When Chicago schools returned to entirely in-person learning in the fall of 2021, students were excited to make connections on campus with their peers and teachers. These desires were stoked by a year of lockdowns, protests, and political uncertainty. Students expressed wanting to learn how they can take action to address issues their communities and peers face, and teachers sought out our programs at a record rate.

CAASE experienced unprecedented demand for our Empowering Youth to End Sexual Exploitation curriculum and our single-session workshops. Glowing word-of-mouth recommendations at long-standing partner high schools led more teachers to seek our programming. Collaboration with a new community partner further extended our reach as they helped us connect with new schools and teen audiences.

We continued listening to students and were responsive to their passion for activism. We created a new webpage dedicated to students looking to take action after CAASE leaves their classroom. We also adapted our content to more specifically model how to disrupt sexual harm.

The results were astounding. We reached a record number of students—7,162 in Chicago and beyond—plus, we hit a major milestone of 30,000 total students served through our program since its creation. Ninety percent of participants over the past academic year indicated that they understood what they could do to end sexual harm in their personal lives and communities—a 111 percent increase from pre-program surveys. After a remarkable year, CAASE continues to see that, as our reach expands, so does our ability to empower youth.

“While in school, this is such an important item to be aware of, I won't let harassment be an ordinary thing...I'll call it out.”
- 11th Grader

“All schools should have this workshop to teach teens about real life situations.”
- 11th Grader

Participants are more than twice as likely to offer something they can do to end rape culture.

CAASE taught a record breaking 7,162 students, a 2.4x increase from the previous year.

Students showed the most growth in understanding the root cause of sexual exploitation.

“Every school should have this to teach when they are dealing with young people.”
- 9th Grader

Data and student quotes are from CAASE’s 2021-2022 post-program participant surveys. Review more highlights on caase.org.

CAASE prevention workshops are available to schools and programs that serve high school aged students. They’re free to public and charter schools. Visit caase.org/prevention for details.