TEEN NF FORMAT

Teen NF classes meet on predetermined weekday evenings at:

St. Louis Children’s Hospital Specialty Care Center (CSCC)
13001 N. Outer 40 Rd.
Town and Country, MO 63017

Prior to the first Teen NF meeting, the team will conduct a required 15-minute phone screening to learn more about your child. You and your child will also be asked to complete brief online screenings to help tailor program content to meet the needs of group members.

Class structure is as follows:

- Three 90-minute classes
- Two 90-minute booster classes to reinforce learned social skills and provide additional support in addressing social concerns that arise once school has started
- Group social activity (bowling)

Snacks will be provided at each session.

For more information, please visit NFCenter.wustl.edu/events.

This brochure is provided through the generosity of the Doris and Donald O. Schnuck Fund for Children in Need. Teen NF is provided free to our families by a generous grant from the St. Louis Children’s Hospital Foundation.
OUR MISSION

The Washington University NF Center, in collaboration with the Department of Psychology at St. Louis Children’s Hospital, is pleased to offer Teen NF. This innovative program is composed of a short series of social skill classes for teenagers in middle school and early high school who have difficulty with social interaction. While it is typical for all teens to feel uncomfortable in social situations, teens with NF1 tend to experience more social anxiety and have greater difficulty reading social cues. This often results in difficulty initiating and maintaining friendships and responding to complex social situations in a flexible, age-appropriate manner. With this in mind, our goal is to provide teenagers with NF1 the skills to make and develop friendships during these formative years.

WHAT IS NF1?

Neurofibromatosis Type 1 (NF1) is the most common type of Neurofibromatosis, affecting approximately 1 in 2,500 individuals worldwide. This genetic condition affects almost every organ system, causing a predisposition for tumors to grow on nerves in the brain and throughout the body. In addition, individuals with NF1 often struggle with delays in learning, social, attention and motor/coordination skills.

WHAT IS TEEN NF?

Teen NF is a social skills group for adolescents with NF1 aged 13 to 17 years. Specifically created to enhance self-esteem and improve conversational skills, this program will provide your child with the necessary tools to maintain healthy and successful relationships throughout your child’s life.

Led by a clinical psychologist, Teen NF classes address the following topics in a small group setting through interactive discussion and role playing.

• Enhancing conversational skills
• Entering and exiting a conversation
• Choosing appropriate friends and social activities
• Appropriate use of humor and good sportsmanship
• Handling teasing, embarrassing feedback and bullying

While teens are engaged in small groups, parents meet with a behavioral health specialist to discuss specific strategies to promote continued development of these skills outside of the scheduled Teen NF meetings.

HOW WILL TEEN NF HELP MY CHILD?

In addition to the structured curriculum designed to address the social difficulties encountered by teens with NF1, this program will provide you and your child the opportunity to meet and interact with other families dealing with similar challenges. Through a mixture of group discussion and interactive games, your child will develop the necessary skills to cultivate and maintain new friendships, strengthen his or her confidence in challenging situations, and be provided the comfort in knowing that he or she is not alone in dealing with these issues.

WHAT IS THE PEERS® PROGRAM FOR ADOLESCENTS?

Teen NF is based on the PEERS® Program for Adolescents. The PEERS® Program is an evidence-based social skills intervention for motivated adolescents in middle or high school who are interested in learning ways to help them make and keep friends.