

Westford Public Schools **Violence Prevention Curriculum**

Imbedded within the district guidance and wellness instruction are evidence-based curricula and solid instructional approaches that support and sustain a positive school culture conducive to academic success.

Health/Wellness Classes are offered in grades K-12.

The curriculum incorporates:

- Use of scripts and role plays to develop skills
- Empower students to be an upstander by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- Help students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber bullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- Emphasize cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- Enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications;
- Engage students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- Step to Respect
- Second Step
- Responsive Classroom
- Co-Curricular offerings that acknowledge and support diversity
- Advisory Block Programming

Grades K-5 Wellness and Guidance Curriculum

Laying the Groundwork

- Build community and trust
- Foster collective responsibility
- Responsive Classroom approach and strategies
- Promote Core Values (morning meetings, routines, assemblies)
- Share a common language within each school

Teaching Strategies/Tools

- Small and large group classroom/guidance lessons
- Conflict resolution and problem solving strategies
 - Solution wheel

- Educators for Social Responsibility “Think CAPS “
- CAPS: *Cool Off, Agree to work it out, Point to the problem and Solve it*
- Role playing in small and large group settings
- Social skills groups

Character Education

- Utilize monthly assembly structure to reinforce character development
- Positive reinforcement
- Each K-5 school incorporates Compassion Projects and /or service learning projects.
- Teachers address Core Values through literature selections and follow up discussions/activities

Providing Resources

- Literature, videos and games that teach specific concepts and skills
- Guidance web pages
- School newsletters
- Training opportunities for all staff
- Parent workshops

Responding to Situations

- Student self-referral system
- Social replay
- Processing sheets for conflict resolution
- Social contracts
- Behavioral plans
- Pre-K/5 handbook policies on bullying

Grades 6-8 Health Curriculum

Prevention & Education

Grade 6-8 Health Curriculum:

- Adjusting to middle school
- Value, respect and school climate
- Decision-making and bullying prevention
- Internet safety/cyber bullying
- Mental/Emotional Effects of bullying
- Guidance counselors and guidance curriculum
- Peer Counselors
- School Wide Assemblies/Initiatives (i.e. Rachel’s Challenge, Ryan’s Story)
- Web Site and Friday Email for parent resources
- Cooperation within the Westford community: Westford Police Department, Westford Parent Connection, Westford Academy
- Email accounts set up to communicate information to school

- Advisor/Advisee programs (PRIDE/BEST)
- Handbook policies on bullying

Grades 9-12 Health Curriculum

Prevention & Education

Freshmen Health and Senior Health Seminar Course Curriculum

- Safe Dates, evidence-based curriculum by Hazeldon, addresses dating violence.
- Healthy conflict resolution through role-play
- Internet and Online Safety Curriculum
- Risk taking and refusal skills
- Decision-making and communication skills
- Self-esteem
- Peer Counseling Training Programs
- Outreach to elementary and middle schools
- Counseling Intervention
 - Relationship building
 - Parent connection
- Advisory Programming
 - Communication Skills
 - Internet Safety
- Social Work Support
- Individualized and small group counseling
- Recognized Gay Straight Alliance organization
- Best Buddies Program
- Administration Intervention
- Handbook policies on bullying

K-12 Physical Education Curriculum

- Building self-esteem
- Power of positive words
- Accepting and enjoying differences
- Positive risk-taking
- Overarching concepts that reinforce positive school culture:
“Communication,” “Citizenship”, “Teamwork”, “Goal Setting”