



October 2017 Newsletter

Salt Lake Peer Court

A Program of Utah Law Related Education
645 South 200 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84111
801-322-1815 // saltlakepeer court@gmail.com
www.saltlakepeer court.org

SLPC VOLUNTEERS READY AND EAGER

After hours of training in restorative practices, mentoring, court procedure, and cultural competency, 80 youth volunteers from high schools across the city have begun Salt Lake Peer Court hearings and they are excited to start working with referred youth and their families. "Peer



Court has been one of my most positive experiences in high school," explained youth volunteer E.H. "It's extremely clear to me that the work we do supports real change in a person's life."

The impact that Salt Lake Peer Court has on youth volunteers is easily and often overshadowed by the successes and accomplishments of the youth referred to the program for minor offenses. It's important to recognize the opportunities afforded to these young leaders by the program and acknowledge their dedication to such efforts. Throughout the school year, youth volunteers serve others in a meaningful way, learn new skills, and contribute to their communities. Volunteers complete thousands of hours of service annually. Salt Lake Peer Court provides participants, whether volunteers or referred youth and their families, a safe space to be themselves, feel heard, and grow. Youth volunteer K.W. summed it up perfectly, "Because of Peer Court I feel like I've finally found a place where I belong."

*Now accepting
referrals!*



School administrators and SROs have been submitting referrals since the school year started. Keep them coming!

Salt Lake Peer Court can accept referrals from school administration or staff, law enforcement, and parents or guardians.

We're eager to support you and the families you serve in any way we can. Please don't hesitate to contact us.

**Referrals can be made on
the SLPC website at:
saltlakepeer court.org/refer**



"It is silly to believe that you can change someone, but it is completely foolish to believe that you cannot empower someone to change themselves."

-youth volunteer N.D.

WHICH OFFENSES CAN BE REFERRED?

We've already received referrals for a variety of offenses- including vaping, assault, marijuana, and theft. While this is not an exhaustive list, the following offenses are eligible for Peer Court:

- Alcohol
- Assault
- Bullying
- Criminal Mischief
- Disorderly Conduct
- Fighting
- Harassment
- Marijuana
- Paraphernalia
- Theft
- Tobacco/E-cig/Vaping
- Trespassing
- Truancy^
- Vandalism
- Weapon

^At this time please contact SLCS Student Services for truancy concerns.

SLPC Participant Feedback

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"They really encouraged me to do better." -youth

"They were determined to help my child." -parent

"My mentor made me feel supported." -youth

"I feel more comfortable opening up [to Salt Lake Peer Court volunteers] than at school." -youth

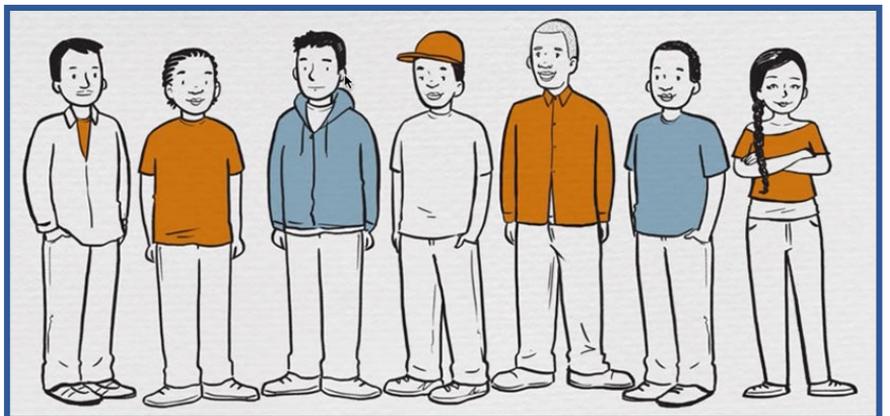
"[Programs like Salt Lake Peer Court] are where I'm glad to see my tax dollars spent." -parent

"I felt like they really did care about me and my progress." -youth

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YOUTH JUSTICE AWARENESS MONTH

October is Youth Justice Awareness/Action Month. The Utah Board of Juvenile Justice will host an event in recognition of YJAM on October 26th from 2:00-4:00pm at the State Capitol in the Gold Room. The theme of the event is *Pipeline to Success: Celebrating a Powerful Partnership* and it will highlight the important changes made to the juvenile justice system by House Bill 239 as well as recognize the leadership



who strive to give youth a clear and powerful voice to improve the juvenile justice system. The UBJJ's Youth Advocates of the Year will be awarded at the event. The Honorable Steve Teske, Chief Judge in Clayton County, Georgia, and National Chair of the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, will be the keynote speaker. The event is free and open to the public.

"Peer Court has given me the opportunity to interact with students from diverse backgrounds."
-youth volunteer E.M.