



## Peer Education: Powerful Protective Factor

### **SHAPE (Sexual Health And Peer Education Program)**

Created by Teen emPower!, this innovative peer education program recruits and trains over 30 high school students each year to present lessons on social and peer pressure, media messages, and assertiveness skills for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. Using high school students as facilitators leaves a positive, powerful impression on the middle school participants.

### **A Decade of Success**

SHAPE is the only peer education program of its kind in Oklahoma, and one of very few in the country that uses trained high school students as program facilitators for middle school students. The SHAPE peer educators have presented this popular and highly successful program to over 10,000 students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade since Teen emPower! created the program in 2008.

### **Positive Impact**

Evaluations have consistently highlighted the use of peer educators as an important protective factor for both middle school students and high school peer educators. A recent evaluation (2021) was conducted by the Health Promotion Sciences Department, Hudson College of Public Health at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. It documented the positive changes in knowledge and strong levels of satisfaction among the middle school participants, as well as the skills gained by the peer educators.

A case study prepared by the Department of Health and Kinesiology Department at Texas A&M University highlighted key factors that have made the SHAPE program so successful. *Peer Educators As Partners in Sexual Health Programming: A Case Study* (2020) described the extensive process for recruiting and training the SHAPE high school peer educators.

For more information on SHAPE and copies of the evaluation reports, go to the Teen emPower! website: [www.teenempower.org](http://www.teenempower.org)