

What makes an effective peer leader?



So, you're going to be a peer leader? Here's some information to help you be a great peer leader.

Why is being a peer leader important?

Being a peer leader is an important task. You are in a position to influence your peers, to lead them and to guide them to make good choices, particularly when it comes to their health.

We know that young people value their friends and peers above almost everything else. Young people will often turn to their peers for guidance or advice before going to adults or professionals. As a peer leader, you are able to use your skills, knowledge and experience to support your peers.

By being a good peer leader, you have the ability to impact your peers by:

- Increasing self-esteem and confidence
- Increasing social connectedness
- Improving problem-solving and teamwork skills
- Improving mental health and wellbeing.

All of these great things are potential outcomes for all program participants – peers and peer leaders!



How can I be a great peer leader?

Trust, respect, and leadership are all really important attributes for a peer leader. You will need to earn the trust and respect of your peers, and then maintain them. You can do this by being a great leader and building strong relationships.

A good peer leader might also:

- Be enthusiastic
- Be comfortable building relationships
- Be a good listener
- Be reflective and open to learning
- Hold a genuine desire to 'give back'
- Be dependable
- Be flexible
- Have the ability to influence others and encourage others to establish and achieve goals
- Have empathy toward the experiences and ideas of others.

Your Program Coordinator is there to support you as a peer leader, and there are a number of resources to help develop the skills to be a great peer leader.

Most importantly, have fun with your peers!

