

# Community Health Advancement Program (CHAP) Health Mentoring at the Seattle World School (SWS)

## Program Information

The **CHAP SWS Health Mentoring Program** is a partnership with the Seattle School District as a service learning opportunity for UW students seeking to work with adolescents in a health-related context. This project was initiated in 1997, and now in our 15<sup>th</sup> year, we are conducting this health mentoring program for our third year at the SWS. As mentors working in small interdisciplinary teams, UW students provide health information to youth, build mentoring relationships, and model healthy lifestyle choices.

This project provides UW students with an opportunity to work with and learn from colleagues in other disciplines. Foremost to keep in mind is the students' life experiences may be very different than our own and learning travels both directions. We all learn from each other.

### **WHY DO WE DO THIS?**

**The middle and high school years are considered an optimal time for health interventions** that make a positive impact in young peoples' lives. The ELL high school students we work with have come from a variety of countries around the world and have been identified as being especially vulnerable to influences that promote unhealthy behavior, and thus have special needs for health education.

This project provides UW students an opportunity to develop skills for working with people with broad variety of backgrounds, cultural values, and English proficiencies. This community service project will help you develop professional skills that will carry forward into your future work, including developing communication skills and rapport with adolescents, and presenting health information to a low English-literacy audience. In addition to being a fun and rewarding experience for mentors and students alike, you will have opportunities to work collaboratively with other students in the health fields, gain confidence in your skills and abilities as a future clinician/educator, and help young people make healthy and positive decisions in their lives!

### **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

**Over the course of each quarter** mentor teams develop one or two short (5-10 minute) presentations on a health-related topic, and prepare small-group activities to reinforce the message through discussion and mentoring. Each mentor group will help facilitate small group activities with their kids for the remainder of the class period. The mentor-to-student ratio is ideally 1:2 or 1:3. Mentors have access to a variety of lesson plans that were developed in previous years, resources for developing their own, and they can work with the CHAP program coordinator or Seattle Schools' Health Educator to create age-appropriate presentations and activities for the kids. Topics we cover, and how they are presented, are flexible, and may follow a quarterly theme.

## **PREPARATION AND TRAINING**

**All mentors participate in an initial training** from adolescent health specialists: a Seattle School District Health educator, and program faculty and staff. The training covers adolescent health issues, school district/SWS teaching guidelines, and issues related to working with ELL (English Language Learner) students covering a range of language proficiencies.

## **TIME COMMITMENT**

This information will provide you with a better understanding of the time commitment involved with this program. This project runs for the entire academic year, November-May, and we would like mentors to commit for the entire year, although occasional absences are expected (for tests, etc.), and we realize it may not be possible to commit for the duration.

**Recurring time commitment:** We will meet one morning per week: Tuesday or Thursday, roughly 8:35 to 9:45 a.m. depending on which day works best for mentors. This time includes introductions, presentation, mentoring, and debriefing. We generally do 5 – 8 sessions per quarter.

**Orientation:** At an initial half-day training you will receive background on the program, resources for mentoring, engage with and develop relationships with the other mentors in your team, learn the logistics of the program, select topics and presentation dates and practice developing topics and presentations. We also hold one brief planning meeting per quarter.

**Session preparation:** You will need to schedule time to meet with your mentor team outside the mentoring sessions – no more than twice per quarter, usually one time per quarter. We have a number of presentations and resources from past years available so you should not have to start from scratch, although mentors often enjoy designing presentations, and learn most from that process. Either way, the Seattle Public Schools health educator and CHAP's program coordinator will provide support and feedback throughout presentation development.

## **WHERE IS THE SEATTLE WORLD SCHOOL?**

The SWS is located on Capitol Hill at 301 21st Ave E., Seattle, WA 98112 (about 3 miles from UW Health Sciences at 21<sup>st</sup> Ave E. and John St.). It is located in the former Meany Middle School building, co-housed with Nova High School. Bus connections are easy from the University District (#48, #43) and surrounding areas.

## **WANT TO KNOW MORE?**

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