

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM

H.A.N.G. (Helping Adolescents Network & Grow!)

Service Intro

Many teens with ASD or other diverse abilities struggle to find true friendship amongst their peers. Many others lack a safe context in which they can learn about and practice the skills necessary to navigate the complex world of social networking!

H.A.N.G. was created to provide a safe and fun environment for teens with Diverse Abilities to network with others who share common interests. This group meets around a two-part rotating schedule where one session is social, onsite, and devoted to planning an upcoming outing, and the next session is the social, off-site group adventure the group just planned. H.A.N.G. groups may meet for their two-part cycle of Planning-then-Activity once or twice each month as desired by the group.

A typical session

Most **planning sessions** occur on a weekday evening such as a Thursday or Friday night for pizza and planning at a Pivot Point office; these last approximately 2 hours.

Most **outing sessions** occur on Saturday or Sunday, for approximately 2-3 hours, occasionally longer. Group outings depart from pre-arranged meeting places and times, depending on the activity planned.

Our clients are...

- Individuals age 14 to 18 who are able to attend and participate in small group activities. Individuals requiring additional support for success may attend with their own caregiver/respite worker.
- Individuals seeking safe and non-judgemental friendship building opportunities with peers in their own community.
- Individuals interested in joining our fun activities!

Pivot Point's Approach

- We draw upon a variety of best practices to select social and life skill goals that are related to each group of teens.
- We inspire individual participation through group planning, collaborative decision making, and showcasing individual strengths, interests and desires.
- We leverage dynamics that occur "in the moment" within the group context to gently highlight effective group interaction skills.
- We encourage group ownership of "their" weekly activities by facilitating their planning, while being "chaperones" to the outings they have planned.
- We promote self monitoring and self regulation by fostering safe ways for members to provide and receive peer input / evaluation.
- We encourage mentorship by inviting more experienced H.A.N.G. members to take on leadership roles within the group.
- Behind the scenes, we arrange admissions, verify transportation and safety details, and ensure parents are well informed of group plans, upcoming activities, and individual progress.
- Teen to Staff ratios are typically between 5:2 and 8:2 depending on participants, needs, and activities.



Previous outings include...

- Local Beaches and Community Pools: Teens can choose to go to the outdoor swimming pools, walk trails, kayaking, swimming or play beach volleyball. They bring lunch, sunscreen, and bathing suit!
- Local Fun Parks and Activity Centres: Teens choose outdoor activities such as mini-golf, or indoor game. Teens bring lunch or buy from the concessions.
- Local Bowling: Choices include open bowl and theme nights, as well as transportation and group meal options before, during, or after bowling.
- Local Zoos and Seasonal Attractions: Teens love to watch shows, go on rides, and snack on carnival food or bring a group-packed lunch to share together.
- Destination Attractions & Museums: Teens choose topics/exhibits to attend, watch live demonstrations, and take tours. Bag lunch is often best, and creates a nice casual social time together.
- Local movie theaters: On rainy days the teens can collectively decide on a movie to see together with meal options before, during, or after the show.

How to get started

1) If you are already a client, contact your Program Assistant to ask about adding H.A.N.G. services to your current plan of care.

2) If you are not yet a client, the best way to start is to complete our online form at www.pivotpoint.ca/request-a-meeting. This is a confidential way to share your contact information, so that one of our Regional Managers can connect with you to explore the suitability of our services in more detail.

H.A.N.G. groups do not have a lot of assessment nor Behaviour Consultation requirements. However, each participant must be pre-screened for quality of fit for the group they hope to join, and to identify personal and family goals.



Contact Us Today

Toll Free: 1.866.531.4544

Phone: 604.531.4544

Email: SA@PivotPoint.ca

Office Hours: 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday

www.pivotpoint.ca

Head Office Mailing Address

#24 15515 24th Avenue

Surrey, BC, Canada,

V4A 2J4

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