

NEWS RELEASE

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For
Children's Cove
The Cape & Islands Child Advocacy Center



Children's Cove Celebrates Monomoy RHS TASK Force Success *Cape Teens Raise Awareness of Child Sexual Abuse*

Harwich, MA – Children's Cove: The Child Advocacy Center for the Cape and Islands, held its sixth and final session with the Monomoy Regional High School Teen TASK (Taking a Stand for Kids) Force. The group of 13 volunteers, sophomores at Monomoy, worked together to learn about and raise awareness of child sexual abuse issues on Cape Cod as well as the programs and services Children's Cove provides to victims. The mission of the Teen TASK Force is to engage teens by empowering them to advocate for teens to step forward about abuse and to educate their peers on child abuse issues.

The Teen TASK Force started its six-monthly sessions in December and met with Children's Cove staff as well as partner agencies such as the Dennis Police Department, Independence House, and Massachusetts State Police.

In addition to education, throughout the sessions the TASK Force was divided into three teams to develop their own child abuse awareness project, designing their own professional awareness materials by working with team members from Grouper Marketing & Creative. Each team had a separate week to implement their public awareness project in April, National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

“We recognized the fact that the best way for teens to hear the message about child sexual abuse would be from their peers” stated Stacy Gallagher, Director of Children's Cove, “They taught us a lot about how they talk with their peers and the best way to present information in a meaningful way.”

By the end of May, each team had spent a week engaging their peers in school in creative ways to raise awareness of sexual abuse and violence. One team used a strategy that put creative materials in common areas that peers engaged in, another had a table during their “Jawsome” hour where they played a fact game for prizes but also learned about abuse, while the third used a dazzling hologram that got a lot of attention.

Melissa Maguire, Director of Student Services of the Monomoy School District, attended the last session with TASK Force members, and Children's Cove staff. “It was so impressive to see the collaboration between our amazing MRHS students and Children's Cove. Our students were passionate about their projects which addressed teen dating violence and more. I couldn't be prouder of our students!”

“We were thrilled” said Gallagher “it was incredible to see their success, creativity and passion to not only the idea of raising awareness, but supporting victims who have not come forward yet and encouraging them to get the support they need. They gave us a lot of insight and information to better engage their peers and spread awareness.”

This marks the second year Children’s Cove has worked with Cape schools, with last year being its first program at D-Y Regional High school. Children’s Cove has shared their success with some other school districts on the Cape, and are hoping to launch another Teen TASK Force next school year.

Children’s Cove, a department of Barnstable County, has been the Cape and the Island’s Childrens Advocacy Center since 1997. Children’s Cove provides coordinated and comprehensive multidisciplinary services to child victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse, witness to domestic violence and child sexual exploitation and trafficking. To learn more visit www.ChildrensCove.org

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