

Peer Mediation Programs for Students

Target Audience: K-12 students and teachers

Life involves a series of decisions and conflicts. Is your classroom and school a place where students learn to face the tests of life rather than being a life of tests?

Why is building negotiation and collaborative problem solving for students important?

Life and learning is a process of negotiation and collaboration. The skills and dispositions that support students being able to pay attention to “What do I need now?” “What are my goals and how can I work with others to achieve these goals in the best way?” “How can work and learn with others?” shapes our lives. Learning is always powerfully shaped by an ongoing process of negotiation and collaborative problem solving.

This workshop series is focused on students and the development of peer mediation programs. Peer mediation is a powerful and effective youth leadership model. Peer mediation programs support students to help other students to resolve their differences and conflicts in flexible and non-violent ways. Peer mediation supports students utilizing conflict resolution practices and social, emotional and civic skills/dispositions to play a leadership role in increasing peace and reducing violence in their school.

How can this program help my school?

Kids helping kids fosters caring, responsible and supportive learning environment. Peer medication programs promote social, emotional and civic learning. Relationships are the foundation for learning and teaching. When schools recognize the profound importance of relationships and how we negotiate and solve problems in helpful (or inadvertently, unhelpful) ways, we are supporting the mission of schools: learning, teaching and developing the skills and dispositions that support life long learning and effective citizenry.

What do I get with the *Peer mediation* program?

This workshop series supports positive school climate and other forms of school reform. When schools focus on teaching students negotiation and collaborative problem solving skills and develop peer mediation programs, you will receive field-tested materials and experienced consultants who guide you though the stages of setting up a successful program. Our work is based on the research-based conflict resolution/mediation program developed by Ellen Raider and Susan Coleman at Teachers College, Columbia University.

We train a carefully selected group of students along with adult peer mediation coaches and a program coordinator. After three days of training for this group, your school will be ready to have students begin mediating disputes among their peers. The students will learn a model that helps them provide a structure for students who are in conflict to tell their stories, listen

to each other, brainstorm solutions, and negotiate an agreement that will work for them. The peer mediators will learn listening, empathy, questioning, intergroup relations, and problem-solving skills. In addition to this training, the peer mediation coaches will receive coaching in how to implement peer mediation programs, promote the program school-wide, and help improve peer mediators' skills. Your peer mediation coaches will then be able to sustain the program and train new peer mediators in future years.

With the *Peer Mediation* program you will receive

- An introductory meeting with our consultant and a committee of your administrators, teachers, and parents to customize the *Peer Mediation* program to fit your school's schedules, cultural composition, most pressing needs, and constraints.
- One day of training for five to seven adult peer mediation coaches followed by three days of training for a core group of 18-22 students and the adult coaches to help all involved become proficient in the skills they need and the process they'll be using to help students resolve conflicts.
- An introductory presentation for school staff to familiarize them with the peer mediation approach and encourage them to refer students to the program.
- One day of on-site follow-up consultation later in the year, which includes a meeting with administrators and additional training for staff and students, and ongoing consultation to help you make implementation decisions, integrate the program with other school initiatives, and resolve program dilemmas.
- Periodic phone and email contact between our consultant and a designated "point person" in the school(s) will be an intermittent but ongoing part of the process. This will allow our consultants to understand successes and challenges and be helpful – from afar – in any and all ways that they can.
- Peer mediation implementation guides for the core staff working with the peer mediators and a notebook of materials and forms for peer mediators.

To find out how the *Peer Mediation* program can serve your school or district, call us at (212) 707-8799 or write to us at info@csee.net to learn more about our Professional Development Services.