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SUMMER 2011

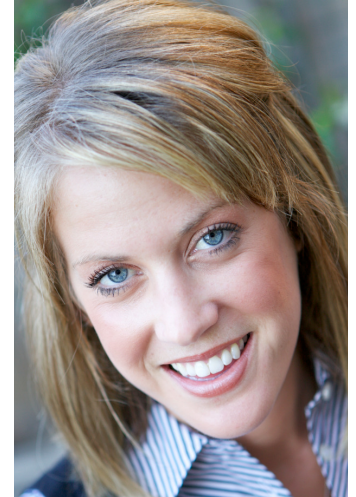
# The Free to Be Connection

## Free to Be Announces a New Executive Director

Free to Be is pleased to introduce Christy Wohlert as our new Executive Director. Christy has been on staff at Free to Be for three years as the Peer Program Supervisor and Program Director.

Christy has a background in arts education, and earned a degree in Psychology from Liberty University. She is a native of Santa Cruz, and resides in Santa Rosa with her husband, Michael and 11 month old son, Daniel. Christy's interest in working with teens and helping them realize their potential in life is what brought her to Free to Be.

"It's an honor to be following in Sue Bisbee's footsteps. She has paved an incredible path for Free to Be and it is now my privilege to carry the torch. I have loved Free to Be even before I was on staff, and I want nothing more than to see this program thrive."



Christy Wohlert, Executive Director

Sue Bisbee, former Executive Director, plans to stay involved by serving on the Board of Directors and working as part-time Development Director. Sue sees a bright future for Free to Be with Christy assuming leadership of the organization. "It has never been more critical for us to support our youth in making healthy choices. Under Christy's capable leadership, Free to Be will continue to make an impact."

## Local Foundation Grant Received

The Ernest L. and Ruth W. Finley Foundation has awarded Free to Be a \$50,000 grant to provide youth support for healthy choices. We are grateful for this generous grant that will benefit many of the teens in our community!

## Moving Forward

While Free to Be has had many financial and political challenges in the past two years, we have continued to reach youth with positive messages, through the support and encouragement of so many in our community. In the 2010-2011 school year, more than 1,200 youth in 19 venues, including private and public schools, after-school programs, and youth groups benefited from presentations by Free to Be's high school-aged Peer Educators and young adult staff.

Our mission today is more relevant than ever: *"motivating and equipping youth to live an abstinent life-style, encouraging healthy choices for a healthy future."* Here are some ways to partner with us in this important work:

- Host a Free to Be informational evening in your home
- Introduce Free to Be to a friend, community leader and/or organization
- Volunteer to help plan Free to Be's first annual fundraising event in March 2012
- Consider making a monthly pledge or a one-time donation

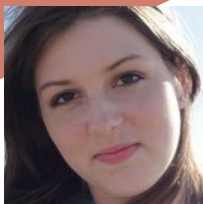
Please contact Lucy Avalos at (707) 526-3819 or lucy@free-to-be.net for more information about getting involved. Credit card donations are accepted online. Please visit [www.freetobeteens.org](http://www.freetobeteens.org).



Join the conversation. [www.freetobesr.blogspot.com](http://www.freetobesr.blogspot.com)

## New Peer Educators

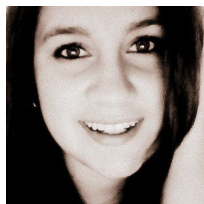
Grace



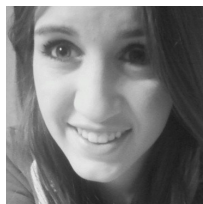
Megan



Rachelle

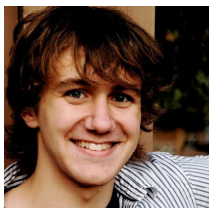


Catie



*"We are involved in f2b because we care about our fellow teens in the community and beyond and want to help supply them with info that will help them choose the best option for them."*

## ConGRADulations Class of 2011 Peer Educators!



Ryan



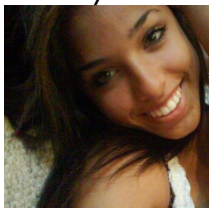
Arin



Ben



Isaac



Vanessa



Dakota



Noelle



Leesa

What an incredible year this has been and how quickly time has flown by! It is always bittersweet coming to the end of a school year. We look back and reminisce about all the fun we had and think of all the students we reached this year with messages of healthy relationships and postponing sexual activity. At the same time, we must say goodbye to our graduating PEs.

Free to Be will miss these amazing Peer Educators. Although this year was filled with challenges, it also came with huge victories. Our Peer Educators have been the glue that has held our program together in difficult times. We are so proud of these teens and know that they will continue to inspire teens in their communities.

### Data Reports New Trends Among Teens!

Among ages 15-17, 58% of girls and 53% of boys said they have had no sexual contact, compared to 48.6% of girls and 46.1% of boys in 2002.

- National Center for Health Statistics (2006-2008 Survey)



Peer Educators Rachelle and Ryan Carrillo.

### 2011 STAR PEER EDUCATOR RYAN CARRILLO

*"Free to Be is a place of support and encouragement for me. It is a place of fun and excitement, but also a place of maturity and trust. It is a place I can go to; it is people I can talk to. It is a door - an opportunity - to share my experiences with others and hear from my peers what they feel, answering their questions in return. The more I become involved, the more I realize I WANT to be involved. Free to Be cultivates relationships. By being involved in Free to Be I am investing in myself and my future personally, as well as this entire new generation. I am able to reach out to my age group, my peers, my friends. Free to Be is hope, freedom, and another option."*