



Hey y'all! My name is Chandler. I'm a senior at Bozeman High and this is my first year as a Peer Educator. I've lived in Bozeman my entire life. And as a Bozemanite I find myself being pretty active. In high school I've been involved in almost as many activities as one could be. I've played baseball, football, and (intramural) basketball, wrestled, competed in track and field, climbed and skied. In addition to those physical activities, I've also been part of some pretty cool school activities. I spend time in Environmental Awareness Club, Project X²+ (a gender equality club), jazz choir (my school's select choir), and Rotary Club (where I hold the position of vice president). Outside of school I spend some more of my time volunteering for political campaigns and, of course, as a Peer Educator. Out of all these amazing things I find myself doing. Peer Ed is one of my favorites.

I wasn't entirely sure about what I was getting myself into when I applied for a spot as an educator, all I knew is that I wanted to help others get information about sexual healthcare and healthy relationships. Everything I knew about Peer Ed came from my friends talking about how amazing it is. When I showed up to Bridgercare before our three day retreat it became more clear. Our goal was, and always will be, to first learn about healthy relationships and sexual health, then to share that information with those around us. Since that first day I have learned more than I could've ever imagined. To be honest though, I knew next to nothing about sexual healthcare in the Gallatin Valley, I wasn't even sure how to get to Bridgercare. But that didn't matter! Abbie from Haven and Cami from Bridgercare welcomed me with open arms. Throughout this amazing experience I've been able to achieve my goal of joining Peer Ed. I've been able to help others during classroom lessons and impromptu conversations about sexual health and healthy relationships. The ability to help others in this way has been amazing, and filled with highlights.

Teaching classroom lessons is alone a highlight of Peer Ed. But within those lessons there's a lot of fun to be had and a lot of conversation to be made. Personally, my favorite lesson has to be healthy relationships with sophomores. During this lesson we have an activity in which students are given sticky notes with actions written on them. Students then organize the notes on a spectrum of healthy, unhealthy, and abusive. After they do, we open it up to conversation about where some of the sticky notes landed. A main takeaway from the activity is that some actions can change where they belong based on context. By itself, the activity and conversation are eye opening, but every time I lead the lesson, I get to experience a new perspective. One of the most important parts of teaching lessons like that is the amount of information we get to share with others. It's truly amazing.

Overall, Peer Ed is one of the coolest experiences I've ever been a part of. I've learned so much throughout this journey, not only about sexual health and healthy relationships but also about myself. I've met some amazing humans along the way as well, people that I'm lucky enough to call my closest friends. I can confidently say that Peer Ed has helped me become the courageous person I am.