

The Mission of Peer Counseling is to develop and enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of our youth by focusing on peer education through a comprehensive program and curriculum that encompasses social and emotional skills and awareness, peer mediation, academic opportunity, student service and referral. The core of the peer counseling program is a strong academic middle and high school curriculum which addresses skill building in communication, problem solving and decision making. It also addresses a multitude of social, individual, school and family concerns.

Through careful selection and training, peer counselors increase the likelihood that appropriate help can be received by requesting persons. The focus of the curriculum is preventative. A variety of intervention strategies are employed, however, to educate and motivate students or to involve trained professionals, when needed. The results can be a more positive and safer school climate, healthier students and staff with lower stress levels, and a better utilization of school and community resources.

Peer Counseling Program Operation and Design

Through classroom instruction, role-playing and skill building activities, peer counselors are trained to help their fellow students.  Requests for program services from administrators, teachers, students, school resource officers, counselors, parents and others are made to the program coordinator who assigns skilled and knowledgeable peer counselors to offer their assistance. In addition to working with students individually and in groups, the peer counselors provide a variety of other services. They act as conflict mediators and peer tutors, assist special groups or classes within the school and the zone, provide classroom presentations, welcome new students and promote special projects.

The peer counseling curriculum is designed as a two semester middle school for 7th and 8th graders, and six semester high school course with prerequisite screening and testing required at every level. This course is an elective class that provides a full range of services to students, the school and innovative zone through structured in-school and outreach activities. A peer counseling program is in every middle and high school in the Broward County Public Schools.

Westglades Middle School

Peer Counseling is a full service program at Westglades. The program provides personalized tutoring, fifth grade articulation with our feeder schools, orientation for new students, support groups and presentations on various teen issues. Peer Counseling also helps with afternoon announcements, daily bus departures, and school-wide recycling, student counseling, support groups and class presentations.