
Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio & Ohio Center for Sex Education

Peer Education Program – Franklin County Commissioners
Continuation 2023-2024 Proposal

Planned Parenthood’s Ohio Center for Sex Education (OCSE) is grateful for the opportunity to submit this proposal to continue with the existing CelebrateOne Peer Education Program for the 2023-2024 school year. Planned Parenthood and the Ohio Center for Sex Education look forward to the opportunity to continue the existing collaboration with CelebrateOne through this crucial work by starting a new class of 33 peer educators.

The OCSE proposes to implement a virtual and in-person programming hybrid for the CelebrateOne Peer Education Program expansion. Aspects of the program will be in an online format by combining synchronous and asynchronous education and other aspects will be in-person as schools provide access to the program.

Project Summary Statement: Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio and the Ohio Center for Sex Education’s Peer Education Program successfully recruits and trains teenagers between the ages of 14-18 years of age to become Peer Educators - health dissemination leaders who serve as sexual health ambassadors among their peers and their communities. Since its inception in 2010, PPGOH’s Peer Education program has provided sexual health education to more than 83,635 individuals in central Ohio.

During this yearly program, participants receive training in an evidence-based prevention curriculum in order to directly educate their peers and community members on preventing unintended pregnancies, reducing sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and addressing a health disparity or issue that directly affects their community (e.g. human trafficking, adulthood preparation, infant mortality, etc.) By completing the program activities at community events and various schools and/or neighborhoods, Peer Educators strengthen their peers’ ability to identify and reduce risky behaviors, assess the impact on developing self-esteem, and use assertive communication skills to develop refusal skills and leadership skills. A cohort of 33 Peer Educators would have the potential of directly educating 1,650 of their peers within one full year of programming through one-on-one conversations, an additional 333 of their peers through group presentations, and 3,330 people through health educational outreach activities.

Project Implementation and Outcomes:

- *Project goals:* The goal of the Ohio Center for Sex Education’s Peer Education Program is to support the development of healthy lifestyles and responsible choices among central Ohio adolescents. The program’s objectives are to:

- 1) Promote competency in essential sexual health topics and the refining of critical thinking skills;
- 2) Build leadership capacity among teenagers; and
- 3) Create a forum for participating teens to apply leadership skills and content knowledge.

To achieve the above goal and objectives, the Ohio Center for Sex Education provides teens the tools to be:

- a) non-judgmental resources regarding relationship and sexual health concerns;
 - b) adept facilitators of individual and group presentations;
 - c) effective coordinators of impactful community outreach and educational opportunities;
 - d) confidently able to identify sexism and ways to dismantle it, and
 - e) enlightened individuals with a broadened perspective of how their advocacy skills fit into the larger movement for community health.
- *Outcomes:* The short-term outcomes of the Peer Education Program are:
 - 1) An increased knowledge of sexual health,
 - 2) Enhanced leadership skills, and
 - 3) The promotion of positive self-esteem and responsible decision-making.Longer-term anticipated outcomes are:
 - 1) Constructive changes to adolescent sexual behavior,
 - 2) Increased confidence to make responsible and informed sexual health decisions,
 - 3) Expanded awareness of the influence of gender norms on self-esteem and decision making skills, and
 - 4) Reduced rates of unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections among teens in Franklin County.

The Peer Education Program has focused on reducing teen pregnancy and STI rates through providing teens basic sexual health information to increase their knowledge of their bodies and to make more informed health and life choices. Peer Educators are also tasked with hosting community conversations during which values and presuppositions about individual and community roles are explored. Together, Ohio Center for Sex Education staff and Peer Educators will begin discussions with parents, high school administrators, and community leaders about access to information regarding sexual health and health care. Providing youth with the tools to not only responsibly manage their reproductive lives, but also challenge the societal systems that contribute to risk-taking behaviors and introduce them to policy implementation, creates more powerful, critically thinking youth. These young individuals will have increased compassion for each other, confidence in their own self-identity and choices,

and a leg-up on overcoming common barriers to accessing reproductive health care – namely, lack of knowledge and stigma.

- *Recruitment- (Proposed for CelebrateOne only)*: The recruitment strategies for the next class of CelebrateOne-Peer Educators will begin on July 1, 2023 and recruitment will be active from August 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. The recruitment target audience includes:
 - A) All gender identifying youth between the ages of 14-18 because Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio believes the support for reproductive health requires the involvement of all gender identities, and
 - B) Residing in the following zip codes: Northside (43211, 43224, 43229, and 43219), West Side (43222, 43223, and 43204), Near East-South-Southeast Sides (43203, 43205, 43206, 43207, 43227, and 43232).

Since 1998, Planned Parenthood Health Educators have been providing programming through various outlets in the greater Columbus area; the Ohio Center for Sex Education will utilize our existing relationships and collaborate with CelebrateOne to utilize its network of programs to help begin a Peer Education Program based on the CelebrateOne zip codes. Efforts to recruit and nominate potential candidates for the Peer Education Program will be coordinated with CelebrateOne staff and the programs that CelebrateOne already conducts in those zip codes. Once a list of potential candidates is gathered, PPGOH staff will work with support staff to assess that list to reflect those best suited for the program. Those teens will be invited to complete an application package and further screened as potential Peer Educators with the eligibility criteria.

After all applications have been received, applicants will be invited to individually have an “interview” with Ohio Center for Sex Education staff to assess their readiness for this program and any possible future barriers. These “interviews” will be conducted online and will serve as an individual assessment to conduct a success plan for each of the Peer Educators. Three cohorts of Peer Educators will be formed and team leads will be selected from each program cohort to operate in a more official leadership capacity. The input of the teens in the implementation and modification of the program is crucial and keeps the program relevant to today’s youth. It also increases their ownership of and investment in the success of the program. The top applicants reflecting a cross-section of the diverse racial, cultural, social, and economic groups within the selected zip codes will be invited to become the second generation of CelebrateOne Peer Educators.

Proposed Scope of Services

<i>Projections for Proposed Program Year 1</i>					
Project Activities	Number to be Served	Projected Outcomes (use percentages or numbers)	Evaluation Tools	Viral/Ripple Effect Plan	Timeline
Peer Educator Recruitment Period	33-35	- 100% of Recruitment strategies are focused on the 13 CelebrateOne zip codes	Applications are only accepted from youth living in the 13 CelebrateOne zip codes	Peer Educators are only selected from the 13 CelebrateOne zip codes	August 1, 2023 – September 30, 2023
Peer Educator Training Period	33	- 80% training attendance - 85% average on post-test and all knowledge checks - 20 hours of training on medically accurate health information and gender norms - Program teambuilding retreat	Pre- and post-test, quarterly Knowledge Checks	Participants grow their knowledge, confidence, and skills. They will share these gains with other students	October 1, 2023 – November 31, 2023
Individual Outreach	1,650	- 15 individual contacts made per peer educator for quarters 1 and 2 of the program - 20 Individual contacts made per peer educator for quarter 3 of the program - 10 surveys returned from educated teens per peer educator for all 3 quarters	Participant survey results, individual contact logs	Students use information to pass on to more youth	November 1, 2023 – June,30 2024
Group Presentation	333	- Each peer educator reaches 10 individuals	Staff evaluates communic	Peer educator uses gained	Nov – Dec 2023 & Jan – June 2024

		in a group education format	ation and presentati on skills. Details in database.	leadership and organization al skills in their lives	
Outreach Project	3,330	-Complete Major Outreach Initiative -Participate in health fairs and festivals (e.g. PRIDE, ComFest) -Maintain social media presence (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Instagram)	OCSE staff maintain record of reach through database, report method efficacy.	Community is more informed and engaged in social change.	Sept – Dec 2023 & Dec – June 2024

Project Evaluation: The effectiveness of the program is monitored and measured through surveys and extensive tracking. The youth’s knowledge of topics covered during training is evaluated through a pre- and post-test during the training period, as well as quarterly knowledge checks. Peer Educators will complete a midterm assessment of the program in December 2023 to indicate if changes need to be implemented and to reflect on their personal leadership and social growth in the program. Quarterly, Planned Parenthood will measure the effectiveness of the Peer Educators’ individual contacts through the collected surveys. The number and demographics of individuals served through individual education sessions and outreach events are tracked in a database. In addition to face-to-face contacts, each peer educator will reach 10 people through group education and community outreach during the program year. Peer Educators’ major outreach initiative will focus on increasing the community’s awareness of the harm of reductive gender norms and boldly advocating for increased access to condoms. Meetings with parents and administrators will be tracked; surveys will be created to assess the community’s sentiments on the importance of condom use and accessibility. Viral effect will be measured by the number of Facebook “likes” and responses to posts, number of hits on YouTube videos, and by tracking the zip codes of the individual contacts. Overall program goals and success will be reported to CelebrateOne.

Gender Lens: The Ohio Center for Sex Education (OCSE) chose to change strategies to recruit all genders into this program to emphasize the necessity for everybody to work towards increasing health equity including reproductive health, not only women. Women are often more hesitant to openly discuss gender issues within their communities because of the fear of backlash. These issues, however, are not only for women to discuss and combat in society, which is why we feel educating all genders about these issues and ways to help create

awareness to alleviate these disparities is so important. We feel that getting teens more comfortable with discussing these disparities prepares them for adulthood in ways that other education programs do not. Providing the environment and information for teens to discover their own voice is just one of the ways the OCSE aims to empower future generations.

For the 2023-2024 grant/school year, the Ohio Center for Sex Education will continue the momentum of this work and we seek to collaborate with the City of Columbus to produce a greater impact. We will continue to use additional evidence based curriculum to equip Peer Educators with the language to discuss gender and sexuality diversity. Investing in the power of youth to lead cultural change in their respective communities combats some of the widespread assumptions that teens are not mature enough to engage in critical analysis.

Gender Norms: Historically, women have taken on traditional gender role which may include: maternal behaviors, careers, lifestyles, expressions; whereas men would take on roles leaning more towards positions of power, control, and financial security, which often leads to men having the final say for everything regarding women’s sexuality and reproductive health. Although some positive change has occurred in recent decades, these gender roles persist. The Peer Education Program strives to tackle these archaic stereotypes by educating our teens on how these assumptions came about, why they continue to exist, and most importantly, the reason society needs to change prevailing views on gender norms. Through our training process, Peer Educators receive knowledge about historically significant women in society and public policy shifts that impact a woman’s reproductive rights, as well as how to facilitate an open conversation regarding a topic that was once taboo. For example, in the past, women who openly discussed topics such as sex, gender, politics, contraception, and pleasure may have been labeled as “fast”, “sluts”, “dirty” or “nasty”. Unfortunately, while these labels are still given to women in today’s society, we know when women have open discussions surrounding these topics, they are much more likely to participate in healthy and safe sexual behaviors. The knowledge gained from training provides our Peer Educators with a platform to feel comfortable discussing their values as well as hearing input from others that doesn’t always align with their beliefs or our mission at Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio. Confronting biases at a younger age encourages teens to play a pivotal role in future policy engagement.

Social Change: Inspiring youth to be more resilient in their sexual health decisions means they will be less likely to allow pressure from partners, other peers, or society to unduly influence their choices. The 2023-2024 Peer Education Programs will continue to positively impact the immediate futures of youth at risk for experiencing unintended pregnancies and contracting STIs, improving their likelihood of graduating from high school and attending college, and engaging them as socially conscious members of their communities. Engaging the teens in trainings and conversations about health inequity and its impact in their everyday lives

further qualifies them to be key resources in their communities for combating health disparities such as infant mortality.

Ripple Effect: In addition to those whom Peer Educators meet in their immediate communities, social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, texting, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat spread the impact of the Program even further. The diversity of Peer Educators allows the information to permeate communities far beyond the reach of the prospective schools. It also affords PPGOH the opportunity to reach areas in which we have not yet been able to establish Peer Education Programs or conduct Responsible Sexuality Education Programming.

The primary social change shifts we expect to see are a *shift in individual and community behavior* and a *shift in critical mass or engagement*. Individually, Peer Education Program participants will experience the following changes:

- 1) Increase self-esteem: The youth will earn their peers' respect by mastering new information and becoming a trusted resource for others. In addition, learning to challenge gender biases increases Peer Educators' confidence and acceptance of their own unique identities;
- 2) Development of leadership skills: Participants will have the opportunity to coordinate and lead outreach initiatives, educational presentations, and awareness campaigns in their schools and communities; and
- 3) Ending harmful silence around sexual practices: Helping youth make good decisions and stand up for themselves now will enable them to confidently do so in the future as they provide examples to future teens of what it means to be an independent, thoughtful, proactive young person.

The shift in critical mass or engagement will be made evident by the number of people in the community who are mobilized by Peer Educators to advocate for increased access to reproductive care and the reduction of infant mortality. The effect of the communities' participation in education and advocacy events and social media campaigns will create a viral effect, helping to improve the health and knowledge of the larger community. Ultimately, this program will have long term social change impact by not only addressing the concrete issues of unintended pregnancies and STIs, but by doing so in a manner that undermines one of the very confining influences of sexual risk taking behavior and low self-esteem.

Cost Per Unit:

Peer Educators: 33
 Individual Outreach: 1,650
 Group Presentation: 333
 Outreach Education: 3,330
 Total people reached: 5,343

\$150,000 ÷ 5,330 individuals
 Cost per Unit: **\$28.07**

Budget:

Category	Proposal 33-35 Peer Educators
Salary + Fringe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost associated with salary and fringe benefits for 1.50 FTEs dedicated to this program. 	\$93,750.00
Program Supplies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs supplies include training materials, Peer Education curriculum, provision of access to online supplies and connectivity. 	\$4,500.00
Mileage + Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of travel costs for recruitment purposes, meetings, and travel vouchers for Peer Educators as necessary. 	\$6,000.00
Incentives for program participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swag for Peer Educators and gift cards for teens the Peer Educators reach for participating in program activities, evaluations, and surveys. 	\$6,000.00
Recruitment & Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost to provide recruitment incentives and conduct marketing strategies through social and traditional media 	\$5,000.00
Stipends for Peer Educators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of providing stipends for 33-35 Peer Educators for one year. 	\$16,500.00
Office Supplies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost for office supplies needed to conduct the program 	\$3,250.00
Admin and Program Set up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative cost to run the program. 	\$15,000.00
TOTAL:	\$150,000.00

