



Slide 1




Awareness to Action
*for Professionals Working with Parents
and Professional Caregivers*

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Slide 2

Agenda – Objectives


- Define the scope and impact of sex abuse
- Reflect on professional caregiver's role in prevention
- Describe key steps of prevention
- Understand safety planning as a prevention tool
- Enhance understanding of healthy sexuality information and support as a prevention tool
- Identify and respond to early signs of children's sexual problem behaviors
- Identify and respond to warning signs in adult behaviors
- Develop courage, comfort and communication tools to talk about children's sexual behaviors
- Practice with new skills



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Ground Rules

- Take care of yourself
- Full participation to the extent you feel able and comfortable
- Use "I" statements
- No such thing as a stupid question
- Stay afterwards if you want to talk privately
- Respect privacy




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Taking Care of Yourself




ABCs of Vicarious Trauma



You as the "tool"



Re-grounding



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Stop It Now!'s Approach

Focus on **primary prevention** – **before** abuse happens


- Challenge people at-risk and abusing children to stop their abusive behavior and reach out for help
- Shift prevention focus from children to adults and from people who have been sexually abused to people who sexually abuse youth

Program Areas


1. Prevention Education
2. Technical Assistance/Training
3. Prevention Advocacy
4. Help Services



1.888.PREVENT
helpline@stopitnow.org
stopitnow.org/help



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Activity:
I Want, Hope and Do

- What do you want children and adolescents to know about sexuality?
- What do you hope they don't experience sexually?
- What is your responsibility? What do you do now?

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Key Concepts for Prevention

- HOPE
- ADULTS ARE RESPONSIBLE
- Learn about sex abuse
- Plan for safety
- Promote healthy sexuality development
- Recognize and respond
- Develop confidence
- Take action - speak up
- Implement prevention focused, effective policies and procedures




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Adults Setting Boundaries

The diagram shows a vertical line acting as a boundary. To the left of the line are two stick figures: a small one and a larger one. To the right of the line is a single stick figure with a shaded, cross-hatched head. An arrow points from the family on the left towards the shaded figure on the right, crossing the boundary line.

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A photograph of two young women with dark hair, wearing red shirts, looking down with serious expressions. They are positioned side-by-side, with their heads slightly tilted. The background is plain white.


Won't children tell us?


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The Facts

All sexual activity between an adult and a child **is** sexual abuse. Sexual abuse does not have to involve penetration, force, pain, or even touching. If an adult engages in any sexual behavior (looking, showing, or touching) with a child to meet the adult's interest or sexual needs, it is sexual abuse.

Sexual touching between children can also be harmful, and in some cases abusive.

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Additional Forms of Sexual Abuse


- Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)
 - Multiple platforms
- Sex trafficking
- Sexual exploitation and internet sex crimes

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The Scope of Sexual Abuse




1 in 10 adults report having been sexually abused as a child.




Up to 90% of sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone the child knows. More than 50% is by a parent or another relative.




70-77% of sexual abuse or assault is at the hands of other juveniles.

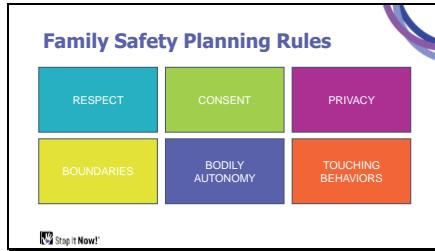


At least 1 in 9 children is solicited sexually on the internet.

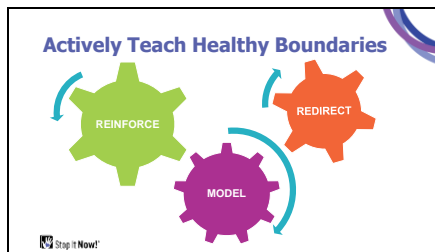
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**Activity:
Family Safety Planning**

Instructions:

1. Review Sample Family Safety Plan
2. What rules are you aware of in your home and/or program (individual)
3. Discuss your reaction/thoughts (group)

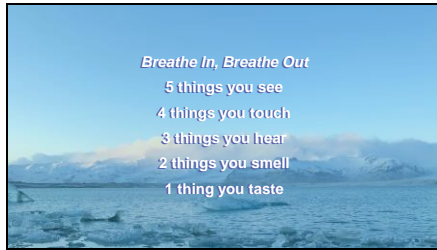
Stop It Now!

A slide titled "Activity: Family Safety Planning" with a light purple background. It lists three instructions for the activity. The Stop It Now! logo is in the bottom left corner.

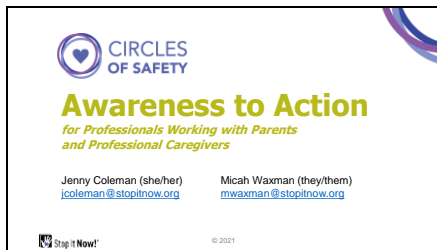
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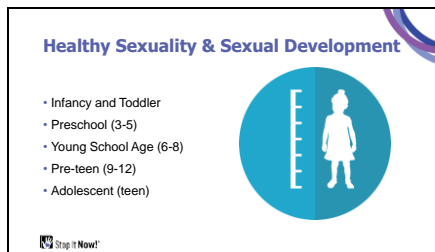
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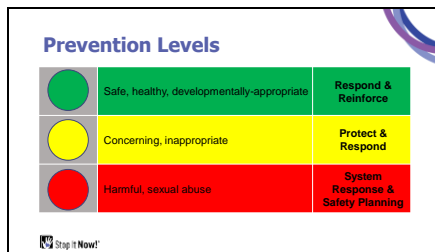
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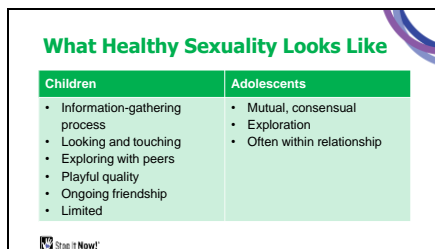
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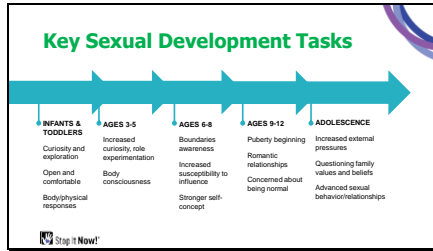
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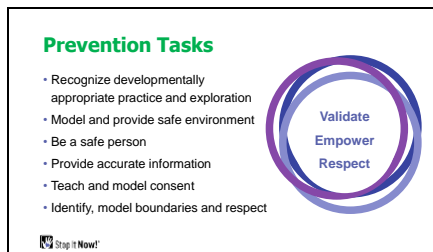
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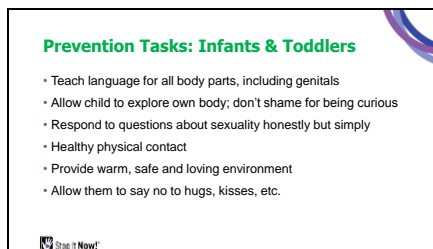
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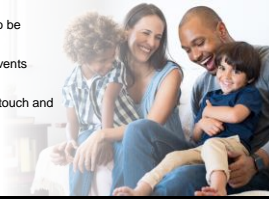
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Healthy Touch


- Everyone needs to be touched!
- Healthy touch prevents sexual abuse
- Providing healthy touch and teaching consent



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Special Considerations



- Youth with different abilities
- Survivors
- As a professional with foster children, students and/or clients



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Prevention Tasks: 3-5

- Teach and model privacy, respect, healthy boundaries
- Talk about "ok" and "not ok" touches
- Provide age-appropriate sexuality education
- Encourage self-care
- Answer questions honestly and directly
- Teach and model consent
- Introducing surprises - NOT secrets



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How Would You Answer?



- How are babies born?
- What is S-E-X?
- Why do I have a penis/vagina?
- What is porn?
- What does gay mean?
- What does “&%\$” mean?

A cartoon illustration of two gingerbread men in a field. One gingerbread man is holding a yellow sign that says "SEX IS A MESS". The other gingerbread man is standing next to him. In the background, there is a speech bubble that says "DAD, I THINK TONY IN MY DAD'S CLOSET... MAMA GEE FROM BABY'S MOM MADE?".

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Talking about Consent

- Minors cannot give informed consent - EVER
- Respect children's physical boundaries
- Teach respect for other people's physical boundaries
- Know the laws – talk with teens!
- Verbal and body language skills
- Model

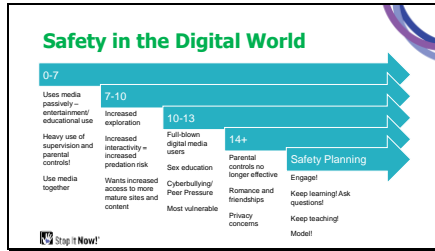


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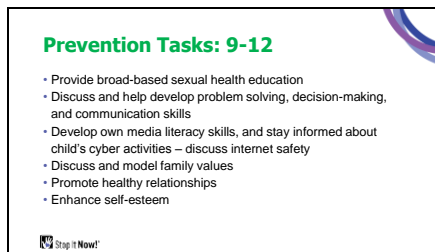
Prevention Tasks: 6-8

- Provide age-appropriate information about sexuality
- Utilize media, books, situational opportunities to discuss sexual matters
- Model healthy and respectful boundaries
- Reinforce family safety planning rules

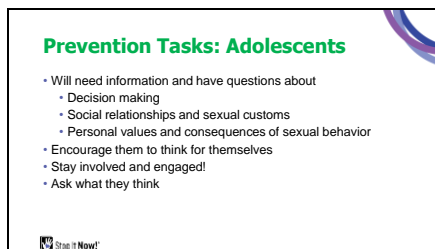
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Questions to Use


- What are your limits? What do your boundaries look like?
- How will you know when your boundaries are crossed?
- What kind of relationship do you want?
- How will you know that a relationship is safe and healthy?




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Activity: What do you wish you knew then?

Instructions: Talk with your partner(s) about the **one thing you wish an adult had told you as a teenager about sexuality and relationships**. What do you wish you knew then? What could've been said to help you better navigate your sexuality and relationships?





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Talking with Kids about Sex Abuse

- Talk most about highest risk situations
- Use "practice scenarios"
- Use "child friendly" language



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Activity: Designing Safety Plans

Use the Handout: Your Family Safety Plan

1. Individually: Start with your five most basic/important rules – what would you want to add?
2. In groups: Share and listen. Is there anything you'd like to adopt or phrase differently after hearing other's responses?

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Response to Appropriate Sexual Behaviors

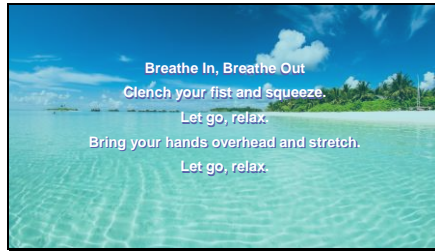
- Respond and reinforce
- Establish and reinforce safety plan
- Educate and support
- Monitor



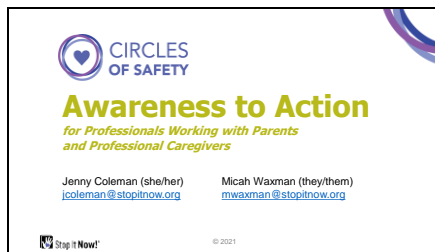
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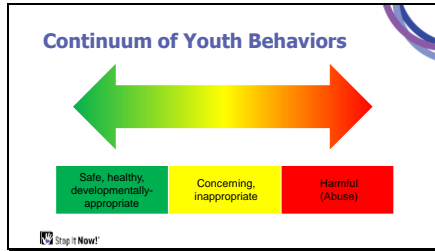
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Healthy or Unhealthy?

Healthy	Variable	Unhealthy
Curiosity, Discovery, Processing	Motivation	Coercion/control, Emotional Need, Reactive
Mutual consent, Equal power, Spontaneous	Dynamic	Manipulation, Threats, Unequal dynamic, Repetitious, Strategized
Looking, Touching, Showing	Activity	Adult sex-like activity, Repeated behavior
Fun, Silly, Spirit of play	Affect	Fear, Shame, Entitled, "Sneaky"

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Consider the Context

Scenario: You walk in on a 6-year-old and a 3-year-old. They are both on the bed, and the 3-year old is naked. The older child is touching the younger child's penis. This is the second time this has happened, but the first time this happened you just asked them to go put their clothes on and get ready for dinner.

What information do you need? What do you want to know?


➤ *What questions about motivation, dynamic, activity, and affect do you want to ask?*

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Consider the Context


- Is the behavior developmentally expected?
- Have you seen these behaviors before?
- Have you set limits before?
- Differences in age, size, development?
- Between playmates - playful quality?
- Coercion, manipulation, threats? Obsessiveness?
- How did the children react when discovered?

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Warning Signs of Possible Sexual Abuse in Children


- Unexplained changes in routines and habits
- Regressive behaviors
- Unexplained fears, mood swings
- Risky behavior
- Secrets
- Leaves "clues"
- Unexplained money or gifts
- ❖ Sexualized behavior

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Warning Signs of Youth Causing Sexual Harm


Confused about social rules and interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insists on physical contact/alone time with child• Age-appropriate sexual behaviors in inappropriate settings• Spends time with much younger children
Anxious, depressed, needs help	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drugs and/or alcohol involved• History of violence, own abuse
Impulsively sexual or aggressive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behavior elicits complaints/continues after limits set• Uses threats and coercion

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Talking with Youth about Warning Signs

- Stay calm, don't shame or label
- Talk about behaviors – not intent
- Refer to safety plans and rules
- Redirect and talk about alternatives
- Help kids build communication skills
- Let them know that adults are responsible for helping them and their environment stay safe

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Response to Warning Signs

- Protect and respond
- Take action
- Follow up
- Trust yourself
- Find an ally
- Review and follow the safety plan




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Continuum of Youth Behaviors




Safe, healthy, developmentally-appropriate	Concerning, inappropriate	Harmful (Abuse)
--	---------------------------	-----------------

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Harmful Sexual Behaviors between Children


- Shows vulnerable (younger) child explicit sexual images, videos or content
- Uses force, aggression, bribes, coercion or manipulation paired with sexual behavior
- Mature sexual behavior between young children or between an older youth and a younger child
- Does not respect another child's "no" or elicits complaints from another child when playing sexual games

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Discovery of Abuse or Sexual Harm


- Disclosure
- Accidental
- Intentional
- Evidence
- Adult's reaction

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Next Steps


FOR CHILD WHO EXPERIENCED ABUSE	FOR CHILD WHO HAS SEXUALLY HARMED
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response• Talking with others, i.e. parents• Professional help• Resume safety• Protect relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response• Resume safety• Talking with others, i.e. parents• Professional help• Protect relationship

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Response to Disclosure and/or Evidence

- System response and safety
- Reporting
- Safety
- Professional Help
- Relationship



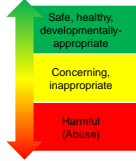
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Activity: Continuum of Youth Behaviors

1. What is the prevention level?

2. What is your response?


- Consider:
 - Motivation
 - Dynamic
 - Activity
 - Affect



Safe, healthy, developmentally-appropriate

Concerning, inappropriate

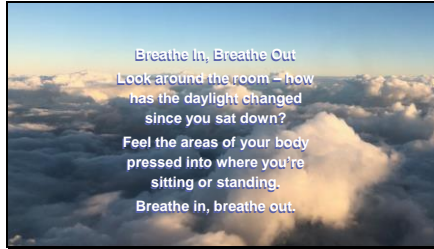
Harmful (Abuse)



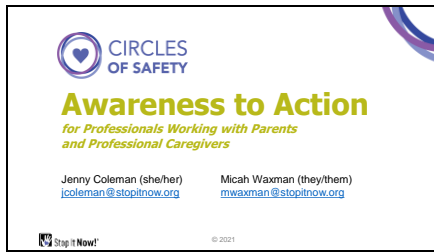
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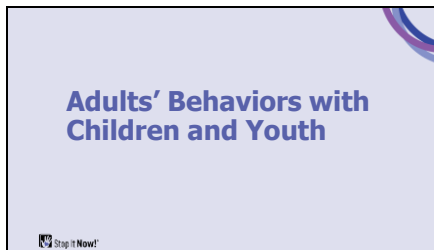
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Continuum of Adult Behaviors

	Safe, Healthy, Developmentally Appropriate	
	Concerning, Inappropriate	
	Abusive	




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The Importance of Breaking Down Myths




I am probably well known and liked by you and your child: a nice guy offender.
I can be a man or a woman, married or single.
I can be an adult, adolescent or a child.
I can be of any race, hold any religious belief, and have any sexual orientation.
I can be a coach, teacher, family friend, parent, step-parent, relative, clergyman, babysitter, or anyone who comes in contact with children.
I am likely to be a stable, employed, respectable member of the community




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Observing Behaviors – Not Intent

If we only knew when someone was walking down the wrong road, we might be able to stop them in their tracks, turn them around, and get them help before they harmed a child.






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Consider the Context

- Whose needs are being met?
- Do behaviors continue after clear limits have been set?
- Is parental authority being undermined?
- Is one child singled out?
- Can a child say "no"?



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Concerning, Inappropriate Behaviors in Adults

Child-focused	"Too good to be true."
Boundaries	Don't recognize what is appropriate Make excuses for harmful behavior
Relationships	Secret or excessive interactions



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Barriers to Speaking Up

FEARS

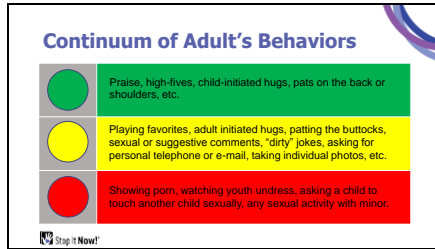
- Misinterpreting situation
- Worry about offending others
- Make things worse
- Safety concerns
- Family disruption
- Financial loss
- Shame and guilt

BELIEFS

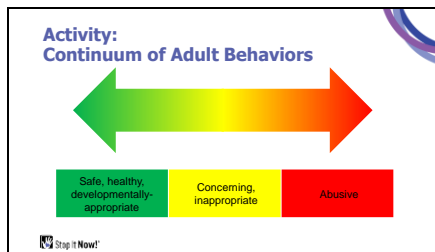
- They're the "perfect" family
- They are a "good" person
- Every family has issues
- They wanted it
- That's how they show affection
- They are "too old"



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Speaking Up - Model


- Set the tone - shared responsibility and accountability
- Be honest and genuine
- Describe the behavior
- State what you want
- Speak up and set boundaries



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Communication Skills


- Language and Tone
- Avoid Labels and Intent
- Stick to the Facts
- Calm and Confident
- Respectful
- Listening Skills
- Follow up



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**Activity:
Low Risk Situations**

- Your dentist is regularly ½ hour late
- Your neighbor's dog digs holes in your yard
- Grandma lets children stay up past bedtime
- Your roommate always leaves a mess
- Your food has arrived cold at a fancy restaurant



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Successful Conversations

DOs


- Set the stage
- Stick to the facts
- We're on the "same side"
- Be honest about your feelings
- Include positives
- Be prepared with information
- Create safety plan together

DON'Ts

- Avoid labels
- Avoid judgment
- Avoid comparisons

AFTER


- Thank the adult
- Follow up



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Speaking Up


- I know we both care about children. I know it's important for both of us that children in our home are safe. **(Set tone/responsibility)**
- I feel uncomfortable bringing this up but it's important to me. **(Be honest and genuine)**
- I notice you often whisper to Marcia, and I've heard you mention to her to remember to keep the secret. **(Describe behavior)**
- I want you to follow our family's/program rules/guidelines about whispering and keeping secrets. Our safety rules (or policies) state that adults will refrain from keeping secrets with children. I would like you to stop whispering to children and having any discussion with them about keeping a secret. **(State what you want)**
- Please follow our safety plan and rules (or policies and procedures.) **(Set boundaries)**



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Exercise: Adults Crossing Boundaries

1. Set the tone - shared responsibility and accountability
2. Describe the behavior
3. State what you want
4. Speak up and set boundaries




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Role Play Scenarios		
PARENTS & FAMILIES	PROFESSIONAL CAREGIVER/EDUCATOR	COMMUNITY MEMBER
1 Your child tells you your spouse asked them to keep a secret about buying them something.	A parent tells you that your assistant teacher teased their 14-year-old that they are "leaky."	You have noticed that your neighbor has been standing at the bus stop with a group of children since school started.
2 You are concerned that your spouse may be looking at illegal images.	A parent in your day camp has been bringing gifts to another camper (not his own child) and asking about the child's home life.	You've noticed a religious leader taking a special interest in a 13-year-old, often bringing them alone to their office.
3 While visiting for 2 weeks, Aunt Mary tells your 6-year-old that he is going to break lots of hearts and jokes about being younger so she can take a "roll in the hay with him."	In the teacher's lounge, you overhear the librarian talking on the phone about an overseas trip, and how cool it was to see so many young, pretty girls "dating" older men.	Your supervisor brings his 8-year-old to work daily after school. A colleague has been spending a lot of time with her. You observed him telling her that her dad doesn't understand her the way he does, and he has been talking about dating websites he visits.

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Role Play Debrief


- What was challenging to talk about?
- What did you notice about switching roles? How did it change your perspective? How was it to observe?
- What skills came naturally?
- What skills did you notice need strengthening?
- What else??



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What Are We Asking You to Do?

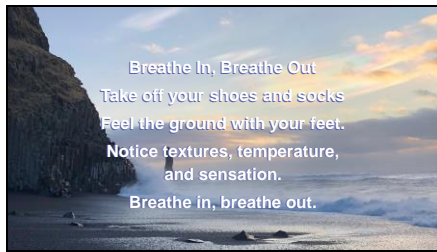
- **Plan** ahead for safety
- **Act** *before* children are harmed or to prevent further abuse.
- **Recognize** both prevention opportunities and concerning situations
- **Imbed** prevention into the setting
- **Sustain** prevention actions

 **Stop 'n' Now!**

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