

Center for Empowerment & Education

Presentations Grades 9-12

The Center for Empowerment and Education, formerly known as the Women's Center of Greater Danbury, has been working with students in the Bethel Public School system for many years providing educational programs on a wide variety of programs including boundaries, healthy relationships, sexual harassment, and online safety. The Center for Empowerment and Education is a member agency of the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence and has been providing services to victims of sexual assault and domestic violence in the Greater Danbury area since 1975. The Center has offered sexual assault prevention and awareness programs in community schools for over twenty years.

Since October 1, 2016, all local and regional school districts in Connecticut are required to implement sexual assault awareness and prevention programs in grades kindergarten through twelve, as per Section 17a-101q of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Department of Children and Families (DCF), in collaboration with the Connecticut State Department of Education (SDE) and Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, have developed a framework as well as performance indicators for these programs.

Bethel High School is partnering with the Center for Empowerment and Education and their education team to provide programs to our Grade 9-12 students that align with the guidelines set forth in the state-wide framework. You can learn about the Center from their website:

<https://thecenterct.org>

Please see below the programs that will be offered in each grade level:

9th Grade via Health classes:

Healthy Relationships & Dating Violence (Fall and Spring Semester)

In the United States, 1 in 3 teens is a victim of sexual, emotional, verbal or physical abuse by a dating partner. This program analyzes the root cause of this issue, power and control, and sheds light on unhealthy relationship dynamics. Students will learn to identify “red flag” behaviors and where to seek help for themselves or a friend.

Cybersafety (Fall and Spring Semester)

This program on cybersafety teaches students about online dangers such as bullying, online strangers, sexting, geotagging, etc., as well as what they can do to stop these behaviors and protect themselves. This workshop helps students understand what sexting is, why it happens, and the legal, social, and emotional consequences associated with it.

Dangers of Grooming (November 14 & 15, 2024)

This program will address the warning signs of predatory and grooming behavior and what students can do if they find themselves or their peers in these dangerous situations.

NOTE: If you do not wish for your child to attend the Grade 9 programs on *Healthy Relationships, Dating Violence, and Cyber Safety*, please immediately notify Stacie Kaye at kayes@bethel.k12.ct.us. If you do not wish for your child to attend the Grade 9 program on the *Dangers of Grooming* please immediately notify Mari Lerz at lerzm@bethel.k12.ct.us.

11th Grade via Health classes:

Got Consent? Addressing Sexual Assault (Fall & Spring Semester)

This program helps students understand sexual assault by explaining specific laws, statistics, and debunking myths about perpetrators and victims. Our interactive clicker technology allows teens to anonymously input answers for all to see, creating a meaningful and profound discussion. Through activities and conversation, students learn what consent is and when it can and cannot legally be given. Students will learn of the options and resources available in the aftermath of an assault.

Flirting or Hurting? Addressing Sexual Harassment (Fall and Spring Semester)

This program about sexual harassment focuses mainly on understanding and communicating personal boundaries. Students identify the difference between flirtatious behaviors and sexual harassment, along with the continuum of harmful acts that can constitute sexual harassment. Students learn laws and consequences associated with harassment.

NOTE: If you do not wish for your child to attend the Grade 11 programs, please immediately notify your child's Grade 11 Health teacher (Talia Smeraglino, Anthony Fernandes or Ann Belardinelli) at the start of the semester.

12th Grade (Spring 2025):

Know Before You Go

This program is for students in 12th grade and explores campus sexual assault and the importance of consent. Analyzing campus culture and social norms, students will learn to identify behaviors, attitudes, and customs which lay the groundwork for sexual violence to flourish. The second half of this program will focus on empowering students to be "upstanders" in potentially harmful situations. Attendees will gain tools that will allow them to intervene in safe, non-violent ways to help end sexual harassment and sexual abuse. Students will also learn about Affirmative Consent and the policies and laws in place regarding college campuses' response to sexual assault.

NOTE: If you do not wish for your child to attend the Grade 12 program, please notify Asst. Principal Mari Lerz at lerzm@bethel.k12.ct.us.

If you have any questions about the programs, contact Keli Calderon, Community Outreach Coordinator, Keli.c@thecenterct.org or (203) 731-5200 ext. 251.