safety ON the LINE

Child Abuse Awareness Month Toolkit

april 2024

center *for* prevention *of* abuse.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our Programming.....3

Praise for CFPA.....4

Facts & Statistics.....5

Body Safety Rules.....6

Child Abuse Defined.....7

Online Safety.....9

Popular Social Media Apps.....10

Words to Know.....11

Continuing the Conversation.....13

Mandated Reporting.....15

Awareness Events.....16

Activities.....17

Sis & Me: Down by the Sea.....17

Online Safety.....18

Your Digital Footprint.....20

OUR PROGRAMMING

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."

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 PreK–12th grade annually. The goal is to empower children with their voice and to give them the tools to be able 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, staff training on sexual abuse prevention, and parent education on sexual abuse warning signs and services CFPA provides.

To schedule this programming, please contact CFPA's Director of Prevention Education, Kristi Stephens, at PreventEd@centerforpreventionofabuse.org or 309.691.0551.

PRAISE FOR CFPA

"This program was well-suited for the students as it effectively promoted awareness and alertness regarding body safety. The program successfully helped students understand and prioritize their safety."

"I appreciate this program so much! It is very age appropriate and unfortunately/ fortunately it has helped students share with me something we have had to report and help keep them safe. Thank you!"

"The students were very engaged with the presentation, and it was meaningful for them. This service is so important, and I appreciate the value of the programming."

"Definitely an important and great program to continue to present in schools! Thank you!"

"This topic can be uncomfortable, but the presenter made the kids feel heard, seen, and comfortable. It was very engaging, and the kids understood the topic/ expectations."

"It is so important for our students to be educated in this area and could truly prevent abusive situations from occurring. Also, because it can be preventable if students know what to do if they encounter a situation, they can learn how to help others with this specific education. It is so worthwhile."

"Students were attentive and engaged in the material presented. The information presented was organized and at the right level for the students."

"The presenter did a great job keeping the class engaged and making this difficult content approachable and understood."

"Organized and presented in a professional manner. In a short period of time, quite a bit of important information was gone over. We felt as though the students got to hear and understand some very important information."

"The presenter was well informed and did well providing information and connecting everything together. They also did well explaining the links and resources provided and how they can and should be used."

"The Center for Prevention of Abuse staff did a great job discussing a sensitive topic professionally! Very well done!"

FACTS & STATISTICS

16%

of young adults in the U.S. have experienced at least one type of sexual abuse online **before the age of 18**

91%

Someone known and trusted by the child or child's family members perpetrates **91%** of child sexual abuse

1 in 4 girls & 1 in 20 boys

in the United States experience child sexual abuse

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

Over 50% of victims of online sexual exploitation are between the ages of

12 & 15

Child abuse crosses **all** socioeconomic and educational levels, religions, and ethnic and cultural groups

Approximately

1 in 5 youth

experience unwanted sexual online exposure to sexually explicit material

1 in 4 youth

experienced online sexual grooming via long, intimate conversations in online chatrooms

Sources:
University of New Hampshire
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
Darkness to Light
University of South Florida
American Society for the Positive Care of Children

BODY SAFETY RULES

1 SAY NO

Say this in a strong, “this is important” voice

2 GET AWAY

To a safe place where others can help

3 TELL SOMEONE

A safe, trusted adult

4 BE BELIEVED

Keep telling trusted adults until someone helps you and makes sure that you are safe

Private Body Parts Rule

A person’s private body parts are the areas of their body that are covered by swimsuits/underwear. No one should ask to see or touch the areas of your body where your swimsuit/shorts cover unless they are helping you to be ***clean and/or healthy*** *(parent/doctor)*. No one should ask you to look at or touch the private parts of their bodies, the areas covered by their swimsuit/underwear.

CHILD ABUSE DEFINED

There are different types of abuse. It can be sexual, physical, and/or neglect. All these types of abuse have lasting physical and emotional effects.

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

Possible signs of sexual abuse

- Unexplained burns, bruises, black eyes or other injuries
- Apparent fear of a parent or caretaker
- Faded bruises or healing injuries
- Injuries that do not match the explanation
- Difficulty walking or sitting, or other indications of injury to the genital area
- Sexual knowledge or behavior beyond what is normal for the child’s age
- Running away from home

Physical Abuse is when an adult or older minor hurts a child’s body on purpose repeatedly leaving marks such as bruises, welts, burn marks, broken bones, black eyes, etc.

Possible signs of physical abuse

- Unexplained burns, bruises, black eyes, or other injuries
- Apparent fear of a parent or caretaker
- Faded bruises or healing injuries
- Injuries that do not match the explanation

CHILD ABUSE DEFINED

Neglect is when a child's basic needs are not provided for *(food, water, shelter, clothing, and medical care)*. As long as the caregiver is doing their best to provide for their child, it is not neglect. Neglect is purposely not taking care of one's child.

Possible signs of neglect

- Frequently missing school
- Begging for or stealing food or money
- Lacking needed medical or dental care
- Being frequently dirty
- Using alcohol or other drugs
- Saying there is no one at home to take care of them

Many of these signs may also be present in children exposed to violence in their homes and communities, like domestic violence and gang violence. These signs don't prove that a child is being abused. But they could be a signal that the child and his or her family may need help.

If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected in Illinois, call 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873).

Source: Prevent Child Abuse Illinois

ONLINE SAFETY

Risks online

- Predators often lie about their age online and say that they are younger. They may display a persona that's a bit older than the child and ask personal questions about the child's parents/caregivers, teachers, friends, and other adults in their lives.
- Many online platforms give predators the ability to give children gifts and rewards online to engage the child. In online gaming, predators may be able to give a child a gift card which may come across as innocent since they may not have access to purchase items for themselves. They may also be able to give money online if certain applications allow this interaction.
- Communicating and sharing information with someone online may lead to using that knowledge or influence to take advantage of 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.

Tips to establish online safety

- Starting conversations with your child about online dangers and online sexual abuse is a great way to establish safety. Help them understand that sharing their personal information online can give predators access to establishing their trust.
- Get online with your kids and let them show you what they like to do. Ask questions about their online interests including websites, social media friends, and other activities to encourage open dialogue.
- Setting your child's profile to private on social media and gaming platforms can mitigate online dangers. Monitoring your child's friend requests includes making sure your child only accepts connection requests from people that they know in real life.

Source: RAINN

POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA APPS

Social media continues to evolve and change with the introduction of new apps that can easily be downloaded to a phone or device. Be aware of what social apps children might be using to chat or connect with other people. Please review appropriate privacy settings within each app with your child.

FACEBOOK allows users to share text, pictures, and videos on their own page. It also has a messenger feature for private conversations. Users can set their profile to private in certain areas if they choose to.

INSTAGRAM allows users to upload pictures and videos using filters and organize by tags and locations. Users can follow each other.

SNAPCHAT allows users to take photos and videos and share them. These "disappear" within seconds but are housed at Snapchat. User's locations are also visible to others.

TIKTOK allows users to create and share short videos. It has limited controls, exposing children to cyber bullying and explicit content.

YOUTUBE allows users to watch, like, share, comment, and upload their own videos.

X allows users to share short posts. These posts can contain text, videos, photos, or links.

BEREAL is the simplest photo sharing app to share once a day your real life in photo with friends. Every day at a different time, everyone captures a photo in two minutes. Capture and post in time to discover what your friends are up to.

DISCORD allows users to communicate with voice calls, video calls, text messaging and media files in private chats or as part of communities.

TWITCH is an American video live-streaming service that focuses on video game live streaming, including broadcasts of esports competitions, in addition to offering music broadcasts, creative content, and "in real life" streams. Twitch is operated by Twitch Interactive, a subsidiary of Amazon.com, Inc.

WORDS TO KNOW

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.
- How to 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.

WORDS TO KNOW

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

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

A critical component of child abuse prevention is talking openly with a child at an early age about body safety. Here are some tips and facts about signs of abuse to continue the conversation:

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 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.
- Ask open-ended questions and use active listening. Repeating back the information you have heard can make the child feel heard.
- Assure the child that you believe them by saying “It took a lot of courage for you to tell me this. Thank you.”
- Make a plan so the child knows who safe adults are in their lives and how to best contact them in an emergency.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

Recognize the Signs

- Understand that some children may not display apparent red flags of abuse.
- Refer to the warning signs on page 15 of this toolkit under mandated reporting for more information.

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).

For more tips try the hot chocolate talk from Committee for Children

hot-chocolate-talk-2023-conversation-guide.pdf (cfchildren.org)

Sources:
Talking with Kids about Abuse | U.S. Center for SafeSport (uscenterforsafesport.org)
Child Sexual Abuse | Sexual Abuse Prevention | Darkness to Light - Darkness to Light (d2l.org)

MANDATED 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. All reports can be made anonymously.

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

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
- Alleged Perpetrator(s)
  - Name(s)
  - DOB(s) or age(s)
  - Relationship to Victim(s)
  - Address
- Types of Harm(s) to Victim(s)
  - Physical abuse
  - Sexual abuse
  - Neglect/Death

Source: https://mr.dcfstraining.org

CANTS5 Form

Mandated Reporting Flow Chart

AWARENESS EVENTS

Participate in Wear Blue Day

Blue is the official color of Child Abuse Awareness month! Wear your favorite blue attire on **Friday, April 5th** to show support for child abuse awareness and prevention! Wearing blue connects you to millions of others across the country who support child abuse prevention efforts, strong families, and healthy children. 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

in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month

ACTIVITIES

Sis & Me: Down By The Sea

Created by the CFPA Prevention Education department and featured as part of *PreventEd: Sexual Abuse* curriculum for elementary students, the following is a sample from "Sis & Me: Down by the Sea," a book about boundaries, safe touches and child sexual abuse prevention.

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

Praise from teachers on Sis & Me:

"Students were engaged and liked the story. It was an age-appropriate presentation."

"Kept students engaged and they were able to use what they learned throughout the story."

"I thought it was very informative and the book was a great tool for learning at this age."

"Great story for this age group! They were very engaged and the conversation before the story really prepared them well."

"Students were engaged; enjoyed the story and learning to say no, get away, and tell someone."

SCAN THE QR CODE TO PURCHASE ONLINE NOW!

ACTIVITIES

Online Safety

Target Audience: Late elementary – Middle school

Objective: learn about what is safe to share online

Time: 10 – 15 Minutes

Supplies: Online Safety worksheet and red, yellow, and green coloring supplies

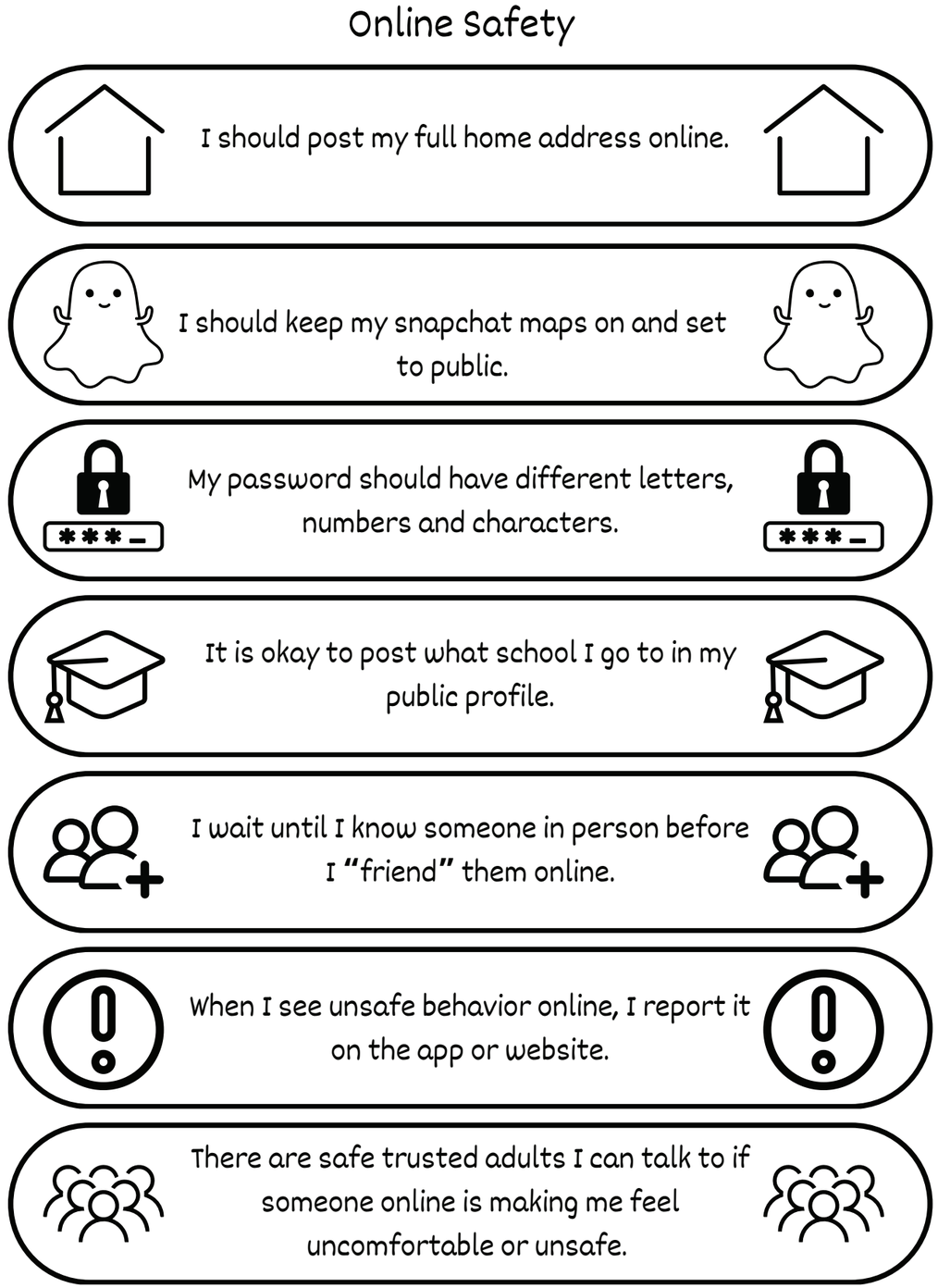
Activity:

Use the “Online Safety” Worksheet

Ask students to color the box red if they would answer no, yellow if they are unsure, or green if they would answer yes.

Debrief Questions:

1. For each statement, encourage students to share their answer and why they chose that color.
2. How can we make our accounts more private and secure?
3. Where can you report unsafe behavior?
4. Who are some trusted adults we can talk to about unsafe or uncomfortable situations you see online?



ACTIVITIES

Your Digital Footprint

Target Audience: Middle school

Objective: to understand the positive and negative affects our digital footprint has

Time: 20 Minutes

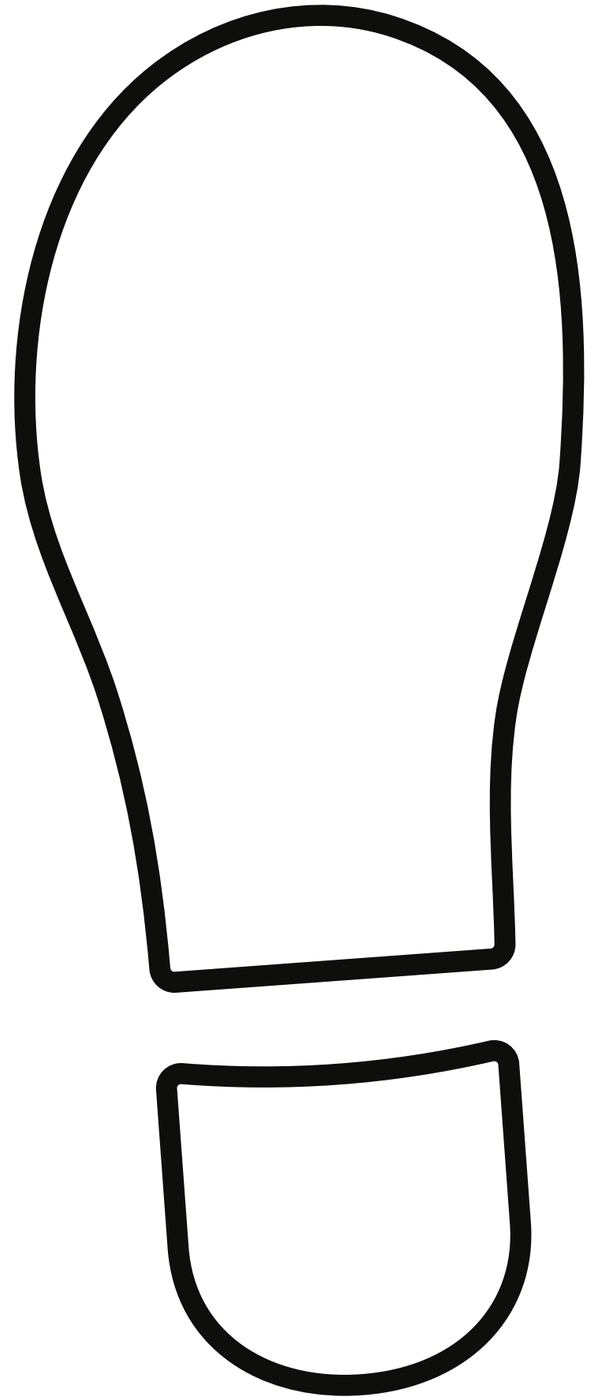
Supplies: paper/footprint worksheet and writing utensil

Activity:

Begin by having students trace their shoe on the paper to create a footprint or use the footprint on the worksheet attached. In the footprint, ask students to draw or write all of the apps and online websites they use. When finished, have students share all the apps/websites they came up with?

Debrief Questions:

1. What is in your digital footprint?
2. What are the positives from using these apps/websites?
3. What are the negatives from using these apps/websites?
4. What are some ways we can keep ourselves safe from these specific examples?



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