Peer Education Superheroes on Campus: Assembly and Engaging Your Team

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NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

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- Started in college AOD Prevention in 2001
- Educational background in Social Work
- Trainer for Certified Peer Education Training (CPE), Screening and Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment Training (SBIRT)
- Coalition to Prevent ADHD Medication Misuse (CPAMM), NCAA Sexual Assault Prevention Task Force, Chair, Coalition of Higher Education Association for Substance Abuse Prevention (CoHEASAP)

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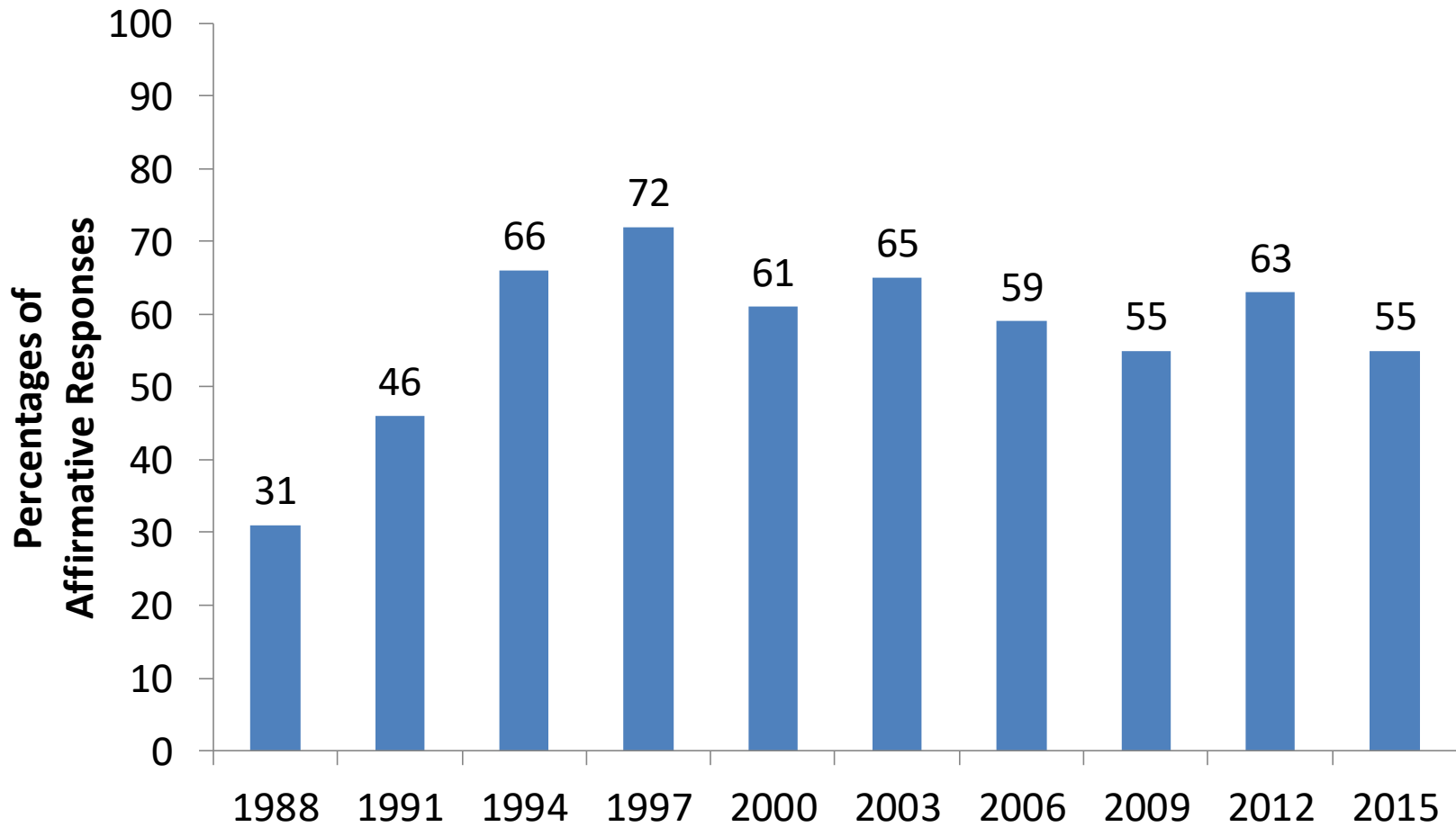in Higher Education

What is Peer Education?

What is Peer Education?

- Peer education is an intentional system of identifying, training and empowering a group of individuals to have educational conversations within peer groups where they have unique **influence** and **access**

- Peer education capitalizes on the unique impact that peers have on each other

(Astin, 1993; Kuh, 1993; Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Nora & Terenzini, 1999)

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College Alcohol Study:
Use of Peer Groups Whose Primary Purpose is Drug or Alcohol Abuse

Bar chart — Y-axis: Percentages of Affirmative Responses (0 to 100); X-axis: years

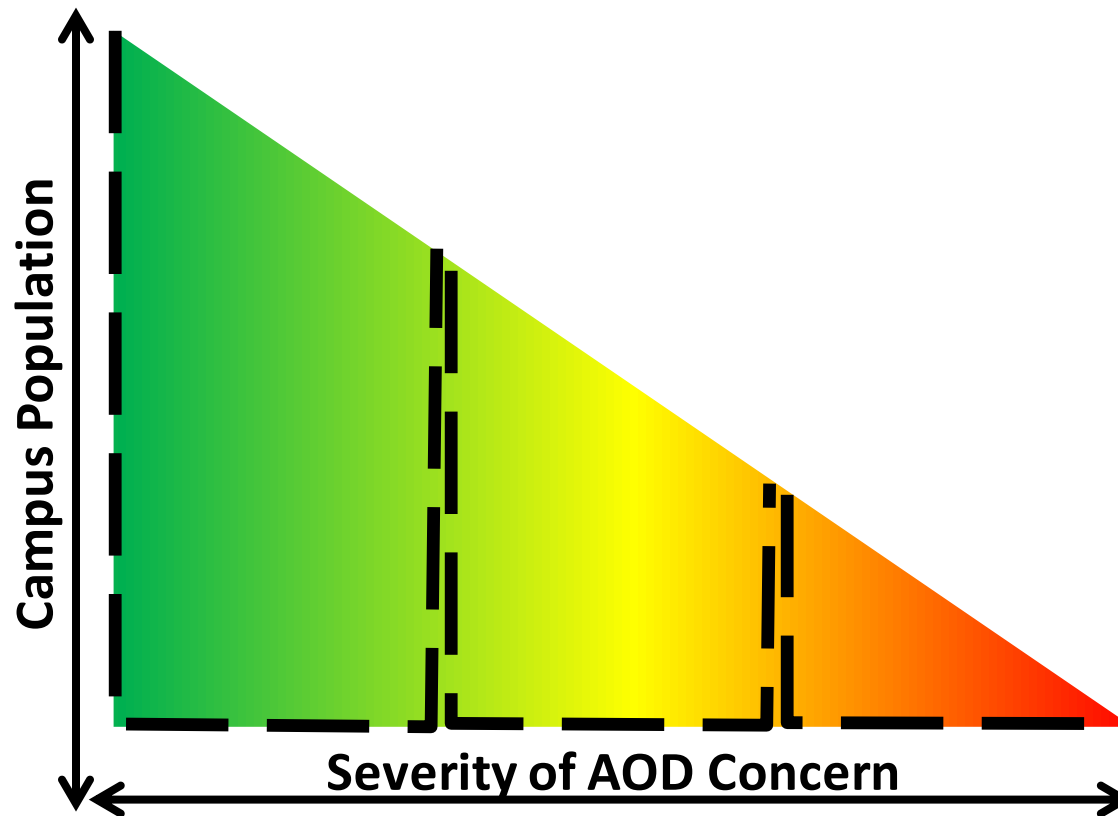| Year	Percentage
1988	31
1991	46
1994	66
1997	72
2000	61
2003	65
2006	59
2009	55
2012	63
2015	55

Why Peer Education?

- Peer educators can communicate with students with access that professional staff do not have
- Peer education programs are economical
- Peer education programs are effective
- Peer educators make healthier decisions, increased leadership opportunities, higher-ordered thinking skills (NPES data)

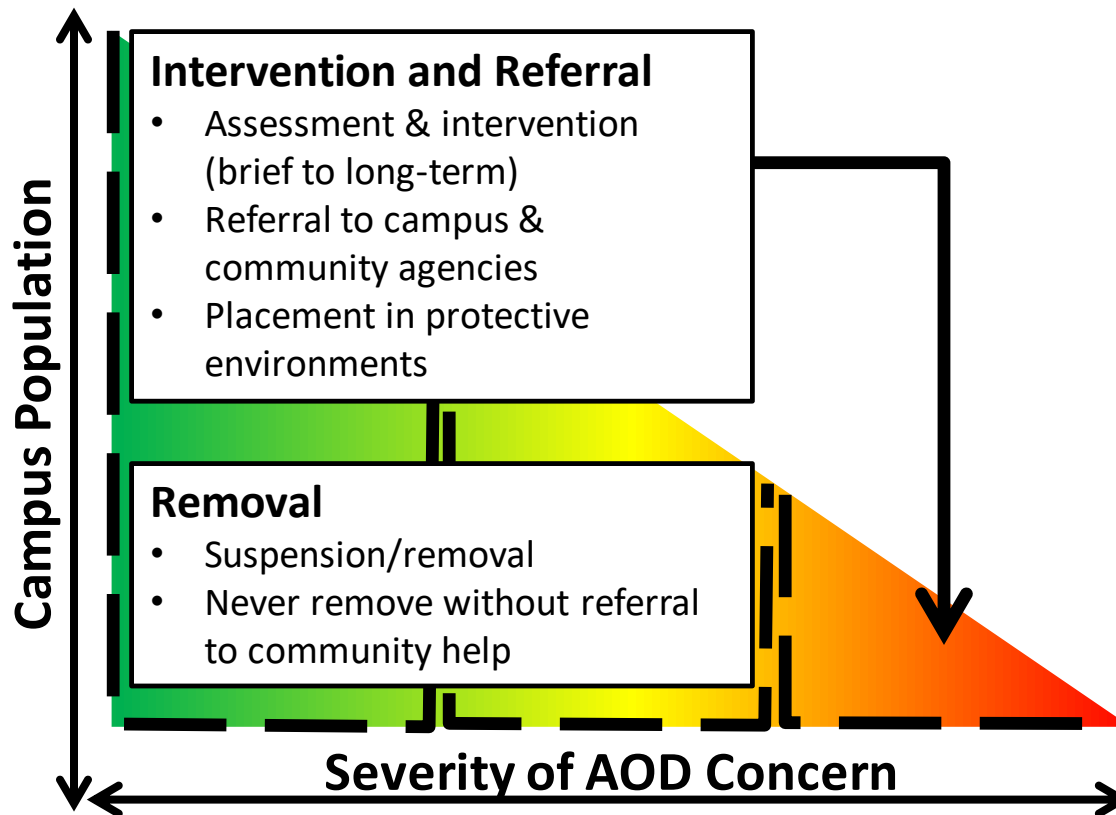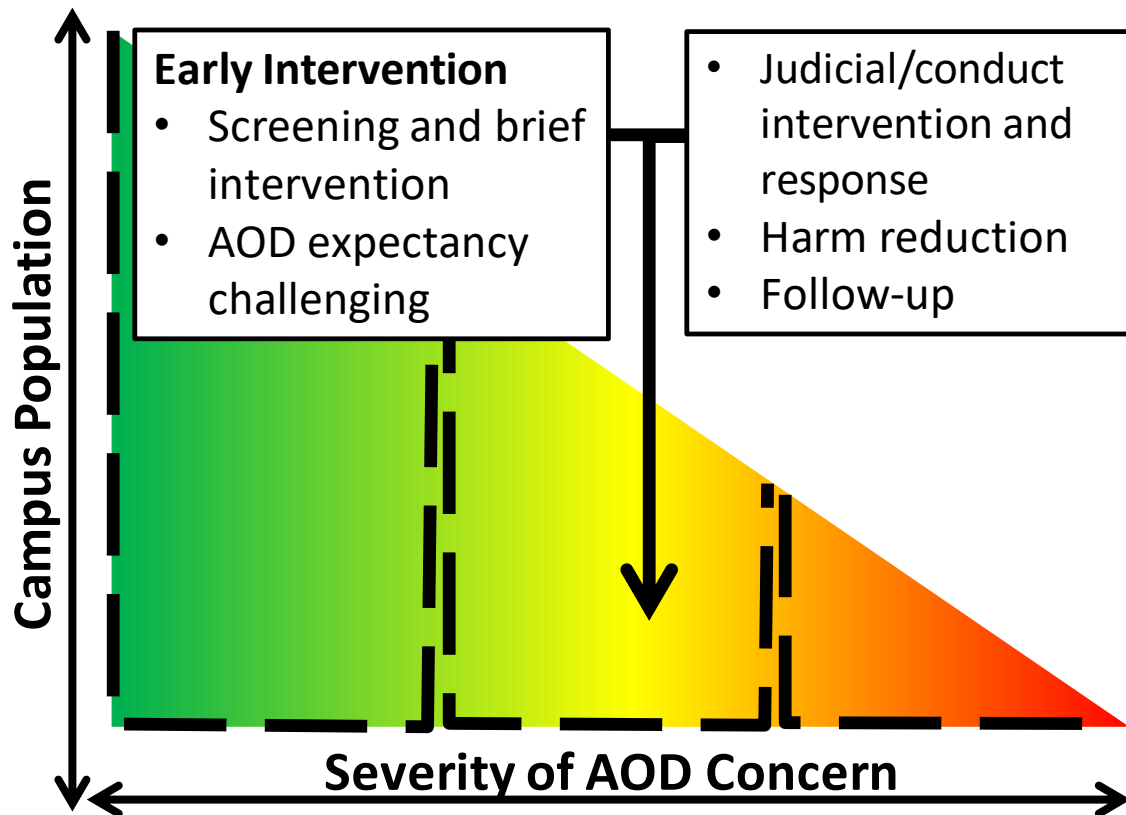(Tinto, 1993; Pinciaro & Bedwell, 1997; Badura et al., 2000; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Wawrzynski, 2007)

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Peer Education in Prevention

Prevention Pyramid

Prevention Pyramid

Prevention Pyramid

Campus Population (vertical axis)

Severity of AOD Concern (horizontal axis)

Early Intervention
- Screening and brief intervention
- AOD expectancy challenging

- Judicial/conduct intervention and response
- Harm reduction
- Follow-up

Prevention Pyramid

Primary Prevention
- Provide alternatives to high-risk behaviors
- Build skills to reduce escalation to higher-risk behaviors
- Education and training on pro-social bystander behaviors

Campus Population

Severity of AOD Concern
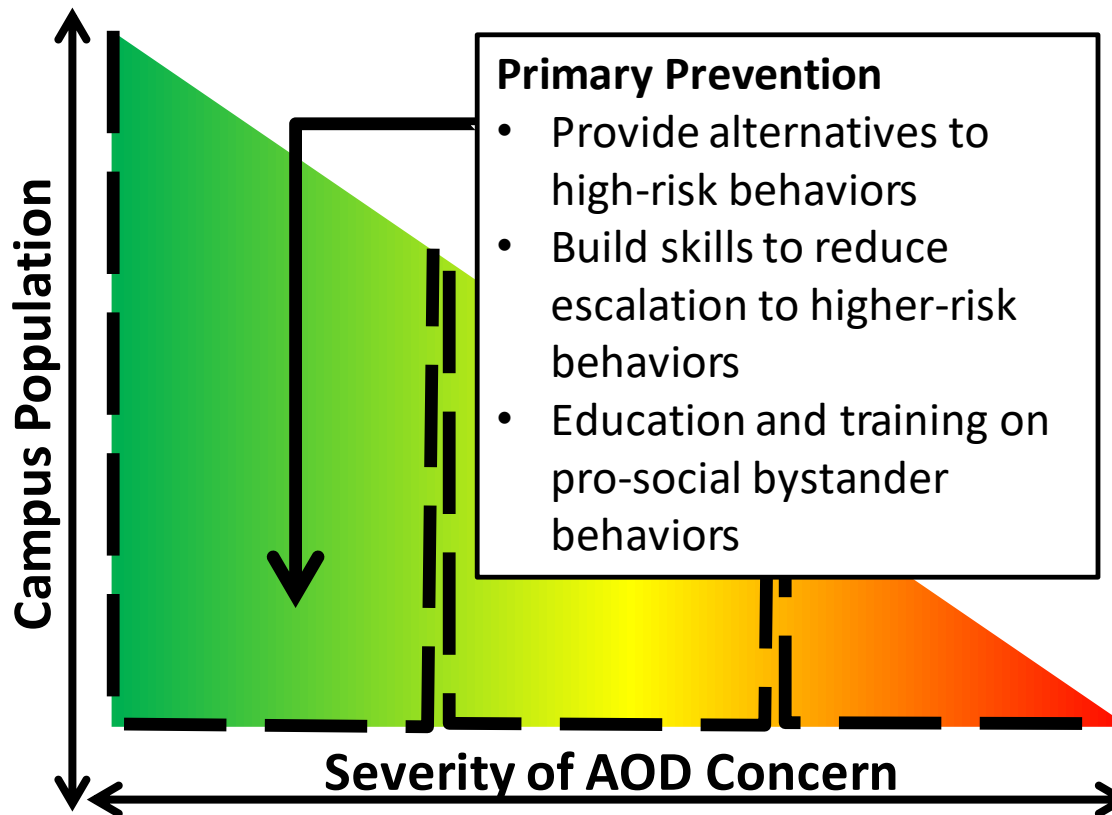
Prevention Pyramid
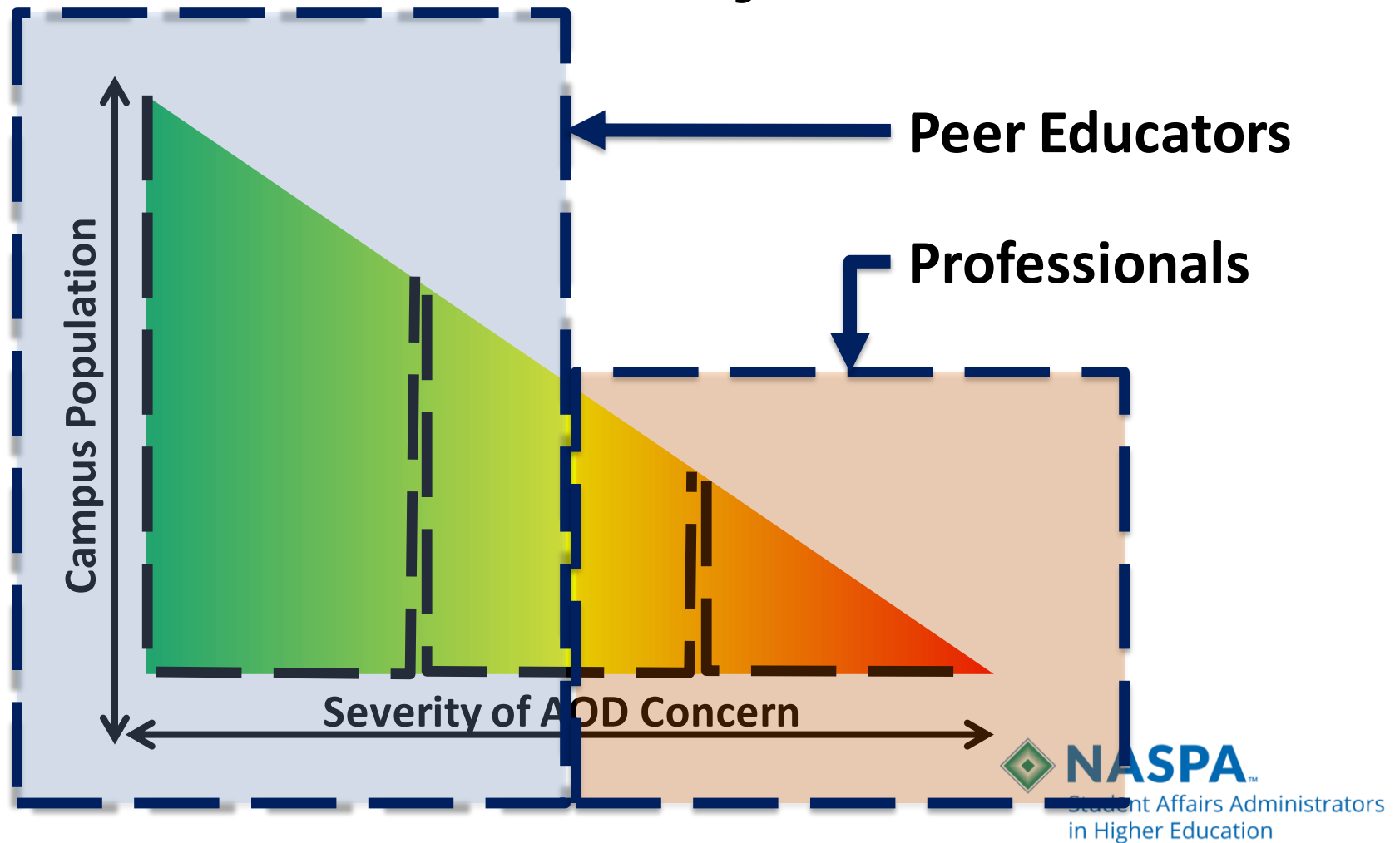
Is Peer Education "Evidence-Based"

- Sure
  - Demonstrated evidence of peers as reliable narrators of information
  - Tons of research on peer educators themselves having improved outcomes
- But also, peer education is a *tool* (human resource) in campus prevention efforts

National Peer Educator Study

- Dr. Matthew Wawrzynski, Michigan State University

- NPES Data is from 2017-2018 Report (n=484)

- Participation open to identified peer education chapters (npes@naspa.org)

Motivation to Become a Peer Educator

National Averages

	Greatly Influenced	Influenced	Had Very Little Influence	Did Not Influence My Decision
Desire to help others.	63.80%	34.90%	1.20%	0.00%
Interest in gaining job related skills.	51.30%	35.40%	10.80%	2.50%
Desire to acquire additional knowledge.	55.90%	38.80%	4.90%	0.60%
Observation of other peer educators.	26.70%	36.00%	22.10%	15.20%
Encouragement from others.	24.70%	38.30%	24.30%	12.80%
Desire to be involved in college.	51.90%	37.10%	8.50%	2.50%
Needed to add something to my resume.	23.80%	35.80%	25.40%	15.00%
Money (a job).	16.20%	20.00%	18.10%	45.70%
Peer educator class counted for course credit.	5.20%	8.70%	11.20%	74.80%
Career development/exploration	29.50%	40.30%	16.60%	13.50%
Desire for recognition.	9.20%	22.30%	30.10%	38.40%
Interest in making friends.	21.80%	38.20%	25.40%	14.70%
My personal experience dealing with a health and wellness concern (e.g., alcohol, drugs, or sexual health)	31.50%	30.50%	18.00%	20.00%
My personal experience of a friend or family member dealing with a health and wellness concern (e.g., alcohol, drugs, or sexual health)	29.50%	34.10%	16.00%	20.40%

Practical Competence

The practical competence learning domain includes identifying short and long-term goals, establishing a career path, and developing a sense of self and purpose.

The NPES measures intrapersonal development with the following outcomes:

- Having a sense of purpose.
- Having a career direction.
- Developing long range goals.
- Engaging in effective listening.
- Effectively organizing my time.

- Knowledge about general student health issues.
- Effectively presenting a program.
- Holding myself accountable for obligations and commitments.
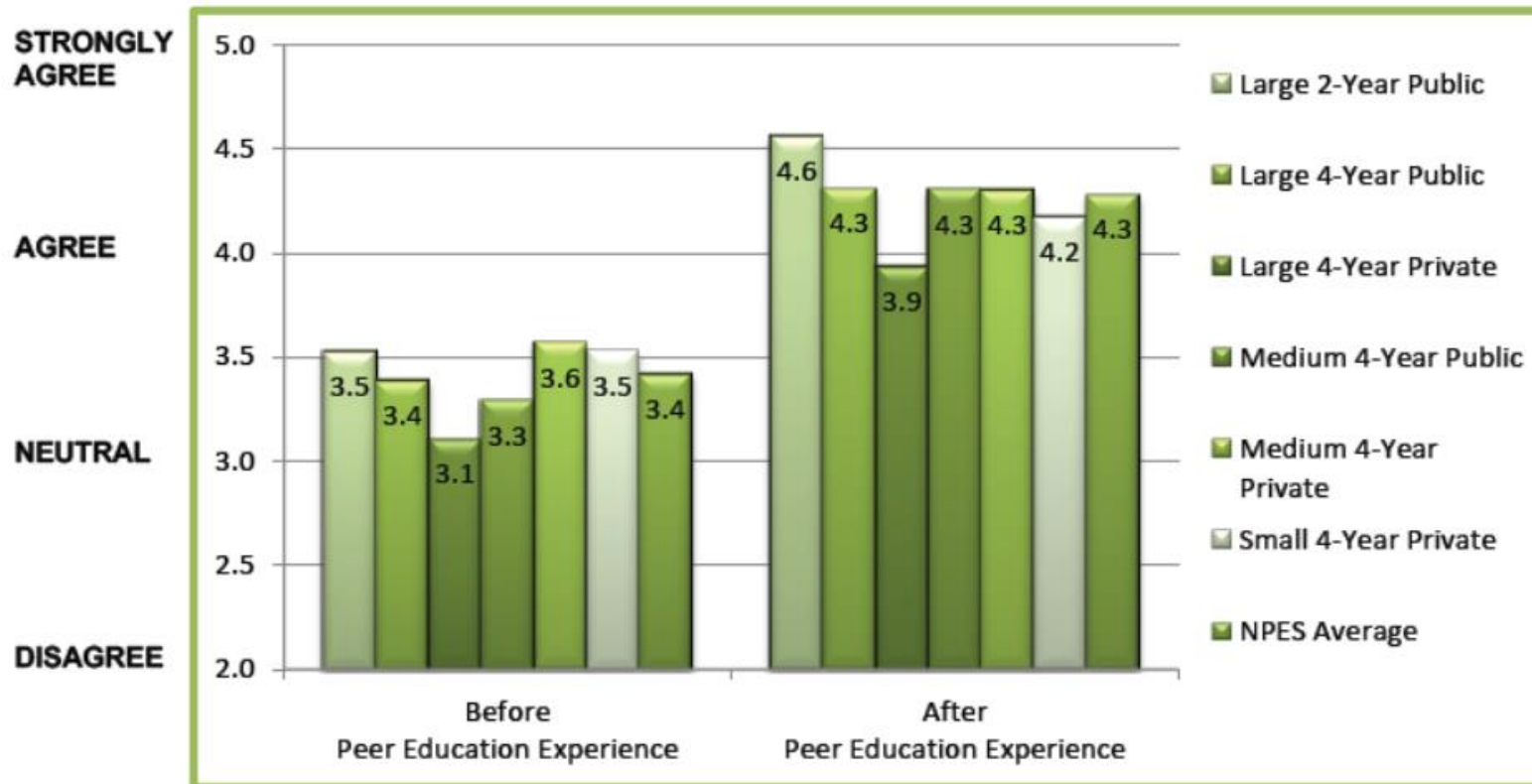
Cognitive Complexity

The cognitive complexity learning domain includes reflecting on previous experiences, considering assumptions, thinking critically, and applying learned concepts to practical problems.

The NPES measures cognitive complexity with the following outcomes:

- Applying previous experiences to inform new situations.
- Reevaluating previous assumptions.
- Formulating an innovative approach to a solution or problem.
- Critically analyzing situations.
- Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory.
- Applying theories or concepts to practical problems in new situations.
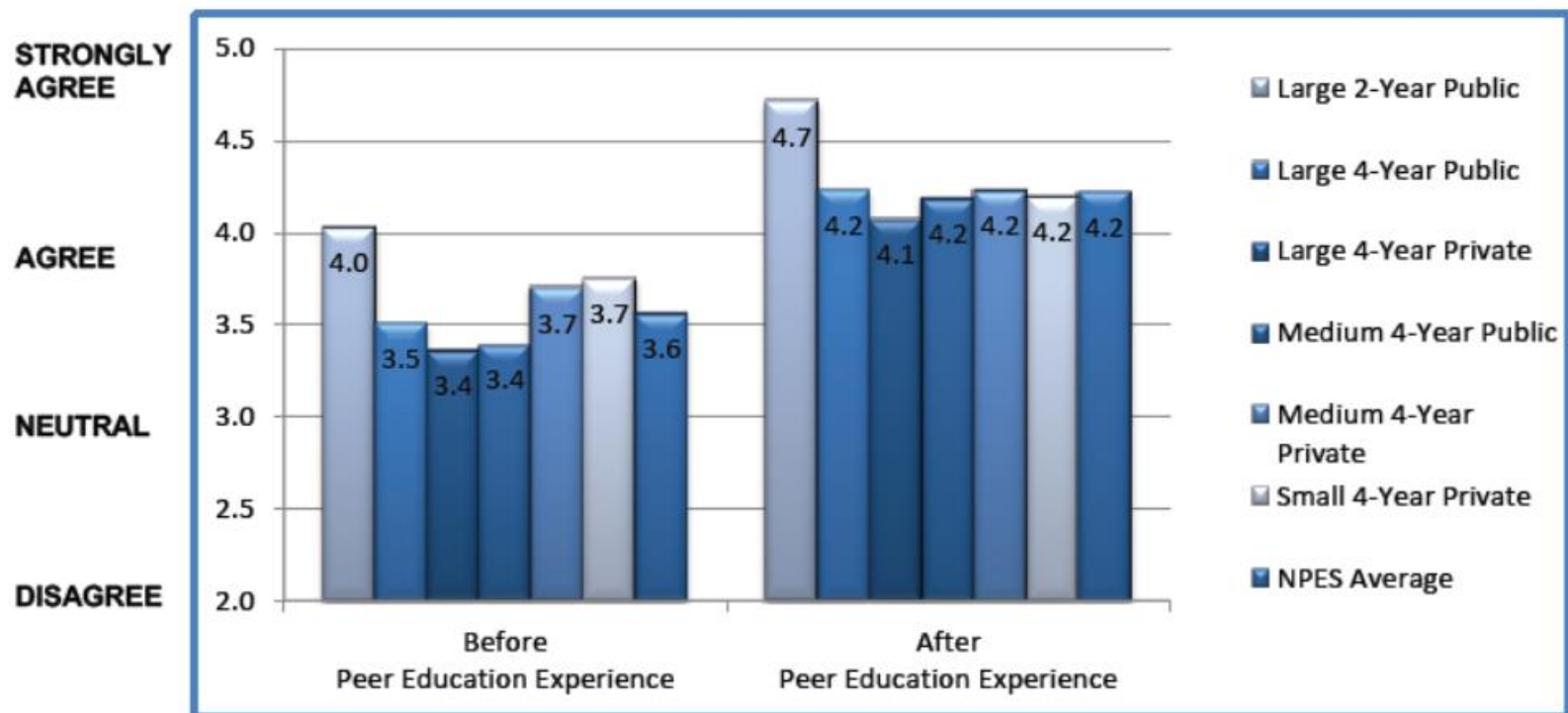
Intrapersonal Development

The intrapersonal development learning domain includes realistic self-appraisal, self-awareness, personal goal setting, navigating personal values and beliefs, working with people different from one's self, recognizing personal attributes such as self-confidence, self-esteem, ethics, and integrity.

The NPES measures intrapersonal development with the following outcomes:

- Clarifying beliefs or values.
- Understanding people's values that different from my own.
- Developing a personal belief system.
- Having a better understanding of my own values.
- Having a positive self-concept (self-confidence, self-esteem, independence, and determination).
- Articulating values and beliefs as they relate to personal decisions.
- Recognizing and accepting my strengths and deficiencies.
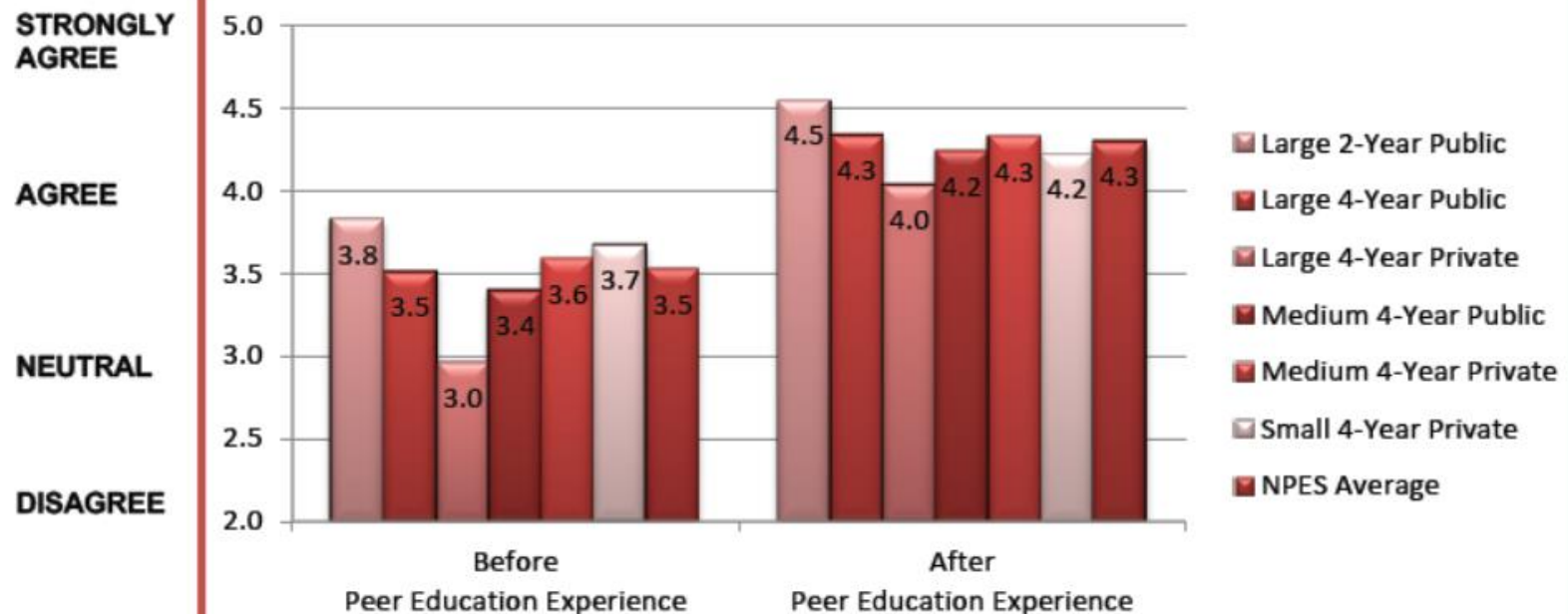
Knowledge Acquisition, Construction, Integration, and Application

Knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, and application learning outcome includes awareness/knowledge of campus and community resources, interpreting thoughts and ideas, evaluating arguments effectively, and developing problem solving skills.

The NPES measures knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, and application with the following outcomes:

- Having knowledge about general health issues.

- Evaluating information, arguments, or methods and assessing the conclusions.

- Having knowledge about campus resources.

- Referring someone to counseling.

- Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations.

- Researching skills that allow me to seek out information about topics.

- Developing an effective solution to a problem.
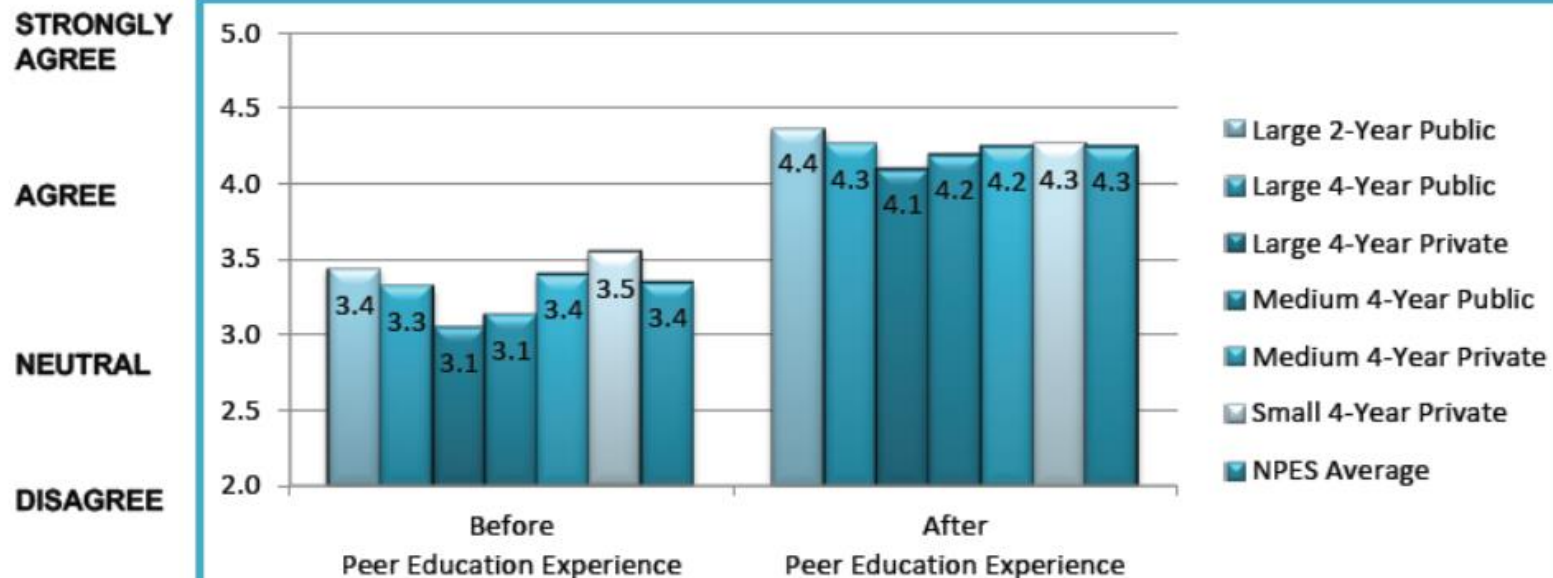
Interpersonal Competence

The interpersonal competence learning outcome includes managing relationships between self and others, understanding personal leadership styles, active listening, establishing comfort discussing risky behaviors, presenting, role modeling health choices for others, and creating meaningful relationships.

The NPES measures interpersonal competence with the following questions:

- Effectively managing conflict between others.
- Effectively working with others who share views that are different from my own.
- Effectively demonstrate a skills leading a group.
- Ability to motivate others to accomplish goals.
- Listen to and consider other's points of view.

- Presenting ideas and information effectively to others.
- Effectively communicating with people.
- Talking with a friend about a risky behavior or choice.
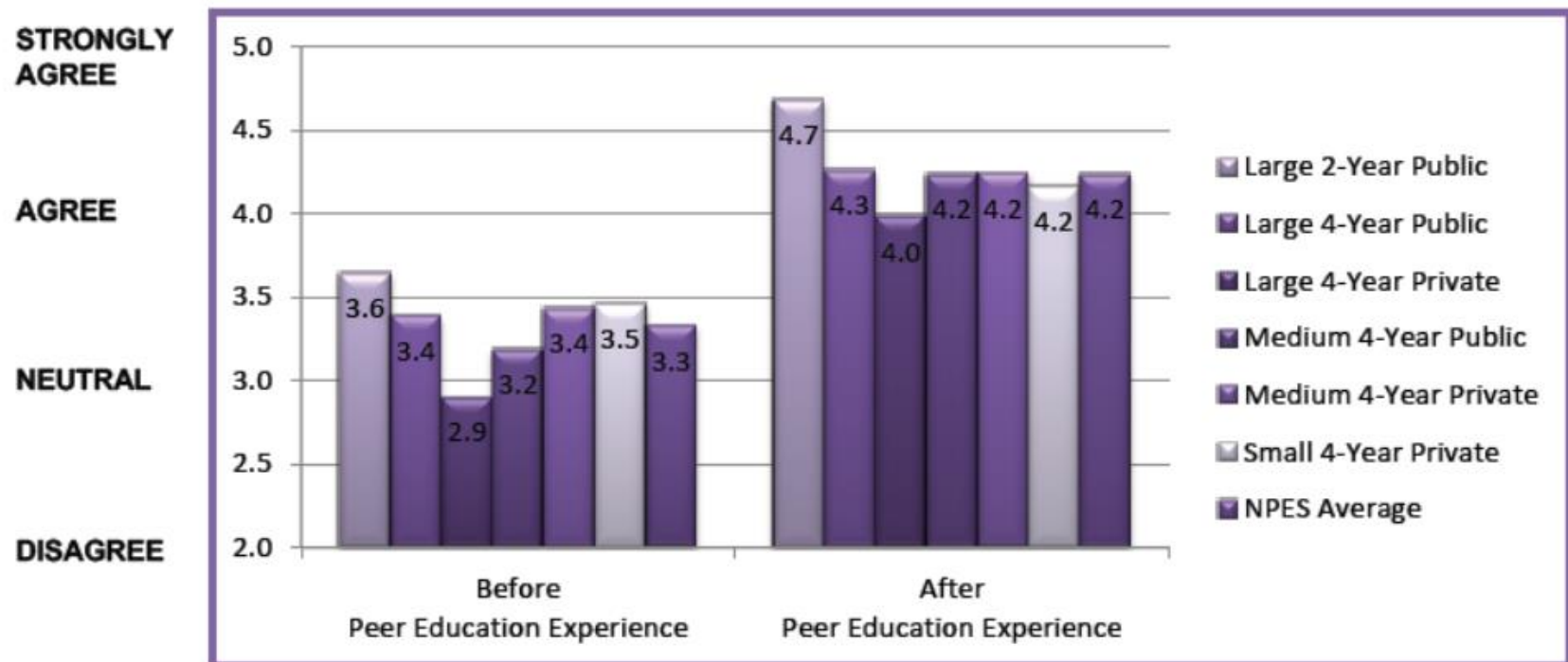
Humanitarianism and Civic Engagement

Humanitarianism and civic engagement learning outcome includes consideration of others, thoughtful critical reflection, having conversations with others who may be different from you, and integrating into the campus community.

The NPES measures humanitarianism and civic engagement with the following questions:

- Considering the welfare of others when making decisions.
- Engaging in critical reflections.
- Putting others before yourself.
- Having conversations with students who are a different race/ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation than me.
- Feeling a part of the campus community.
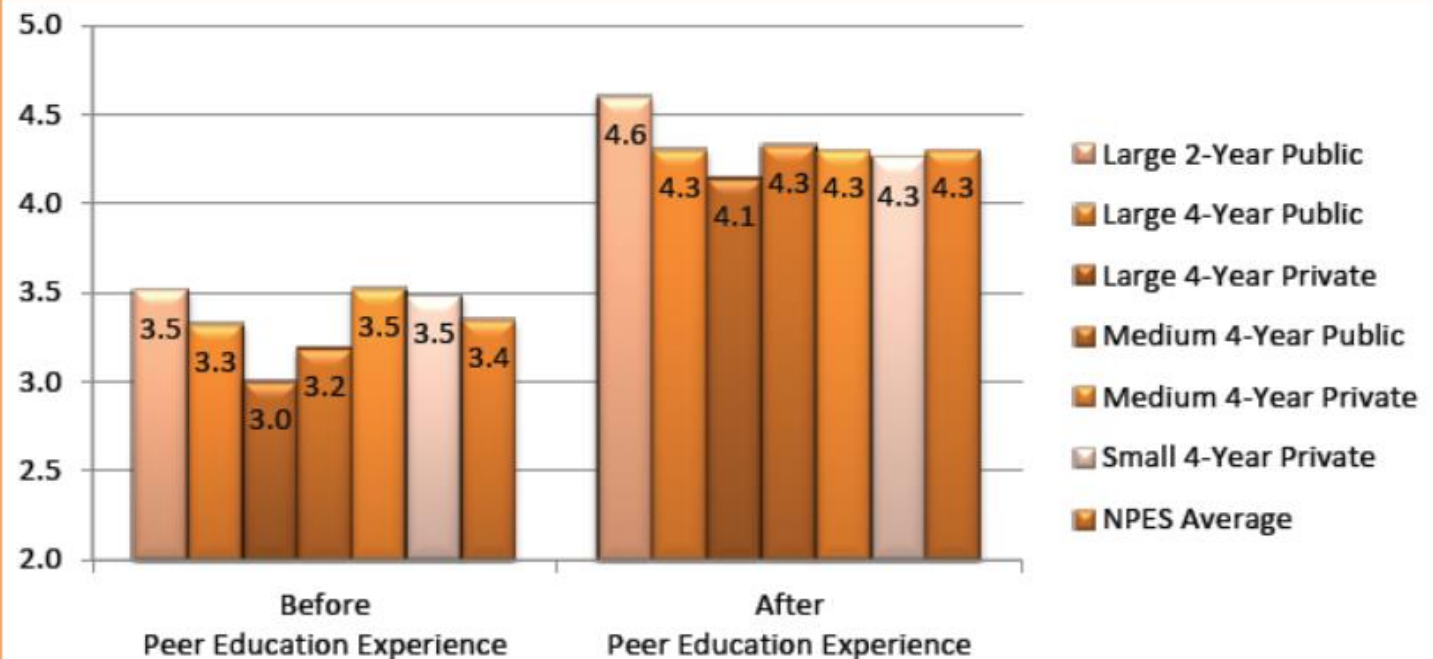
Models of Peer Education Programs

Models of Peer Education Programs: Peer-to-Peer Consultancy

- Peers meet individually with students
- Highly structured programs (e.g. HIV screening, mentoring); and generalized (e.g. RA model)
- Training emphasizes listening skills, response and referral; training can include specific tools or techniques
- Requires a higher investment from an institution (space/supervision/training)

Models of Peer Education Programs: Targeted Group Educational Programs

- Peer educators present on educational topics to small groups or through passive programming, including poster campaigns, fairs, interactive events, etc.

- Program topics are specific and are indicated to peer groups

- Training emphasizes knowledge and content delivery skills

Models of Peer Education Programs: Environmental Advocacy

- Peer educators change campus and community environments
- Change campus policies, influence resource allocations, find and address gaps (e.g. tobacco policies, unjust campus practices, service creations)
- Training emphasizes leadership and advocacy skills

Models of Peer Education Programs: Peer Theatre

- Peer Educators are trained to conduct interactive scenarios about health topics to engage students in educational dialogue

- Requires extensive setup and training for implementations

- Supervision is required for periodic training updates and follow-up

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Models of Peer Education Programs: Hybrid Models

- Most peer education groups consist of peer educators who operate across methodologies
- Individual peer educators may have skills in one area, but lack skills in others
- Hybrid model is a more sustainable model
- Requires institutional investment, especially in supervision

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College Alcohol Study:
Peers With Primary Focus
on Alcohol and Substance Abuse – 2015

Category	Value
Campus utilizes peers	55
Educational workshops	43
Health awareness	48
Alcohol-free events	40
Policy review/ task member	22
Guest lectures in academic classes	26
Initial intervention/ referral to counseling	12
Other	7

(Anderson, 2018) – caph.gmu.edu

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Individual Roles of Peer Educators

Learner · Activist · Consultant · Disseminator · Trainer · Operator · Collaborator

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Roles of Peer Educators: **Consultant**

- Provide one-on-one service
  - Formally: screening and referral
  - Informally: bystander intervention

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Roles of Peer Educators: **Disseminator**

- Service disseminates information and education
  - Raise awareness and knowledge
  - Change attitudes and beliefs
  - Align perceptions

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Roles of Peer Educators: **Trainer**

- Service teaches, improves, and retains skills and abilities
  - Passive: through non-interactive display (e.g. brochures, advertisements)
  - Active: through interactive workshops and tabling opportunities
  - With a level of mastery in mind

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Roles of Peer Educators: **Activist**

- Service changes the environment contributing to student decision making
  - Environmental assessment and management
  - Policy change
  - Giving voice and lending power to disenfranchised populations

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Roles of Peer Educators: **Collaborator**

- Works with the group and the community to identify gaps in service
- Service also includes being a representative voice between the peer education group and community

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Roles of Peer Educators: **Operator**

- Servant leader for the peer education group, providing support service
  - Strategic planning for group
  - Assessment and evaluation service
  - Budget
  - Makes decisions

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Roles of Peer Educators: **Learner**

- A key identity of collegiate peer educators is that they are in pursuit of higher education, of which peer education is a facet
- Continuous development and learning in roles of a peer educator

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What Makes Peer Education Groups Successful?

Successful Peer Education Groups: Strong Diverse Membership

- Group should not be built around one person or one type of talent

- Recruit people with diverse ideas and skills

- Identify what your group lacks and recruit members who posses those talents

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Successful Peer Education Groups: Well Trained Peers

- Completing some baseline, foundational training (CPE)
- Monthly training meeting
- Annual or biannual retreats
- Content area workshops
- Utilizing experienced peers as mentors or trainers

Certified Peer Educator (CPE) Training
Skills for Peer Educators

- Power, Role, and Characteristics of Quality Peer Educators
- Affecting & Understanding Change
- Being an Effective Listener
- Responding to Crisis
- Bystander Intervention
- Intrapersonal Identity Development
- Program & Presentation Skills
- Group Development

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National Percentage of Training Received for Peer Educators

Category	Received Training	Did Not Receive Training
BYSTANDER INTERVENTION	89%	11%
HAZING PREVENTION	42%	58%
IMPAIRED DRIVING PREVENTION	49%	51%
NUTRITION	60%	40%
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND FITNESS	59%	41%
SEXUALLY INFECTIOUS DISEASE (SID)	69%	31%
AIDS/HIV PREVENTION	55%	45%
PREGNANCY	35%	65%
STRESS MANAGEMENT	89%	11%
EATING DISORDERS	62%	39%
MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS	90%	10%
SELF-HARM PREVENTION	62%	38%
SUICIDE PREVENTION	72%	28%
VIOLENCE PREVENTION	72%	28%
SEXUAL ASSAULT/RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE	93%	7%
MARIJUANA USE	61%	39%
PRESCRIPTION DRUG USE	54%	46%
ILLICIT DRUG USE	61%	39%
ALCOHOL USE	88%	12%
TOBACCO USE	55%	45%

Legend: ■ Received Training   ■ Did Not Receive Training

National Percentage of Peer Educators Who Engaged in Educational Activities

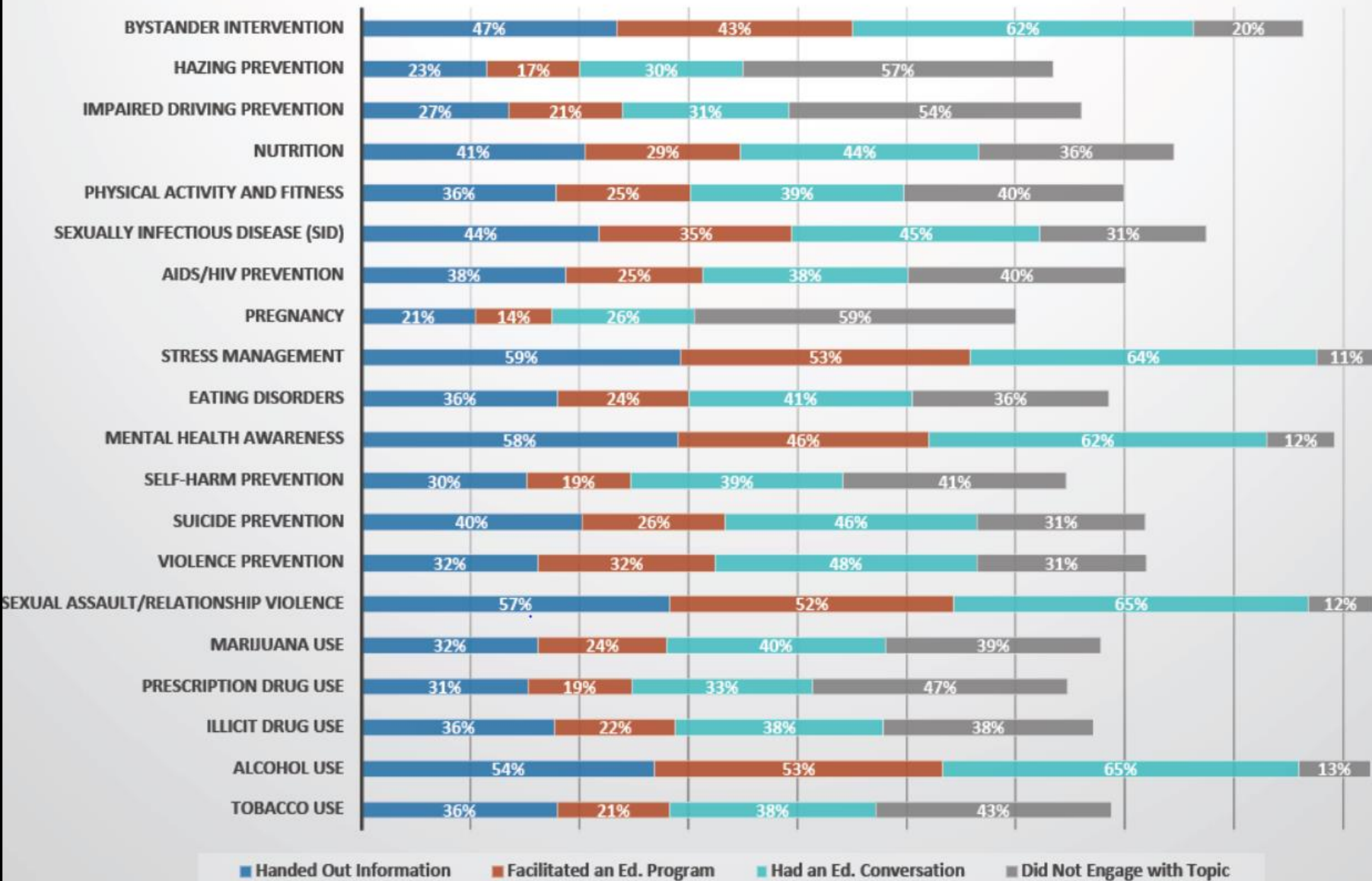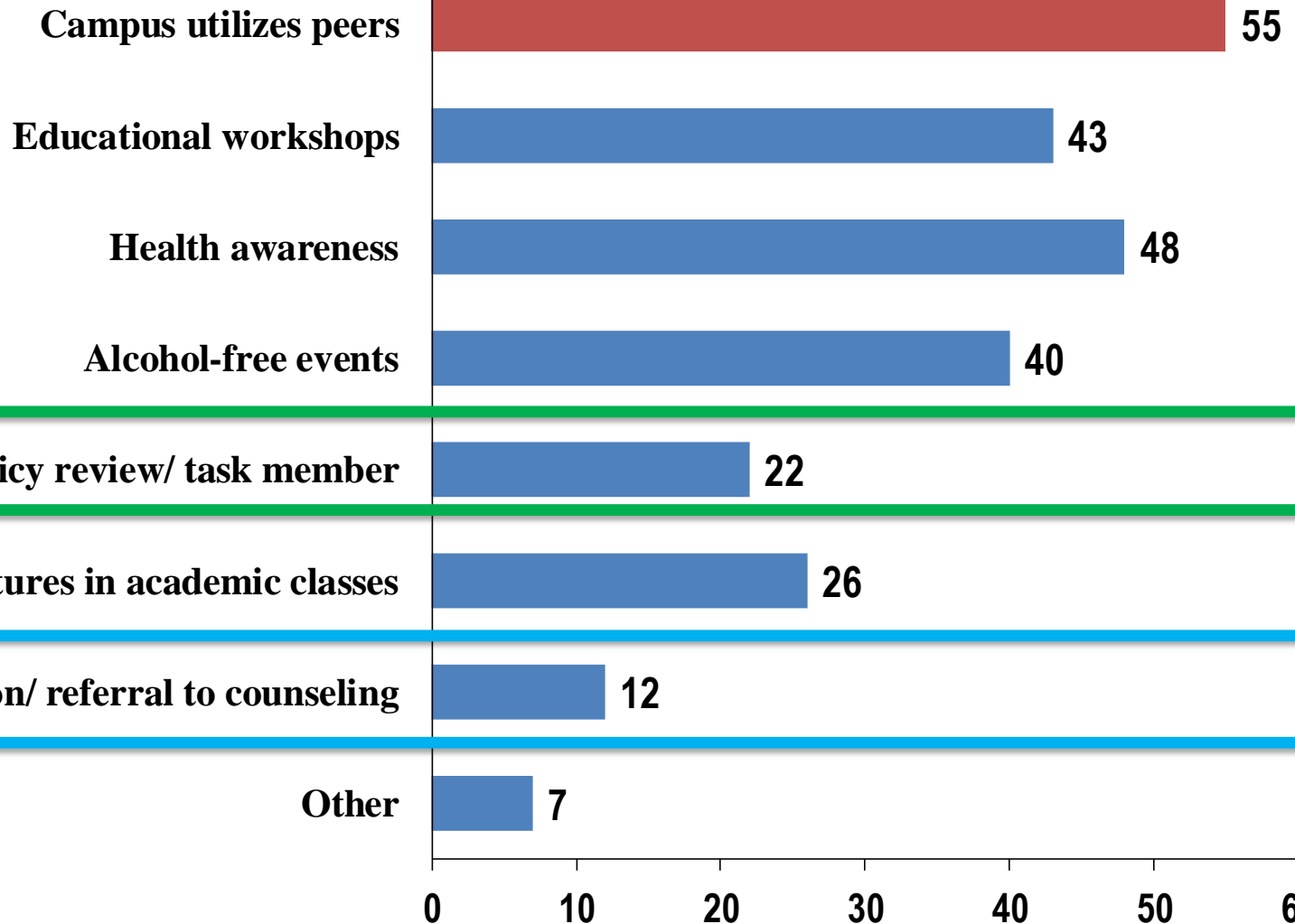# Successful Peer Education Groups: Utilizing Role as Change Agents

- Peer educators have capacities to impact change which are **under-utilized**
  - In consultancy role, through screening, brief intervention
  - In advocacy role, through identification and policy change

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0 10 20 30 40 50 60

Successful Peer Education Groups: Active Advisement

- Passion for student wellness
- Spends time with group issues
- Promotes collaboration
- Evaluate efforts
- Mentor, teach, coach, counsel
- Serves as public relations contact
- Builds bridge for transition
- Coordinate effective peer education training

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Successful Peer Education Groups: Peer Student Ownership

- Peer leadership and ownership of the peer education group is an overarching umbrella and foundation of the program

- Students hold the responsibility for leadership of the program – scheduling events, etc.

- Program should be enjoyable

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Recommendations

- NPES Competency Related
- Invest in Advising
- Train and Trust Peer Education Groups
- Plan and Account for Transition

Recommendations:
National Peer Educator Study

1. Participate in the National Peer Educator Study (NPES)
   - Requires institutional membership with NASPA to access for free
   - For inquiries or to sign up, e-mail npes@naspa.org

Recommendations:
Practical Competence

2. Provide goal setting activities for peer educators and create goal timelines.

3. Work to relate peer educator work to career goals.

4. Provide opportunities for feedback and constructive criticism regarding presentations (peer to peer).

5. Create mock counseling sessions and provide feedback.

6. Ensure grounding in mission & values of work.

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Recommendations: Cognitive Complexity

7. Incorporate reflection activities into individual or group meetings.
8. Deconstruct peer educators' previous assumptions through dialogue circles, role playing, or case studies.
9. Provide students with theories that are easily understood and transferable in their daily work as peer educators.
10. Utilize puzzles or problems to help facilitate or enhance critical thinking skills.

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Recommendations:
Intrapersonal Development

11. Use written reflection tools (e.g. Journals)
12. Lead reflective activities that include group conversations, 1-on-1 meetings and silent reflection.
13. Provide space for students to discuss and reflect along religious or spiritual dimensions.
14. Facilitate values exercises to help articulate values throughout one's life, rank values, personally and

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Recommendations:
Knowledge Acquisition, Construction, Integration, and Application

15. Coordinate information or training sessions/workshops with campus partners.
16. Invite academic affairs partners to meetings, facilitate trainings, or partner on programs.
17. Introduce peer educators to scholarship in the student affairs, counseling, psychology, and other academic fields.
18. Examine work as it relates to existing literature and critique for its alignment with best practice.

Recommendations:
Interpersonal Competence

19. Practice scenarios that peer educators encounter during typical conversations with fellow students.

20. Analyze case studies with peer educator groups.

21. Hold an active listening workshop, ensuring feedback is part of the peer educator process.

22. Encourage shared responsibility to group members as the year progresses.

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Recommendations: Humanitarianism and Civic Engagement

24. Encourage peer educators to attend campus events to help them feel a part of the campus community.
25. Allow students to identify community partners from whom they can learn about the profession.
26. Organize volunteer opportunities with community partners.
27. Create space for conversations and reflection during group meetings-reflect, seek, and receive feedback at the end of meetings.
28. Incorporate social-justice and multi-cultural training into work.

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Recommendations:
Invest in Advising

29. Dedicate FTE allocation to advising (right staff level).

   – Do not allow "other duties as assigned" to rule this work.

30. Attend professional development for staff in advising roles.

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Recommendations:
Train and Trust Peer Educators

31. Facilitate a baseline, foundational training for all peer educators (new, recurring).
    - Certified Peer Educator (CPE) training – cpe@naspa.org
32. Provide topic-based training for groups with specific health and safety aims.
33. Create procedures for program (intervention) implementation.
34. Follow-up with peer educators regularly.

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Recommendations:
Plan and Account for Transition

35. Document successes and lessons learned between classes of peer educators.

36. Constantly recruit for peer education participation.

37. Recognize independence and continuity of peer education classes.

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