

HOW TO HOST PEER LEADER MEETINGS



How/When to Meet:

Hosting your Sources of Strength meetings is an important way to support the growth and strength of your team. During these meetings, Peer Leaders can work to carry out their mission of spreading Hope, Help, and Strength into every corner of their community, reaffirming that their voices have great power and that they continue to be Agents of Change and Connectors to Help. Meetings provide an opportunity for Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders to laugh and play together, for youth-adult connections to strengthen, and for your team to live from a place of joy, compassion, and authenticity. Peer

Leader teams have the capacity to change population-level norms for the better, and playing, sharing, and planning together can help support that.

Here are some ideas and resources for planning and hosting Sources of Strength meetings:

Scheduling Meetings

- **Discover Team Availability**
 - Send out a Doodle Poll or email, or use a scheduling app to find a time/times that work best for your team to meet.
 - It is recommended you meet once a week for a half-hour to an hour.
- **Create a Consistent Multi-Week Meeting Schedule**
 - Plan meetings for 3-6 weeks out (i.e. meet every Friday at 12:00 pm).
 - Find a way to communicate clearly with your team and remind them of upcoming meetings or initiatives.
 - Use Google Calendar or similar systems to set up reminders or alerts that meetings are happening. Some teams also use Remind for simple communication and reminders via text message.
- **Ask Adult Advisors to sign up to facilitate different meetings**
 - Ask Adult Advisors to plan on facilitating a meeting (individually or in teams) and delegate who will execute on each section and what pre-planning, materials, or resources are needed to pull off this meeting in a 30-60 minute period (Game, sharing prompt, planning ideas, etc.).

Meeting Tips and Ideas

- Consider recording meetings so Peer Leaders who are unable to join can watch or listen later. Develop a system for sharing these meeting videos back out with the team.
- If you have large groups of Peer Leaders, split meetings into groups amongst Adult Advisors. Ideas for making groups can include using initials, birthdays, or previously established roles, responsibilities, or subgroups, etc.
- Return to the Peer Leader Mission Statement (page [139](#)). Read it as a group and ask Peer Leaders to share what pieces feel most impactful to them right now and what ideas they have for moving forward in their mission.

As you meet with your Peer Leader team, please continue with the One-Part Planning, One-Part Sharing, and One-Part Fun formula.

ONE PART FUN

It is strongly recommended your team use games and a sense of playfulness in Peer Leader team meetings and campaign efforts. As humans, we can take ourselves too seriously; we need to make sure we are still making room for fun in our lives! Many of us are interacting with difficult stories in our world, work, and personal lives, but that does not mean that all of our prevention efforts have to be serious. Games can alleviate the heavy emotions around discussions of world events, stress, and the transitions Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders are experiencing. Other ideas for adding fun to meetings include:

- Ask a silly question, “Would You Rather?”, or use another fun prompt to start the meeting.
- Start meetings with 30 seconds of dancing.
- Do a 3-5 minute accessible workout during the meeting.
- Ask a 2-3 Peer Leaders to share their favorite meme, TikTok, or YouTube video from the week.
- Have a dress-up theme for meetings and have everyone introduce their “look” to kick off the meeting.

ONE PART SHARING

We strongly believe in the power of our stories and in strength-based storytelling. Our vision is to Empower a Well World by saturating schools and communities with stories of Hope, Help, and Strength. At Sources, we work with Peer Leader teams to talk about what is going right in their personal lives and in the world around them, and we want to draw out what is helping them right now. Research shows that by noticing our positive stories of strength, resilience, and recovery, our brains can physically change to become more positive. Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders are encouraged to share their stories of resilience and strength with each other to remind ourselves of what helps during difficult times.

In these Peer Leader meetings, your team is encouraged to share about the strengths they are using right now to overcome adversity and difficulties. Sources of Strength challenges individuals and groups to make 10% of the story about the challenge, adversity, or struggle a person is facing and 90% about what is helping them and how they are managing. While this approach takes intention and practice, it is a powerful skill that will cause ripple effects of **Hope, Help, and Strength** throughout an individual, home, school, and community.

Helpful Prompts for Group Discussions

- Which of the Big Three Emotions (Anger, Anxiety, or Sadness) is most common for you right now? Which Strength is helping you manage that emotion?
- Who are the people in your life that are helping you? How do they help you?
- What Healthy Activities help you to feel joy right now?
- What Healthy Activities are calming for you right now?
- Share a story of how you are using Healthy Activities to cope.
- Who do you think is the most generous person that you know and why?
- Name a person who has been generous towards you. How have they shown Generosity?
- What is one way you can show Generosity today?
- How well are you taking care of your physical well being? How might you take better care of your Physical Health being?
- Who is an example of a great Mentor in your school/life? How do they show up for you as a Mentor?
- Who provides you with Family Support? They can be family by choice or blood-related.
- Who is a Positive Friend in your life right now? How do they help you?
- Who has connected you to Healthy Activities?
- What Healthy Activities have helped you?
- What or who has helped you connect to better Mental Health?
- Who is someone who has benefited from access to medical care recently?
- Who or what is giving you Strength during this time?
- How many Strengths have you combined at once? (Journaling with my iguana and my mom combines 3:

ONE PART PLANNING

During this time, Peer Leaders can continue to create positive social norms and behaviors in their homes, with their peers, and in the broader community. They do this first through experiencing and practicing a community of strength in the Peer Leader meetings and then by transforming positive energy and stories of strength into strategic messaging campaigns that invite other students, family members, staff, and the community to engage, interact, and apply strength to their own lives.

We have developed two highly structured campaigns to support your Peer Leader teams.

- Read the Campaign Planning documents and Peer Leader Meeting agendas
 - Trusted Adult Campaign
 - What Helps Us Campaign
- Ask Peer Leaders how the campaign can look in your context and how they can adapt the campaign to best fit the needs of their family, peers, and community.
- Check out sourcesofstrength.org and follow Sources of Strength on Instagram and Facebook for updates and ways to participate.

Below are several ways Peer Leader teams can apply strength to their own lives and encourage others to do the same:

- **Create a personal [Self Care Card](#)** (page 138).
 - Encourage Peer Leaders to share the template with others!
- **Create a resource map for your local school/community.**
 - What resources are available for students? Recommended resources include the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (call or text **988**), the names and contact details of available school counselors, and websites and phone numbers for local community resources.
- **Plan regular meetings and check-ins with the Peer Leader team.**
 - Encourage Peer Leaders to create a plan of who they would like to check in with daily, weekly, etc.
- **Have Peer Leaders design handouts or prompts to include in pick-up lunches or school-wide communication.**
 - Ask the team to take a piece of fabric/ribbon from their house, write a message of Hope/Help/Strength on it, and tie it to a pre-approved community or school fence.
- **Design a Sources of Strength Board Game.**
 - Find templates, instructions, and ideas [here](#)
- **Use prompts and games from Peer Leader meetings with family and peers.**
 - Encourage Peer Leaders to ask the people in their lives the prompts used in Peer Leader Meetings and play games in their homes.

Sources of Strength is continuing to collect resources and ideas each day. You can add your own ideas [here](#) and continue to follow Sources of Strength on social media for more [@SourcesofStrength!](#)