



What is PEERS®?

- The PEERS® Curriculum for School-Based Professionals is an evidence-based secondary social skills curriculum developed by Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson of UCLA
- The scripted manual is designed to teach students to make and keep friends using ecologically valid instruction
- A variety of techniques are used to instruct. Some include didactic lessons, role-play, perspective-taking questions and behavior rehearsal, alongside of coaching support

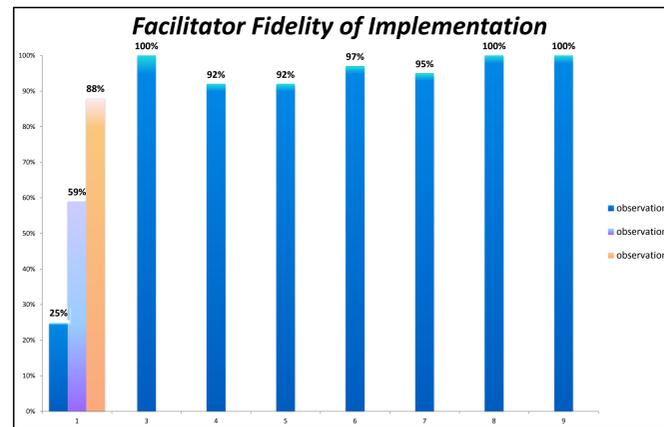
Implementation

- Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson came to Delaware and trained over 50 educators to implement PEERS®
- Facilitators included teachers, psychologists, speech-therapists and building administrators
- Cohort 1 received follow-up support from the Delaware Positive Behavior Support Instructional Coach on fidelity of implementation, data collection and any curricular technical assistance
- Cohort 1 consisted of 9 groups across 5 school districts

Data Collection

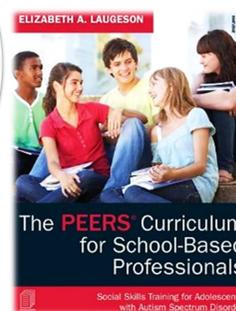
- Pre and Post data were collected for each participant
- A variety of measures were initially used, but our grant now focuses on three:
 1. **TAASK (Test of Adolescent Skills Knowledge)**
 - Included in the PEERS® curriculum
 - Assesses social skill knowledge of teens
 2. **Teacher Rating Scale**
 - Created by the University of Delaware
 - Assesses applied knowledge of the skills taught
 3. **Facilitator Fidelity of Implementation**
 - Instructional Coach uses the curriculum to ensure that each scripted lesson component is taught as the curriculum intends

Results



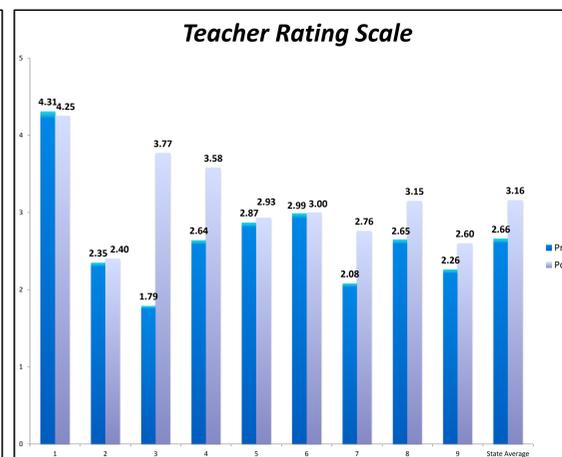
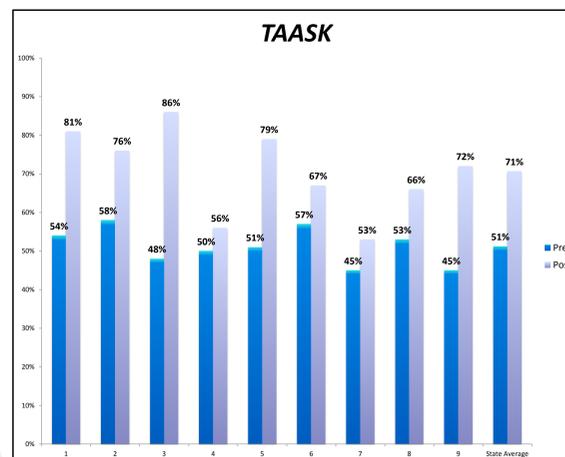
"At our school, we found that the PEERS social skills based curriculum stimulated students to self reflect on their social behaviors during interactions with their peers. It assisted them in stepping out of their comfort zone to start conversations. Students showed interest in being more social and began having get-togethers during school and outside of school."

-Special Education Coordinator, Charter School



"At first, we were all a little skeptical about using a scripted curriculum...but as the weeks unfolded, we realized just how much the carefully structured, step-by-step lessons and role plays allowed our students to first learn specific things to do and say and then gave them the time and opportunity to practice these new skills. The ongoing, predictable format of the lessons, role plays, review and homework appeared to decrease the uncomfortableness many students feel when discussing this topic, thus allowing them to build their confidence to interact successfully with their peers."

-Facilitator, Brandywine School District



Conclusions

- Fidelity of Implementation was high and quickly achieved
- Students increased their social knowledge
- Most teachers found increases in social skills
- Group 3 had a higher level of student growth because parent involvement was higher
- The focus of Cohort 2 will be increasing parent involvement by holding district information sessions and by using the Parent Information Center (PIC) of Delaware

Building Capacity

- Participating school districts are expanding PEERS® to all secondary buildings
- Additional groups that will receive coaching support have been added for the 2015-2016 school year
- Networking sessions are planned to share strategies for addressing scheduling and selection barriers, in addition to celebrating successes
- Our goal is to have all school districts in Delaware using the PEERS® curriculum

"I have experienced changes of my self-confidence to an extent. I got into sports more and got to know more people. I also learned some new social skills from PEERS. Like how to use humor appropriately, how to handle teasing and most importantly, how to make and keep friends."

-High School Student



References

Laugeson, E. (2014). The PEERS® Curriculum for School-Based Professionals, Routledge New York