



March 30, 2015

Dear School Principal:

In 2014, the Connecticut General Assembly enacted Public Act 14-196 to create a statewide K-12 child sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education program to be used by local Boards of Education commencing in October of 2015. The legislation charged the State Department of Children and Families, the State Department of Education, and Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS) with developing or identifying such a program.

Connecticut's Child Sexual Abuse & Assault Education Planning Team comprised of representatives from the aforementioned entities and others, including School Superintendents, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, sexual assault prevention educators, and a volunteer survivor representative would like your assistance in this planning process. The team will create a K-12 Sexual Abuse and Assault Prevention Education Program Framework, with accompanying materials and resources, including community-based resources to be used by local Boards of Education and school districts to implement the newly required programming.

Many schools across Connecticut are already implementing innovative strategies to develop the whole child, address and prevent interpersonal violence, and promote safe school climates. The planning team would like to get your feedback as we work to assist school districts in incorporating child sexual abuse and assault awareness prevention education into your work to improve student outcomes and promote lifelong success.

It is in that vein that we request your time and feedback. **Please identify a staff member to complete this brief survey.** We are seeking this information to better understand how schools currently engage in this work, to identify gaps, and to share best practices. Survey results will only be used to inform the planning purposes for this project. **Only one survey should be completed and submitted for each school.** The online survey may be accessed at the following link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CTchildsexualabuse>

Attached please find a hard copy of the questions for your reference as it will be helpful to read through with your staff prior to submitting your answers via SurveyMonkey.

The planning team is aware of the many requirements and expectations placed on schools to educate our students and effectively prepare teachers and inform parents. We want to serve as a resource and ensure that child sexual abuse and assault awareness prevention education only

serves to heighten the work already being done throughout Connecticut to make students and schools safe and healthy.

According to Public Act 14-196, the following are considered key elements of a child sexual abuse and assault awareness prevention education program:

- the skills to recognize abuse and assault, boundary violations and unwanted forms of touching and contact, ways offenders groom or desensitize victims; and
- strategies to promote disclosure, reduce self-blame, or mobilize bystanders (*Section 1(a)(2)*).

Schools will also need to train teachers* regarding the prevention, identification, and response to child sexual abuse and assault, and resources on awareness and prevention of child sexual abuse and assault must be provided to students, teachers, and parents (*Section 1(a)(1)*).

Finally, each school district will need to have a uniform child sexual abuse and assault response policy that addresses the following:

- actions that child victims of sexual abuse and assault may take to obtain assistance, intervention and counseling options for child victims of sexual abuse and assault; access to educational resources to enable child victims of sexual abuse and assault to succeed in school; and uniform procedures for reporting instances of child sexual abuse and assault to school staff members (*Section 1(a)(3)*).

**Please complete and submit one survey per school by April 13, 2015. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Nicole Seymour
Nicole.l.seymour@gmail.com at Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services.**

Thank you in advance for considering our request and supporting this effort.

Sincerely,

Members of the Connecticut's Child Sexual Abuse and Assault Education Planning Team
Connecticut State Department of Children and Families
Connecticut State Department of Education
Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services
Connecticut Association of Boards of Education

cc: Superintendents of Schools

*Teacher is inclusive of student support professionals.