



Introduction

People to People is a peer-to-peer education program created by the American Red Cross, in collaboration with Kansas City Free Health Clinic and Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center of Missouri (MATEC-MO), to support individuals with HIV and AIDS.

The People to People Program is part of a national initiative funded by the Health Resource Service Administration (also known as HRSA) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This initiative is designed to build the capacity of organizations and Peers to develop and replicated HIV Peer Education programs. In Missouri, we are one of three sited in the country that is participating this larger national program; other sites are in New York City and in Oakland, California. The project is research-based, which means that on a local and national level, participants will help us gather information that may guide future program policies. Participant input will be important in demonstrating how effective Peer support can be for engaging person living with HIV into care. This training is also the first of its kind, in this region, that incorporates a two tier approach that trains peers and develops organizations to utilize them in multidisciplinary teams.

Training

The People to People Program is broken up in the three individual levels:

- **Level I**

This training is one day or 8 hours in length. It offers a foundation of knowledge on HIV, how it affects people and how, as a Peer Educator, participants can help other HIV-positive people learn to live with the diagnosis. It also helps peers evaluate their level of interest in becoming a peer, what it means to be a peer and the benefits of being a peer.

- **Level II**

This training is three days or 24 hours in length. It is interactive and addresses advanced HIV 101, treatment options, adherence, medication resistance, return to work issues, workplace skills, communication skills, cultural sensitivity and other relevant topics. The curricula development team is comprised of peers and service providers to insure the effectiveness of the material.

- **Level III**

At this stage of training, Peers who have completed levels I and II continue to build upon the knowledge and skills covered and practiced in Level II. In addition, Level III covers workplace training, facilitation skills and shadowing and reverse shadowing of the role of Peer Educator in the workplace. However, all skills learned at this level will be specific to job responsibilities required of the Peer. Not every peer will serve in the same capacity at every organization.

Recruitment

Recruitment for Level I Peer Educator Training occurs primarily through the use of flyers and brochures at venues where individuals living with HIV obtain services but are not limited to Community Based Organizations, AIDS Service Organizations, Health Clinics, Food Pantries and Pharmacies. Follow up calls are made to key personnel of these organizations with in two weeks to assess whether additional recruitment materials are required.

Upon completion of Level I trainings, participants are invited to participate in a Level II training should they choose to increase their knowledge of HIV/AIDS, become trained to be peers and work or volunteer in clinic-based settings. A selection criteria process for Level I peers to move on to Level II peers include a screening form, a pre-screening telephone call, and a face to face interview.

