



# KATIE BROWN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Promotes Respectful Relationships by Teaching Relationship Violence Prevention

*Providing our services since 2001.*

August 31, 2017

Dear KBEP Friends,

I want to share an excerpt from a speech presented at a KBEP press conference by Eleane Lema, a student from B.M.C. Durfee High School in Fall River. She has a great understanding of the KBEP, a great appreciation of what it takes to respect oneself and the relationships chosen to continue on a path of progress, and a remarkable vision of the future, her future. Besides that, she dedicated herself to be a great student wherein she was a QuestBridge finalist, was named Youth of the Year in 2016, and graduated second in her high school class. This fall she is entering MIT as a freshman studying Biochemistry. She hopes to become a biochemist with the aim to develop safer and more natural medical treatments.

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"I am honored to share my experiences with the Katie Brown Educational Program, both in 8th and 11th grade, which have been exceptional. I have learned valuable concepts that I will share with others and use later in life. This program has enlightened me how couples should treat each other in a safe and healthy way. I have learned what violence is, the five (5) different types of violence and how it negatively affects both the perpetrator and the victim. Violence causes hurt and fear, and is a never-ending cycle that can destroy lives. Jealousy is not an act of love and care but of possession and dominance. Healthy and fair expectations are equal and realistic between both partners.

The most important thing that I have learned is consent. I love the Tea video that demonstrates how tea or "sex" should not be offered to people who deny it, are unconscious, intoxicated, or underage. Consent is granted permission and if the person is not capable or does not explicitly respond, sexual contact should not be forced onto them. We must respect each other, especially when it pertains to our bodies.

The KBEP also revealed to me the immense problem of dating violence among teens. I believe this happens because teenagers are vulnerable and impressionable humans, overwhelmed with societal expectations to fit in and be accepted. Teens want to have dating relationships and find "the one" even if that means risking their own health, family and friends, beloved activities, and their life. They endure pain because their partner "loves" them but they become completely dependent on them for survival.

The KBEP effectively challenges students like me to take control of our emotions. Though we may desire romance and believe that our relationships might work, we must leave abusers to save ourselves from further violence. Furthermore, the KBEP presenters do a great job in making us aware of unhealthy actions by analyzing the perspectives of both the victim and the perpetrator.

Ultimately, the KBEP has helped me reinforce the idea of safe and healthy relationships between others. Realizing how much I care about my family and friends, I would not want any of them to feel hurt in an abusive relationship. While at college this fall, I will look out for others. Love and support can heal and overcome anguish and suffering. Compassion brings us together and makes the world go around, not violence."

Eleane is just one of the 83,000 students positively impacted by the KBEP. I am asking today for your support. Help the KBEP team reach 6000+ young people this year and change their lives with this vital education, for it is the youth who have the ability to stand up and stop this epidemic of violence.

Sincerely,

Claire S. McVicker, Executive Director