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**CIRCLES
OF SAFETY**

**Circles of Safety:
Understanding the Role of
Healthy Sexuality
Development and Education
in Sex Abuse Prevention**

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
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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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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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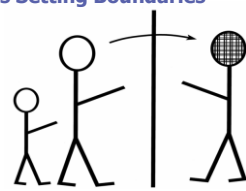
Key Concepts for Prevention


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

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Adults Setting Boundaries



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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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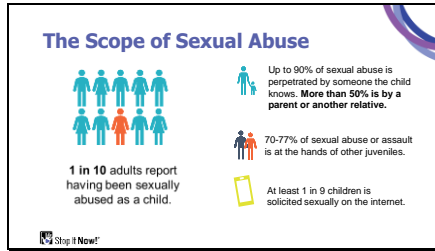
Additional Forms of Sexual Abuse

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

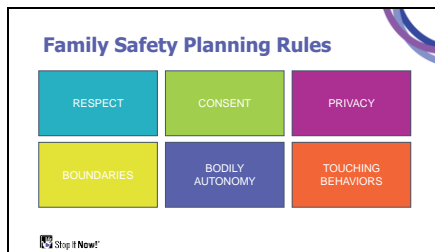
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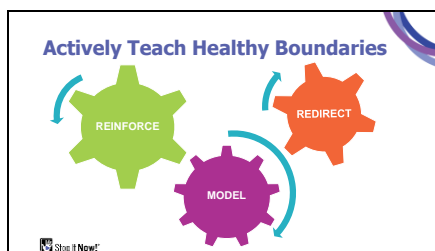
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


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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)

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**Children's
Sexual Behaviors**


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Healthy Sexuality & Sexual Development

- Infancy and Toddler
- Preschool (3-5)
- Young School Age (6-8)
- Pre-teen (9-12)
- Adolescent (teen)



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**Activity:
Learning about Sex**


Instructions: Discuss one of the following, practicing your self-care:

1. How you learned about sex?
2. How you wish you had learned about sex?
3. How children should learn about sex?

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
**Children's sexual behaviors
are different from
adults' sexual behaviors.**

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Prevention Levels


	Safe, healthy, developmentally-appropriate	Respond & Reinforce
	Concerning, inappropriate	Protect & Respond
	Harmful, sexual abuse	System Response & Safety Planning

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What Healthy Sexuality Looks Like

Children	Adolescents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information-gathering process• Looking and touching• Exploring with peers• Playful quality• Ongoing friendship• Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mutual, consensual• Exploration• Often within relationship




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Key Sexual Development Tasks




INFANTS & TODDLERS	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-8	AGES 9-12	ADOLESCENCE
Curiosity and exploration Open and comfortable Body/physical responses	Increased curiosity, role experimentation Body consciousness	Boundaries awareness Increased susceptibility to influence Stronger self-concept	Puberty beginning Romantic relationships Concerned about being normal	Increased external pressures Questioning family values and beliefs Advanced sexual behavior/relationships




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Prevention Tasks

- Recognize developmentally appropriate practice and exploration
- Model and provide safe environment
- Be a safe person
- Provide accurate information
- Teach and model consent
- Identify, model boundaries and respect





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Prevention Tasks: Infants & Toddlers

- Teach language for all body parts, including genitals
- Allow child to explore own body; don't shame for being curious
- Respond to questions about sexuality honestly but simply
- Healthy physical contact
- Provide warm, safe and loving environment
- Allow them to say no to hugs, kisses, etc.



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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?


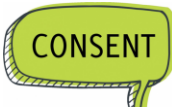





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Talking about Consent

- 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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Safety in the Digital World


0-7 Uses media passively = entertainment/ educational use Heavy use of supervision and parental controls! Use media together	7-10 Increased exploration Increased interactivity = increased predation risk Wants increased access to more mature sites and content	10-13 Full-blown digital media users Sex education Cyberbullying/ Peer Pressure Most vulnerable	14+ Parental controls no longer effective Romance and friendships Privacy concerns	Safety Planning Engage! Keep learning! Ask questions! Keep teaching! Model!
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Prevention Tasks: 9-12

- Provide broad-based sexual health education
- Discuss and help develop problem solving, decision-making, and communication skills
- Develop own media literacy skills, and stay informed about child's cyber activities – discuss internet safety
- Discuss and model family values
- Promote healthy relationships
- Enhance self-esteem

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Prevention Tasks: Adolescents

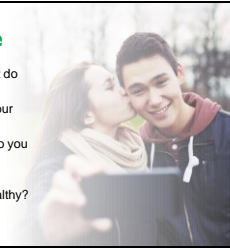
- Will need information and have questions about
 - Decision making
 - Social relationships and sexual customs
 - Personal values and consequences of sexual behavior
- Encourage them to think for themselves
- Stay involved and engaged!
- Ask what they think



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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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Thank you!

training@stopitnow.org
stopitnow.org
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Helpline: **1.888.PREVENT**

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