

SAFE-T Newsletter: Being Informed

BEING INFORMED: UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL ABUSE DYNAMICS

We know that the best way to prevent child sexual abuse is to involve adults; children can not be responsible to protect themselves from abuse. Adults need to understand what sexual abuse is and how it happens so that they can be aware of and, respond to, things that come up in their children's lives and in their communities. Child sexual abuse is defined any sexual remark, gesture, behavior, or touch that is nonconsensual (unwanted, manipulated, or forced) or done with a child. It can occur between an adult and a child or between children. Over one third of child sexual abuse cases are committed by juveniles. In all cases, one person is (or multiple people are) exerting power over another.

UNDERSTANDING THE GROOMING PROCESS

Grooming is a subtle, gradual, and escalating process of building trust with a child with the intention of harming the child. Abusers may groom the children for weeks, months, or even years before any sexual abuse takes place. It usually begins with behaviors that may not seem inappropriate and escalates to more and more boundary violations. For a list of potential grooming behaviors see the Recognizing Grooming Behaviors box on the back of this newsletter.

Year 1 Progression

1. Program Introduction
2. Support & Resources
3. Coping
4. Empathy
5. Respecting Boundaries
6. Flirting, Joking, and Sexual Harassment
7. Taking Responsibility for Actions
8. Bystanders
9. Healthy Relationships Project I
10. Healthy Relationships Project II

Year 2 Progression

1. Program Introduction
2. Sexuality
3. Gender Stereotypes
4. Consent
5. What is Sexual Abuse?
6. Showing Support
7. Risk Factors & Asking for Help
8. Creating Caring Communities
9. Final Project I
10. Final Project II



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Teen Adult Dialogues

Support and Resources: Who is someone that you could go and talk to if you needed support or had any questions?

Taking Responsibility: What is something you are proud to have taken responsibility for? How did you decide to take responsibility for your actions?

Taking Responsibility: When is taking responsibility for your actions hard to do?

Congratulations on completing the Teen-Adult Dialogues!

We hope that you and your child had a chance to talk about things you may not have ordinarily discussed. It can be challenging to have conversations about relationships with adolescents, but the benefits to openly and honestly discussing each person's perspective go a long way in creating healthy relationships with adolescents. We hope you will continue conversations about healthy relationships with your children in the future!

Questions?

If at any point you have any questions or concerns about the SAFE-T Program, please contact the SAFE-T Team at:

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RECOGNIZING GROOMING BEHAVIORS

Grooming behaviors may include:

- Befriending the parents and child and gaining their trust.
- Looking for opportunities to have time alone with a child (e.g., offering to babysit or inviting the child for sleepovers).
- Moving from non-sexual touch to "accidental" sexual touch. This usually happens during play so the child may not even know purposeful inappropriate touching.
- Allowing or encouraging the child to break rules (e.g., smoking, drinking, using drugs, viewing pornography).
- Communicating with children outside of the person's role. This includes texting or emailing without the parents knowledge.
- Giving gifts or special privileges to the child.
- Testing a child's boundaries through telling