

haven

Everything to know about Peer Ed!

Peer Educators co-facilitate presentations in schools with Bridgercare and Haven staff while also providing informal support and information to their peers outside of presentations.

Why Peer Ed?

With so many physical and emotional changes happening during adolescence, it can be a time of isolation, especially if families are not comfortable discussing sexual health and relationship issues with their children. Having high school aged Peer Educators model comfortable communication about these issues normalizes concerns many teens assume only they have. The Bridgercare/Haven Peer Education team not only offers medically accurate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based, culturally sensitive sexual health and relationship information to students in local schools and community groups, but they also provide resources and referrals outside of presentations in informal settings. In this way, area youth are better able to access the information they need as it becomes relevant to them.

Other things Peer Educators do

Aside from teaching in classrooms and being a resource for their peers, Peer Educators are invited (but not required) to volunteer at Haven and/or Bridgercare events, Instagram takeovers, the occasional shelter tidy-up, make social media posts, etc.

A successful Peer Educator is:

- Committed: To learning, to engaging in (potentially hard) conversations, to sharing knowledge with their peers, and most importantly, committed to attending the weekly meetings.
- Interested: In the topics (sexual health, healthy relationships and consent/coercion)

What do Peer Educators learn?

The basics, so they can be good resources for their peers:

- ✓ Puberty
- ✓ Healthy, Unhealthy and Abusive Relationship Characteristics (and the gray are between these)
- ✓ Advocacy for survivors of teen dating violence or sexual assault
- ✓ Consent & sexual assault/preventing coercion
- ✓ STIs
- ✓ Contraception
- ✓ Bystander intervention
- ✓ LGBTQ+ allyship

Timeline

We recruit Peer Educators for the following school year in March and April. We accept applications from students who will be in grades 9-12 the following year from any school (or homeschooled).

Peer Educator candidate interviews and final selections:

- ✓ May - Summer Orientation and Leadership Retreat: Five days in August
- ✓ Weekly meetings: August – May on Tuesdays from 6:30 – 8:30 PM.
- ✓ No school = No peer ed meeting.
- ✓ Organize, schedule and attend education events and presentations: September - May once Peer Educators are trained
- ✓ End of year celebration: May

Questions? Email Mei, Haven's prevention coordinator at prevention@havenmt.org.