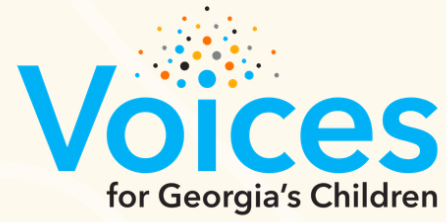


# FREE your FEELS™

Launched By:



Georgia  
Department of  
Behavioral Health  
& Developmental  
Disabilities



In Partnership With:



**FREE** your **FEELS**™

**SPEAK.**

We want to empower youth to speak out and express their real feelings,

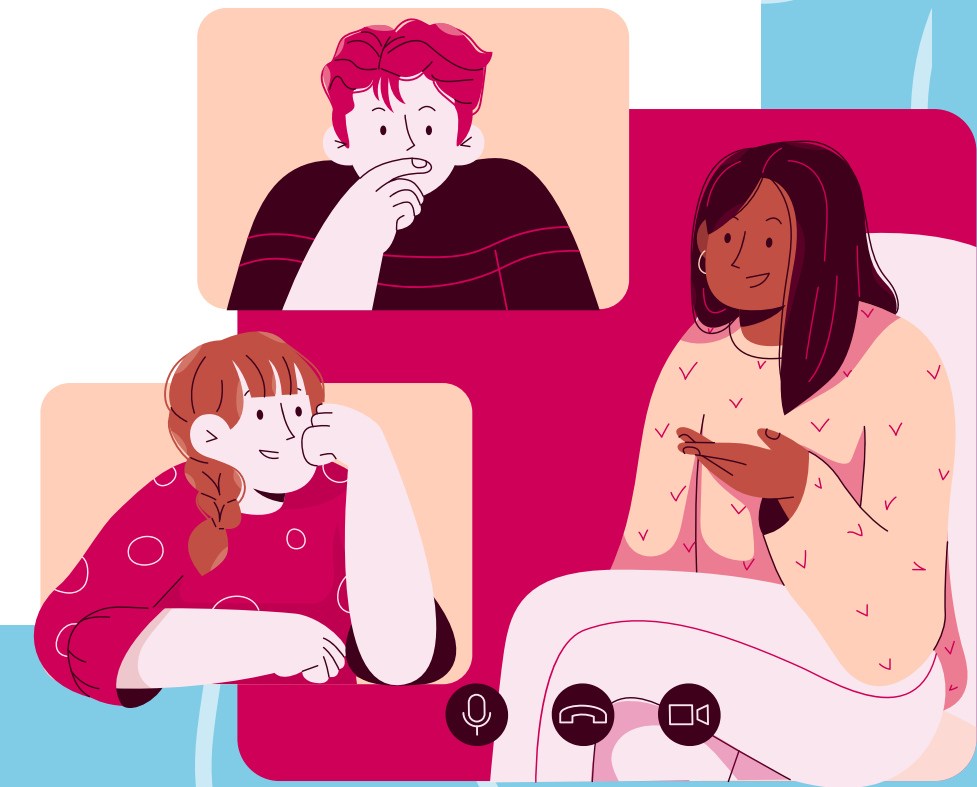
**LISTEN.**

To encourage adults and peers to check-in with each other and listen judgment-free,

**CONNECT.**

And to connect everyone to resources for further guidance or help.

[FREEYOURFEELS.ORG](https://freeyourfeels.org)



# CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT



**Key stakeholder  
& community  
meetings**



**Incorporating  
youth voices**



**Collection of  
data &  
resources**

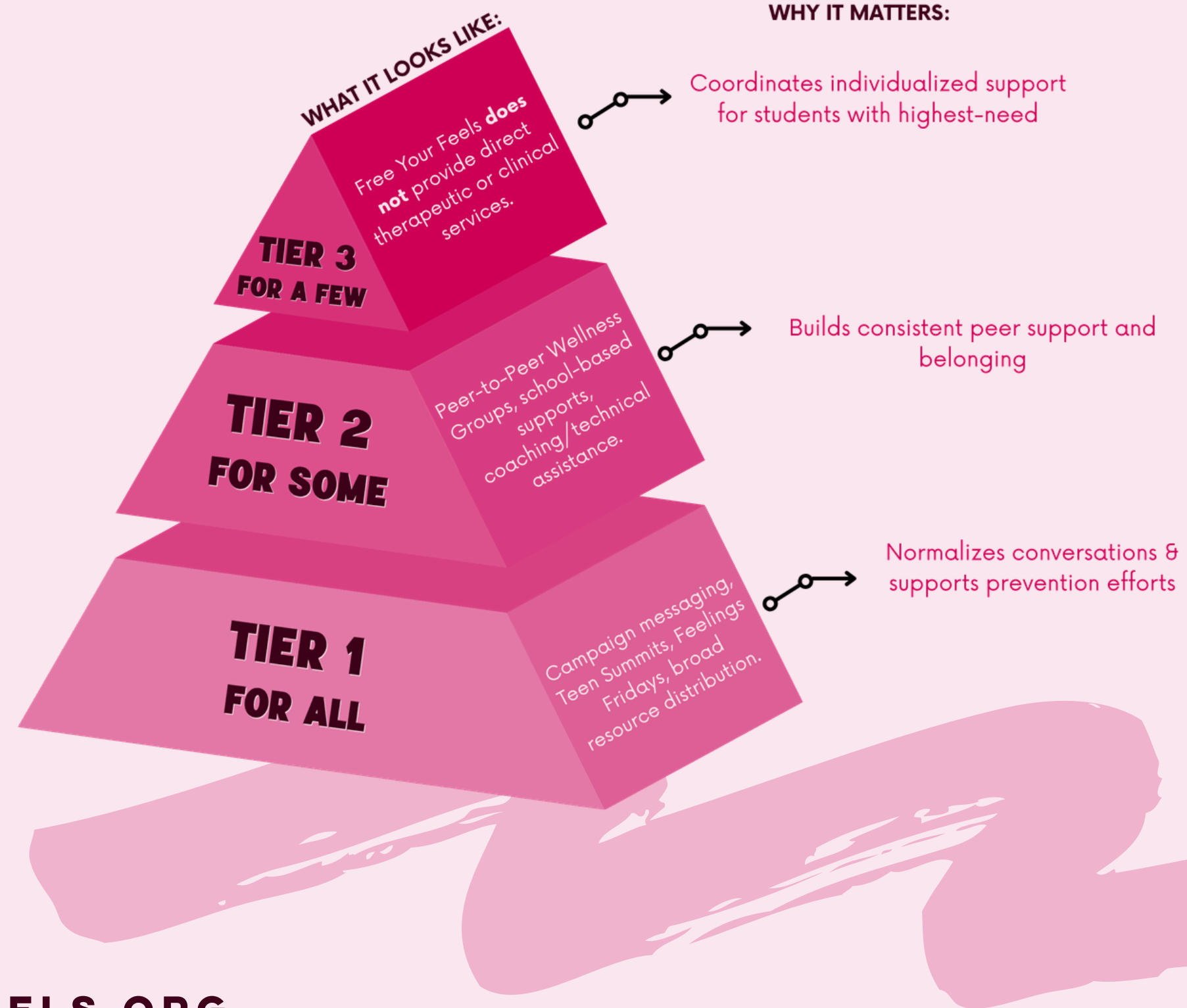


**Bridging the  
state & the  
community**



# CAMPAIGN DESIGN

The Free Your Feels (FYF) initiative is a campaign designed to promote mental health awareness. It operates at the first tier of universal prevention strategies, which does not necessitate evidence-based practices. The campaign is flexible and can be tailored to suit any setting, with the primary goal of increasing mental health awareness and education within the community to the extent the community can accommodate. FYF continuously assesses and adapts its approach and has progressed to the second tier of targeted prevention efforts. Through technical assistance and support for creating and executing a peer-to-peer program, FYF can take a more targeted, needs-based approach when and where necessary.





# CAMPAIGN SUPPORT & EVALUATION

SUPPORT

## 1:1 Technical Assistance

- Implementation support of Blueprint Implementation Guide
- Identification of locally driven priority target areas
- Leveraging local champions
- On-Demand Resources
- Blueprint Implementation Guide
- Monthly Resource Toolkits
- Curated Resources

## Quantitative

- Survey via newsletter and social media
- Engagement Metrics

## Qualitative

- Youth focus groups

EVALUATION



# CAMPAIGN JOURNEY

'21

Funding from DBHDD secured as well as partnerships with VoxATL and Silence the Shame becoming the core campaign collaborators.

'23

Initiated partnership with Ser Familia and incorporated culturally and linguistically relevant resources and content for the Spanish-speaking community; Co-hosted three (3) FYF Teen Summits; Participated in community events; Increased exposure of campaign.

'20

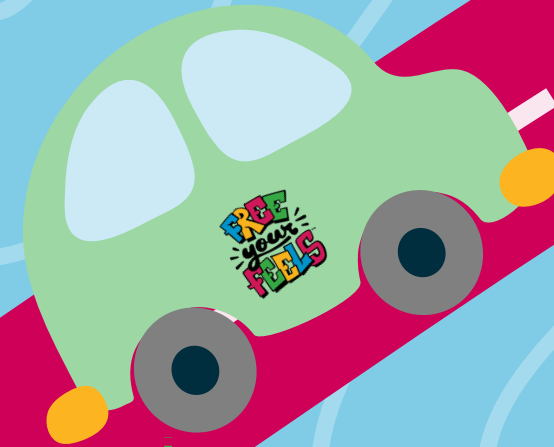
Launched September 2020  
Our pilot year was focused on understanding campaign effectiveness, building partnerships, and growing a collection of resources.

'22

Re-strategized the campaign's goals and secured additional funding; Hosted the inaugural FYF Teen Summit in Atlanta!; Released the official Blueprint Resource Guide for schools and communities.

'24

Free Your Feels has exciting plans! We will organize additional FYF Teen Summits, providing valuable experiences & learning opportunities for young participants and their caregivers. Additionally, we are launching a pilot peer-to-peer group specifically designed for middle and/or high schools. These groups aim to foster connections, support, and growth among students. Furthermore, we are committed to increasing community engagement, and collaborating with local communities to foster positive well-being!



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## PARTNERSHIPS

FYF partners and supporters incorporating FYF resources and materials at in-person events and digital spaces!

## DIGITAL

Increasing social and digital audience with daily engagement via social and monthly newsletters

## IN-PERSON

FYF participating as vendors or sponsors at community events/FYF-hosted events (i.e. teen summits)



# PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

## LAUNCHED BY:



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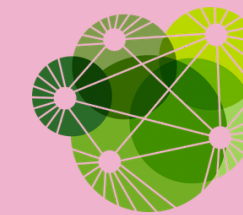


## IN PARTNERSHIP:



[FREEYOURFEELS.ORG](http://FREEYOURFEELS.ORG)

## COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS (NOT LIMITED TO):



GEORGIA  
family connection  
PARTNERSHIP



GEORGIA STATEWIDE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORK



NCBW  
100  
METROPOLITAN ATLANTA  
CHAPTER



THE  
CARTER CENTER



Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning  
BRIGHT FROM THE START



GUIDE, Inc.

Gwinnett United In Drug Education, Inc.  
working together for safe and healthy communities



Connecting School Counselors...Supporting Students



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF GEORGIA

# DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

**DAILY SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT AND  
CONTENT**

**MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS AND  
RESOURCE TOOLKITS**

**WEBSITE DEVELOPMENTS FOCUSING ON  
THE CURRENT NEED OF RESOURCES**

## SOCIAL MEDIA

July('22)-March ('23) compared to July ('23)-March ('24)



**44.9%**

Followers increase  
across all social media  
platforms



**8%**

Increase in overall  
engagement  
(how people are engaging with your  
posts, stories, and reels during the  
reporting period.)



**126%**

Increase in overall  
impressions  
(the number of times our content was  
displayed to social media users)



# IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT



“ I always wanted to do something like this. I am so happy I was given the opportunity. Growing up, I felt alone, I want to encourage people who feel like this to step out of their comfort zone and try something new.  
- Delaney Grace, 15, She/Her ”

“ To “free my feels” is to express myself and tell or show others the other side of me.  
-Josiah, 14, He/Him ”

“ To “free your feels”, you should talk to someone who’s a great listener, and they let you vent.-  
-Madisyn, 14 , She/Her ”



# INTENTIONAL ENGAGEMENT


“ This is what we have been looking for – one place to send all of our parents and students to receive resources we try to tell them about. It’s different when you have somewhere to send them that’s at their fingertips. ”  
-GA School Counselor

**FREE your FEELS**

CREATING A FREE YOUR FEELS PEER-TO-PEER PROGRAM

- 1 Identify Adult Sponsor**
  - Determine who the adult sponsor(s) will be; this will likely be the adult mental health ambassador already trained in mental health or suicide prevention.
  - Commit to one school year with a FYF P2P Program.
  - Identify and secure space for meetings and determine meeting dates and times, this will likely be the safe zone already identified in your community.
- 2 Identify Youth Leaders**
  - Youth leadership is instrumental in getting a peer-to-peer program off the ground; your youth mental health ambassadors will most likely fill this role.
  - Interested students participating in the program must set and understand the boundaries of their role.
  - The students serve as not only resources for their peers but can also assist in designing FYF school awareness activities around trauma, mental health, and suicide prevention.
- 3 Implement Mental Health Supports**
  - Train youth leaders in Youth Mental Health First Aid
  - Train sponsors/student leaders on empathy, active listening, and basic social and emotional skills
  - Invite local mental health agencies to speak to the students. (Do a lot of role-playing.)
  - Establish a referral system for students, teachers, counselors, or walk-ins.
- 4 Begin Consistently Meeting**
  - Market your group's meeting date, time, location, and purpose.
  - Meet regularly. Don't be discouraged if it takes a few weeks to get the group off the ground.

Remember: A P2P program is strengthened by deep support inside the community.



Voices for Georgia's Children | DBHDD | VOX ATL | Silence the Shame | Ser Familia

**1 IMPLEMENT FYF IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES**

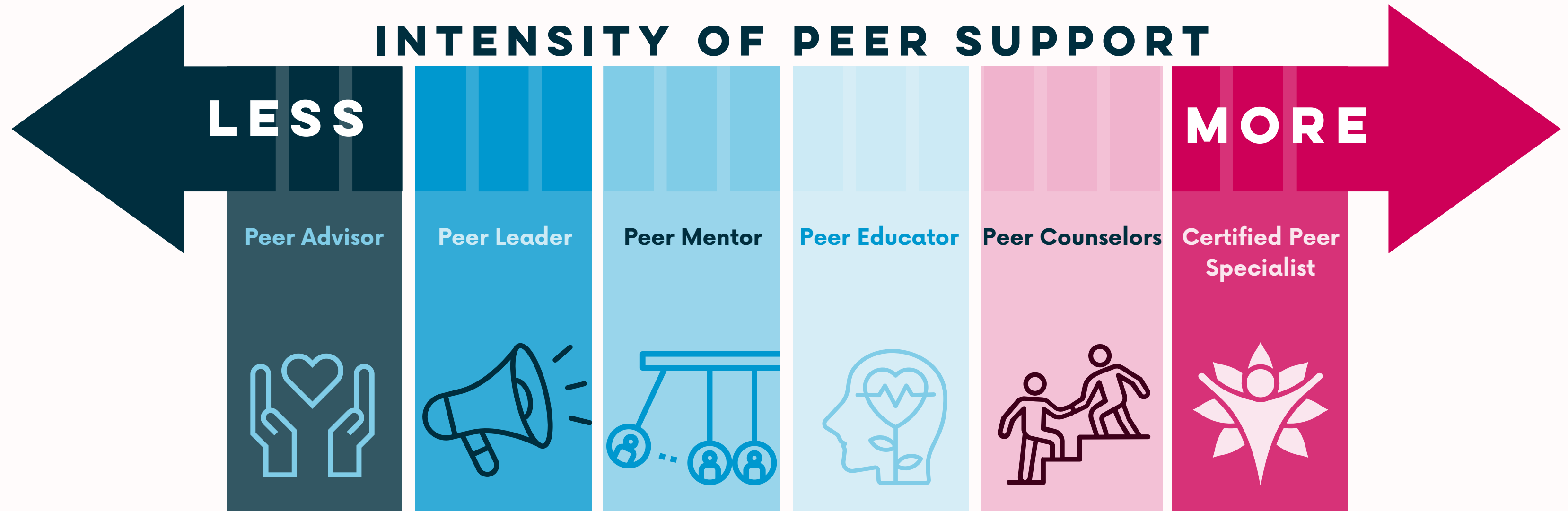
**2 ESTABLISH PEER-TO-PEER GROUPS**

**3 A BRIDGE TO RESOURCES**



# CONTINUUM OF PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT MODELS

INTENSITY OF PEER SUPPORT



**PREVENTION. PEER EDUCATION. NON-CLINICAL SUPPORT.**

# STAY connected



freeyourfeels@gmail.com



freeyourfeels.org



Maria Ramos  
Sr. Program Specialist  
Voices for Georgia's Children

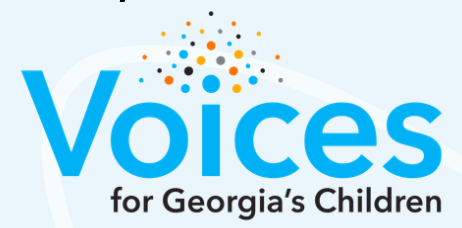


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