CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION TOOLKIT

APRIL 2022

center *for* prevention *of* abuse.

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INTRODUCTION

Erin's Law & Meeting State Mandates

On January 24, 2013, Governor Pat Quinn signed into law "Erin's Law," which requires all public Illinois schools to provide age-appropriate child sexual abuse prevention education for students Pre-K through 12th grade annually. The goal is to empower children with their voice and to give them the tools to be able to tell an adult about an unwanted or unsafe touch right away, instead of being silenced by their perpetrator *(www.erinslaw.org)*.

The Center for Prevention of Abuse's *PreventEd: Sexual Abuse* curriculum fulfills this state mandate by providing sexual abuse prevention education to students in classrooms across the Tri-County Area. Other educational programs CFPA provides are staff trainings on sexual abuse prevention and parent education on sexual abuse warning signs.

PreventEd: Sexual Abuse **Curriculum Details**

PreventEd: Sexual Abuse is a unique body safety and abuse prevention program serving school aged children Pre-K through 12th grade and explores the differences between normal physical contact (safe touches) and child sexual abuse (unsafe touches). Each individual presentation is based on the four body safety rules, "Say No, Get Away, Tell Someone, and Be Believed," and helps children identify safe adults to talk to if they are in danger or experiencing abuse. Once the 30–45 minute age specific body safety programs are completed, the students will have received the prevention education required by "Erin's Law."

PRAISE FOR CFPA

"Conversations like these are not always easy, but they are so important, especially at this age. Thank you for giving our kids these opportunities to learn, ask questions, and get valuable information. Thanks for all you do for our community."

"This program is great! If even one kid speaks up it's worth every minute! Thank you!"

"Very informative and providing students' confidence to report any abuse."

"All the information was age appropriate and presented in a clear manner. Thank you for coming in and helping to educate our students!"

"CFPA brings up important issues and normalizes talking about hard subjects."

"The program made the students become aware of what they needed to do to protect themselves from forms of child abuse. Also, this provided clear directions and protocols to report or speak up about the abuse they may experience."

BODY SAFETY RULES

1. **Say No!** In a strong, assertive voice
2. **Get Away!** To a safe space where others can help
3. **Tell Someone!** A safe, trusted adult *(someone 16 years or older)*
4. **Be Believed!** Keep telling trusted adults until someone helps

Private Body Parts Rule

The first part of the Private Body Part Rule says no one should ask to see or touch the areas of your body where your swimsuit covers unless they are helping you to be CLEAN or HEALTHY.

The second part of the Private Body Parts Rule says no one else should ask you to see or touch the areas of their body where their swimsuit covers.

Source: secondstep.org/child-protection

STATISTICS

90%
OF CHILDREN
know their abuser

1 IN 4 GIRLS & 1 IN 6 BOYS
will be sexually abused before they turn 18 years old

at least
1 IN 7
CHILDREN
have experienced child abuse and/or neglect in the past year

school personnel identify
52%
of all identified child abuse cases classified as causing harm to the child, more than any other profession or organizational type, including child protective services, agencies, and the police

CHILD ABUSE
crosses all socioeconomic and educational levels, religions, and ethnic and cultural groups

the U.S. loses on average
5 CHILDREN
every day to child abuse and neglect

every 10 seconds, a child is abused or raped

child sexual assault happens every
TWO MINUTES

for every report,
TWO MORE
go unreported

Sources:

https://arkofhopeforchildren.org/child-abuse/child-abuse-statistics-info

https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/safekids/reporting/Pages/index.aspx

https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html#:~:text=At%20least%201%20in%207,experience%20more%20abuse%20and%20neglect

https://www.d2l.org/

TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE

There are three main types of child abuse: sexual, physical, and/or neglect. All of these types of abuse have lasting physical and emotional effects. Below is a brief description of each.

Physical Abuse: Physical abuse is when an adult or older minor hurts a child's body on purpose, repeatedly leaving marks.

Behavioral Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Drastic behavioral changes
- Excessively aggressive, violent, or destructive
- Cruel to animals
- Visibly depressed or suicidal

Physical Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Puzzling bruises, welts, burns, broken bones, black eyes, or other injuries
- Explanations that do not match the injuries
- Noticeable fear of caretaker

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or older minor touches the child in the private part of their body, asks the child to touch their private parts, or shows the child pictures or videos with sexual images.

Behavioral Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Become withddrawn, depressed, and/or anxious
- Have trouble sleeping, nightmares, and/or bed wetting
- Change in school performance
- Develop eating disorders
- Sexual knowledge or behavior beyond what is typical for their age

Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Pain, swelling, or injury to genital area
- Painful urination or bowel movements
- Difficulty walking and/or sitting
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing

Neglect: Neglect is when basic needs *(food, water, shelter, clothing, medical care, etc.)* are purposely being withheld.

Behavioral Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Depressed, withdrawn, or apathetic
- Exhibits antisocial or destructive behavior
- Fearful and anxious
- Reluctant to go home

Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Inadequate medical or dental care
- Often sleepy or hungry
- Often dirty, demonstrates poor personal hygiene, or is inadequately dressed for weather conditions
- Conditions in the home are unsanitary or otherwise inadequate

Source: preventchildabuseillinois.com

HOW CAN I HELP BREAK THE SILENCE ON CHILD ABUSE?

Minimize Opportunity

- Understand that abusers often become friendly with potential victims and their families, enjoying family activities, earning trust, and gaining time alone with children, a process known as "grooming."
- Monitor children's internet use. Offenders use the internet to lure children into physical contact.
- Think carefully about the safety of any isolated or one-on-one settings. Choose group situations when possible.

Talk About It

- Talk often about the Private Body Parts Rule throughout the year so students hear it more than once annually.
- Inform children of safe internet use—not posting personal information such as address, phone number, school, etc.
- Let children know that often times the abuser is not a stranger but rather someone the child knows and trusts.
- Be aware that children are usually told to keep abuse a secret. Creating a safe and open environment, as well as discussing these topics on a regular basis, will help a child feel comfortable disclosing if abuse occurs.

Recognize the Signs

- Understand that some children may not display apparent red flags of abuse.
- Refer to the warning signs page in this toolkit.

React Responsibly

- BELIEVE the child. SUPPORT the child. Remain CALM for the child.
- Report the suspected or disclosed abuse to appropriate authorities for investigation.
- Reach out to local agencies for services. The Center for Prevention of Abuse is available for free and confidential counseling, as well as advocacy. Reach us at 309-691-0551 or 24/7 Crisis Hotline 1-800-559-SAFE (7233).

Source: Darkness to Light

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Consent

Consent is explicit permission or agreement to engage in (sexual) activity. It is given:

- **Willingly:** wanting to be actively participating in the act/situation
- **Verbally:** communicating with words – actually saying "yes"
- **Coherently:** being of present & agreeable mind and under no influence or inhibitor
- **Continuously:** on-going from the initial ask throughout the act of engagement

Boundaries

Boundaries are rules or limits we set to help keep us safe. Strong, healthy boundaries set by children can make them less susceptible to child abuse. Empower children to set boundaries:

- Respect and help children understand that they have a right to say "no" to any type of touch that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Talk about body safety & body ownership by teaching children that their body belongs to them.
- Honor children's personal space and privacy by getting consent before touching their bodies or belongings.
- Give children choices on other ways that they can show affection that don't involve close physical contact *(i.e. high five, fist bump, facial/verbal expressions, writing thank you cards, and air kisses).*
- Model the same behavior as adults.

Source: http://www.childrenscenter.cc/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/teaching_boundaries_cc.pdf

Cyber Safety

The dangers of technology:

- Communicating and sharing information with someone online may lead to using that knowledge or influence to take advantage or manipulate them.
- Sexting- sending, receiving or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs or videos can lead to:
  - Sextortion- Using pictures/videos of a sexual nature to exploit them for another person's benefit and/or using coercion or threat of force to demand more explicit photos/ videos, sex, or money from another person.
- Meeting up with someone who they met online can lead to human trafficking- the exploitation of human beings through force, fraud, or coercion with the purposes of forced labor or commercial sex in order to make a profit.

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Encourage children to:

- Remember that everything they post online is permanent and public
- Set all social media accounts to private
- Don't "friend" people they do not know
- Don't post sensitive information *(phone number, address, location)*
- Don't meet up with someone they met online

Grooming

Abusers often form relationships with potential victims and their families prior to the abuse. This is called "grooming." Grooming is a process by which someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for purposes of sexual abuse. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know- for example, a family member, friend, or professional.

Grooming Behaviors can include:

- Special attention, outings, and gifts
- Isolating the child from others
- Fulfilling the child's unmet needs
- Filling needs and roles within the family
- Treating the child as if they are older
- Gradually crossing physical boundaries and becoming increasingly intimate/ sexual
- Using secrecy, blame, and threats to maintain control

ONCE THE SILENCE IS BROKEN

Reporting

A mandated reporter is legally required to report when they have reasonable cause to believe a child may be abused or neglected. It is a mandated reporter's role to gather information and call the Abuse Hotline; however, it is not their duty to investigate. If a child is showing any of the warning signs or discloses, you must follow up with a report.

easy access to the CANTS 5 Form required to report disclosures

In Illinois, you can call the Illinois Child Abuse Hotline at **1-800-252-2873**

Outside Illinois, call the National Child Abuse Hotline at **1-800-442-4453**

All reports can be made anonymously

A Mandated Reporter's Checklist for Handling Disclosures

Identifying the Abuse

- Is the victim under the age of 18?
- How does the child know the alleged perpetrator?
- Is there a specific incident of abuse or neglect?
- Are there a set of circumstances involving abuse or neglect?
- Can demonstrated harm or substantial risk of physical or sexual injury to the child be identified?

Collecting Information

Alleged victim(s) information

- Name(s) of victim(s)
- DOB(s) of victim(s) or age(s)
- Address

Types of harm(s) to victim(s)

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect/death

Alleged perpetrator(s)

- Name(s)
- DOB(s) or age(s)
- Relationship to victim(s)
- Address

Source: https://mr.dcfstraining.org

SIS & ME: DOWN BY THE SEA

"Sis & Me: Down by the Sea: A Book About Boundaries, Safe Touches, and Child Sexual Abuse Prevention" was created by the CFPA Prevention Education department and featured as part of the *PreventEd: Sexual Abuse* curriculum for elementary students

Excerpt from pages 29–30

"Once we were clean, we headed to the car. Then Mother stopped to remind us before we got too far,

'You should always tell a grownup that is trusted to you, like Daddy or Grandma, even your teacher too,

When you feel unsafe or it's something you're unsure about, talking to a trusted adult can help you figure it out.'"

AVAILABLE FOR ONLINE PURCHASE HERE:

amazon

BARNES & NOBLE

lulu

SCAN THE QR CODE TO PURCHASE ONLINE NOW!

APRIL ACTIVITIES

Wear Blue Day

Blue is the official color of Child Abuse Awareness month! Wear your favorite blue attire on Friday, April 1st to show support for child abuse awareness and prevention! Don't forget to snap a picture and use the hashtags #GreatChildhoods, #GoBlueIllinois, or #CFPA to share your school's participation on Facebook or Instagram!

I Run With Survivors 5K/1 Mile Walk

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Trust Bubble

Grade: K–4th

Length: 10-20 minutes

Supplies Needed: paper, pencil

Objective: to establish healthy physical boundaries

Activity:

1. Ask children to draw a picture of themselves and then draw a large bubble around their self-portraits.
2. Once the bubble is drawn around the picture, have the students write on the inside of the bubble people they trust *(ex. mom, dad, grandparents, cousins, teachers etc.)*

Debrief:

1. Why did you choose the adults who are inside your bubble?
2. Who are some adults to keep on the outside of our bubble?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

I'm Telling You

Grade: 5th–8th

Length: 20–25 minutes

Supplies Needed: pencil, boundaries worksheet

Objective: to help clearly, assertively, and respectfully communicate their boundaries in more than one way

Activity:

Ask participants to read each phrase on the "Setting Boundaries" worksheet and in their own words write down how they could effectively communicate boundaries they are or aren't comfortable with (ex..I don't want to; I am not comfortable with that)

Debrief:

1. Why do you think setting boundaries is important?
2. Are there other ways we can communicate boundaries? *(Body language, facial expressions etc.)*
3. Who are some of those people we need to set boundaries with?
4. How should somebody react if they are told someone is not comfortable with the situation?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

SETTING BOUNDARIES

What is a boundary?

A boundary is an invisible "barrier" between you and other people – limits beyond which you will not go and beyond which others are not welcome.

It is healthy to have a good sense of where your feelings and opinions start and stop, and where the other person's feelings and opinions start and stop.

It is especially important to know how to set boundaries with "difficult" people – particularly with those individuals who are critical, controlling, manipulative, demanding, or aggressive.

How do I communicate my boundaries to other people?

Here are some words to use:

I have a problem with that _____
I don't want to _____
I've decided not to _____
This is what I need _____
This is hard for me to say _____
I understand your point of view but _____
I feel uncomfortable about _____
I'd rather not _____
Yes, I do mind _____
I'd prefer not to _____
It's important to me _____
I'll think about it _____
That's unacceptable _____
I guess we see it differently _____

Who do I need to be establishing clear boundaries with?

_____

Source: Myle Marks, https://www.pinterest.com/pin/202521314473207482/

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

My Hero

Grade: 9th–12th

Length: 25–30 minutes

Supplies Needed: book, magazine, internet, DVD, etc. *(depending on their favorite character)*

Objective: to reinforce healthy boundaries

Activity:

1. Ask students to select a character from one of their favorite books, movies or television programs and observe the kinds of relationships and choices these characters make.
2. Ask students to look for examples of poor boundaries and healthy boundaries, and share the examples by reading passages aloud to their peers or by watching scenes from video programs as a group.

Debrief:

1. Why did you choose the character you did?
2. What were some of the healthy boundaries?
3. What did the unhealthy boundaries look/sound like?
4. How can establishing boundaries help us have healthy relationships?

center *for* prevention *of* abuse.

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