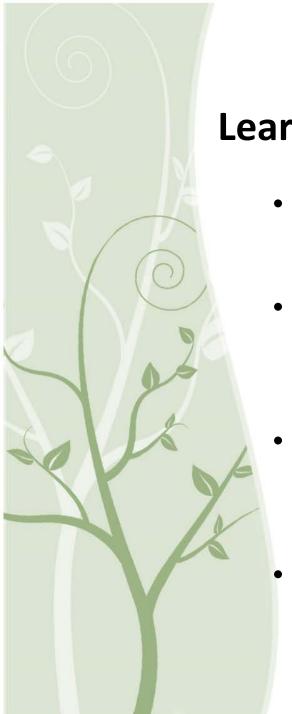# Best Practices in Peer Education

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Learning Objectives

- The participant should be able to describe how to structure a comprehensive recruitment process for peer educators.

- The participant should be able to list various retention strategies to maintain high levels of engagement among peer educators.

- The participant should be able to identify at least three strategies to measure the effectiveness of peer education programs.

- The participant should be able to list at least five common challenges associated with developing peer education programs.

What Brings You Here Today?

Why Peer Education?

- **Research suggests that peer educators benefit the most**

- **Resource for health promotion/education**

- **Access to student population beyond office hours or availability of professionals**

- **Informal conversations and contact with peers beyond programming**

- **Vehicle for delivering evidence-based and/or evidence-informed interventions**

- **Culture change**

Peer Education Considerations

What is the purpose of the group?

- What are the objectives for the group
- How will the peer educators be utilized?
- What are the conditions they are meant to address?
- How does it relate back to the strategic plan for the institution?

Peer education group

- **Supervision of peer educators**
  - Staff and/or graduate students
  - Experienced peer educators
- **Format and structure of group**
  - Paid
  - Course/Internship credit
  - Volunteer
- **Topics covered by group**
  - All health topics
  - Specific health topics

Peer Education Considerations

Institution

- **Location**
  - Urban vs. Rural
- **Type of school**
  - Private
  - Public
  - Religious
  - Commuter
- **Resources**
  - Funding
  - Staff

Recruitment

- General recruitment strategies

- Targeted recruitment strategies

- Information sessions

- Formal application process

- Selection committee

- Interviews

Recruitment Process

Students For Responsible Choices (SRCs):

- Attend Leadership Fair spring semester

- Campus wide email recruitment in January of spring semester (for SRCs to begin the next fall)

- Solicit recommendations from key campus constituents

- Targeted emails: "You have been recommended."

- Formal application process including 2 letters of recommendations

- Director of Wellness Programming interviews all candidates

- All current SRCs interview all candidates in group format (3 groups with 3 different interview tasks)

- Candidates selected and invited to a spring "Meet and Greet"

Recruitment Process

UConn Sexperts:

- Beginning of each semester prior to the mandatory training
- Discussed at programs, in stall streets, at events
- Applications are held until the screening process time
- Formal application process online
- Interview includes a UConn Sexpert and advisor
- Candidates are selected and called to be invited to the group

Recruitment Tips

- Structure is key – legitimizes your program
- Ask for recommendations
- Frame as "leadership development"
- Discuss what skills the student will gain from the program
- Be open about expectations of the group and program
- Where does this fall among the students' priorities?
- Gauge time commitment, and then ask again, and again…

Retention

- Training
- Annual retreat
- Holiday parties
- Recognition
- Conference/training opportunities
- Letters of recommendation
- Banquets
- Friendships
- Leadership opportunities

Retention

UConn Sexperts:

- Shirting ceremony

- Holiday Party

- Mandatory training each semester

- Conference Opportunities

- Leadership positions

- Program awards

- Letters of Recommendation

- Dairy Bar end-of-the-year program

- "Cording" of our seniors and annual gifts of mugs and alumni sticker

Retention

SRCs:

- Training Week

- What's an SRC, Anyway?

- Branding

- Pizza and Personal Sharing

- Holiday Party

- BSU Fashion Show

- End of year BBQ

- Senior Gifts

- Letters of Recommendation
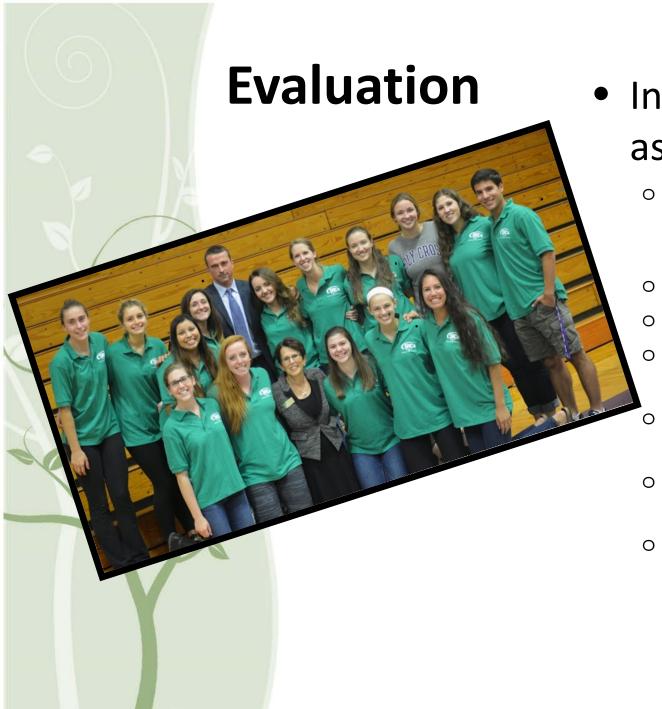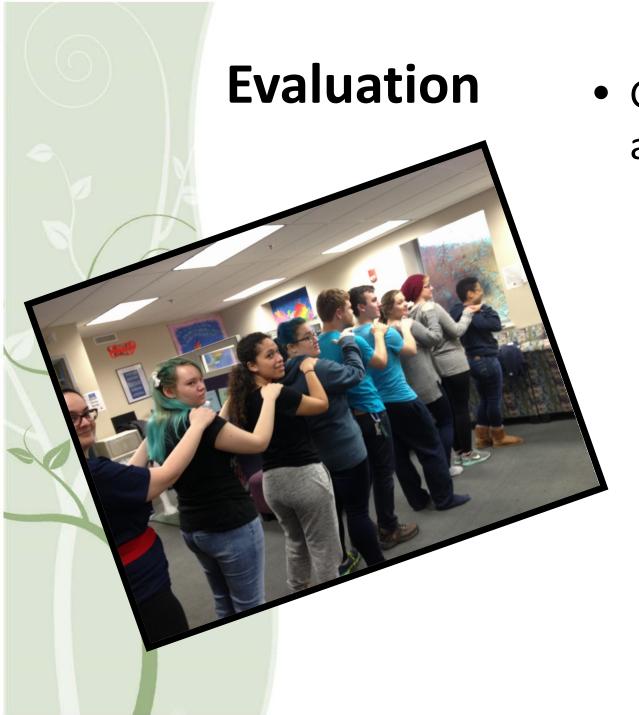
- Campus Recognition of the Group and its Mission

Branding

Traditions

Traditions

Evaluation

- Individual assessment
- Group assessment
- Programmatic evaluation
- Campus-wide surveys
- NPES
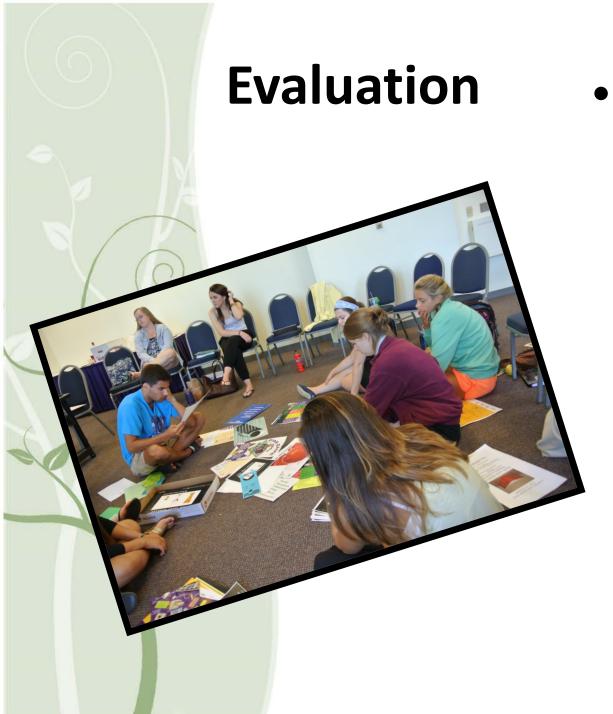
Evaluation

- Individual assessment

  o After program assessment of how each presenter did

  o Reflection papers

  o Set individual goals

  o Provide individual feedback one-on-one

  o Pre and post-test of semester or year

  o Self-assessment leadership skills
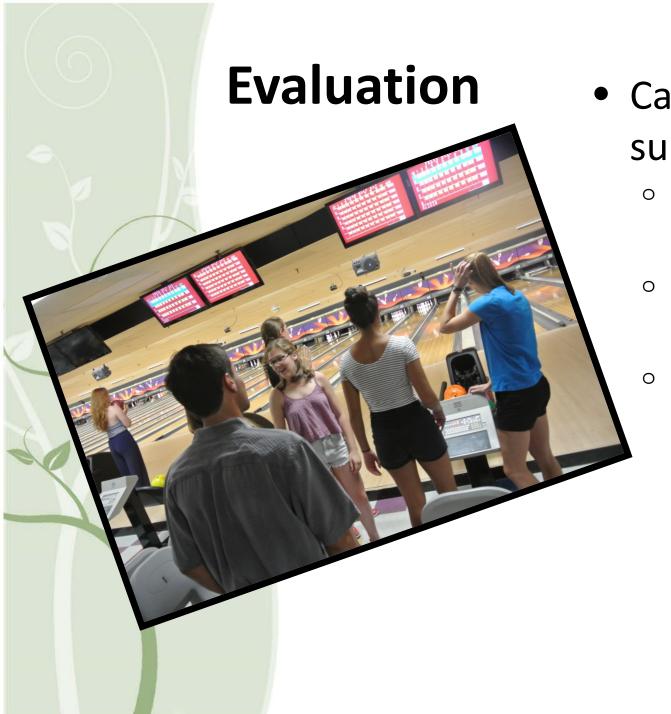
  o Pre and post test of content

Evaluation

- Group assessment
  - Set up group goals or assigned evening goals
  - Provide assessment feedback loop at programs
  - Have students provide feedback to each other during practice or prior to a program
  - What are some of the programs that utilize best practice? What do we mean by best practice in peer education?

Evaluation

- Programmatic evaluation
  - Use program objectives and measure them for each presentation
  - Set measures for behavior change and track indicators
  - Measure beyond satisfaction of program
  - What are other colleges (peer and aspirational schools) doing; compare for best practice

Evaluation

- Campus-wide surveys
  - o Understand key health issues for your students (ACHA-NCHA)
  - o Ask who they trust on campus and capitalize on that information
  - o Determine if students can identify the peer education with the department or office— does it matter?

Evaluation

- ## National Peer Education Study

  The National Peer Educator Study was designed to provide evidence-based research outcomes associated with being a peer educator on a college or university campus. The National Peer Educator Survey (NPES), is a Web-based survey administered to peer educators affiliated with NASPA -BACCHUS on college and university campuses across the United States. The NPES focuses on the following:

  o Peer educator perceptions regarding intra- and interpersonal growth and development among a number of health related behaviors;

  o Time peer educators devote to educationally purposeful activities and experiences; and

  o Behaviors peer educators use to motivate a behavior change in peers

Challenges & Lessons Learned

- Attendance
- Branding: T-shirts, logos, tablecloths
- Behavioral standards
- Social media
- Structure
- Flexibility
- Leadership demand
- A few good men
- Group dynamics
- Competing commitments of peer educators
- How **NOT** to reinvent the wheel
- Leadership development

Discussion groups

- **Break into groups based on topics to discuss strategies**
  - **Recruitment**
  - **Retention**
  - **Branding**
  - **Evaluation**
  - **Challenges**
  - **Other**

Report Out On Strategies

Resources

- The BACCHUS Network
  - https://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/groups/bacchus-initiatives
- Certified Peer Educator (CPE) Training
  - https://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/groups/bacchus-initiatives/initiatives/certified-peer-educator-training
- UConn Health Education Website (www.healthed.uconn.edu)
  - Health Education Facebook Page (www.facebook.com/#!/uconnhealthed)
  - Twitter (@capt_condom)
  - Instagram (@capt_condom)
- Babson Wellness Website (http://www.babson.edu/student-life/health-wellness)

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