

BEYOND HUNGER PEER EDUCATION PROGRAM INFORMATION PACKET

Dear Prospective Participant:

Thank you for your interest in Beyond Hunger and our *Peer Education Program*. We are very excited about this work and about incorporating new peers. Below you will find an overview of the program, information about Beyond Hunger's philosophy, information about the commitment necessary and the benefits of being involved, a letter to parents, an application, and contracts. Please feel free to contact us at Beyond Hunger at any time with questions or thoughts about the program. If you are interested in participating after looking through this information packet, please share the information with your parent(s) or guardian, and complete an application. Please submit your application to us as soon as possible either by mail, email or fax. Thank you for your interest.

OVERVIEW:

Beyond Hunger developed the *Peer Education Program* to prevent eating disorders in 2004. We have presented in over 26 schools and 19 community events during the past three years. We are excited to continue our *Peer Education Program* in 2007-08 providing eating disorder prevention presentations in schools and community centers. We will conduct a one-day training for the peer educators to learn how to: educate other teens about the consequences of dieting and eating disorders, the power of acceptance of diversity in body size, coping with feelings to prevent food and weight issues, and the concept of Health at Every Size; a new and research-based paradigm of health and weight.

Adult facilitators will assist peer educators as they educate middle school and high school students during classroom presentations. Additionally, we offer teacher and school counselor training, and parent education.

We will collaborate with peers to address situations that may contribute to the development of body dissatisfaction and eating disorders. We will support peers to constructively address these conditions on their school sites. We will provide resources for community treatment services (private therapists and other local treatment options), and information about how to access those services. Peer educators will be invited to participate in our *Peer Education Program*, regardless of having been identified with eating problems or not.

Here is some feedback from some of our peer educators:

- ❖ My experience as a peer educator has changed my life. I love sharing my personal experience to help other people as well as teaching philosophies that promote a healthy body image.
- ❖ Being a peer educator has helped me get to know myself better. Eating disorders are really hidden in this society. Contributing to raising awareness is a great feeling. It's not only about anorexia, bulimia and compulsive overeating but health overall.

BEYOND HUNGER PHILOSOPHY

Beyond Hunger has a three prong approach to educating and supporting people struggling with body image issues and disordered eating:

1) **Body Acceptance:** (*body image*)

In this culture, individuals learn to value an unrealistic and unattainable “perfect body” and equate thinness with being “good, attractive, and worthy”. Feelings of low self-worth and self-doubt become misplaced upon bodies, creating a very negative and sometimes abusive relationship with their bodies. People can recreate their relationship with their bodies by healing the body shame and developing acceptance for their natural bodies.

2) **Intuitive Eating:** (*food*)

People struggling with food and weight issues are usually out of touch with the physiological cues that signal hunger and satisfaction. The restrictive nature of most diets leads to feelings of deprivation and can actually worsen compulsive behavior, leading to the diet/binge cycle. By re-learning to eat intuitively, people can base their food choices on internal bodily signals of hunger, satisfaction, and fullness.

3) **Emotion Wisdom:** (*feelings*)

The symptoms or behaviors of eating disorders (overeating, under-eating, and the obsession with food and weight) are often developed by people as ways of coping with psychological stress. In order to create alternative ways to meet their emotional and spiritual needs, it is first necessary to develop emotional wisdom: the ability to identify, express and process emotions.

BENEFITS OF BEING A PEER EDUCATOR:

- ❖ Learn about and explore issues of body image, and creating a healthy relationship with food and weight.
- ❖ Impact others who may be struggling with issues around body image.
- ❖ Help to prevent eating disorders.
- ❖ Receive school “internship” credit, or community service hours.
- ❖ Become a part of a team of young people working toward a common goal.

COMMITMENT REQUIRED:

- ❖ Attend an orientation training meeting with the Peer Education Coordinator
- ❖ Attend 2-hour meetings on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday from 4-6:00 pm from October through May
- ❖ Conduct presentations regularly (a minimum of 5 days during the year)
- ❖ Be on time and prepared for every presentation you sign up for
- ❖ Find a substitute to present for you if you are unable to do a presentation you signed up for

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Dear parent/guardian of prospective participant:

Your son or daughter has expressed interest in becoming involved in Beyond Hunger's *Peer Education Program*. Beyond Hunger is a non-profit organization that has been working with people struggling with food and weight issues for over 19 years. We believe that raising awareness and early identification is the key to stopping the increase of eating disorders among young women and men in our community. We also believe that youth educating their peers is the most effective way for young people to learn and to make an impact.

We have been providing school and community education for seven years through classroom presentations, workshops, parent presentations, and community agency presentations. We began incorporating peer educators into our presentations in 2004 and are excited to continue this effective program.

The peer educators we have worked with expressed how much they learned about eating disorder prevention, how rewarding it was to make an impact on their peers, and how much they enjoyed being part of a supportive group of young people working toward a common goal. We are excited about working with a new group of peers, and hope that you will support your son or daughter to become part of the program if it seems like a good match.

If your child becomes part of our program we also request that you support her/him in keeping her/his commitment to the program. This commitment includes attending an orientation with the Coordinator, 2 meetings per month October through May, and showing up on time and prepared to the presentations he/she is signed up for. In addition, you will be asked to sign a Parental Consent Form.

Please feel free to contact us at Beyond Hunger with any questions.

We are excited about this opportunity and look forward to working together! You may reach us at (415) 459-2270.

Best wishes,
Shannon Myers, MA, MFT
Clinical Director

PEER EDUCATOR APPLICATION

Thank you for your interest in becoming a peer educator with Beyond Hunger! It can be a very challenging and very rewarding experience. Please answer the following questions to help us get to know you, and to see if this program is a good match.

Motivation: We accept peers both with and without experience with their own eating and body image problems.

1. What makes you interested in becoming a peer educator?
2. What do you hope to gain from the experience of being a peer educator?
3. What do you hope to accomplish as a peer educator?
4. How have issues of either body image or eating disorders touched your life personally?

Skills: Speaking in front of a group, and facilitating discussions can be challenging and sometimes scary. We are all always working on improving these skills.

5. Describe any public speaking experience you have:
6. Describe any discussion facilitation experience you have:
7. What do you feel your strengths would be as a presenter?
8. What do you feel your growth areas would be as a presenter?
9. Would you be comfortable speaking about your personal experience in front of a group?

PEER EDUCATOR APPLICATION

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Commitment: Beyond Hunger makes a commitment to present to schools and community events throughout the school year.

10. What other extra curricular activities are you involved or will you be involved in?

11. What would you do if you were signed up to do a presentation with Beyond Hunger, and later found out you had a test at school on the same day?

12. What is your form of transportation? (How will you get to meetings and presentations?)

13. If you rely on others for transportation, what would you do if you found out they couldn't drive you to a meeting or presentation?

Please tell us anything else you think might be relevant in helping us to assess whether this would be a good match at this time:

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Address

Phone #'s (home, cell)

Email

Date

Grade in 07-08

Languages spoken

Please Return to Beyond Hunger as soon as possible. Thank you!

BEYOND HUNGER PEER EDUCATOR
Student Contract

In committing to work with Beyond Hunger as a Peer Educator in the Fall of 2007 through the Spring 2008, I agree to the following:

1. I will join Beyond Hunger's Peer Educator Team and meet two times a month for two hours on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 4-6 pm.
2. I will attend an orientation meeting with the Peer Education Coordinator.
3. I will be a peer educator at my school and will participate in presentations at other schools and community events from October 2007 through May 2008.
4. I will provide classroom/community presentations at least 5 times (presentations can be full days or partial days or evenings) throughout the school year with other peer educators and Beyond Hunger facilitators.
5. If it turns out for any reason that I am unable to conduct a presentation I signed up for I will find a replacement and notify Beyond Hunger staff.
6. I will be available to meet on my school campus with Beyond Hunger staff to coordinate eating disorder prevention efforts.
7. I agree to make up any class work I miss because of my participation in Beyond Hunger's *Peer Education Program*.
8. I will secure my parent or guardian's consent for the above.
9. I agree to give my permission for Beyond Hunger staff to consult with my parent/guardian about any serious concerns about my participation in the *Peer Education Program*.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian

Signature(s) of Parent(s)/Guardian

Date

Phone number(s)

Street Address

City

Zip Code

BEYOND HUNGER
Parental Consent Form

Your child has been invited to participate as a peer educator in an eating disorders prevention program. We request your support in helping your child follow through with the below commitments. Our goal is to reduce body dissatisfaction and eating disorders. To participate, your child commits to the following:

1. She/he will be a body image and eating disorders prevention peer educator for the Fall 2007 through the Spring 2008.
2. She/he will attend an orientation meeting with the coordinator.
3. She/he will provide classroom/community education to at least 5 schools or community agencies with other peer educators.
4. If for any reason she/he is unable to provide a presentation she/he is signed up for, she/he is responsible for finding a replacement and notifying Beyond Hunger staff.
5. She/he will be available to meet on her/his school campus with Beyond Hunger staff to coordinate eating disorders prevention efforts.
6. She/he will meet with the Beyond Hunger team two times a month from 4:00 – 6:00 pm on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month from October through May.
7. She/he agrees to make up any class work she/he misses because of her/his participation in Beyond Hunger's *Peer Education Program*.

We will be attending community events, and presentations at various school sites, which requires permission for your child to carpool with other students and Beyond Hunger staff.

Parental Authorization and Waiver: I am the parent or guardian of the minor named below and have legal authority to execute consent to all of the above activities. By signing below, I hereby indicate my consent to his/her participation as a peer educator as described above.

In addition, I understand that the activities will require driving and/or carpooling to and from various community events and school sites and hereby waive and release Beyond Hunger, Inc., its Staff, Board of Directors, and each individual Board Member of all liability, including liability that may result from negligence, for any and all injuries, claims or damages arising from or resulting from the participation of the minor named below in the above-described activities.

Name of Participant

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Address

Phone Number

Emergency Contact Name

Emergency Contact Phone Number