.routledge.com/cw/laugeson

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