

WISE programming is consistent with federal and state health education guidelines, and 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.

Middle School Lessons

6th Grade

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

Lesson 2 - Creating Change: This lesson emphasizes the potential everyone has to shift cultural norms. Students identify their values and individual strategies for making positive change in the world. Students 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 understand that everyone has the right to say what happens with their bodies and has a responsibility to respect other people's bodies and comfort levels. Asking for permission is the bare minimum when it comes to having healthy relationships.

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 explore and define what makes behaviors harmful. Students brainstorm safe ways to respond to sexual harassment as a bystander and identify resources and safe adults for guidance.

7th Grade Learning Objectives

- Define sexual harassment and identify harmful behaviors.
- Reduce the acceptability to violence and shift normative attitudes around sexual harassment.
- Introduce practices and skills for seeking consent from others.
- Set expectations of respect and care for others in relationships.

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 gender norms that limit us from having fulfilling friendships, dating relationships, and relationships with ourselves.

Lesson 2 - Consent: Students review the basics of consent using a case scenario. Discussion 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.
- Apply learning from previous years in analysis of relationship case scenario.
- Identify strategies that some people use to take away power and control from others, specifically in dating or romantic relationships. Build skills to intervene.
- Demonstrate 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 (CDC, 2017).
- Empathy and concern for how one's actions affect others is protective against perpetration (Yarnell, L., et al., 2014 & CDC, 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 & CDC, 2017).

SOCIAL

- Norms that maintain women's inferiority and sexual submissiveness increase perpetration (CDC, 2017).
- Norms that support sexual violence increase perpetration (CDC, 2017).
- Norms that support male superiority and sexual entitlement increase perpetration (CDC, 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: Students will analyze the influence of culture, media, technology and other factors on health.

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

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

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