



# CHILDREN & YOUTH COMMUNITY PLAN (CYCP) REPORT CARD



ALEXANDRIA'S PROGRESS TOWARDS ENSURING EVERY CHILD SUCCEEDS TODAY AND TOMORROW

## VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

This issue reports the progress made on preventing sexual and domestic violence and building healthy relationships between April 2021 - March 2024

## CYCP GOAL

All Children, Youth, and Families will be Physically Safe and Healthy

## ALEXANDRIA SPOTLIGHT

This Report Card celebrates the work of the Keep It 360 Peer Advocates! The Peer Advocates are: **Alex Zhi McMillian, Chloe Yokitis, Kahleia Zayona Green, Khamille Muhammad, Odalis Monserath Quijano Zelaya, Yaerelin Molina, Kimoree Easter, Larry Cox Jr.**

Through a partnership between the Sexual Assault Center (SAC), Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy (ACAP), and the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA), the Peer Advocates were hired and trained to educate their peers on making healthy life choices.

Each month, they present workshops to middle and high school students at LINK Club after-school programs at Francis Hammond Middle School, George Washington Middle School, Jefferson Houston, and Community Lodgings. All workshops focus on prevention topics, such as healthy relationships, substance abuse prevention, anti-bullying, dating violence prevention, goal setting and visioning, cyber safety and social media boundaries.

Survey data reveal that most of the Peer Advocates from this year and years past agree that they feel more connected to and valued by the Alexandria community since they started working as a Peer Advocate. **"I highly recommend anyone to join Keep it 360 because the organization's culture makes me feel valued. Not only do they care and inspire us to do well on our job, but also in school. The staff ensures that we're heard. They're like a mentor to me."**



## What do you like best about being a Peer Advocate?

What I like best about Keep It 360 Peer Advocate is open communication I have with my peers/staff as well as the opportunities for professional development, such as attending workshops and community events

I like how flexible the work schedule is

I enjoy the connections we make with other people, adults, and professionals within the community, allowing for more opportunities to open up alongside simply just working at this program as a job

I love how we're able to physically go into middle schools and talk to the students whose lessons we create. Not only are we planning the curriculums and sketching out what the lesson will look like, but we get to actually carry out the lesson and talk to them ourselves, which is really neat. When I talk to the students, they look at us with focus and ask us questions and laugh when we make jokes, and I can really tell that they're listening and really taking note and thinking about what we say. The support and mentorship we offer to the students is what I wish I would have had when I was younger, so it is very important to me and I take it very seriously.

Being able to spread the knowledge

The food

mostly the kids and growing a bond with them

# RESULT

## All young people live healthy lives and violence-free

### WHY THIS MATTERS

During adolescence, young people learn how to form safe and healthy relationships with friends, parents, caregivers, teachers, and romantic partners. Healthy relationships are ones where each person's independence is respected, decisions are made without fear of retribution or retaliation, arguments remain calm, and there is mutual trust, good communication, and consent.

Healthy dating during adolescence can be an important way to develop social-emotional skills and build positive relationships in other areas, such as in school and at work.

Unhealthy relationships, on the other hand, usually have an imbalance of power. Some unhealthy relationships become physically, emotionally, or sexually violent. Youth who experience dating violence are more likely to experience symptoms of depression and anxiety, engage in unhealthy behaviors, and think about suicide. Sexual and domestic violence are serious societal problems that can have lasting, harmful effects on victims and their family, friends, and communities.

Youth in Alexandria are experiencing violence as we speak. In 2023, the Sexual Assault Center and Domestic Violence Program served 117 youth who experienced sexual and domestic violence. This is why we need effective intervention services to respond to violence and why we must focus on prevention work at the same time. Creating and nurturing healthy identity development and healthy relationships among youth are effective strategies to prevent interpersonal violence and inter-generational violence.

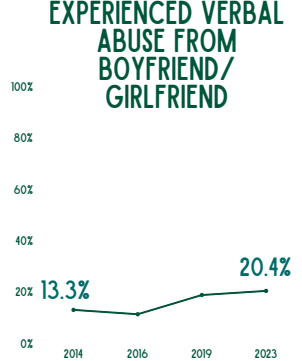
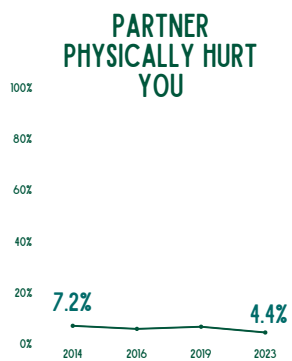
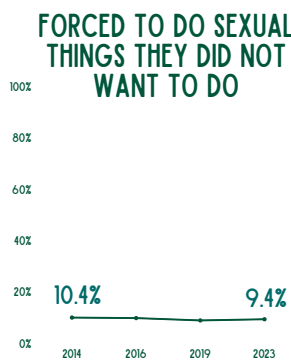
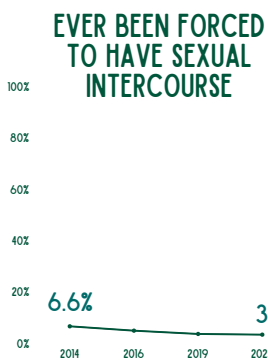


### HOW WE ARE DOING

#### DATING/RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE\*

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Alexandria, VA, 2013-2023

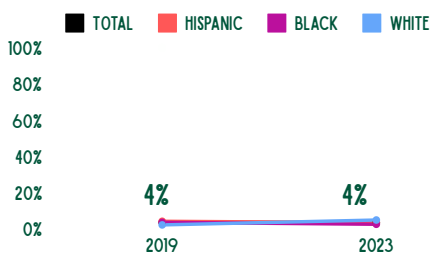
**Trend:** The percentage of youth who reported dating violence, with one exception, has decreased over the last decade. Youth who reported experiencing verbal abuse from a partner, however, increased by 53%.



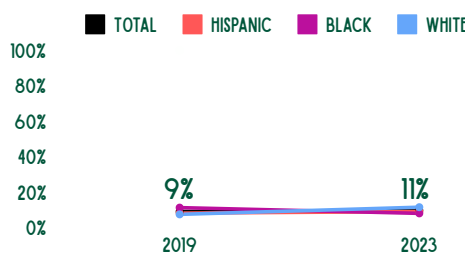
\*Obtaining accurate data on sexual violence is inherently difficult because it is understandably under-reported. The numbers are more a reflection of whether our community is a place where students feel comfortable reporting the incidents.

#### DATING VIOLENCE BY RACE/ETHNICITY

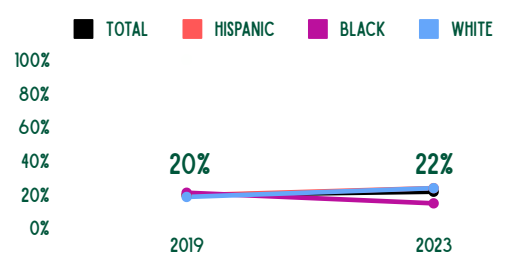
##### EVER BEEN FORCED TO HAVE SEXUAL INTERCOURSE



##### FORCED TO DO SEXUAL THINGS THEY DID NOT WANT TO DO



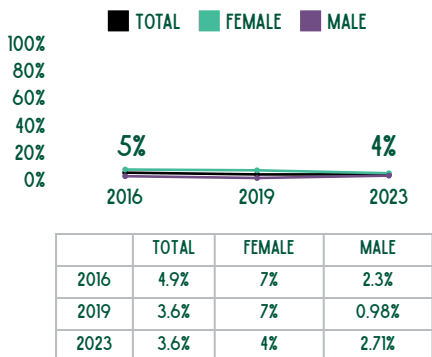
##### EXPERIENCED VERBAL ABUSE FROM BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND



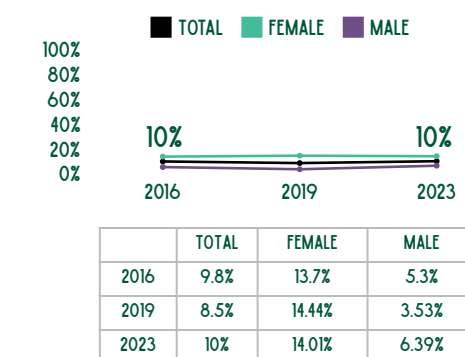
**Trend:** Black youth are the least likely to report dating/relationship violence. White youth are the most likely to report abuse.

#### DATING VIOLENCE BY GENDER

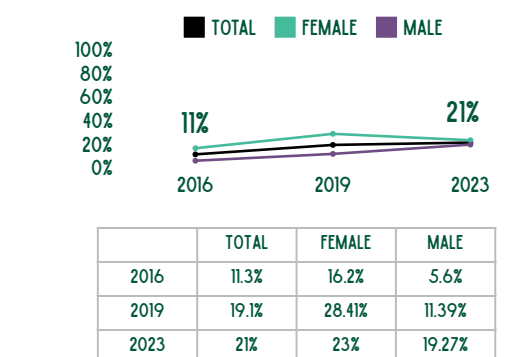
##### EVER BEEN FORCED TO HAVE SEXUAL INTERCOURSE



##### FORCED TO DO SEXUAL THINGS THEY DID NOT WANT TO DO



##### EXPERIENCED VERBAL ABUSE FROM BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND



**Trend:** Female youth are more likely to report dating violence than male youth.

### STRATEGIES

#### Strategy #17.

Offer programs to empower youth, build self-confidence, and foster healthy relationships with a focus on attracting BIPOC youth participation

#### Strategy #18.

Support peer to peer education and advocacy through the Keep it 360 Peer Advocate program

### IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

Progress with preventing dating violence:

2 Strategies

6 Action Steps



50% are in progress or fully implemented

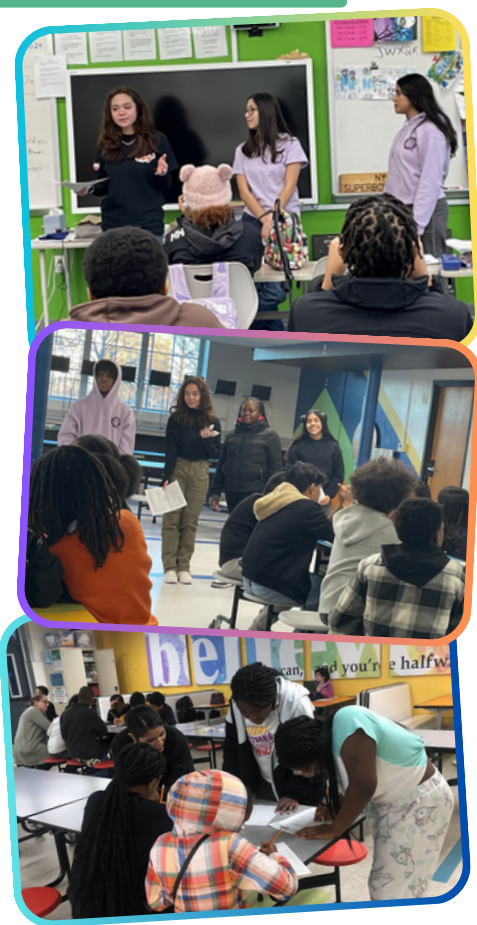
### CHAMPIONS

Alexandria Sexual Assault Center (SAC), Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy (ACAP), and Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA)

### PARTNERS

- [ACPS 21st Century Grant - Link Club](#)
- [Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities](#)
- [Capital Youth Empowerment Program](#)
- [Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying](#)
- [Safe Space NOVA](#)

## WHAT DID WE DO?



- Collaborated to hire and train teen peer advocates in sexual and domestic violence prevention, substance abuse prevention, sexual health education, and general advocacy and presentation skills.
- Empowered peer advocates to educate youth across Alexandria about healthy relationships and prevention through workshops, social media, and forums.
- Provided opportunities for peer advocates to engage with City service providers and leaders for exchange of information and perspectives.
- Partnered with Safe Space NOVA to deliver two programs - one focused on healthy sexuality called **You + Me = We** and the other, called **LGBTQIA+ Youth Social Support Group**, aims to be a place for youth to make new friends, find a support system, and build community. Both are funded through a grant from the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.
- Provided a **support group for parents of LGBTQ+ youth** through a violence prevention grant from the Virginia Department of Health.
- Partnered with **Capital Youth Empowerment Program (CYEP)** to offer the Safe Dates curriculum to Alexandria youth through a grant from the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. CYEP focuses on serving Black/African American and Latino/Hispanic youth. The mission of CYEP is to level the playing field for the underserved.

## HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

### PREVENTION EFFORTS

Keep It 360 Peer Advocates Hired & Trained to deliver prevention workshops



# of Workshops Delivered



# of Workshop Participants

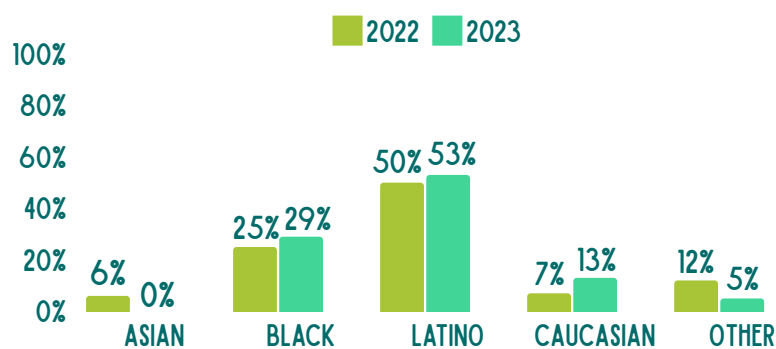


### INTERVENTION EFFORTS

# of Alexandria youth who received services from the Sexual Assault Center (SAC) and Domestic Violence Program (DVP)

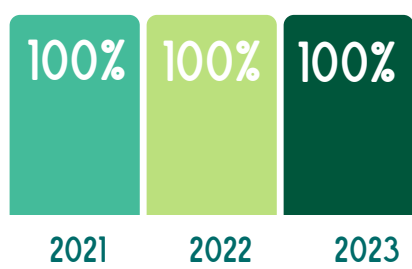


# of Youth who received services from SAC/DVP by Race/ Ethnicity

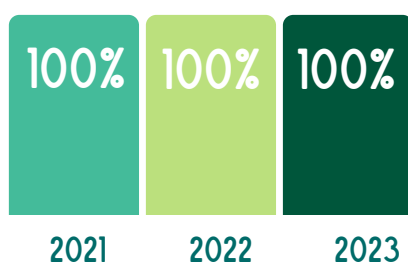


## HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

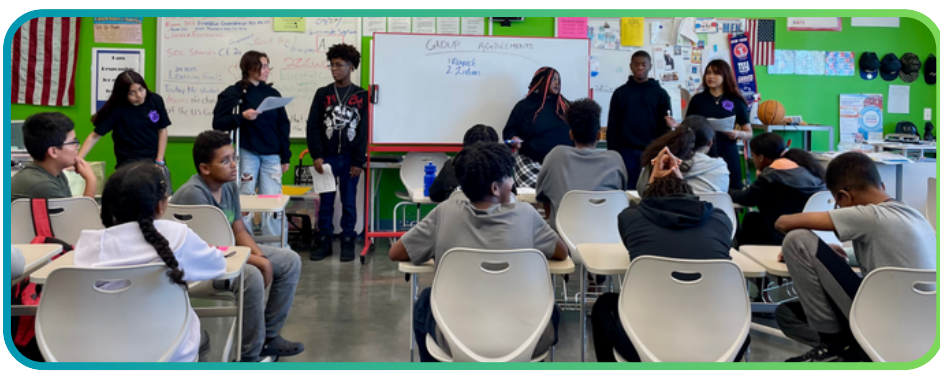
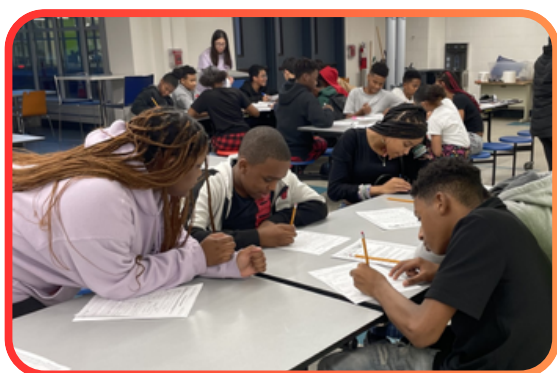
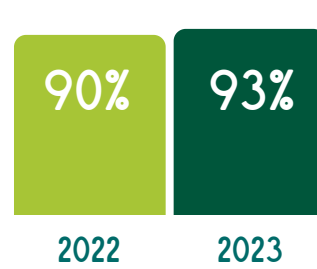
OF PEER ADVOCATE POSITIONS FILLED



OF PEER ADVOCATES WERE SATISFIED WITH THEIR JOB



OF STUDENTS SAY THE PEER ADVOCATE FACILITATORS DID A GOOD JOB



### MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS SAID THE FOLLOWING WHEN ASKED WHAT THEY LIKED BEST ABOUT THE WORKSHOPS:

“ I liked the drawing activity and how the instructor was very nice and very positive and kind and funny ”

“ I got to express myself without judgement ”

“ I like this activity because you get to choose the activity that you want ”

“ I like the skits ”

“ That we had a chance to create a vision board about ourselves ”

“ I like the drawings ”

“ They teach and educate you on real stuff ”

“ the volunteers are very nice ”

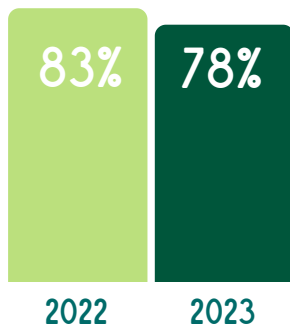
“ The best thing I liked about the activity was how we all didn't stop talking which is what I really liked ”

“ I liked how it was engaging and had a good time with the facilitators ”

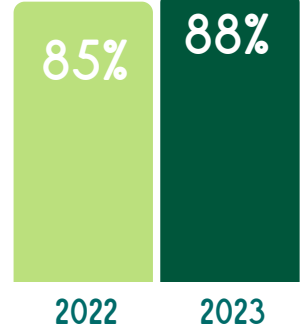
“ The snacks and the positivity ”

## IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?

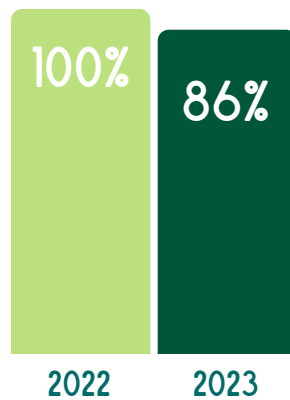
% of Workshop Participants (Alexandria Youth) plan to use this information in the future



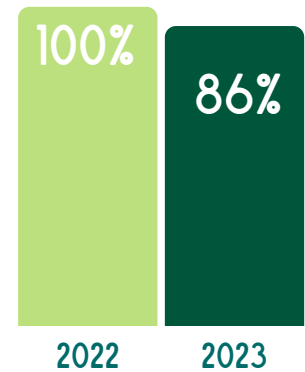
% of Workshop Participants say that what they learned was useful and important



% of Peer Advocates surveyed agree or strongly agree that their own knowledge of sexual and domestic violence prevention has increased since becoming a Peer Advocate



% of the Peer Advocates surveyed report that they have grown as a leader because of the Program



## FEEDBACK FROM THE PEER ADVOCATES:

“ This job has definitely brought me closer to the Alexandria community. I've been able to meet so many folks that I otherwise would've never encountered -- youth at the middle school, adults who we partner with, politicians who support us-- and incorporate into an entire network of supporters who are there when we have questions or need help.

Through the community cookouts and monthly SAPCA and ACAP meetings, I've been able to meet local City Councilmembers which has been a really neat experience. Now, whenever I see them, they wave at me and greet me by name, which makes me feel not just seen but also valued.

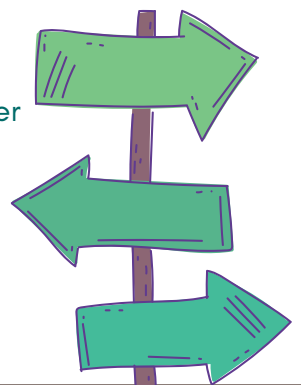
“ I'm more involved into the community & helping others realize how much we can help & teach ”



## WHERE WE ARE HEADED

### Between now and 2025, we will:

- Build a new branch of the Peer Advocate program that will hire youth ages 18+ to offer programs to empower youth, build self-confidence, and foster healthy relationships with a focus on attracting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) youth participation
- Serve as a resource to ACPS staff and teachers on domestic and sexual violence prevention and response (i.e. connecting students with safety resources, providing trainings on SV/DV and healthy relationships, etc.)



## RESOURCES

- **Raise Your Voice to Help Neighbors at Risk of Abuse:** How to recognize signs of abuse in children and adults. View or download the flyer in **English, Spanish, Amharic** or **Arabic**.
- If you are experiencing **sexual or intimate partner violence** or know someone who is, we are here 24/7 to help. Visit
  - <https://www.alexandriava.gov/SexualViolence>
  - <https://www.alexandriava.gov/DomesticViolence>
  - <https://www.alexandriava.gov/LGBTQ>
  - or call anytime day or night: 703-683-7273 or 703-746-4911
- For resources on **substance abuse**, visit: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/SAPCA>
- For resources on **healthy sexuality and pregnancy prevention**, visit: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/ACAP>
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