

What is Peer Support?



Alcohol
and Drug
Foundation



Local Drug Action Team Program

Peer support is all about young people helping young people.

This can be achieved through a Peer Support Program where life skills, experiences and attitudes can be shared in a safe setting, in a structured way that is chosen by the participants.

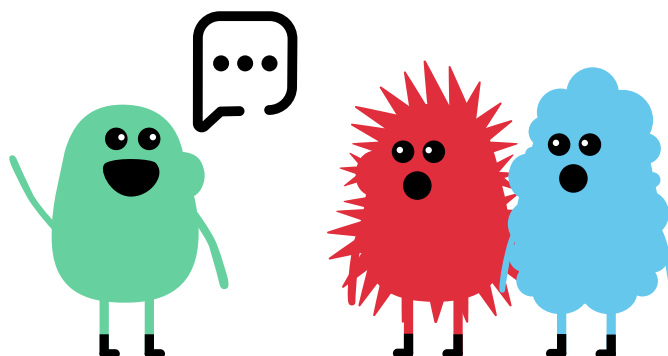
Young people frequently turn to their peers for information and advice.

Many young people find it easier to talk to their peers first, before they talk to others such as family members or professionals. That's where Peer Support Programs can help – by providing support networks for young people.

So, what is a peer?

A Peer is someone who has equal standing with another and who belongs to a specific societal group, sharing distinct characteristics with this group. They are not necessarily friends but share something in common with each other, such as:

- age, gender, culture, religion or ethnicity
- where they live
- shared experience
- sexual identity
- health status.



A Peer Support Program might be formal or informal. It should be tailored to suit the individual needs of the young people involved in the activity, so will look different from group to group. Ultimately, it should:



Provide a safe space and learning environment for young people without fear of judgment, misunderstanding, harassment or abuse



Increase social connectedness and create a sense of belonging



Provide positive role models, positive peer influences and opportunities which help young people to develop self-acceptance and self-esteem.

Peer Support Program participants should co-design their program activities – this ensures they are relevant, valued and engaging for everyone involved.