



A Program of SAFE

SAFE is excited to share the findings of a 5-year, controlled effectiveness study of Expect Respect support groups.



Effects of Expect Respect Support Groups for Youth Exposed to Violence

New study assesses effects of a violence prevention program on teen dating and youth violence.

CDC released a new article, [Evaluation of the Expect Respect Support Group Program: A Violence Prevention Strategy for Youth Exposed to Violence](#) in the journal, *Preventive Medicine*. This study discusses the impact of a violence prevention program, Expect Respect Support Group (ERSG), in decreasing teen dating violence and aggression among high risk youth.

The authors suggest that programs like Expect Respect may provide a significant return on investment by preventing life-course trajectories of chronic health problems and saving hundreds of millions of dollars in economic burden on society. [See the full study in the Journal of Preventive Medicine here](#) and scroll down for our summary.

The Study

Conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the study focused on students participating in the program's 24-session, curriculum-based support groups provided by SAFE in local middle and high schools.

Expect Respect support groups are designed to build skills for healthy relationships among youth who have been exposed to or involved in any form of violence or abuse. The study compared participating students with similar students in two control school districts.

The Findings

Expect Respect support groups result in significant positive outcomes for students.

Among boys, the number of group sessions attended related to declines in psychological teen dating violence (TDV) perpetration and victimization, physical TDV victimization, sexual TDV perpetration and victimization, reactive aggression, and proactive aggression.

The highest risk boys – the most violent at the start of the study – attended the most sessions and demonstrated the most reduction in violence, showing that they benefited most from this program.

Girls demonstrated reductions in reactive and proactive aggression.

Exposure to violence at home, school, and/or in the community increases the risk for multiple forms of violence and is associated with chronic behavioral, social, mental, and physical health consequences for victims and perpetrators.

Youth exposed to violence are also at greater risk for future violent relationships as adults. With a per-individual cost of approximately \$650 (services are free to students in participating schools), the authors suggest Expect Respect may provide a significant return on investment in terms of future savings.

To learn more about Expect Respect, please visit safeaustin.org/expectrespect.

