

What is Project Amp?

Project Amp is designed to meet each student “where they’re at.” It provides youth with a safe place to explore values, beliefs, and perspectives about physical and mental wellbeing, substance use, and related issues such as relationships and school concerns. Project Amp’s 4 to 6 sessions are focused on the student’s strengths, goals, and experiences. Students can spend some time with someone who isn’t a relative, teacher, or counselor, just to talk about themselves.

Throughout design, delivery, and research, Project Amp centers and values the voices, lived experiences, and skills and strengths of youth and young adults.



“We need more things like this in our schools and communities for people my age to become more comfortable talking about and being more knowledgeable about their emotions and how they can carry themselves. It’s important for the next generation to be learning about this.”

- Project Amp Participant

Project Amp Is:

- geared towards youth and youth-driven
- delivered by skilled, young adult near-age peer mentors
- rooted in research-based practices
- person-centered, trauma-informed, recovery-oriented, and strengths-based
- culturally responsive
- flexible and adaptable

Initial research on Project Amp showed:

- Reduced substance use
- Improved coping
- Improved self-efficacy



Mentors Make the Difference

Project Amp mentors are relatable.

They understand the unique challenges of being a young person—especially during hard times—and can provide peer support and guidance based on their own experiences.

Mentors often become the first point of contact for students who are struggling, even after the brief mentorship intervention happens.

They recognize when students need more support and can guide them to school or community activities, clinical services, or other supports.

Working with a near-age peer helps to improve youth engagement.

Project Amp mentors are skilled in fostering trust, creating connections, and building relationships with healthy boundaries.

Young adult peer roles are important in supporting all youth.

With supervision and support, skilled young peers make it possible to offer helpful programming on well-being, substance use, and mental health to more youth.



Project Amp Sessions

The Project Amp model is flexible to meet the needs of youth, and sessions can be completed over 4-6 meetings. Mentors navigate the content throughout the relationships in person-centered, youth-driven ways.

Session 1: Getting to Know You: Interests and Goals

Get to know one another and explore what makes the participant happy, their strengths, and their goals and concerns.

Session 2: What Does it Mean to Be Well?

Explore the concepts of health and wellness, and ways to cope with stress.

Session 3: Social Supports

Help youth to understand their social influences and social support resources, and talk about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Session 4: Wrap-up and Long-Term Planning

Revisit conversations from past sessions and discuss a plan to help achieve goals and build supports.