



Between Friends is one of four sites throughout U.S. funded by The Allstate Foundation to launch Expect Respect in local schools

**(Chicago, IL, September 30), 2022** – The SAFE Alliance in Austin, Texas has selected Between Friends in collaboration with Chicago Public Schools to participate in a replication of the evidence-based violence prevention program, Expect Respect. Funded by [The Allstate Foundation](#), each site will receive \$100,000 plus 60 hours of training and technical assistance to implement the program in their community beginning September 2022.

[Between Friends](#) provides teen dating violence prevention programming and youth counseling in the Chicago Metropolitan Area. Our mission is to prevent domestic violence and end the cycle of abuse by equipping our communities with the tools necessary for everyone to feel safe and equal in their relationships. We are excited to participate in this initiative which will strengthen support for local youth and provide increased opportunities for them to make meaningful changes in their schools.

[Expect Respect](#) is a comprehensive, school-based program with three primary components:

- 1) Curriculum-based support groups for youth at increased risk for victimization and perpetration of violence due to previous exposure to violence and other adversities
- 2) Youth leadership development including youth-led events and campaigns
- 3) Strategies for building safer and more welcoming schools including improved responses to incidents of violence and abuse in students' lives

Developed by SAFE and implemented in Austin-area school districts since 1989, Expect Respect is recognized as a best practice in public health and violence prevention. In a 5-year [controlled outcome evaluation](#) conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the program's school-based support groups demonstrated reductions in aggression for boys and girls, and reductions in dating and sexual violence perpetration and victimization for boys. The highest-risk boys (those who reported the highest level of violence at baseline) showed the greatest improvement. The program's comprehensive approach aims to increase students' safety, promote positive social norms for relationships, and create safer and more welcoming schools.

The project will conclude in November 2023 with a National Convening of partners, funders, and policy makers to review successes and lessons learned across sites.

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