An Ounce of Prevention:

Using inclusive teen social skills groups to prevent and minimise the risk of sexual offending and reoffending.

DR. LAURIE SPERRY
BOARD CERTIFIED BEHAVIOR ANALYST-DOCTORAL
MSC FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY/CRIMINOLOGY
YALE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
The Case of “Edward”

Edward is an attractive 14 year old boy who is fully included in his high school. He is extremely interested in girls and girls are initially interested in him. He watches a lot of romantic comedies and uses scripts from these to try to meet girls. More often than not the girls find his romantic overtures awkward and they describe him as “creepy”. The harder he tries the more he is shunned.

Recently he heard some of the “popular” kids talking about having sex. Unsure how to “get sex” he thought he’d just ask.

Edward approached a girl at school, and said “I hear you give good ____________Can I have one of those?”

Edward is charged with sexual harassment.
The Case of “Ray”

Ray is in the throes of puberty. He occasionally gets aroused during class and will get an erection. Panicked, he doesn’t know what to do. He begins to sweat and pushes his erection down with his hand which has the opposite effect of reducing his problem. He continues to sweat and push at the front of his pants. A classmate sees him and immediately reports him to the teacher for “playing with himself in front of everyone”. He is accused of a sexual offense at school.
Challenges understanding the social Expectations of the environment (PTP)
Limited, poor sexuality education
Excessive time online
Chron Age > Dev Age
http://www.kaltura.com/tiny/6coha
Social Isolation
PUBERTY
The group started with 1 member who had been arrested 2 weeks after his 10th birthday.

2 groups- 1 focused on social skills and sexuality; 1 focused on social skills

6 teens per group 5 teens on the spectrum 1 teen mentor without ASD

2 adults (1:3 ratio)

Meet Every Other week

Boys receive 1:1 support during the intervening weeks from behavioral therapists at home, school, community, clinic.
# Sample AGENDA

## WEEK 12 Agenda Exiting Conversations and Facts about Your Body!

**Peers Curriculum Pp 191-192; Making Sense of Sex pp 58-61**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’ll read you a list of reasons why people get turned down when they try to join a conversation. You read from your list and figure out what you could do differently next time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Try again later and listen before you join</td>
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<tr>
<td>Try a different group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Try again later, following the steps for joining a group</td>
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<td>Try a different group and don’t get too personal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Try a different group that is talking about something you know about</td>
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<td>Try a different group that does not know or care about your reputation</td>
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- Watch this video about a guy trying to meet girls. Are they interested in him? How do you know? What could he do differently next time? Is it okay to keep trying to meet these girls if they say no? Why or why not? What could happen if he keeps trying?

  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa4aXn0qgwM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa4aXn0qgwM)

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrival: Conversation Starters- turn to one person in the group and ask them the question on your card.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Review of Group Norms:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follow Directions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talk one at a time</td>
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<tr>
<td>VEGAS RULE (your story is safe here)</td>
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<th>Teen Teacher of the Week- GP- Melt and Chill cards</th>
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<th>Buzz Word – Exiting a conversation</th>
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<tr>
<td>We’ve learned about how to join in a conversation (move close, smile, make eye contact, wait for a pause and say hi). What can you do when you’re not welcome in conversation? How do you know, and now what?</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Read these pages on Puberty and changes in your body. Questions? Ask the Doc! Put your anonymous question in the box!</th>
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<tr>
<th>GAME time- Vote- Name Five, Last Word or Pictionary</th>
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<tr>
<th>Parents: If you did purchase the Making Sense of Sex curriculum, we are going through the chapter on Puberty. See the back for what we covered.</th>
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Arrival

**Seating Considerations:** We try to separate highly reactive children
We place them between typical peer and therapist
We place friendly dyads near each other in a position where they can easily interact.

**Conversation Starters:** Each teen has to turn to a person in the group and ask the question, then the person has to ask the same question back

**Skill**- orienting towards conversational partner, initiating conversation, “green” topics, staying on topic)
**Follow directions** includes following directions of peers

**Talk one at a time**- Sometimes we have to use the conch shell Ala Lord of the Flies

**Vegas Rules**- The teens share deeply personal questions and experiences (sexual orientation, criminal offenses, questions about sex, things they are afraid they’ll be laughed at about)
Teen Teacher of the Week

**Topic:** Something we’ve covered during 1:1 sessions (self-regulation) or a special interest (drones) or something the child is particularly good at (hygiene)

**Social Skills:** Leadership, managing a group, presenting, staying on topic
New Skill: What can you do when you’re not welcome in a group or someone doesn’t want to talk to you? How do you know, and now what?

Activity: to practice/role play the skill

Video and a discussion:

Watch this video about a guy trying to meet girls. Are they interested in him? How do you know? What could he do differently next time? Is it okay to keep trying to meet these girls if they say no? Why or Why not? What could happen if he keeps trying?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa4aXn0qgwM
Sometimes Questions are tough to ask in front of a group. What’s Up Doc is a chance to write down your question, that is related to our topic. Put it in the Doc in the box and I’ll read it and answer it. There’s no such thing as a dumb question! It’s anonymous

Sample Questions:

Q: Will it be bad if you have bad breath when you kiss someone?

Q: What is the difference between rape and sexual assault? How serious is rape?

Q: If and when the time comes, where should you have sex?

Q: I masturbate 2-4 times a day. Is that normal?
Game Time and a Word about the Peer Mentors

Blindfolded Mini Golf (skill: Listening, perspective taking, turn taking)
Pictionary (Skill: Getting out of your comfort zone),
Trashball (?),
Name 5 (Skill: impulse control over blurting out). Group games and in Dyads.

**Peer Mentors**: Teens, trained, primed, given feedback. Legitimate source of info for other teens. Keep it real and age appropriate.
Parent Homework: Have you had the talk??- No, not that talk

**Parent Homework** - Favorite part for teens- parents are encouraged to practice the skill at home that we worked on in group.

They are provided with resources and tools: Before the holidays:

Make your cell phone savvy.

The internet does not come with an eraser- everything you do leaves a digital footprint.

It is illegal to take pictures of other people’s genitals. If you show it to a friend you could get arrested for possession AND distribution of child pornography.

There are laws against cyberbullying. What are the laws in your state?

https://www.stopbullying.gov/laws/index.html
(Not so) Smart Phones

It’s never too late to develop a technology contract.

https://www.bark.us/blog/creating-technology-contract-child/

Makes rules and usage expectations concrete
Helpful to have a contract to point to when issues arise
Tailor it for your situation
Be clear on the consequences of not following the contract.
To Monitor or Not Monitor: That is the Question
HOW to TEACH: Evidence Based Tools For YOUR Toolbox!
Applied Behavior Analysis

ABA = Applied Behavior Analysis - Is the use of learning strategies to change important behaviors in meaningful ways.
If the strategy doesn’t fit, don’t try to shoehorn it onto the problem behavior.
Chaining: Forwards/Backwards

Chaining- A sequence of behaviors. The completion of each behavior provides a cue to do the next behavior.

Example: Getting Out off the school bus—Cues Walking into school—Cue for
Walking down particular hall and seeing other student they don’t like---cue disruptive behavior.

In this situation chaining could be used to teach a NEW chain- having the child Enter the school by a different entrance, which cues different hallway, which Avoids cue for problem behavior.

FORWARD CHAINING- break down the steps of the activity, focus instruction to teach the first step. Once mastered, reinforce and move on to second step and so on.

BACKWARD CHAINING- The LAST step is taught first. One learned the second to last step is taught. The advantage is the learner always knows that the next step is going to be.
**Shaping**

Teaching a new behavior by systematically reinforcing closer and closer approximations of the target behavior. Shaping changes behavior gradually and systematically. Approximations are reinforced until the target behavior is achieved.

You have a student who screams and aggresses towards you when you make a home visit.

The target behavior is for the student to open the door and greet you with “hi or hello”.

**Step 1:** Reinforce student for walking into another room when the doorbell rings and you arrive.

**Step 2:** Reinforce student for standing in the same room when you arrive while maintaining a quiet tone/safe hands.

**Step 3:** Reinforce student opening the door for you and standing in the same room when you arrive while maintaining quiet tone/safe hands.

**Step 4:** Reinforce student for opening the door and saying “hello” or “hi”.

Response Cost

Removing a reinforcer for an unwanted behavior.

Basically, a fine is imposed on undesirable behavior.

Do use it in conjunction with lots of positive reinforcement

Do make sure that the reinforcer is meaningful to the students.

Example of use: Mr. G. Has 1 hour in the morning when his class needs to complete all of their morning work. Whatever time is left over the students apply towards preferred activity time (PAT). He sets a visual timer for 1 hour. Student on task behavior is reinforced because if they finish quickly they have more PAT time to play in the gym or engage in another preferred activity. Off task behavior is “fined” because they have to finish their work before they access their preferred activity.
High probability Request Sequence

A high-probability request sequence- Have the student do something that is simple and that they are usually willing to do followed immediately by a request that typically would result in a challenging behavior.

For example: You set up your morning routine as follows: Person X is usually willing to get out of bed and eat breakfast. You follow this immediately with a getting dressed because- YOU HAVE BEHAVIORAL MOMENTUM
Antecedent based strategies

Designed to reduce the occurrence of interfering or problem behavior. YOU change the environment and the Antecedents that could trigger the interfering behavior.

**Look at your environment** - what could you change to make the problem behavior IRRELEVANT? Or reduce the likelihood that the behavior is triggered?

**Consider:** seating arrangements, increasing choices, schedule changes.

**Use in group** - reorganize group, split into smaller groups
Pivotal Response Teaching (PRT)

PRT- Increases student motivation, and teaches students to monitor their own learning and behavior by teaching them choice and giving them control over their learning. Especially good for improving academic performance.

Examples: Time to do math, do you want to do 9 problems or 10 problems?

I am working for (you earn or you don’t earn)

Date: __________________________
Name: _________________________
I am working for ____________________________

_____________________________
_____________________________
_____________________________

I am working for (you earn or you don’t earn)

_____________________________
_____________________________

_____________________________
Teaching Replacement Behaviors: The person GETS something out of engaging in this problem behavior (attention, control, preferred activity).

- SHOW THEM WHEN THEY WILL GET ACCESS TO THE ITEM/ACTIVITY
- SHOW THEM A BETTER WAY OF GETTING ACCESS

- Morning Meeting
- Reading
- Math
- Computer Lab
- Lunch
Replacement Behavior: Get Out of something

TAKE A BREAK/CALM DOWN

WAY TO REFUSE

No Thanks I’ll Pass

Can we talk about this later?
YOU ARE THE EXPERT!

Each Table has a tool sheet.

Your table will become the expert on this strategy!

Read the definition.

Spend 10 minutes looking up your strategy online

Write down ADDITIONAL information you find in the section marked ADDITIONAL information.

Talk with your group- What would you use this strategy for?

Write down ideas under “RECOMMENDED USES”
Divide your group in half.

Half of your group will stay at your table- You are “REPORTERS”

The other half of your group will move each time they hear the alarm you are “SCRIBES”

The REPORTER Half that stays will be responsible for explaining YOUR TABLE’S strategy to each new group.

The SCRIBE HALF that moves will be responsible for writing down notes for each of the other strategies.

Scribes will return to their table and share additional info and recommended uses for each of the other strategies to their original team.
Picking the right tool

Work alone or with a partner.
Identify ONE behavior you would like to change.
Write it down on your handout.
What tool will you use?
What is your plan for using that tool?
Share with the group!
Why We DO IT

**Benefits**- prevention of first or future offenses.

**Unexpected Benefits**- Friendships outside of social skills group have blossomed. Parent support for each other, resource sharing. Success in other settings. Community inclusion.

**Questions?**
### Action Plan to start a social group in your community

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<tr>
<th>Actionable Item</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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