

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



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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



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



Activity: I Want, Hope and Do · What do you want children

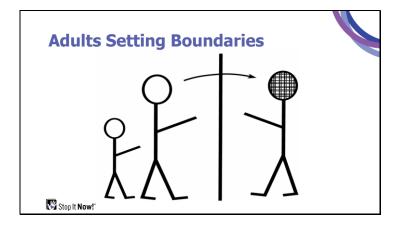
- and adolescents to know about sexuality?
- What do you hope they don't experience sexually?
- What is your responsibility? What do you do now?

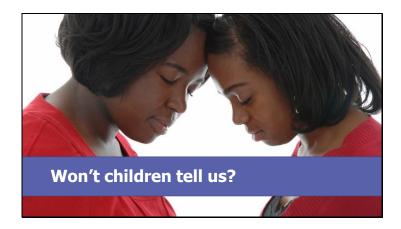


Key Concepts for Prevention

- 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







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.



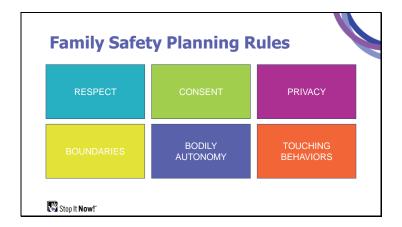
Additional Forms of Sexual Abuse

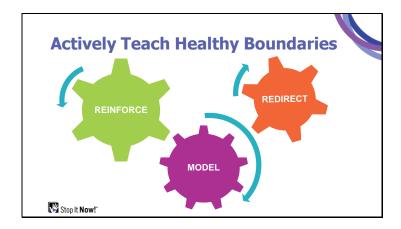
- Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)
 - Multiple platforms
- Sex trafficking
- Sexual exploitation and internet sex crimes





The Scope of Sexual Abuse 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:

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



Children's Sexual Behaviors



Healthy Sexuality & Sexual Development Infancy and Toddler Preschool (3-5) Young School Age (6-8) Pre-teen (9-12) Adolescent (teen)

Activity: Learning about Sex

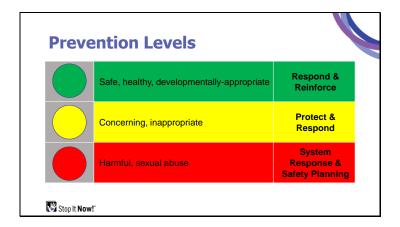
Instructions: Discuss one of the following, practicing your self-care:

- How you learned about sex?
 How you wish you had learned about sex?
 How children should learn about sex?

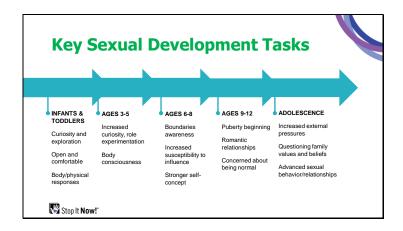


Children's sexual behaviors are different from adults' sexual behaviors.



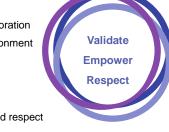


What Healthy Sexuality Looks Like Children Information-gathering process Looking and touching Exploring with peers Playful quality Ongoing friendship Limited Adolescents Mutual, consensual Exploration Often within relationship



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



Stop It Now!"

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.



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

Special Considerations

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



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



How Would You Answer?

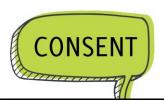
- · How are babies born?
- What is S-E-X?
- Why do I have a penis/vagina?
- What is porn?
- What does gay mean?
- · What does "*&%\$" mean?



Stop It Now!

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

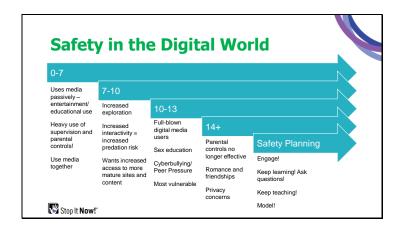


Stop It Now!"

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





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



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



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?

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?



Talking with Kids about Sex Abuse • Talk most about highest risk situations • Use "practice scenarios" • Use "child friendly" language

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?



Response to Appropriate Sexual Behaviors Respond and reinforce Establish and reinforce safety plan Educate and support Monitor

Thank you!

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Helpline: 1.888.PREVENT





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