EMPOWERING YOUTH TO END SEXUAL HARM

CAASE’s Prevention Team educated 4,002 youth across the city of Chicago – all while seeing some big changes! We hired a new Prevention Manager and a new Educator. With fresh eyes on our curriculum, the team revised our signature programs in order to maintain cultural relevance for our students and trained 21 facilitators on the revamped material.

Our Prevention Program outcomes continue to be overwhelmingly positive. Pre and post-surveys suggest participants in CAASE’s multi-session curricula improve significantly. CAASE is also inspiring young people to think beyond the possibilities of their classrooms by blending learning, art, and activism.

CAASE helped arrange a staged reading of Now That We’re Men, a play that explores the topics of consent, power, and masculinity, at a local high school as part of their Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) campaign. At the Skokie Public Library, a group of teens collaborated with a CAASE Educator and graffiti artist on a mural inspired by efforts to end sexual harm. We look forward to continuing our exploration of creative methods for engaging youth.

WORKING TO END SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

CAASE’s policy team worked to prevent passage of a wrong-headed prostitution ordinance in Chicago which aimed to further penalize people selling sex while ignoring the cause of sexual exploitation: demand. We successfully improved the proposed city ordinance and gained necessary changes in the general prostitution ordinance. But perhaps more important than the passage of any individual law is its implementation.

The race for Illinois Attorney General gave us the opportunity to press candidates on how they would use their wide-ranging authority in the application and enforcement of policies related to gender violence. We also examined the implementation of current laws, studying who is getting charged with which prostitution-related crimes and ordinance violations, and which cases are being sent to diversion court and garnering what outcomes. Stay tuned for our report in 2019.

Additionally, we worked to end the root causes of sexual harm (including sexual assault and sexual exploitation) by advocating for laws that reduce poverty, reform the criminal justice system, and provide more options to survivors. We opposed the criminalization of both victims and poverty, while advocating for just and humane penalties for perpetrators. As always, we spent the year collaborating with various like-missioned coalitions.

2018 YEAR AT A GLANCE

WALKING WITH SURVIVORS

Over the year, CAASE’s Legal Team provided free, expert legal services to 208 survivors of rape and prostitution in Chicago. They assisted clients with 69 separate matters related to education, finances, housing or employment. In one such case, we pursued additional resources in order to take action against a large corporation on behalf of a client. We’re proud to have received $70,000 from the TIME’S UP Legal Defense Fund, allowing us to move the matter forward.

Our attorneys were also busy educating the legal community. They formed relationships with 25 members of the private bar, trained them on the nuance of representing survivors, and added them to our Pro Bono Project. 13 of the new members were matched with CAASE clients.

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

Each department remained active in our community in 2018! CAASE participated in 41 panels, trainings, presentations and speaking engagements, reaching a total of 1,438 people.

Our community showed amazing support at our main fundraisers: 78 people - more than ever before - joined the Race for CAASE team, and raised funds to support CAASE’s cutting-edge Prevention Programs. ‘Celebrating Activism’, our annual fall fundraiser, was another highlight event. Supporters and friends of CAASE helped us honor the work of Katia Altamay and Sheerine Alemzadeh of Healing to Action. The event attracted 150 guests and netted a record-breaking $38,829 to support CAASE programming.

2018 SERVICE STATS

208 survivors received expert legal services
8% increase in student participants since 2017
4,002 youth empowered with Prevention Education
41 trainings engaged our community