

## Middle School Prevention Program Description

WISE programming is consistent with federal and state health education guidelines, based on research and best practices to end gender-based violence. Lessons are delivered in two-parts each school year, to build on content, skills and analysis from previous sessions. The strategies of the Prevention and Education Program reflect the Center for Disease Control’s Social-Ecologic Model connecting the individual, relational, community and societal factors that influence real and lasting change.

6th Grade	Media Literacy
6th Grade	Creating Change
7th Grade	Consent: how do you know?
7th Grade	Sexual Harassment
8th Grade	Healthy Relationships
8th Grade	Consent Scenario

### 6th Grade

**Lesson 1 - Media Literacy:** In an environment saturated by media, it is difficult to distinguish the meaning in the messages - especially about relationships. This class will build critical analysis of how media informs our sense of selves in limiting and stereotypical ways. Students will understand the motivations behind the media and learn to identify and resist unhealthy messages.

**Lesson 2 - Creating Change:** This class will emphasize the potential everyone has to shift cultural norms. Students will identify their values and individual strategies for making positive change in the world. Students will finish the 6th grade program by putting all of their ideas together on a poster to be hung in the school.

#### 6th Grade Learning Objectives

- Identify the harms of gender stereotypes.
- Understand the social creation of gendered expectations and their ability as individuals to use their influence for positive change.

### 7th Grade

**Lesson 1 - Consent: how do you know?:** This session builds expectations among peers for safe and respectful touch. Students will understand that everyone has the right to say what happens with/to their bodies and a responsibility to respect other people’s bodies and comfort levels. The class practices different styles of communication, and how students can be sure that they have permission before they touch another person.

**Lesson 2 - Sexual Harassment:** 8 in 10 students experience some form of sexual harassment during their school lives, impacting the ability to learn and fully participate in their academic careers. Discussion and activities will explore and define the differences between sexual harassment and flirting. The class will brainstorm safe ways to respond to sexual harassment as a bystander and identify resources and safe adults for guidance. Students will end the program by writing scripts demonstrating their ability to respectfully and clearly articulate consent.

#### 7th Grade Learning Objectives

- Define sexual harassment and identify behaviors that are included. Reduce the acceptability to violence and shift normative attitudes around sexual harassment.
- Introduce consent practices and skills for seeking consent from others.

## 8th Grade

**Lesson 1 - Healthy Relationships:** The first lesson of the 8th grade program unpacks the unhealthy messages we learn from media that shape our expectations for relationships. Students examine and reflect on the restrictive and harmful norms that limit us from having fulfilling friendships, dating relationships and relationships with ourselves.

**Lesson 2 - Consent Scenario:** Students will review the basics of consent using a case scenario. Discussion will connect the analysis of the previous lesson to the behaviors in the scenario, illuminating the cultural roots and individual behaviors in dating and sexual violence. Students strategize how the scenario characters could have done a better job making sure that the situation was safe and comfortable for everyone involved.

### 8th Grade Learning Objectives

- Connect cultural norms around gender to the normalization of gender-based violence and an imbalance of power in relationships.
- Build skills and apply learning from previous years to relationship case scenario.
- Identify strategies that some people use in order to take away power and control from others, specifically in dating or romantic relationships. Build skills to intervene.
- Build empathy for people who have less power in situations or society.

## Middle School Prevention Program - Content Rationale

### Individual:

- Individuals who strongly adhere to traditional gendered norms have higher risk for perpetration (Zurbriggen, 2010 & Center for Disease Control, 2017).
- Emotional health and connectedness is a protective factor against perpetration (Center for Disease Control, 2017).
- Empathy and concern for how one's actions affect others is protective against perpetration (Yarnell, L., et al., 2014 & Center for Disease Control, 2017).

### Relational:

- Peers are one of the most significant social risk factors in health behavior (Yarnell, et al., 2014).
- Association with sexually aggressive, hyper-masculine, and delinquent peers is a risk factor for sexual violence perpetration (Zurbriggen, 2010 & Center for Disease Control, 2017).

### Social:

- Norms that maintain women's inferiority and sexual submissiveness increase perpetration (Center for Disease Control, 2017).
- Norms that support sexual violence increase perpetration (Center for Disease Control, 2017).
- Norms that support male superiority and sexual entitlement increase perpetration (Center for Disease Control, 2017).
- Changing normative attitudes around the acceptability to violence decreases perpetration (Abramsky, 2016).
- Recognition of culturally constructed messages about the roles of men and women and lack of power afforded to women/girls in relationships decreases perpetration (Heise, 1998).

## National Health Education Standards

**HES 2:** Analyzing Internal and External Influences- Students will analyze the influence of culture, media, technology and other factors on health.

**HES 4:** Interpersonal Communication- Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health.

**HES 7:** Self- Management-Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.

**HES 8:** Advocacy- Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.