

NATURAL HELPERS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Natural Helpers program is based on a simple premise: Within every school, an informal 'helping network' already exists. Students who need help naturally seek out other students they trust. The Natural Helpers program utilizes this existing helping network and provides training to students who are already serving as informal helpers. It gives them skills to more effectively help others.

Natural Helpers include a cross-section of students. They are identified and selected through an anonymous survey. After the helpers are identified, they are invited to participate in the Natural Helpers program. They receive training in communication and decision-making skills, information on major problems facing students, use of local resources, and awareness of their limits as helpers. This training assists the Natural Helpers to listen empathetically, provide information or referral if needed, and help others make their own choices. They are **NOT** professionally trained therapists or counselors.

Roles of Natural Helpers:

- Being a good role model
- Continuing to help their friends with their concerns
- Recognizing when people have serious problems – and referring them to trained helping resources
- Working with members of their helping team to discuss issues and specific problems
- Providing accurate information
- Becoming more involved in their school and community
- Lending an empathetic ear to lonely and/or new students

The following are some specific things that EPJ Natural Helpers do in addition to their helping role:

- Welcome new students and give tours, etc.
- Present lessons to middle school students on drugs, alcohol and bullying
- Be a mentor to freshman (sophomore helpers and above)

Natural Helpers

Seniors

Bobby Ortiz - Bobby.Ortiz@k12.sd.us

John Schuh - John.Schuh@k12.sd.us

Maria Corio - Maria.Corio@k12.sd.us

Katherine Giorgio - Katherine.Giorgio@k12.sd.us

Juniors

Alicia Nelson- Alicia.Nelson@k12.sd.us

Payton Donnelly- Payton.Donnelly@k12.sd.us

Sophomores

Aaron Koupal – Aaron.Koupal@k12.sd.us

Emily Mickelson – Emily.Mickelson@k12.sd.us

Elena Giorgio – Elena.Giorgio@k12.sd.us
Emily Peirce – Emily.Peirce@k12.sd.us

Freshman

Elsie Aslesen - Elsie.Aslesen@k12.sd.us
Elyssa Collins – Elyssa.Collins@k12.sd.us
Taylor Trudeau – Taylor.Trudeau@k12.sd.us
Jacob.Reed – Jacob.Reed@k12.sd.us
Cecil Gylfe – Cecil.Gylfe@k12.sd.us
Payton Hall – Payton.Hall@k12.sd.us