



INDEPENDENCE HOUSE, INC.

Cape Cod's leading resource, counseling and advocacy center to address and prevent domestic and sexual violence.

Promoting safe and healthy relationships

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PREVENTION, EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Independence House partners with select community organizations, schools, faith-based organizations and businesses to promote communities and societies free from intimate partner violence through primary prevention practices. These are long-term partnerships with those who share our vision to change social norms regarding violence.

Independence House staff will come to your school, community organization, religious institution or business and provide information regarding the agency services as well as organize awareness raising events and encourage the support of our community. Independence House also provides workshops for youth, parents, professionals and community leaders on many topics.

The Independence House Prevention, Education and Outreach program is dedicated to the primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence and raising youth awareness on Cape Cod, providing curriculum based workshops to schools throughout the Cape. All educational workshops and each curriculum is age appropriate and can be tailored to meet the needs of youth in schools from elementary through high school. In accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Education Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, we have tailored workshops to meet the learning standards for each grade level. All workshops are designed with interactive activities to engage students in facilitated conversations around selected topics. Independence House will also adapt any lesson plan to fit specific needs of administrations, teachers and students.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) has reported that:

"Up to 80% of adolescents report being bullied during their school years."

"Around 160,000 school children stay home each day out of fear, often without telling their parents why."

"Forty percent of 5th-8th graders say they have experienced sexual harassment by their peers."

"Adults who were bullies as children have higher rates of substance abuse, domestic violence and other violent crimes"

(Bullying is characterized by an imbalance in power, similar to the power and control displayed in abusive relationships.)

Other reports indicate that:

- *About 1 in 4 teens reports verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse each year. (www.chooserespect.org)*
- *Teen dating violence perpetuates other common issues affecting American teens such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, binge drinking and drug use. (ncadv)*
- *In June of 2008, driven by recent domestic violence killings, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health issued a public health advisory on domestic violence (www.mass.gov)*

In March of 2010, the Massachusetts Senate unanimously passed an anti-bullying legislation requiring all schools to address bullying. The complete legislative act can be found at <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2010/Chapter92>.

Additionally, you may download a summary of requirements for each school at:

[http://independencehouse.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Bullying-Summary-May-2010- 2 .pdf](http://independencehouse.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Bullying-Summary-May-2010-2.pdf)

THE NICHOLAS G. XIARHOS RESPECTFUL YOUTH RELATIONSHIP PROGRAM

The Nicholas G. Xiarhos Respectful Youth Relationship Program is our youth-focused primary prevention and educational program promoting healthy relationships and violence prevention among high school students throughout Cape Cod. The program is named in honor of Nicholas Xiarhos, son of Yarmouth Police Deputy Chief Steven Xiarhos, who lost his life in Afghanistan. Nick was a mentor and role model to his peers and always looked out for others.

MENTORS IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION (MVP) CURRICULUM

Independence House staff is certified to deliver Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) curriculum. This structured curriculum is presented to high school students and provides training on raising awareness and inspiring leadership around preventing violence, teen dating violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment and gender stereotypes. Students work independently throughout the school year on projects that empower them and raise awareness among their peers on these topics.

Independence House certified MVP facilitators currently present the full MVP curriculum to Barnstable High School, Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School, and Falmouth High School. Additionally, tailored segments of the MVP curriculum continue to be presented to select classrooms and grades throughout schools on Cape Cod.

WORKSHOP TOPICS & BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Below is a list of suggested workshop topics that are presented in schools throughout Cape Cod. Most workshops are appropriate for elementary through high school aged youth and all workshops are tailored for age appropriateness. Many workshops may be combined as time permits.

BULLYING

Types of bullying; cyber bullying; bystander intervention and empowerment; snitching vs. telling

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Understanding conflict; understand your feelings; recognize your triggers; active listening; resolution skills

ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES

Defining boundaries: physical vs. emotional; boundaries related to friendships; communication skills (and dating relationships for older youth)

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Characteristics of good friends; how to be a good friend; boundaries related to friendships (characteristics of healthy dating relationships and boundaries related to dating relationships for older youth)

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Defining sexual harassment: examples in a school setting; what to do if we experience sexual harassment

GENDER STEREOTYPES & SEXISM

(For older youth) Gender vs. sex; defining stereotypes; how stereotypes influence violence; what you can do to change

SEXUAL ASSAULT & CONSENT

(For older youth) Legal definitions; statistics; understanding consent; communication skills; drugs and alcohol; helping a friend

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

(For older youth) Types of abuse; warning signs; characteristics of healthy relationships; helping a friend

VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA

(for older youth) Media and advertisement affecting intimate partner violence