

The Power of Stories Shared

Alex Lenzen, 11th grader at Cathedral HS (St Cloud), realized that the completion of a research project on sexual assault could not be the end.

She contacted the Center, and learned that, several years earlier, 11th graders had developed and taught a unit on sexual assault in 9th grade Health classes. We gave her a copy of the curriculum they developed, and encouraged her to visit with Bob Bjornstad (Health teacher at CHS) and staff at the Central MN Sexual Assault Center. She then invited several classmates (Lauren Unger, Lee Weisbrich, and Alissa Ziemann) to join her.

They revised the curriculum to create a two-lesson sequence, and taught the Health classes in mid-April.

They were excited by the results.

“They took in everything we had to say, and listened intently. It was great when they asked us questions, and were eager to hear what we would say.” (Alissa)

“I think that, by being peers to them, they took more of what we said to heart. Hopefully, we encouraged them to make better decisions.” (Lauren)

It also had significant effects for the four of them.

“I learned from the students, and saw their views on everything. That helped me to realize how problems can occur, and can also be fixed.” (Lee)

“It helped me to know and remember the struggles freshman year held [for me]. It also helped me to realize the impact of my actions and words on [younger students]. (Alex)

Mr Bjornstad has already signed them up to do the unit next year.