

BUILDING ON THE POWER OF PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT TO ENHANCE STUDENT WELL-BEING



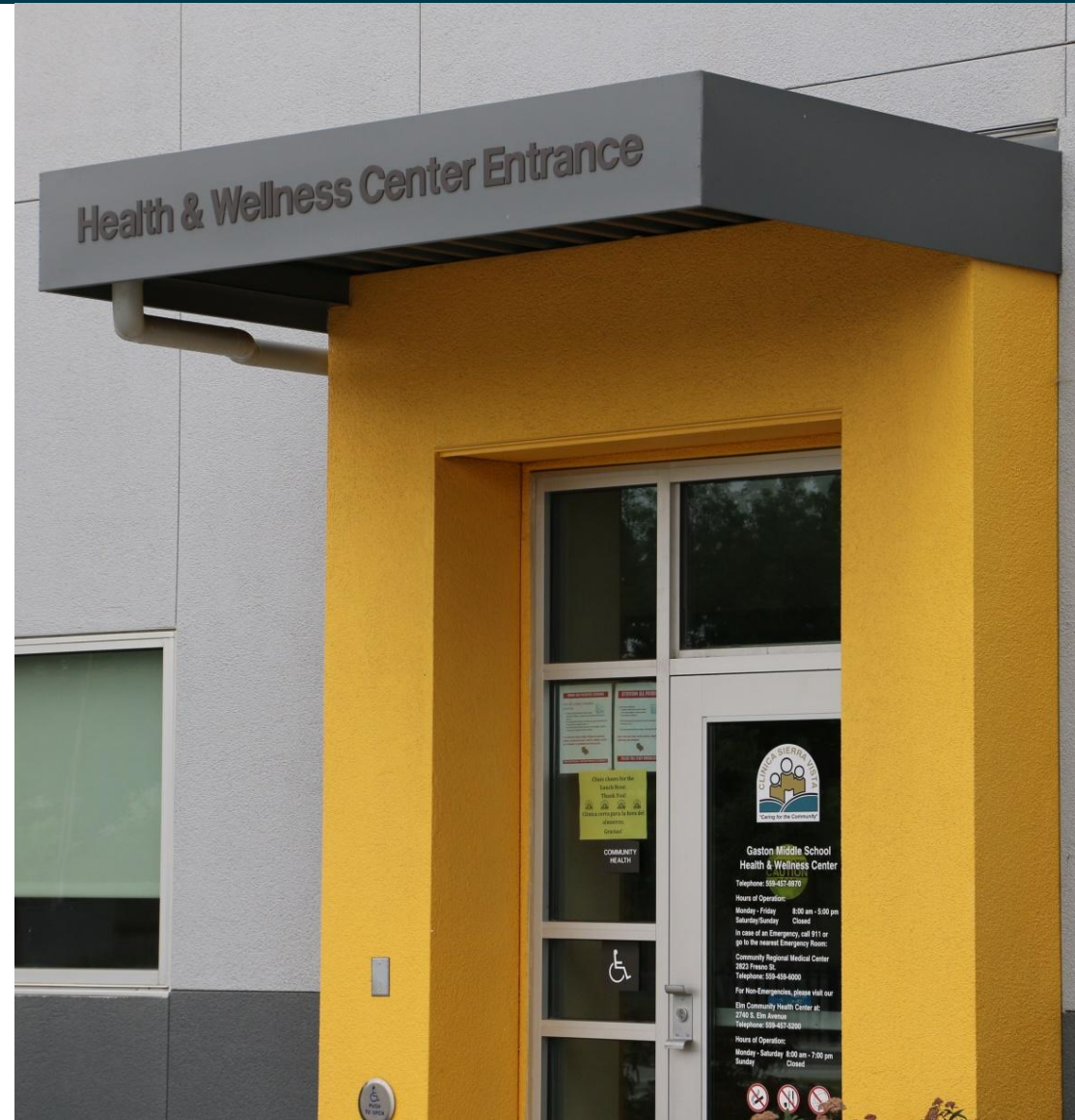
CALIFORNIA
SCHOOL-BASED
HEALTH ALLIANCE

Putting Health Care Where Kids Are

Putting Health Care in Schools

The California School-Based Health Alliance is the statewide non-profit organization dedicated to **improving the health & academic success** of children & youth by **advancing health services in schools.**

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peer-to-peer mental health supports



WHY PEER TO PEER MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS?

- ❖ Youth want to talk to other youth
 - ❖ Peer relationships are highly valued by adolescents
 - ❖ Critical need for more mental health supports in schools
 - ❖ Increase equity and diversity
 - ❖ Double impact - benefits for peer mentor and peer mentee
 - ❖ Fits into the MTSS as Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions
- 

"Like, you are only supposed to talk to someone with a degree; but aren't friends or family the ones who should be able to support you? (Especially) if you don't have access to therapy, or you don't want to talk to someone you don't know..."

What if we all were better prepared to support each other?"

PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMS - MODELS

LESS

INTENSITY OF PEER SUPPORT

MORE

PEER-
DESIGNED/
LED SAFE
SPACES



PEER
AMBASSADORS



PEER
EDUCATORS



WELLNESS
PEERS



CULTURE
KEEPERS
R J PEER LEADERS



PEER
MENTORS/
PEER
COUNSELORS



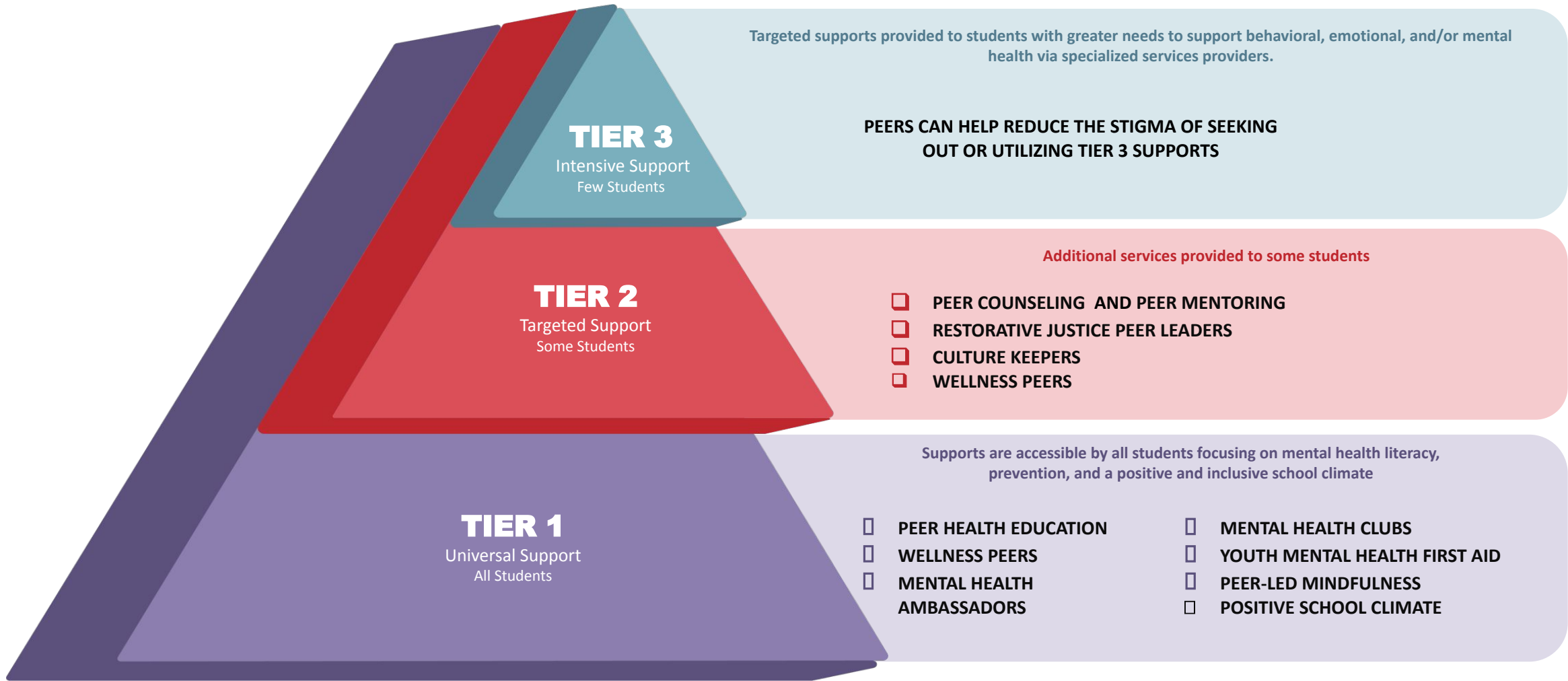
PEER
SPECIALISTS
WELLNESS
COACHES



*PREVENTION
PEER EDUCATION
NON-CLINICAL SUPPORT*

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) School Mental Health Pyramid

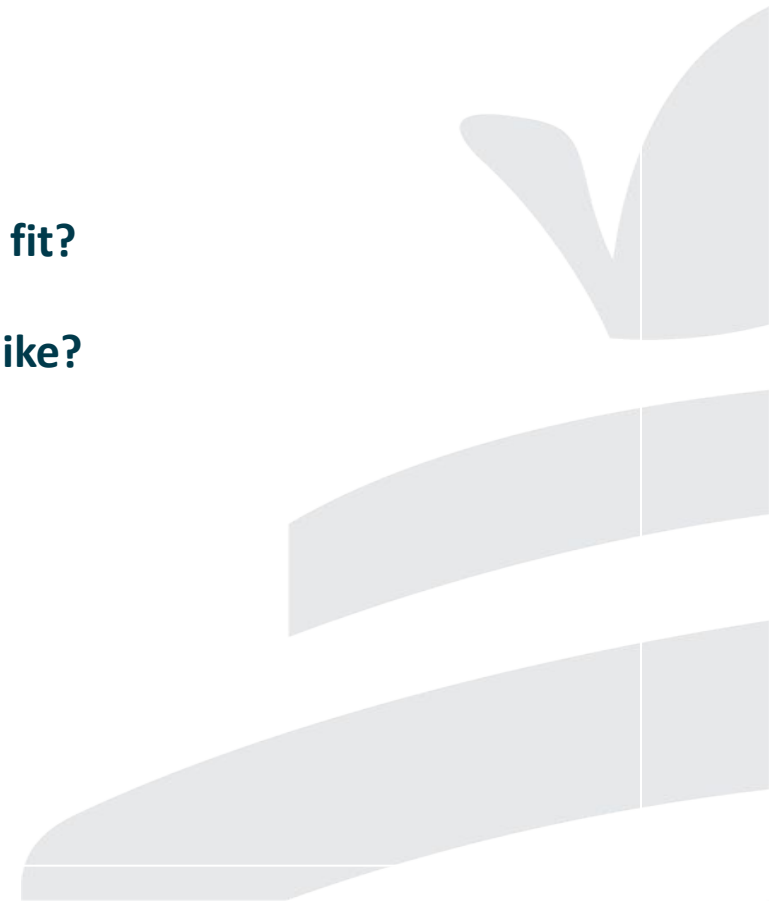
PEER SUPPORTS





GETTING STARTED

- ❖ **No one size fits all! Consider your school community's needs**
- ❖ **Design your "WHY"**
 - ◆ **Why are you starting a peer-to-peer program?**
 - ◆ **What need are you addressing?**
 - ◆ **What data can help you determine what model is the best fit?**
 - ◆ **Who can partner with you?**
 - ◆ **How will you know it's working? What does success look like?**
- ❖ **From Design to Implementation!**
 - ◆ **Who will direct the program?**
 - ◆ **Do leads have adequate time and support?**



Elements of a Peer Program

1. Needs Assessment
2. Purpose and Mission Statement
3. Goals & Objectives
4. Staffing
5. Administrative and Faculty Support
6. Service Options
7. Policies and Procedures
8. Community/Youth Advisory Group
9. Evaluation
10. Funding



PEER MENTORING / PEER COUNSELING



MPA MENTORING



Love your self. You know.
Never be afraid to be your self.



TRAINING

1. PROGRAM GOALS AND ROLES OF THE PEER HELPER

- Review of program's operation
- Set norms and expectations, review ethical guidelines
- Review important peer helper qualities: acceptance, caring, etc.
- Confidentiality and Duties to Inform

2. TEAM BUILDING

3. SELF-AWARENESS TRAINING

- Prejudice Awareness and Reduction
- Frame of Reference
- Values Clarification
- Noticing

4. COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING


- Non-Verbal Communication
- Question-Asking: Open & Closed Questions
- Paraphrasing for Content and Feeling
- Helping Someone Without Giving Advice

- "I" messages
- Communication stoppers
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Assertiveness versus aggressiveness
- Am I in over my head?



“BUT THEY ARE JUST KIDS!”

Strong peer mentoring/counseling programs have:

- Very clear guidance around scope of the peer’s role
 - Thorough training on red flags that need to be reported to advisor
 - Expectations around documentation of all peer sessions
 - Expectations around boundaries
 - **Lots** of practice - role plays, scenarios, opportunities to grow
 - Adequate staff time to oversee the program for quality and safety
 - School staff training and buy-in
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Empathetic listening

Identifying emotions

Recognizing and reflecting strengths

Relationship-building

Communication

Stress management tools

SKILLS OF PEER LEADERS

Organizational skills

Social awareness

Respect for others

Self-efficacy

Self-confidence


Paraphrasing

Goal setting

Social Engagement



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT LEADERS

- ❖ Invest in training for schools and CBOs to bring P2P programs to schools
 - ❖ Implement P2P support as part of all schools' Tier 1 intervention
 - ❖ Fund programs and partnerships to scale P2P programs
 - ❖ Support research and evaluation efforts on Youth P2P programs
 - ❖ Consider P2P a critical strategy for improving/diversifying our mental health workforce
 - ❖ Commit to co-creating programs with youth, and centering youth voice and experience
- 



- ❖ Invitation to think differently and more broadly about what supports student mental health and well-being, and by whom it is delivered.
- ❖ Certified Wellness Coaches workforce
 - Increase the California's BH capacity and grow a larger, more diverse behavioral health workforce with lived experience
 - Expansion of non-clinical mental health support and wellness strategies, such as peer programs

RESOURCES

- ❖ Peer-to-Peer Mental Health Supports Webinar Series
 - [Fostering Student Well-Being Through School-Based Peer-to-Peer Support Programs](#)
 - [Youth-Driven Change: High School Peer Leaders Speak on their Experiences](#)
- ❖ Peer-to Peer Mental Health Supports Learning Collaborative
- ❖ [Peer-to-Peer Mental Health Support \(CSHA website\)](#)
- ❖ Peer-to-Peer E-Resources Hub (in development)
- ❖ California Student Mental Health Implementation Guide - MHSOAC -
 - Update coming soon!

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