

Case Study: John F. Kennedy Junior-Senior High School

Your prevention team has been working with the John F. Kennedy Junior-Senior High School for the past two years. Initially you helped develop some large assembly presentations and then several workshops for students who were Freshman and Sophomores in the school. During the past year, you have worked intensely delivering Girls Circle to a group of Freshman girls. One of your biggest champions is the Health Teacher, Rebecca Lopez. Rebecca helped you initially get your foot in the door and was the key person in organizing your ability to deliver Girls Circle this past year.

The principal, Marie Johnson, has been at this school for eight years and is respected by faculty, students, parents and the community. She prides herself on being an innovator and a pioneer in a lot of academic arenas. The person responsible for many of the curricula and special initiatives is Marcus Lewis, the Vice-Principal. Your prevention team has met both Marie and Marcus over the past two years but you have not had a substantive conversation with either of them. You realize that they are pivotal if you want to work more holistically with the school and begin to create a healthy school environment and change some of the social norms related to sexual violence.

During the past year, the School Board, has approved utilizing a comprehensive sexual health curriculum for all grade levels and has involved numerous parent groups in this process. They have also worked with their Health and Wellness committee on this process.

Anecdotally, you have heard from students, community members and Rebecca Lopez that there have been numerous incidents of sexual assault at this Junior/Senior High School but you are not sure if this is fact or perception. Your team is unsure of what the protocol is for reporting. In addition, you are not sure the role faculty and staff play in this process.

You feel that this school has a lot of potential in working with your team over the next year or two. Is there a role for expanding Girls Circle? Could you incorporate more bystander training into your work? What does the Student Handbook say about a code of conduct? What are the expectations for staff and faculty? Might you leverage an internal social marketing campaign? Leverage students? Assess the environment? Build positive social norms that would enhance learning and overall academic achievement? There is a lot to consider.

