

STUDENT CENTER PROGRAMS

Peer Mediation and Peer Leader

INTRODUCTIONS

- Lori Hodin, Coordinator of Safe School Initiatives
- Susan Shields, Peer Leader and Wellness Dept. Coordinator.
- Peer Leaders: Kate Barker, Matt Cahill, Sara Meier and Sammie Roberts
- Peer Mediators: Annika Nygren, Scott Papapietro, Jahnea Johnson

STUDENT CENTERED=POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

- Youth empowerment is a strength based model that nurtures leadership potential in students.
- It promotes resiliency.
- These programs are resources for students and help students develop the abilities to foster caring cooperative relationships.

HISTORY OF THE PEER LEADER AND MEDIATION PROGRAMS

- The Peer Leader Program began in 1980's
 - Sequential Curriculum
 - Peer Helper to Advanced Peer Helper
- School Mediation Program began in 1994.
 - Began as a student mediation program and grew over the years.

Coordinator of Safe School Initiatives

Job Description

The Coordinator of Safe School Initiatives is a role meant to ensure that all who attend and work at Lincoln-Sudbury do so in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe. This individual will coordinate programs aimed at the many facets of school safety. This individual will also help collaboratively guide the school in developing and implementing programs to address school safety as issues arise.

1. SCHOOL MEDIATION

- oversee the School Mediation program
- recruit and train student and adult mediators
- provide on-going training and support to mediators throughout the year
- supervise all mediation sessions
- provide mediation services for student, staff, and parent/child conflicts at L-S
- mediate conflicts at L-S involving an adult and another party
- keep L-S community well informed about the mediation process
- support staff in strategizing solutions to issues they face both inside and outside the classroom
- meet bi-weekly with Housemasters and Campus Aides
- keep Administration informed as to the patterns of conflicts dealt with in mediation

2. VISIONS

- oversee the Visions program, including being cognizant of the need for trainings, new initiatives, assessments and interventions
- organize staff trainings
- coordinate the Visions trainer group, including responsibility for appropriate division of labor within the group
- be a resource for staff on Visions related matters
- write and submit annual grant in conjunction with Admin liaison

3. SCHOOL CLIMATE & VIOLENCE PREVENTION

- keep the Superintendent/Principal, administration, and staff informed about issues related to violence prevention, a safe school climate, and our Core Values of fostering cooperative and caring relationships and the respect for human differences
- co-chair the School Climate Committee
- serve on the School Safety Council
- organize staff and student trainings required by anti-bullying legislation
- support teachers in the classroom around issues of conflict
- recruit and train student leaders for the Connectors program and organize the Connectors program in the spring

PEER MEDIATION

- 2010-2011 - 13 students and 11 adults trained and ready to mediate.
- 2011-2012- 40 students and 4 adults participated in full day trainings and follow-up full lunch role-plays
- 30 adult involved mediations (admin, teachers, staff, parents)
- 30 student involved mediations

Quotes from Mediators

Scott Papapietro, 12th Grade, Peer Mediator

I feel lucky to have the opportunity to participate in such an effective mediation program. The skills and communication strategies that I picked up through being a mediator will certainly be useful in dealing with future situations that may arise. The LS Mediation program is a valuable resource that students should be made aware of.

Annika Nygren, 12th Grade, Peer Mediator

What have you learned by serving as a peer mediator?

Through mediation I have learned about myself as well as how other people interact/ react. Through mediation I have learned that listening to every side of an argument is crucial in being able to come to an agreement or common ground. Mediation has helped me to step back in my own personal situations and look at the conflict from all angles. As Jahnea said in the video, mediation has also helped me to pick up on human body language cues that can apply to every day conversations.

Through peer mediation, How does peer mediation promote a positive and safe school culture?

Mediation promotes a safe school culture because it provides a comfortable and open environment for those in conflict. In a mediation room, the parties in conflict are free to share their sides and opinions without interruption or verbal/physical conflict. I have found that many students have gone through mediation on various occasions because they have had positive experiences with it in the past.

In what ways is peer mediation more useful than and effective traditional discipline and adult centered forms of problem solving.

Peer mediation is more effective and useful than traditional discipline and adult centered forms of problem solving because it is a place without judgement or punishment. Mediation provides a place for students to work their issues out on their own without house or headmaster involvement. It is not a "blame and shame" environment, but an open one with freedom of expression and opportunity for the issue to be resolved on equal levels and provide common ground for the conflicting parties.

MORE MEDIATOR QUOTES

Jahnea Johnson 12th Grade, Peer Mediator

- As a peer mediator, I have learned patience, and I've learned how to communicate and I've learned to be observant of other people and their body language. I've also learned that it is not always easy to help other people.
- I feel that peer mediation promotes a positive and safe school culture here at LS for the fact that when you are talking to your peers you can express your feelings any type of way you want to and as mediators we need to keep it totally confidential.
- And just the comfort level when you know its confidential you are able to allow your emotions to totally take over and really express how you really feel in any situation. It gives you a chance to look at both sides of an issue and to make sure that the party that you got in the altercation with is in agreement and fully understands the issue.
- Peer mediation is more useful than disciplinary codes for conflict resolution for the fact that when you're brought in front of a counselor or a Housemaster you feel like you're in trouble and this is what you have to do. Peer mediation is offered as an option, you volunteer to come and talk to the person you're in conflict with. So by you taking the initiative, it states that you are willing and open to express yourself and discuss why you acted as you acted.
- I feel that once you are talking with your peers when an adult is not in the room you will be more honest about what you did and why you did it. Peer mediation gives you the reason and the help to solve your own problems.

PEER LEADER ELECTIVE

- An elective semester course for 1 credit.(Most students take it for the year.)
- .25 Release Time to Coordinate Program.
- Open to 11 and 12th Graders with teacher recommendation.
- **Course Requirements:**
 - Attend Peer Leader Trainings (2x a year)
 - Weekly attendance with internship
 - 8th Grade Q&A Sessions and Tours

PEER LEADERS IN OUR COMMUNITY

- 55 Peer Leaders in the program.
- 27 in Curtis Mentor Program (Each Peer Leader mentors 2 students)
- 27 Lincoln and Sudbury Elementary Schools
- 1 Peer Leader working in the REACH program @LS.

PEER LEADER VOICES

- **Kate Barker, 11th Grade**
Curtis Mentor
- **Matt Cahill, 12th Grade**
Loring 5th Grade class
- **Sara Meier, 12th Grade**
Curtis Mentor
- **Sammie Roberts, 12th Grade**
Curtis Mentor

PEER LEADER QUOTES

Kate Barker, 11th Grade, Curtis Mentor

The time that I spend with my mentees has developed into a relationship. We have been fortunate enough to spend the whole year together and it has benefited my ability to help them and their ability to be comfortable with me.

Going into the peer leader program, I thought each session would include problems, frustrations and issues that we would work through to benefit mentee. However, I am pleasantly surprised to now know that most days are great days, and we can just talk about the simple stuff. Our time isn't a therapy session, often times its just chatting and spending time together.

Prior to this year, I was unaware of the peer leader program. Now that I am a part of it, I strongly support it. I don't want anyone to be in the dark about how beneficial this program is, just as I was before.

I have learned a new kind of leadership from being a mentor at Curtis. It is different than being a captain on a team for example, this leadership is more personal but still just as valuable.

Samantha Roberts, 12th Grade, Curtis Mentor

"The peer mentoring program has meant a lot to me because I was able to connect with my mentee really well. She was on the same teams that I was on in 6th and 7th grade. This way I am able to give her a lot more advice because I was struggling with the same things. I am able to say, I was there, I went through that, but look, I survived."

Sara Meier, 12th Grade, Curtis Mentor

The mentoring program has taught me how to communicate and become a better leader than I expected as a student.

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU FOR THE
INVITATION TO PRESENT.

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