

Dear 7<sup>th</sup> grade parent or guardian,

Your 7<sup>th</sup> grader just participated in two days of prevention programming with WISE through their health class. For decades, WISE has worked with Upper Valley school districts to facilitate education to end gender-based violence.

The first day of programming reintroduced students to the real life practices of consent. The lesson aimed to build their expectations for safe and respectful touch and emphasized their responsibility for understanding another person's comfort level. They learned that asking for permission is the bare minimum. When it comes to having healthy relationships, we have ongoing conversations with our partners to understand what they need to feel safe and comfortable.

During the second day of programming, the students participated in an activity that helped them to think critically about what makes certain behaviors harmful. The WISE educator read short scenarios to the class, and students would decide whether the behavior was harmful or not by moving to respective sides of the room. At the end of the activity, the students summarized that they made decisions about where to stand by reflecting on whether or not the person was being treated like a full human being and if their feelings were considered. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention identifies "empathy and concern for how one's actions affect others" as a protective factor against sexual violence perpetration. Finally, the students worked in small groups to brainstorm potential strategies for intervening in harmful situations involving their friends and classmates. We agreed that we are all responsible for making our community a safer place for everyone.

## Parenting for Prevention

**Take any and every opportunity to reinforce the message that each person is in control of their own body. Apply consent to interactions outside of and in addition to those that are sexual.**

- Ask for permission before touching.
- Allow children and teens to say "no" to physical contact (e.g. hugging relatives)
- Have conversations when siblings violate each other's physical space and reinforce the idea that one's body belongs only to oneself.

**Use the media to talk about how you see (or don't see) people getting consent in TV shows and movies. If they are not getting consent, why are they able to get away with that in the media? How does the media make consent seem confusing? What can we do to counteract these harmful messages?**

**For more information about consent and sexual violence:**

- Read, **Driver's Ed for Sexual SuperHighway: Navigating Consent**  
[www.scarleteen.com/article/abuse\\_assault/drivers\\_ed\\_for\\_the\\_sexual\\_superhighway\\_navigating\\_consent](http://www.scarleteen.com/article/abuse_assault/drivers_ed_for_the_sexual_superhighway_navigating_consent)
- Watch, **Body Sovereignty and Kids**, [youtu.be/EvGyo1NrzTY](https://youtu.be/EvGyo1NrzTY)
- Watch, **Understanding Consent**, [youtu.be/raxPKklDF2k](https://youtu.be/raxPKklDF2k), **Tea Consent**, [youtube.com/watch?v=fGoWLWS4-kU](https://youtube.com/watch?v=fGoWLWS4-kU)  
or **Cycling Through Consent**, [youtu.be/-JwlKjRaUaw](https://youtu.be/-JwlKjRaUaw)