ukyouth
Positive About Youth

Activity ideas

Peer education starters

Two activities for potential peer educators, designed to help them think through whether they are ready to be involved.

1 Peer qualities

Aim

To reflect on the qualities of a successful peer educator.

Process

Below is a list of some of the qualities that might make an ideal peer educator. They sound like a mountain! Imagine you are climbing it! On a separate sheet of paper, draw an outline of a mountain slope. Consider each of the keywords (in capital letters in the boxes). For each in turn, decide whether you have already reached the top of the mountain or whether you are still part way up. Write each key word on the slope at the position you think you have reached.

Most of us are hard on ourselves; another person may give a more balanced view. You might find it useful to discuss your own picture of yourself with someone you trust and respect – a friend, member of your family, teacher or youth worker.

INTERESTED i.e. genuinely interested in the subject of your peer education

CONCERNED i.e. want other young people to get the message

COMMITTED i.e. concerned enough to give up your time

ACCEPTING i.e. tolerant of people of different race, age. sex and abilities

COMMITTED TO EQUALITY i.e, genuinely believe that all people should have equal rights and opportunities

RESPECTFUL OF OTHERS i.e. respect others' right to have their own ideas and make their own choices

IN TOUCH i.e. aware of young people's interests, attitudes and feelings

CONFIDENT i.e. without being arrogant

GOOD AT RELATIONSHIPS i.e. have already formed some good relationships

APPROACHABLE i.e. others will talk to you about their feelings

SELF AWARE i.e. can think about your own strengths and needs

OPEN i.e. able to ask for help and learn from mistakes

TRUSTWORTHY i.e. can be relied on to keep an agreement

GOOD TEAM MEMBER i.e. can work with others towards agreed goals

When you have finished your mountain, round up by completing these sentences:

I think I can start preparing to become a peer educator because.....

I will need to work on.....

Reflection

You might have been surprised at the list of qualities. For example, it does not include being able to lead a discussion or answer questions. At this point your attitudes and motivation are what matter most.

ukyouth Positive About Youth

2 Supporters wanted

Aim

To work out the right support system for you as a peer educator – and then negotiate it.

Process

Think about some ideas about the ways people can support you in building your skills and confidence as a peer educator. Tick anything you might consider.

How people could help me

- Discuss my ideas with me
- Compare ideas/experiences if they are also doing the programme
- Answer questions, give views, try things, etc. to help me do the activities
- Give me feedback about things I do
- Do some of the programme activities as a group or pair
- Give me advice
- Let me try things out on them or observe me with others

If you can see a way in which you could use some help, run through in your mind people you know that you could ask to be your 'supporter' or 'supporters'. They will want to know what it's all about and what would be involved for them, so think that through too.

Who might be useful:

- A friend I trust
- A group of friends
- A few people of my age from my youth group/team/college/school/work
- Someone from my family
- An adult who knows me
- An adult with experience of peer education or youth work
- Anyone else?

You might decide you need more than one kind of supporter perhaps one person to talk things through with and a group to try things out. Have a plan for finding your support:

- I have decided to ask: I will explain what I am doing by saying.....
- I will say that what I need from a supporter (or supporters) is.....
- If my first choice says 'no', I'll ask:

Ground rules for working together

If you are going to negotiate help, it's important to set things up properly. Below are the sorts of Ground Rules that people make if they are going to work together like this. Make your own version or use these.

- We'll respect each other
- We'll make an agreement about confidentiality in relation to everything we do or discuss
- We'll make time to talk or work together and keep to dates and times we agree
- One of us will not give the other feedback about what they do and what they are like unless that person actually asks for it
- We will give constructive feedback by telling the other about their strengths and areas for improvement
- We'll agree to tell each other if we are hurt or angry
- We'll keep a sense of humour
- We'll agree about how we might sensitively challenge each other if we are being discriminatory

These activities are taken and adapted from *Yes, me!* previously published by UK Youth. Current publications are available from the UK Youth storefront. http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/ukyouth