

I Empathize- Empower Youth Program

UMD SAFE Center Prevention Team

Objectives/ Goals

- 1. Understand the Empower Youth Program and what it entails
- 2. Updates on the pilot virtual and in-person programs

Why I Empathize?

This is a well regarded curriculum designed to work with high school/middle school students around issues of human trafficking. We chose this curriculum over other options because it:

- Focuses on sex and labor trafficking/exploitation
- Can be facilitated online or in-person
- Is in the process of being translated into Spanish
- Includes pre and post surveys
- Aims to prevent exploitation of in all forms including human trafficking
- Focuses on nurturing empathy in students

Empower Youth Program

- The Empower Youth Program is a program designed to facilitate prevention focused conversations with youth.
- It's designed to empower youth with identifying the signs of trafficking and exploitation, while teaching them strategies they can use to protect themselves and the people around them.
- SAFE Center prevention team staff members completed a facilitator training prior to implementing the curriculum

Website: <https://iempathize.org>



5 Modules

Module 1: Empathy

Module 2: Negative Pushes

Module 3: Negative Pulls

Module 4: Positive Pulls

Module 5: Choosing Empathy

Disclosure Protocol

1. Letting students know about our mandated reporting responsibility and confidentiality limitations.

- Have a staff member will let us know the school's protocols
- Show PowerPoint to students

2. Identify one staff member at school to support our team with disclosures.

3. If a student discloses, we do a break and huddle.

Steps to guide them:

- *Show empathy*
- *Thank them for sharing*
- *Letting them know it's not their fault*
- *Letting them they didn't deserve it*
- *Letting them know the process that comes next*
- *Ask them if they feel they have been exploited*
- *Connect them to resources*
- *We will identify who will be doing the different steps*

Reminder this is not therapy

Virtual Pilot Updates:

- HT 101/ EYP info session was offered to all staff members prior
- Week long volunteer program 1.5h per day for 5 days (SSL hour incentive)
- We reached **10 students**
- Two staff members supported this program
- Ages 13-17

In-Person Pilot Updates:

- HT 101/ EYP info session was offered to all staff members prior
- 5 week long program, separated into two groups and facilitated two different days
- We reached **64 students**
- Three staff members supported this program
- Ages 16-18 (11th graders)

Student Feedback for Virtual Program :

- “the most helpful was that i could understand the differences of empathy and sympathy”
- “The most helpful part of this program was being able to identify masks and red flags in people. I believe this because now we can know some things that can stop us from getting in a bad situation and let us be able to help someone else who might be on it.”
- “I would say the videos were very helpful”
- “Everything in this program was helpful, there were things i didn't understand before but now i am very clear about them.”
- “It was fun learning about empathy”
- “everything about the program was very amazing, i feel comfortable talking to everyone and i have fun as well.”

Challenges:

- Connecting with schools
- Language barriers
- Time management
- Virtual platform

Contact Info:

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Looking ahead:

- International High School at Langley Park
- Partnership with CPS/Office of strategic partnerships and community solutions (middle schools in PG County)
- Partnership with Fairgirls (4 highschools)
- Groups