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Child Sexual Abuse Prevention 101: Staff Training

Participant Packet

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Child Sexual Abuse Prevention 101: Staff Training

Agenda

- **Welcome & Introductions**
- **Goals of the Training**
- **What is Child Abuse and Neglect?**
- **Understanding the Signs and Symptoms of Child Sexual Abuse**
- **Responding to a Child**
- **Creating a Safe Environment for Children**
- **Understanding and Using your School's / Organization's Protocol**
- **Resources**
- **Q&A**
- **Evaluations**

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So what can WE do to keep children safe from child sexual abuse?

- Know about the problem
- Learn about the signs and symptoms
- Understand the long-term impact of abuse
- Learn who commits it and where and why children don't tell
- Learn what can be done to protect children
- **Become part of the solution**

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Notes:

Signs and Symptoms

- Withdrawal from friends or usual activities
- Changes in behavior
- Depression, anxiety or unusual fears or a sudden loss of self-confidence
- An apparent lack of supervision
- Frequent absences from school
- Reluctance to leave school activities
- Attempts at running away
- Rebellious or defiant behavior
- Attempts at suicide

Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER)

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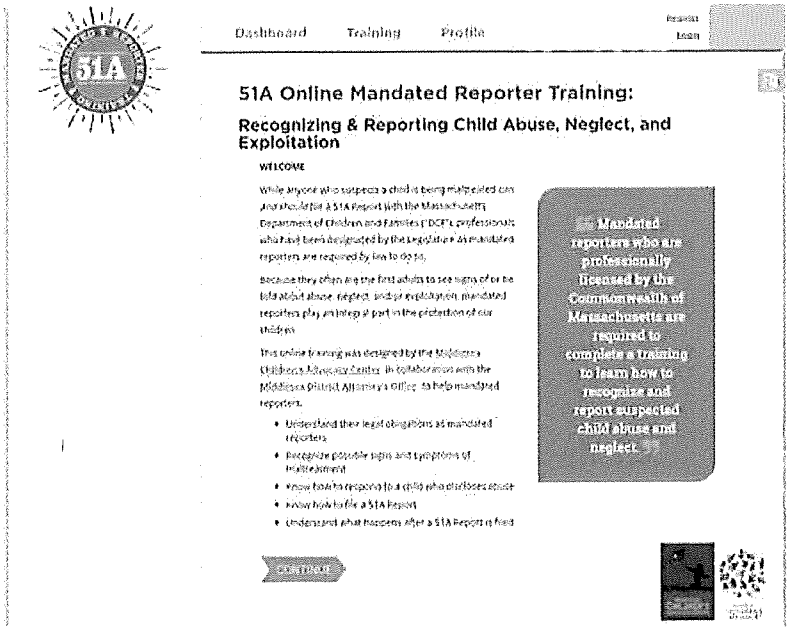
Notes:

If you are involved in a disclosure…



As a mandated reporter make sure that you follow your school's/organization's reporting procedures!

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Notes:

What is a protocol?

- Code of Conduct
- Responding and Reporting
- Safe Physical Environments and Technology
- Screening and Hiring
- Ongoing Training
- Communicating with Parents

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Notes:

Keeping Kids Safe Parent Training Program

Multilingual, multicultural training for parents

Parents learn how and when to talk with children to keep them safe from child sexual abuse.

Parents learn appropriate ways and words to use with children to talk about child sexual abuse safety.

Parents learn what to do if a child tells them something has happened.

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Notes:

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Handout # 1: Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect

CAPTA - Federal legislation lays the groundwork for states by identifying a minimum set of acts or behaviors that define child abuse and neglect. The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), (42 U.S.C.A §5106g), as amended by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003, defines child abuse and neglect as, at minimum:

> "Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm" (CAPTA 2010).

Child maltreatment generally falls into several distinct categories: physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and sexual abuse. Expanded definitions of child abuse and neglect gathered from a number of resources follow:

physical abuse refers to a non-accidental injury caused by a parent or caretaker who has responsibility for that child's care. These injuries may be a result of the child being beaten, thrown, kicked, bitten, punched, choked, stabbed, burned or in some other way harmed. The injury may be intentional or unintentional and may also result from severe discipline, a punishment inappropriate for the child's age or condition, or may result from parental lapses brought upon by immaturity, the use or abuse of substances, or extreme stress. It is also important to note that a non-accidental injury to a child committed by anyone other than a parent or caretaker is considered to be a criminal act and falls under the jurisdiction of law enforcement rather than child protective services.

emotional abuse, although almost always underlying other types of abuse or neglect, can also occur alone. Emotional abuse, sometimes referred to as psychological abuse, is behavior that impairs the child's emotional development or feelings of self-worth including belittling, blaming, or rejecting a child; constantly treating siblings unequally; and a persistent lack of concern by the caretaker for the child's welfare. Usually one recognizes emotional abuse through behavior but it is also possible that the child has so internalized the messages of the abuse that he or she exhibits developmental delays, psychosomatic symptoms (e.g. asthma) and other physical effects (e.g. stuttering or other speech disorders).

neglect refers to the caretaker's lack of attention to the child's basic needs such as the failure to provide food, shelter, clothing, supervision, medical care, or education. Unlike physical abuse that tends to be episodic, neglect tends to be chronic - causing the victims to grow up believing that everyone lives as they do. As a result, they may not confide how they are being treated to anyone. Often, these families have multiple problems although not every multi-problem family is neglectful.

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sexual abuse is defined as inappropriate sexual behavior of an adult or an adolescent with a child. This may include fondling a child's genitals, making the child fondle an adult's genitals, intercourse, incest, rape, sodomy, exhibitionism, sexual exploitation, or the production of, or exposure to, pornography. Sexual abuse may take place within the family (incest), or be perpetrated by relatives, friends, by the boyfriend or girlfriend of the parent, or by others in caretaking roles (e.g. babysitter). Although sexual abuse may occur at the hands of a stranger, most victims know their abusers. Sexual abuse may also be committed by other children or teens and is considered to be abusive when the perpetrator is significantly older or has control over the victim.

In February of 2012, the law in Massachusetts was amended to further define sexual abuse to include **human trafficking** - the term now used to describe the recruiting, harboring, or transporting of children to involve them in commercial sexual activities. In addition, the luring of children through "electronic communication' was also specifically added.

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NCTSN The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Child Sexual Abuse Fact Sheet

For Parents, Teachers, and Other Caregivers

What is child sexual abuse?

Child sexual abuse is any interaction between a child and an adult (or another child) in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or an observer. Sexual abuse can include both touching and non-touching behaviors. Touching behaviors may involve touching of the vagina, penis, breasts or buttocks, oral-genital contact, or sexual intercourse. Non-touching behaviors can include voyeurism (trying to look at a child's naked body), exhibitionism, or exposing the child to pornography. Abusers often do not use physical force, but may use play, deception, threats, or other forms of coercion to engage children and maintain their silence. Abusers frequently employ persuasive and manipulative tactics to keep the child engaged. These tactics—referred to as "grooming"—may include buying gifts or arranging special activities, which can further confuse the victim.

Who is sexually abused?

Children of all ages, races, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds are vulnerable to sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse affects both girls and boys in all kinds of neighborhoods and communities, and in countries around the world.

How can you tell if a child is being (or has been) sexually abused?

Children who have been sexually abused may display a range of emotional and behavioral reactions, many of which are characteristic of children who have experienced other types of trauma. These reactions include:

- An increase in nightmares and/or other sleeping difficulties
- Withdrawn behavior
- Angry outbursts
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Not wanting to be left alone with a particular individual(s)
- Sexual knowledge, language, and/or behaviors that are inappropriate for the child's age

Although many children who have experienced sexual abuse show behavioral and emotional changes, many others do not. It is therefore critical to focus not only on detection, but on prevention and communication—by teaching children about body safety and healthy body boundaries, and by encouraging open communication about sexual matters.

Why don't children tell about sexual abuse?

There are many reasons children do not disclose being sexually abused, including:

- Threats of bodily harm (to the child and/or the child's family)
- Fear of being removed from the home
- Fear of not being believed
- Shame or guilt

If the abuser is someone the child or the family cares about, the child may worry about getting that person in trouble. In addition, children often believe that the sexual abuse was their own fault and may not disclose for fear of getting in trouble themselves. Very young children may not have the language skills to communicate about the abuse or may not understand that the actions of the perpetrator are abusive, particularly if the sexual abuse is made into a game.

If a child discloses abuse, it is critical to stay calm, listen carefully, and NEVER blame the child.

What can you do if a child discloses that he or she is being (or has been) sexually abused?

If a child discloses abuse, it is critical to stay calm, listen carefully, and NEVER blame the child. Thank the child for telling you and reassure him or her of your support. Please remember to call for help immediately.

If you know or suspect that a child is being or has been sexually abused, please **call the Childhelp® National Child Abuse Hotline at 1.800.4.A.CHILD (1.800.422.4453)** or visit the federally funded Child Welfare Information Gateway at: http://www.childwelfare.gov/responding.
If you need immediate assistance, call 911.

Many communities also have local Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) that offer coordinated support and services to victims of child abuse (including sexual abuse). For a state-by-state listing of accredited CACs, visit the website of the National Children's Alliance (http://www.nca-online.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=3999).

Child Sexual Abuse Myths and Facts

Myth: Child sexual abuse is a rare experience.

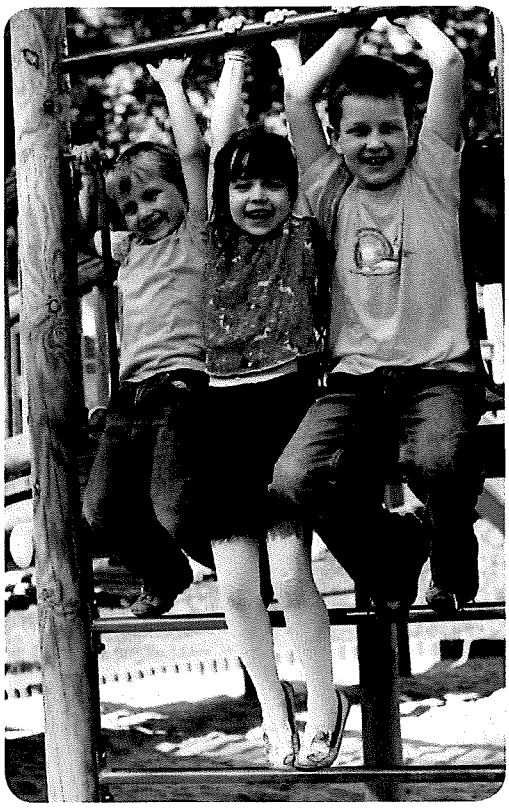
Fact: Child sexual abuse is not rare. Retrospective research indicates that **as many as 1 out of 4 girls and 1 out of 6 boys will experience some form of sexual abuse before the age of 18.**[1] However, because child sexual abuse is by its very nature secretive, many of these cases are never reported.

Myth: A child is most likely to be sexually abused by a stranger.

Fact: Children are most often sexually abused by someone they know and trust. Approximately three quarters of reported cases of child sexual abuse are committed by family members or other individuals who are considered part of the victim's "circle of trust."[2]

Myth: Preschoolers do not need to know about child sexual abuse and would be frightened if educated about it.

Fact: Numerous educational programs are available to teach young children about body safety skills and the difference between "okay" and "not okay" touches. These **programs can help children develop basic safety skills in a way that is helpful rather than frightening.** For more information on educating young children, see *Let's talk about taking care of you: An educational book about body safety for young children*, available at www.hope4families.com/Lets_Talk_Book_Information.html.



Myth: Children who are sexually abused will never recover.

Fact: Many children are quite resilient, and with a combination of effective counseling and support from their parents or caregivers, **children can and do recover from such experiences.**

Myth: Child sexual abuse is always perpetrated by adults.

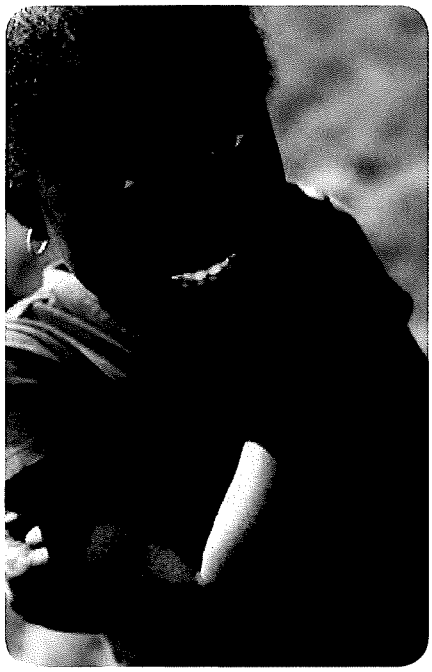
Fact: Twenty-three percent of reported cases of child sexual abuse are perpetrated by individuals under the age of 18.[3] While some degree of sexual curiosity and exploration is to be expected between children of about the same age, when one child coerces another to engage in adult-like sexual activities, the behavior is unhealthy and abusive. Both the abuser and the victim can benefit from counseling.

Myth: Talking about sexual abuse with a child who has suffered such an experience will only make it worse.

Fact: Although children often choose not to talk about their abuse, **there is no evidence that encouraging children to talk about sexual abuse will make them feel worse.** On the contrary, treatment from a mental health professional can minimize the physical, emotional, and social problems of these children by allowing them to process their feelings and fears related to the abuse.

Tips to Help Protect Children from Sexual Abuse

1. Teach children accurate names of private body parts.
2. Avoid focusing exclusively on "stranger danger." Keep in mind that most children are abused by someone they know and trust.
3. Teach children about body safety and the difference between "okay" and "not okay" touches.
4. Let children know that they have the right to make decisions about their bodies. Empower them to say no when they do not want to be touched, even in non-sexual ways (e.g., politely refusing hugs) and to say no to touching others.
5. Make sure children know that adults and older children never need help with their private body parts (e.g., bathing or going to the bathroom).
6. Teach children to take care of their own private parts (i.e., bathing, wiping after bathroom use) so they don't have to rely on adults or older children for help.
7. Educate children about the difference between good secrets (like surprise parties—which are okay because they are not kept secret for long) and bad secrets (those that the child is supposed to keep secret forever, which are not okay).
8. Trust your instincts! If you feel uneasy about leaving a child with someone, don't do it. If you're concerned about possible sexual abuse, ask questions.



Children are most often sexually abused by someone they know and trust.

***The best time to talk to your child about sexual abuse is* NOW.**

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This product was developed by the Child Sexual Abuse Committee of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, comprised of mental health, legal, and medical professionals with expertise in the field of child sexual abuse.

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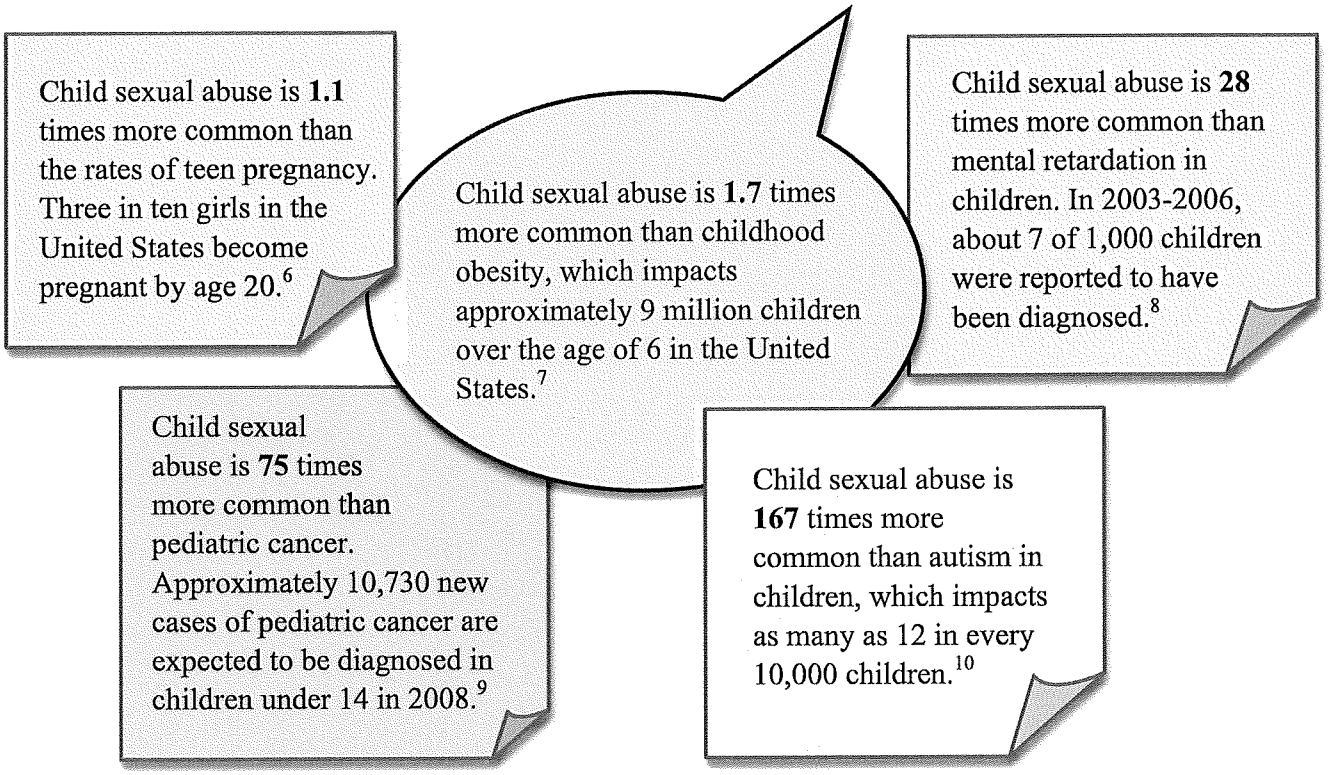
NATIONAL COALITION TO Prevent CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

FACTS FOR PREVENTION: The Health Impact on Children & Youth

One study suggests that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 7 boys will be the victim of some type of sexual abuse or assault before the age of 18.[1] With 75 million children in the United States,[2] this translates to almost 15 million children who will be sexually victimized and abused over the next 18 years.[3] The exploitation of children, and its resulting host of negative health outcomes, should be dealt with as a public health concern.[4]

Consider child sexual abuse in a social context:[5]



Adapted with permission from Chris Newlin, National Children's Advocacy Center

"I am well aware that child sexual abuse and exploitation are huge factors in children's health and in the broader public health. A culture that values its children, invests in its children. It's time to invest in prevention of such abuse." Sharon Cooper, M.D. [11]

Research indicates that:

- The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study estimates that 25% of females and 16% of males have experienced sexual abuse as children. The same study indicates that sexual abuse has been associated with significant negative short-term and long-term health impacts for the victims.[12]
- Child sexual abuse impacts health care costs across a lifespan. Healthcare costs are 16% higher for women who experienced child sexual abuse and 36% higher if they experienced both sexual and physical abuse.[13]

Disclaimer: *The views and information provided in materials and products developed for or disseminated by the National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation do not necessarily represent the official views of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children or other individual members or organizations that make up the Prevention Coalition. Document last modified: January 28, 2011. For more information, visit www.preventtogether.com.*

- Children now spend 45 hours a week with media, 17 hours with their parents, and 30 hours in school. A strong connection has been proven between media exposure and childhood obesity, smoking, and sexual activity.[14]
- Media viewing is a critical risk factor for aggression, linking media viewing and physical behavior.[15]
- Teens exposed to high levels of televised sexual content were twice as likely to experience a pregnancy during the three-year period, compared to teens with lower levels of exposure.[16]
- Childhood sexual abuse can involve a wide number of psychological sequelae, including low self-esteem, anxiety and depression. Numerous studies have noted that child sexual abuse victims are vulnerable to later sexual victimization as well as the link between child sexual abuse and later engagement in high-risk sexual behavior. Survivors of child sexual abuse are more likely to have multiple sex partners, become pregnant as teenagers, and experience sexual assault as adults.[17]
- Data from 67,853 women in a Nurses Health Survey II, analyzed in 2009, examined lifetime abuse reported in 2001 with risk of diabetes form 1989-2005. The results showed child or teen physical abuse reported by 54% and sexual abuse by 34% of participants. Moderate to severe physical and sexual abuse in childhood and adolescence have dose-response associations with risk of type 2 diabetes among adult women. This excess risk is partially explained by higher BMI of women with a history of early abuse. [18]
- Girls exposed to sexualizing and objectifying media are more likely to develop body image dissatisfaction, eating disorders, depression, low self-esteem and possibly lower academic functioning. The American Psychological Association's Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls noted that consequences of sexualization ranged from mental health issues to negative impact to girls' and women's physical health.[19]

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Handout # 4 : Guidelines For Handling Disclosures

The following are some additional tips that will be important in talking with the child:

- Do not let a child swear you to secrecy before telling you something. You may need to report. Let the child know that there are some things you cannot keep secret if you believe they are harmful to him or her.

- If a child asks to speak with you, try to find a neutral setting where you can have quiet and few interruptions.

- Do not lead the child in his/her telling. Just listen, letting him/her explain in his/her own words. Do not pressure him/her for a great deal of detail.

- Respond calmly and matter-of-factly. Even if the story that the child tells you is difficult to hear, it is important not to register disgust or alarm.

- Do not make judgmental or disparaging comments about the abuser. It is often someone the child loves or with whom he/she is close.

- Do not make promises to the child that things will get better. In reality, things may get worse before they get better, but conveying this to the child may make him/her more anxious.

- Do not confront the abuser. This may cause more harm to the child.

- Ask the child if he/she feels like going home. If he/she does not, this should be considered an emergency report and handled immediately by contacting DCF and the local police department. Do not take the child home with you! Provisions should be made by an appropriate agency.

Resource: *Steps Toward Child Abuse Prevention & Creating Safe School Environments A How-To Manual For Massachusetts Educators* (2017) Children's Trust. Full Manual available for download at http://childrenstrustma.org/uploads/files/PDFs/child_abuse_prevention_manual.pdf

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Handout # 5: Safe Environment

Building a Safe School Environment

Physical Elements

From a physical perspective the rule of thumb in protecting children is visibility. The greatest fear of those who would bully, assault, steal from, sexually abuse or otherwise victimize children is being seen. Schools are encouraged to take actions to design, build or adapt existing spaces to maximize visibility include the following:

- Allow for clear sightlines throughout the building and grounds – minimize "blind corners" and "blind spots."
- Landscape to ensure open, visible spaces without the possibility of concealment.
- Secure all areas in the building not used for program purposes that would allow for entrapment, concealment, and isolation (boiler rooms, maintenance closets, storage rooms, unused classrooms, etc).
- Clearly define areas that are off limits to students, staff, volunteers and others.
- Improve lighting in all areas that are poorly illuminated (basic lighting should allow the identification of a face from a distance of about 10 yards for a person with normal vision).
- Ensure that access routes to toilet facilities and locker/shower rooms are well lit and visible.
- Use signage to delineate areas that require staff supervision when in use, or to steer students away from using concealed or isolated walkways or corridors by showing alternate routes.
- Utilize empty space and bulletin boards to post signs and information about safe environments, including how, and to whom to report maintenance issues.
- Consider, if possible, the installation and use of security mirrors and closed circuit surveillance systems in areas that are difficult to monitor.

Procedural Elements

A school's safe environment policies should complement the safety measures established for the physical environment by establishing procedures that govern such things as controlling access to the school campus and buildings; entry and exit procedures; use of the facilities; effective internal and external communication; the expected responsibilities and behaviors of staff, students and visitors; and establishing monitoring responsibilities for all spaces. A clearly articulated, written set of safety

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policies and procedures allows school leadership to demonstrate a commitment to building and maintaining an environment in which every student is safe; affords the ability for leadership to set the example and build confidence in the commitment through action; and helps everyone to be on the same page. Copies of these policies should be distributed widely, posted, taught as a focused lesson or integrated into the curriculum, added to student handbooks, and sent home to parents and caregivers. Some of these actions include but are not limited to:

- Control access to school buildings by keeping outside doors locked, establish which door visitors must use and monitor it during school hours, and establish policies about who will be allowed access and how that can occur (i.e., sign-in procedures that require photo ID, wearing visitor badges, being accompanied while in the building, etc.).
- Establish schedules for school staff and faculty to monitor and supervise bus stops, playgrounds, lunchrooms and hallways – particularly between class periods and during high traffic activities.
- Establish a school safety committee of administrators, staff and students that periodically walk the premises and conduct safety surveys noting such things as potential problem areas and maintenance needs – thus fostering a sense of collaboration, ownership, and responsible school citizenship.
- Create entry and release procedures for students – the whereabouts of every student should be known at all times.
- Establish procedures for use of bathrooms, shower facilities, and changing rooms by students. Consider assigning school personnel to monitor these areas and ensure procedures are being followed.
- Prohibit adults from using the same bathroom facilities as students, and avoid sending younger students to bathrooms when they are in use by older students.
- Encourage staff and volunteers to avoid being alone with a single student behind closed doors. When necessary, however, ensure that another adult knows about the situation, that the door is left ajar, and/or that the interaction can be observed or interrupted.
- Ensure that vendors and other service/maintenance providers are restricted to the area in which their service is being provided, and are escorted/monitored if they need to leave that area. Make sure that staff, faculty and students are aware of their presence in the building or on the property, and that students are prohibited from entering the areas in which the work is being performed unless escorted.
- Publish a school Code of Conduct (see Codes of Conduct for Staff, page 15) that addresses expected behaviors and interactions between faculty, staff and students, and between/among the students themselves.

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- Ensure that leadership addresses periodically and publicly the issue of school safety to the student body, to parents, and to school staff during periods of professional development.

These are just some – but not all - of the physical and procedural steps that can be taken to create safe school environments.

Building A Safe Cyber-Environment

As we seek to promote safe environments, it is important to remember that the Internet may also be used to exploit children by those who seek to sexually abuse them. In addition, cyberbullying has become a problem among peers. Therefore, educators must be sensitive that any online interactions with students do not in any way replicate the traumatic experiences they may have already had. Taking these factors into consideration, guidelines and codes of conduct related to the use of social media might include some of the following:

- Educators should not submit "friend" requests to students or accept friend requests from them.

Options for educators may be to join a professional networking site (Classroom 2.0, LinkedIn, edWeb, etc.) or create an online profile that is maintained as a professional page only. Students can then become followers or friends of this professional page. It is important that all social media interactions conform to the professional boundaries of a teacher/student relationship and that these interactions are educationally valid.

- If the school sanctions accepting friend requests from students, at least one other school staff member should have access to the adult's profile and correspondence.
- If there is contact between educators and students, all applicable privacy settings should be used to protect the student from any content that might be inappropriate.
- Both educators and students should be informed that any communication sent through digital methods (e.g., e-mail, social networking, site note or posts) is not to be kept confidential and may be reported to or shared with others.

Educators are also encouraged to make clear their rules about ethical behavior and the Internet by some of the following:

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- Involve students in creating rules for internet use.
- Post the rules for what is acceptable within the classroom and the school.
- Reinforce acceptable behavior recognizing that offenses may not always be intentional on the part of the students. (e.g., an incorrect url may bring up unintended sites).
- Pair up students into technology buddies so that those who are more adept at technology, and use it responsibly, can assist their peers.
- Model appropriate behavior in one's own cyber use.
- Help students see parallels between unethical behavior in their daily lives and on the Internet.

Schools can and should also partner with parents to ask them for their input and for assistance in monitoring their children's use of social media – when they are at home, on vacation, or even over the summer if the students will be returning to the school in the fall. By encouraging parents to come to the school with any concerns about technology use, administrators and faculty can more quickly become aware of and address issues as they arise. Schools should also obtain a signed acknowledgement from employees and students and their parents that they have received and read the social media policy; and train faculty, staff, employees, volunteers and the students themselves on the school's policies on the appropriate use of social media, and related issues such as cell phones and texting, and cyber-bullying.

Resource: *Steps Toward Child Abuse Prevention & Creating Safe School Environments A How-To Manual For Massachusetts Educators* (2017) Children's Trust. Full Manual available for download at http://childrenstrustma.org/uploads/files/PDFs/child_abuse_prevention_manual.pdf
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YMCA of Metro North
Creating a Child Safe Environment

The YMCA of Metro North serves over 25,000 members. We provide Early Education Care in our Early Learning Programs for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and our Out-of-School Time Programs at 5 branch locations throughout our community service area which includes Melrose, Saugus, Stoneham, Peabody and Lynn.

We are proud and respectful of the trust parents place in our YMCA. A safe environment for children combined with quality programming is an important part of our focus on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

Our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility are part of everything we do. We place great value on providing the most child-safe environment possible and creating an atmosphere where children grow and thrive.

WE WANT ALL CHILDREN TO BE SAFE. UNFORTUNATELY CHILD ABUSE DOES EXIST, TAKING ON MANY FORMS.

Emotional: Threatening a child or using words that can hurt a child's feelings and self-esteem, withholding love and support from a child.

Physical: Causing injuries to a child on purpose, such as bruises, burns, scars, broken bones, etc.

Sexual: Having sexual contact in any form with a child, including exposing, fondling, intercourse, pornography, or internet solicitation.

Neglect: Not providing children with enough food, clothing, shelter, medical care, hygiene, supervision, etc.

9 WARNING SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

- Unkempt or malnourished appearance
- Unexplained bruises, welts, or burns
- Disturbed sleeping or eating patterns
- Abrupt changes in behavior, anxiety, clinging, aggressiveness, or withdrawal
- Sexually transmitted diseases and infections
- Discomfort with physical contact
- Fear of a certain person or place
- Abuse of other children

Employees who are trained in abuse prevention are more likely to understand their role as protector, to recognize the signs that abuse is occurring, and to report suspicious or inappropriate behaviors. Trained staff members are also less likely to place themselves in situations where they could be falsely accused.

We take the following steps to keep children in our programs safe:

- Detailed employment application forms.
- Comprehensive reference checks that include standardized questions that assess risk for abuse.
- Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check & Sexual Offender Registry Information (SORI) check.
- Statement of compliance with the YMCA of Metro North's Code of Conduct and Abuse Prevention Policies. Please read our staff Code of Conduct. If someone is non-compliant, let us know immediately.
- All staff complete an extensive Child Abuse Prevention Training Program.
- Supervisors complete additional training to further promote a child safe environment.
- Staff and volunteers are mandated to report any suspected child abuse.
- Staff are prohibited from working 1-on-1 with or contacting youth outside of the Y (including babysitting and social networking).
- Policies exist to ensure staff & volunteers are not alone with a child. All interaction between a staff and child must be observable and interruptible.

YMCA of Metro North
Creating a Child Safe Environment

CHILD SAFE RESOURCES

For reporting suspected child abuse or neglect in Massachusetts, call the Department of Children and Family Services:

- Lynn, Peabody: 781-477-1600
- Melrose, Stoneham, Saugus: 781-388-7100

OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- **Child-At-Risk Hotline:**
1-800-792-5200
- **Parental Stressline:** A 24-hour hotline for support & guidance in Massachusetts.
1-800-632-8188
- **Childhelp's National Child Abuse Hotline:**
1-800-4-A Child (1-800-422-4453)
- **New Hope:** A 24-hour domestic violence and sexual assault hotline.
1-800-323-4673

What you can do about abuse

- **TALK** regularly to your child about his or her experiences in YMCA programs, school, sports, and other activities.
- **DROP IN** on your child's programs.
- **TRUST** your instincts. Don't wait to tell us if something seems 'strange' speak up.
- Learn to recognize and **WATCH** for warning signs of abuse.
- **LISTEN & WATCH** for signs of your child receiving special attention that other children or teens are not receiving.
- Periodically **ASK** you children these questions:
  - Is anyone scaring or threatening you?
  - Is anyone asking you to keep secrets?
  - Has anyone said anything to make you feel bad?
  - Is anyone touching you in a way you do not like?
- **EDUCATE** your child about self-protection, including information about strangers and good and bad touches.
- **LEARN** to control the stress level of yourself and family members. Communicate with your child and really listen to their concerns.
- **RECOGNIZE** the fact that most abuse happens by people that children know and trust.
- **BECOME AWARE** of your community resources.
- **KNOW** where your children are and who their friends are.
- **TEACH** your child it's not okay to keep secrets from you; that they can always tell you the truth

MELROSE FAMILY YMCA
497 Main St
Melrose, MA 02176
781-665-4360

SAUGUS FAMILY YMCA
298 Main St
Saugus, MA 01906
781-233-9622

TORIGIAN FAMILY YMCA
259 Lynnfield St
Peabody, MA 01960
978-977-9622

LYNN YMCA
20 Neptune Blvd
Lynn, MA 01902
781-581-3105

MELROSE FAMILY YMCA CHILD CARE CENTER
106 Main St
Melrose, MA 02176
781-665-8522

STONEHAM YMCA CHILD CARE & PROGRAM CENTER
39 Pleasant St
Stoneham, MA 0280
781-279-2002

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

The South Shore YMCA serves over 40,000 members, nearly two-thirds are children and teens. We provide early childhood education at three Branches, school-aged childcare off site throughout the communities we serve and day camps, on and offsite as well as our resident camps in Sandwich.

We are proud and respectful of the trust parents place in the South Shore YMCA. A safe environment for children combined with quality programming is part of our focus on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

Our core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility are part of everything we do. We place great value on providing the most child-safe environment possible and creating an atmosphere where children learn and thrive.

CHILD SAFE RESOURCES

For reporting suspected child abuse or neglect in Massachusetts, call the Department of Children and Family Services.

Weekdays Call:
Coastal Area Office Braintree: 781-794-4400
Plymouth Area Office: 508-732-6200
Cape Cod & Islands: 508-760-0200

After 5:00 PM, Weekends & Holidays Call:
Child at Risk Hotline: 800-792-5200

OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Norfolk Advocates for Children
508-543-0500
norfolkadvocatesforchildren.com

Parental Stress Line
800-632-8188
parentshelpingparents.org

Children's Trust Fund
mctf.org

Darkness to Light
d2l.org

Middlesex Child Advocacy Center
middlesexcac.org

Finding Hope for Children, Quincy Medical Center
617-376-5427

South Shore YMCA Safe Kids Resources
ssymca.org/safe-kids

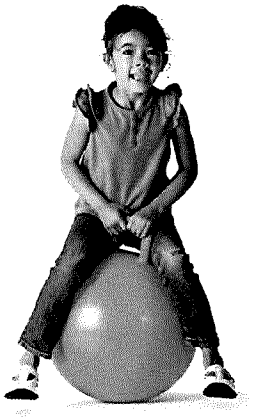
Emilson Branch, Hanover | Quincy Branch
Early Learning Center, Hanover
State Street Early Learning Center, Quincy
South Shore Natural Science Center, Norwell
Camp Burgess & Hayward, Sandwich
Germantown Neighborhood Center, Quincy

the YMCA

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

SAFE KIDS

We're Committed to Child Safety!



SOUTH SHORE YMCA
ssymca.org

FIRST STEPS TO SAFETY

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES
The South Shore YMCAs first steps to safety focus on screening and hiring, training and education, supervision as well as performance management and feedback systems.

OUR SCREENING
To keep children in our programs safe, we take the following steps in our intensive screening of staff/volunteers:
- Detailed application forms
- Comprehensive interview process
- Detailed reference checks
- Criminal background and sex offender record checks
- Internet searches
- Social Security
- Fingerprinting of all EEC Educators

OUR TRAINING
Our staff/volunteers complete an extensive child abuse prevention and reporting training program before their first day of work. Supervisors and directors complete additional training to further promote a child-safe environment. All staff members are mandatory reporters of any suspicion of child abuse in accordance with Massachusetts State Law. All staff/volunteers receive and sign an actionable Code of Conduct/Child Protection Policy.

OUR POLICIES
Staff/volunteers are prohibited from working one-on-one with a child/youth (i.e., babysitting) outside of the South Shore YMCA. Policies are enforced to ensure staff/volunteers are never alone with a child. Child Protection Policies are available upon request. Family members are welcome to visit unannounced, observe any program in which their child participates and are encouraged to express concerns to staff members in charge or a Program Director. All interactions with adults and children are observable and interruptible.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR SAFETY

LEARN more about protecting your child by participating in an informative and empowering child sexual abuse prevention online training. Learn more at Darkness to Light, d2l.org, visit ssymca.org/safe-kids, or contact Laureen Browning, Vice President of Youth Development at 781-826-7910 or lbrowning@ssymca.org.

TALK to your child about his or her experiences in the South Shore YMCA programs, school, sports, and other activities.

DROP IN on your child's programs.

TRUST your instincts. Don't wait to tell us if something seems "strange". Speak up!

WATCH for warning signs of abuse:
- Unexplained bruising or other physical markings
- Disturbed sleeping or eating patterns
- Abrupt changed in behavior: anxiety, clinging, aggressiveness, withdrawal, depression
- Fear of a certain person or place
- Discomfort with physical contact
- A child who abuses other children/anti-social behaviors

LISTEN AND WATCH for signs of your child receiving special attention that other children are not receiving including: favors, treats, gifts, rides, increased affection or alone time, particularly outside of the activities of school, childcare, or other activities. Ask your child these questions periodically:
- Is anyone scaring or threatening you?
- Is anyone asking you to keep secrets?
- Has anyone said anything to you to make you feel bad?
- Is anyone touching you in a way that you don't like?

READ our staff/volunteer Code of Conduct at ssymca.org. If someone is non-compliant, let us know immediately.

INFORMATION ABOUT ABUSE

The South Shore YMCA wants all children to be safe. Unfortunately child abuse does exist taking on many forms.

EMOTIONAL: Any chronic and persistent act by an adult that endangers the mental health or emotional development of a child including rejecting, ignoring, terrorizing, corrupting, constantly criticizing, making mean remarks, insulting, and giving little or no love, guidance, or support.

PHYSICAL: An injury or pattern of injuries that happen to a child that is not accidental. These injuries may include beatings, burns, bruises, bites, welts, strangulation, or broken bones.

SEXUAL: Sexual abuse is the sexual assault or sexual exploitation of children. Sexual abuse may consist of numerous acts over a long period or a single incident. Children can be victimized from infancy through adolescence. Sexual abuse includes rape, incest, sodomy, fondling, exposing oneself, oral copulation, penetration of the genital or anal openings, as well as forcing children to view or appear in pornography. The perpetrator keeps the child from disclosing through intimidation, threats, and rewards.

NEGLECT: Neglect occurs when adults responsible for the well being of a child fail to provide for or to protect the child. Neglect may include not giving food, clothing, or shelter, failing to keep children clean, lack of supervision, and by withholding medical or other essential care.

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Child Sexual Abuse Prevention 101: Staff Training

Handout # 6: Keeping Kids Safe Overview

Keeping Kids Safe is a multilingual and multicultural workshop for parents and guardians to provide them with practical skills to help keep their children safe from dangerous or abusive situations. Parents will learn how to use age appropriate language, understand the signs and symptoms of abuse, how to create family safety rules, and what to do if a child discloses something has happened to them. The parent training is available in *English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Chinese and Khmer.*

The Keeping Kids safe training is primary prevention with a goal to **stop sexual abuse in children** before it happens by training parents how to talk with their children.

- Parents learn how and when to talk with children to keep them safe from child sexual abuse.
- Parents learn appropriate ways and words to use with children to talk about child sexual abuse safety.
- Parents learn what to do if a child tells them something has happened.

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Child Sexual Abuse Prevention 101: Staff Training

Handout # 7: Useful Resources

Children's Trust www.childrenstrustma.org

Steps Toward Child Abuse Prevention & Creating Safe School Environments A How-To Manual For Massachusetts Educators
http://childrenstrustma.org/uploads/files/PDFs/child_abuse_prevention_manual.pdf

Committee for Children http://www.cfchildren.org/

51A Online Mandated Reporter Training: Recognizing & Reporting Child Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation
http://51a.middlesexcac.org/

Massachusetts Children's Alliance
http://www.machildrensalliance.org/index.html

Office of the Child Advocate
http://www.mass.gov/childadvocate/

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Child Sexual Abuse Prevention 101: Staff Training

Location _____ **Date**_____

I. What is your overall rating of the effectiveness and quality of this workshop? Please circle one of the following:

Poor	Below Average	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

II. Please rate the degree to which the training helped you accomplish the following learning objectives. Circle the appropriate number for each workshop objective.

TRAINING GOALS:	NOT AT ALL	VERY LITTLE	SOME	QUITE A BIT	A GREAT DEAL
Participant gained knowledge about the problem of child abuse and neglect in MA - specifically *child sexual abuse*	1	2	3	4	5
Participant understands the signs and symptoms of child sexual abuse	1	2	3	4	5
Participant is prepared to respond to a child's disclosure	1	2	3	4	5
Participant learned how to create a safe environment for children	1	2	3	4	5
Participant is able to Identify, understand and begin to use their school's/organization's protocol structure	1	2	3	4	5

III. What did you like most about today's training and why?

_____

_____

_____

Adapted from Committee for Children, Seattle

Please turn the page

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IV. What one thing would you change about it and why?

_____

_____

_____

V. Leaving the training today I feel ...

_____

_____

_____

VI. Other comments:_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this form!
Please return to the trainer.