

The Positive Peer Influencers series was developed in partnership with The Mediation Center. The State Board of Education requires all schools in grades K-12 to provide instruction regarding alcohol, tobacco, vapor products and other drug use on an annual basis. The Positive Peer Influencer program is aligned with the Georgia Department of Education's Health and Physical Education Program Standards. The Positive Peer Influencer Program empowers Savannah-area public high school students to mentor local middle school students, encouraging them to make healthy choices. Positive Peer Influencers model good decision making, speak with students about how to navigate peer pressure, discuss the potential consequences of poor decisions and offer advice about how to make healthy choices. This innovative program is a special collaboration between The Mediation Center of the Coastal Empire, Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools and the Chatham-Savannah Counter Narcotics Team. The goal of the program is to help local teens learn how to handle social and emotional pressures and to build a relationship with an older student that will carry over when the middle schooler arrives at high school. Positive Peer Influencers will discuss the dangers of tobacco, vaping as well as fentanyl, which is involved in 84% of teen overdose deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Positive Peer Influencers share facts about fentanyl, opioids and other dangerous drugs, encouraging local middle school students to choose to refuse. PPI encourages students to have courageous conversations and to create conditions that allow teens to be influenced in constructive ways. The goal is to equip young people with the tools they need to make positive decisions that set them up for a bright, healthy future. This video series was created to showcase the work of several groups. Deployed on social media at the beginning of the campaign, the series was featured at the Mediation Centers Annual Meeting, at which they presented SCCPSS with the 2024 Business Partner of the Year Award. The videos share the success story of this bold initiative with parents, community members and students.