

ST. MARY'S COUNTY

R&P



THERAPEUTIC

## Peer Assistant Program



**Peer assistant is a program designed to benefit both the campers and you, the peer counselor. Being a peer assistant allows you to provide campers diagnosed with disabilities the extra attention, encouragement, and feedback they may need to experience success.**

## **What does Camp Peer assistant do?**

Peer Assistant helps the specialist make sure that our campers have:

- Someone to work with and personally explain the work in a way that is positive and productive;
- Opportunities to talk about what they are learning, to practice what they are learning, and to share in daily activities;
- Opportunities to ask questions, without fear of being embarrassed in front of the whole class;
- Someone to help and encourage campers to finish assignments and experience success.
- Someone who is a good listener
- Someone who will offer constructive feedback
- **FUN**

## **Program Outcome**

**On completion of Camp program, you, as a peer assistant will:**

1. Be able to describe what it means to be a peer counselor of a camper with a disability.
2. Have developed an understanding of related terminology.
3. Have gained a greater understanding of a persons diagnosed with disabilities and help advocate for their needs.

## **Expectations**

In order for peer assistants to participate in the Camp program they must meet several qualifications and hold positive characteristics.

**A good candidate for the peer assistant program is an individual who is:**

- Able to participate in Camp working with a child or young adults diagnosed with Autism and/or other disabilities
- Capable of handling the responsibilities of working one-on-one with our campers
- Able to communicate well and able to follow the instructor's directions
- Able to assist with any campers if needed.

## **Peer Assistant Characteristics**

- Reliable and helpful
- Demonstrates a positive attitude
- Is prepared for Camp
- Starts class on time
- Completes assignments
- Has a good rapport with peers
- Seeks guidance if needed
- Allows peers to demonstrate independence
- Shows responsibility
- Gives clear instructions

## Rules/Guidelines

- Transportation services will NOT available for peers. Peers should report to camp at 9am and be picked up at 3pm.
- Peers will actively engaged in field trips, along with a wide variety of classroom activities.
- Peers MUST wear comfortable clothing and supportive athletic shoes (**please no sandals**) to camp every day.
- Peers will be given a field Trip schedule that informs you of the various field trip activities we offer. Please look at the schedule so that you can plan accordingly for that particular activity, (i.e., bathing suit, hat, towels, extra clothing, sun screen, etc.).
- Throughout the four weeks of camp, Recreation and Parks will offer you breakfast and lunch at no charge, a menu will be made available to you. However, if you elect not to participate in the breakfast and lunch program, you will need to bring lunch and a snack with you on a daily basis.
- During the first day of camp, you will go through a Peer Assistant orientation followed by your room assignment with campers.
- Peers are responsible for the information contained in this packet and have been provided a disability Etiquette Book for additional resources.
- Peer assistants will never be left unsupervised with campers and will NOT provide any type of personal care.
- Peer assistants that do not demonstrate the expectations and characteristics maybe asked not to return for the duration of the camp program.

## **Verbal Cues**

A sign or signal to tell someone what to do.

### **Example:**

"Sara, throw the ball"

"Ricky, it's your turn to bat"

"Let's stand on the black circle"

"Shane, stand next to this cone and kick the ball"

## **Modeling**

Modeling is a way of demonstrating how to do the activity. After you give a verbal cue, if the student does not do the activity, or does the activity wrong, you should repeat the cue and demonstrate what it is you want him or her to do.

### **Example:**

"Vashon, throw the ball like this."

"You need to swing level, like this."

"Watch me; kick the ball to the wall."

"When the rope comes over, jump like this."

## **Physical Assistance**

Physical assistance is used to help the student if he or she is unable to do the activity after you have given a verbal cue and model. You should only physically assist the student by directing his or her body part with your hands.

### **Example:**

Stand behind the student and physically assist with the arm motion of a throw. Stand sideways in front of a student holding hands, bent knees, and jump over the rope. Stand behind the student and physically assist with the swing of a bat.

## **Feedback**

### **Positive General Feedback**

A supportive statement about the student's motor skill response.

### **Example:**

"Good throw"

"Nice kick"

"Good job"

"Very good"

## Positive Specific Feedback

A supportive statement that includes exact information about what was good about the motor skill response.

Example:

"Good job Mark, stepping with your opposite foot when you throw the ball."

"That's the way to bend your knees when you jump."

"George, I like the way you used your hands to catch the ball."

"Nice strike, you kept your elbows up."

### Scenario

#### Scenario 1

Tutor: Cue: George, strike the ball."

Student: acceptable response

Tutor: Positive Specific Reinforcement:  
Good job striking the ball, you made it over the net."

#### Scenario 2

Tutor: Cue: "Mark, throw the ball."

Student: unacceptable response

Tutor: Positive General Feedback: "Good try."

Tutor: Repeat Cue and Model: "Mark, throw the ball like this."

Student: acceptable response

Tutor: Positive Specific Reinforcement:  
"Nice job, I like the way you stepped when you threw the ball."

#### Scenario 3

Tutor: Cue: Sara, jump over the rope."

Student: unacceptable response

Tutor: Repeat Cue and Model: "Sara, jump like this."

Student: unacceptable response

Tutor: Question the student: "Can I help you."

Tutor: Provide Physical Assistance  
Tutor and student hold hands, bend knees and jump together over rope.

Student: acceptable response

Tutor: Positive Specific Reinforcement:  
"That's the way to bend your knees, now try to jump by yourself."