



www.iempathize.org/eyp
an iEmpathize Prevention Project



iEMPATHIZE

iEmpathize is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to combating crimes against children. We equip adults to empower youth to eradicate exploitation.

THE PROBLEM: EXPLOITATION

The exploitation of minors is an alarming reality in the United States, and it comes in many forms: Bullying has evolved into an issue with often severe consequences. One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused by age eighteen.* And the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the U.S. is part of a thirty-two billion dollar criminal industry.^ Perpetrators of crimes of sexual exploitation see our nation's schools as a prime location to recruit new pimps and lure new victims. These youth often have no idea what is really happening to them until it is too late. The purpose of the Empower Youth Program, therefore, is to empower students with strategies to stay safe from exploitation.

STRATEGY

At the heart of our curriculum is the concept of empathy. Empathy is an active response to the suffering of others, and it is a characteristic that our culture is in great need of cultivating. Few of us are completely apathetic (choosing to disregard another's suffering), but many of us get stuck in sympathy (feeling badly for the suffering of others). Empathy (understanding and actively engaging another's suffering) is the solution to issues of exploitation, from forms as familiar as bullying in a school's hallways to more extreme acts like human trafficking. By inspiring students to develop empathy for those around them, our curriculum distinguishes itself as an exploitation awareness tool as well as a character education program with far-reaching transformative potential for your school, classroom, or youth program.

PROGRAM FEATURES

- **Flexibly designed** for many youth-serving environments, including schools, juvenile corrections environments, after-school youth programs, individual counseling sessions, and more.
- Intended for youth **age 12 and up**.
- **Five lesson unit** comprised of two short films per lesson, discussion questions, learning activities, and assessment options. (*Note: By the end of 2018, the program will expand to six modules. See page 2.)
- Each lesson is **25 minutes** in length with optional extension activities up to 60 minutes.
- **Supplemental Friendly:** The program can be integrated into existing curricula or existing initiatives. Aligns with national standards in Health Education, Counseling, and Common Core (Language Arts and Social Studies).
- The most impactful feature of the program is its **teen showcase**. Rather than featuring adults, the media content is led by youth who speak from their experiences of learning to navigate vulnerability.

"I was personally moved by the Empower Youth Program...The stories portrayed seem authentic. I see our kids in the stories. The program demystifies the powerful nature of life's pushes and pulls and their profound influence on whether or not our kids become victims of exploitation."

-School Counselor, San Bernadino, California

*Centers for Disease Control, ^U.S. Dept. of Justice

DEVELOPMENT

The Empower Youth Program was first developed in 2011 to address the great need for prevention programming with at-risk youth. Through collaborative efforts with survivors of human trafficking, experts in the field of education and educational psychology, law enforcement, and victim advocacy experts, iEmpathize developed content that addresses issues of child exploitation without sensationalizing the concepts. The result is a program with two key objectives:

- Empower youth with strategies to navigate vulnerability safely.
- Nurture empathy, so that youth will help others stay safe as well.

After piloting the content in two U.S. cities, we released The Empower Youth Program in a curricular package that allows any facilitator to deliver the content. Accessible through the facilitator's choice of either an online platform or a physical DVD and guide-book package, the program addresses the following prevention-focused concepts, listen here with their lessons' essential question:

- Module One: Empathy – What is empathy, and why is it important in my life?
- Module Two: Negative Pushes – How can I navigate negative personal and cultural pushes in my life?
- Module Three: Negative Pulls – How can I navigate negative personal and cultural pulls in my life, especially when people sometimes wear deceptive disguises?
- Module Four: Positive Pulls – How can I determine the difference between a disguise and a real positive pull in my life?
- Module Five: Choosing Empathy – How can I identify someone who may be experiencing exploitation, and how can I help?



MEDIA PARTICIPANTS

The program's media is driven by two young people in particular, Taylor and PJ, who are featured in the media of all five modules. Both speak from the experience of having learned how to navigate push and pull factors in their own lives. This program aims to serve youth who are looking for authenticity; today's youth connect with the credibility and empathy that Taylor and PJ bring.

IMPACT

"I think the most helpful part of this program was learning about all the different disguises people wear and how to tell real from fake. I think this has already helped me a lot relationship wise."

-17 year-old female student

"I learned how to be a better person and stop hurting the people I care about."

-14 year-old male student

"As a survivor of domestic minor sex trafficking, no one saw what was happening to me. If there had been a program such as The Empower Youth Program, adults and peers in my life would have been aware of the indicators of exploitation and would have been able to intervene. Now, there is awareness and prevention available so that no other will have to be exploited in the ways that I was. Students, teachers, friends and community members are now able to know what to look for and how to intervene for help; you can literally change the course of someone's life."

-Christine Cesa

TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS

The Empower Youth Program was designed as an intuitive program you can begin using right away. However, we also offer **Facilitator Training** via an online course to prepare you with best practices for facilitating. This course is included in the license package of The Empower Youth Program.

Through our Prevention Approach Workshop, we take this training deeper to include content that equips youth-serving professionals to:

- Understand the roots of exploitation, including human trafficking
- Identify how those roots can present in the lives of the youth
- Generate a response protocol
- Advocate for prevention education in your community

Our training goes beyond intervention techniques to also address prevention strategies that empower youth to identify their pushes, navigate negative pulls, and pinpoint positive pulls. In addition to our unique methodological approach, our **emphasis on the fundamental relationship between empathy and the eradication of exploitation** yields a training experience with actionable strategies that enhance the culture of your organization or school.

Please contact us at info@iempathize.org for information on The Prevention Approach Workshop or visit www.iempathize.org/preventionapproach for additional information.

THE EMPOWER YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

The Empower Youth Program is licensed annually and features regular release of new resources and tools for its license-holders. Thanks to the support of donors, corporate sponsors, and foundations, iEmpathize is proud to offer the Empower Youth Scholarship. Through partial and full scholarship awards, we are able to provide The Empower Youth Program to schools and other youth-serving environments at reduced or complimentary annual licensing.

To apply for a scholarship, visit www.iempathize.org.



Regular License	Partial Scholarship	Full Scholarship
\$4/youth	\$2/youth or less	\$0/youth



Coming soon:

A Spanish Language Adaptation of The Empower Youth Program!

If you'd like to add your name to a waiting list for Programa de Empoderamiento Juvenil, please contact us at info@iempathize.org.

