

Mandated new policy.

Students

Exploitation; Sexual Harassment

Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program

Definitions

Sexual violence is a multi-layered oppression that occurs at the societal and individual level and is connected to and influenced by other forms of oppression, in particular, sexism, racism and heterosexism. On the societal level, it is the preponderance of attitudes, actions, social norms that perpetuate and sustain environments and behaviors that promote a cultural tolerance, acceptance, and denial of sexual assault and abuse. On an individual level, sexual violence is a wide range of sexual acts and behaviors that are unwanted, coerced, committed without consent, or forced either by physical means or through threats.

Sexual abuse refers to coerced or forced sexual contact or activity that may be ongoing or occurs over time, often within a trusting relationship. Most victims know their perpetrators. Perpetrators are usually older than their victims and may trick or force them into gradually doing the sexual behavior. The sexual behavior may not be violent and may even be pleasurable to the child, who doesn't necessarily know it is wrong. Perpetrators of ongoing sexual abuse control the child/youth through secrecy, shame, or threats. Children cannot consent to sexual contact with adults or older youth, and sexual contact is considered abuse, regardless of whether it includes touching or not.

Sexual assault can be defined as any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs by force or without consent of the recipient of the unwanted sexual activity. This includes sexual activity such as forced sexual intercourse, forcible sodomy, child molestation, incest, fondling, and attempted rape. It includes sexual acts against people who are unable to consent either due to age or lack of capacity.

Program

The Woodbridge School District shall implement the Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program identified or developed, in compliance with C.G.S 17a-101q, by the Department of Children and Families, in collaboration with the Department of Education and other assisting entities, with the goal of informing students and staff about child sexual abuse and assault awareness and available resources. The District's implementation of the Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program, per statute, shall be not later than October 1, 2016. The program, for students in Grades K-12, inclusive, shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Providing teachers instructional modules that may include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Training regarding the prevention and identification of, and response to, child sexual abuse and assault, and
 - b. Resources to further student, teacher and parental awareness regarding child sexual abuse and the prevention of such abuse and assault.

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Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program (continued)

Program (continued)

2. Providing students age-appropriate educational materials designed for children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, regarding child sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention that may include, but not be limited to:
 - a. The skills to recognize:
 - i. Child sexual abuse and assault,
 - ii. Boundary violations and unwanted forms of touching and contact, and
 - iii. Ways offenders groom or desensitize victims.
 - b. Strategies to promote disclosure, reduce self-blame and mobilize bystanders.
 - c. Actions that child victims of sexual abuse and assault may take to obtain assistance.
 - d. Intervention and counseling options for child victims of sexual abuse and assault.
 - e. Access to educational resources to enable child victims of sexual abuse and assault to succeed in school.
 - f. Uniform procedures for reporting instances of child sexual abuse and assault to school staff members.

The lessons should be evidence-informed, developmentally and age appropriate and informed by the required curricula standards and performance indicators contained in the SDE Guidelines (Section Three).

[Note: Above items a, b, c, d, e, and f are required per P.A. 14-196.]

3. Implementing a child sexual abuse curriculum to provide age-appropriate information to teach students the difference between appropriate and inappropriate conduct in situations where child sexual abuse or sexual assault could occur, and to identify actions a child may take to prevent and report sexual abuse or sexual assault. Students will be:
 - a. Provided with resources and referrals to handle these potentially dangerous situations.
 - b. Provided access to available counseling and educational support.

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Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program (continued)

The Woodbridge Board of Education directs the Superintendent develop administrative regulations to address the issues of students obtaining assistance, intervention and counseling options, access to educational resources and procedures for reporting instances of child sexual abuse and assault.

A student shall be excused from participating in classroom instruction regarding sexual abuse and sexual assault upon receipt by the Principal of a written request from the student's parent or guardian.

Any student exempted from the sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program shall be provided, during the period of time in which the student would otherwise be participating in such program, an opportunity for other study or academic work.

Students shall be encouraged to disclose abuse to a trusted adult member of the staff, including, but not limited to, teachers, administrators, nurses, coaches, and counselors. Child abuse reporting procedures will be followed for all acts of violence and sexual abuse against children as delineated in policy #5141.4, "Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse," and its accompanying regulations.

Connecticut General Statutes §17a-101, as amended, requires all school employees including the Superintendent of Schools, school teachers, substitute teachers, administrators, school guidance counselors, school paraprofessionals, licensed nurses, physicians, psychologists, social workers, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, or any other person, who in the performance of his/her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to District students, who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused, neglected, or placed in imminent risk of serious harm to report such abuse and/or neglect in compliance with applicable state statutes.

An oral report by telephone or in person shall be made as soon as possible but no later than 12 hours to the Commissioner of Children and Families and to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee followed within 48 hours by a written report to the Department of Children and Families.

Reporting suspected abuse and/or neglect of children, in addition to the requirements pertaining to staff training, record keeping and dissemination of this policy, shall be in accordance with the procedures established and set forth in the Administrative Regulation #5141.4.

(cf. 5131.911 – Bullying)

(cf. 5141.4 – Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse)

(cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)

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Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program (continued)

Reporting Child Sexual Abuse and Assault

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
17a-101q State-wide sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program (as amended by Section 415 of the June 2015 Special Session Public Act 15-5)
A State-wide K-12 Sexual Assault and Abuse Prevention and Awareness Program developed by DCF, SDE, and Connecticut Alliance (The Alliance) to End Sexual Violence.

Policy adopted:

**Woodbridge School District
Woodbridge, Connecticut**

**Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program
Student Program Opt-Out Form**

Connecticut Law, Public Act 14-196, mandates that schools provide age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in Kindergarten through Grade 12. The Woodbridge School District will be utilizing instructional modules and developmentally appropriate educational material in each school and in all grades.

The age-appropriate materials for students may include skills in recognizing child sexual abuse and assault, boundary violations and unwanted forms of touching and contact, and ways offenders groom or desensitize victims and strategies to promote disclosure, reduce self-blame and mobilize bystanders.

In addition, the instructions will include actions child victims may take to get help, intervention and counseling options for child victims, access to educational resources to help child victims succeed in school and uniform procedures for reporting instances for child sexual abuse and assault to school staff.

The law allows students to opt-out of the awareness program or any part of it if the student's parent or guardian so notifies the District in writing.

Please sign this form **ONLY** if you **DO NOT** want your child to participate in this program.

Child's Name: _____

Child's Grade: _____ Child's Teacher: _____

I DO NOT want my child, named above, to participate in the sexual abuse awareness and prevention program that will be conducted by the Woodbridge School District.

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

This form must be received at school by _____

If a parent/guardian does not submit this opt-out form, the student will participate in the program.

Students who do not participate in this program will be provided opportunities for study and/or school work when the student would otherwise be participating in the program.