


Peers Helping Peers

March 4, 2024




HEALTH
EDUCATION
COUNCIL





Origin of Peers Helping Peers

- Peers Helping Peers was developed in 2020 through a partnership between Health Education Council and the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency
 - Oakmont was the first high school Peers Helping Peers was introduced
- 



Who is Health Education Council?

- The mission of the Health Education Council is to cultivate health and well-being in under-served communities by leveraging the power of collaboration.
- Work to promote health and prioritize prevention in underserved communities.

Oakmont Health Careers Academy

- Prop. 98 CPA since 1996
- 3-year cohorted program, 60+ students per year
- Sophomore year (Med Terms)
- Junior year (Clinical Skills and Job Shadowing)
- Senior year (Internships summer and spring)
- Social Science, English and Science classes each year
- Professionalism, community service and job seeking skills throughout
- Partner with three hospitals, local clinics and offices, schools and non-profits



What is a Wellness Center?



Staffing:

- Wellness Coordinator
- Mental Health Associate
- Team of trainees from diverse backgrounds- BSW, MSW, MFT, PCC

Services:

- A safe space to take breaks
- Ongoing individual or group therapy
- Resource hub
- Monthly theme lunch activities
- Classroom presentations

How We Got Started

- Getting connected
 - HEC, Invest Health Roseville
 - OHCA
 - Wellness Center
- An internship
- A grant application




Recruiting Students

- Target Audiences
 - Academy Students
 - AP Psych Students
 - Student Government
 - IB and CP juniors
 - Drama
 - Athletes
- Goal-At least one representative from every demographic/group at Oakmont.




What is Peers Helping Peers?

- **Paid mental health training and internship program** for Spanish-speaking adults and youth and young adults
 - An opportunity to **explore mental health and social service career pathways.**
 - An effort to **reduce mental health stigma** and advocate for more mental health resources, support and intervention; especially in underserved communities.
 - A safe **peer support environment.**
- 



Peers Helping Peers Mission

- 1) Decrease mental health stigma in young adult and Spanish-speaking adult populations.
 - 2) Increase social connection and the ability of participants to serve as mental health supports for their peers.
 - 3) Introduce participants to mental health projects to bring to their peers and communities.
 - 4) Provide students with an opportunity to explore careers in mental/behavioral health.
- 

A large orange circle is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping the text.

Training Components

WEEK 1: Strengths Exploration and Sharing Your Story

WEEK 2: Substance Abuse

WEEK 3: Mental Health Basics

WEEK 4: Healthy Relationships

WEEK 5: Youth Mental Health First Aid

WEEK 6: Youth Mental Health First Aid

WEEK 7: Celebration and Closure

Collaborative partners and their collaboration

- **Guadalupe Ferrera** is a Licensed California Social Worker: She was the speaker for the topics on: Mental Health Basics, Healthy Relationships, and Suicide Prevention.
- **Angela Greer** is a Cultural Success Coach at Another Choice Another Chance. She presented “Love Notes” which focused on mental health boundaries and standards and breakdowns on how to cope with mental health using self-care strategies. She also presented on Substance Abuse focused on opioids.
- **Montserrat Zamora** is a Sacramento State Counseling student. She presented on the mental health effects of stress and how to manage it.
- **Corey Burgees** is a Program Coordinator from PRO Youth & Families. He presented on substance abuse with a broad focus on all drugs and alcohol and the effects on mental and physical health.
- **Ceci Fuentes** is the Mental Health Associate at Oakmont High School. She presented on trauma & Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Collaborative partners and their collaboration

- **Yanira Molina** is a Program Assistant at Health Education Council who presented on financial education and the correlation with mental health.
- **Amanda Cozington** is a program manager for Prevention Support and Services at the Placer County Office of Education. She shared “Be Sensitive, Be Brave” which is a workshop on mental health. The goal of her presentation was to show the students how to identify when you or someone you know is in mental health distress. The skills students learned included: practicing being sensitive and brave in helping others, identifying mental health resources, defining mental health, learning how to prevent mental illness by using a recipe for mental health, and lastly identifying how culture and diversity affect mental health.

Class Example: Healthy Relationships



Ice breaker activity: How are you feeling today?



Students were instructed to share one word that described how they were feeling & a physical motion to demonstrate that word. The rest of the class would repeat the word & mimic the motion.



Session Content: The teaching objectives of this class session were to teach students how to foster a healthy relationship with oneself and others. Students learned about rapport building and self-care.



Role Play: Students were given the opportunity to practice and enhance their rapport building and active listening skills with each other



Check out: What is a coping skill that you plan to use as part of your self-care plan?

Program Successes



- We served a total of 40 high school students between the ages of 15-18 at Oakmont High School who were a combination of juniors and seniors. All students were Roseville Residents.
- Students learned the importance of mental health stigma reduction and education, and they gained skills on mental health basics and influencing factors that include racism, substance abuse, healthy relationships, boundaries, trauma, personal experiences, communication, and self-awareness.
- Students shared ideas to bring mental health awareness to their school through student-led activities. They generated ideas to bring support groups and other activities that create safe spaces for sharing between students.
- Students felt like they were part of a community that could make a positive difference in the lives of their peers.

Participants Feedback



- “PHP Brings real world problems to the attention of young adults”
- “A hardship I experienced in my last was a lack of a social aspect in my life, and PHP filled that through peer interaction”
- Overall, the students provided positive feedback that highlighted the positive effect of a safe space for youth. They appreciated having the space and time to discuss topics they otherwise would not discuss in a school setting.

Student Panel



- What were your key takeaways from being a participant in the program?
- How do you believe this program impacted our school community?
- What will you apply the knowledge you gained to your future endeavors?
- Did participation in PHP increase your knowledge of mental/behavioral health careers?

Spring 2023



Fall 2023



Next Steps

- Training two staff members to be MHFA trainers.
- MHFA for all Sophomores in PE 10.
- HEC will support mental health projects planned by Peers Helping Peers graduates.



Contact Information



- Nancy Ramirez
Assistant Education Council
Program Health
- nramirez@healtheducationcouncil.org
- [Health Education Council](#)

- Cecilia Fuentes, APCC, PPSC
Mental Health Associate Oakmont High School
- cfuentes@rjuhsd.us
- [Oakmont Wellness Center](#)



- Wesley Muller Academy
Coordinator Oakmont High School
- wmuller@rjuhsd.us
- 916-782-3781 x2202
- [Oakmont Health Careers Academy](#)