Santa Clara County Office of Education

Child Abuse Awareness Training

June 2015
Topics

• Purpose and Goal
• Child abuse facts
• Profile of Abusers
• Effects of Child Abuse
• Policies for safety
• Reporting
• Responding
• Safe Touch
Purpose

You are an integral part of Walden West’s efforts to create a safe, healthy, and respectful environment.
Goal of Training

Everybody working at Walden West must be sensitive and well-informed to avoid potential difficulties in this area and for the well-being of the young people entrusted to our care.
A Team Effort

It is not just the responsibility of the _______ _________ to ensure the safety of the campers. Preventing child abuse is a team effort.
Definition of Child Abuse

- **Physical abuse**: physical injury as a result of hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, or otherwise harming a child.
- **Sexual abuse**: any situation where a child is used for sexual gratification. This may include indecent exposure, fondling, rape, or commercial exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic material.
- **Emotional abuse**: any pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth, including constant criticism, threats, and rejection.
- **Neglect**: failure to provide for a child's basic needs.
Definition of Child Sexual Abuse

• Child abuse is any experience during childhood or adolescence that involves inappropriate sexual attention from another person.
• This person is usually an adult but can also be an older child or a teenager.
• Child sexual abuse is not solely restricted to _________ contact.
Child Sexual Abuse: Facts you need to know!

• 1 in 3 girls are sexually abused before the age of 18.

• 1 in 5 boys are sexually abused before the age of 18.

• 30% of sexual abuse is never reported.

• Nearly 70% of all reported sexual assaults (including assaults on adults) occur to children age 17 and under.

• 90% of child sexual abuse victims know the perpetrator in some way.

• 38% of the sexual abusers of boys are female.

(Statistics found on LaurensKids.org)
Before they turn 18...

1 in 6 boys experience some form of sexual abuse

1 in 4 girls experience some form of sexual abuse
Recognizing Characteristics of Individuals Who Abuse and Molest Children

Common Traits:
• Seem preoccupied with children
• Identify with children better than adults
• Converse well with children at the child’s level
• Are well liked by children for reasons not obvious to you
• Are “always available” to watch children
• Prefer the company of children to adult relationships
• Have limited peer relationships with adults
• Engage in activities with children while excluding adults
Recognizing Characteristics of Individuals Who Abuse and Molest Children

Common Traits:

• Have hobbies and interests that appeal to children
• Frequently photograph children
• Engage in frequent contact with children (touching, caressing, wrestling, tickling)
• Allow children to do questionable things
• Do not have own children, but knows a lot about current fads, toys, music that are popular for children
• Spend inappropriate amounts of money on others’ children
Strategies of Abusers

Molesters tend to use three basic strategies:

• Seduction
• Trickery
• Force

All wrapped in secrecy.
Effects of Child Abuse

Child abuse & child sexual abuse can have lasting physical, psychological, behavioral, and societal consequences.
## Effects of Child Abuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Psychological</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Damage to brain and spinal cord</td>
<td>Cognitive delay</td>
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<td>Impaired brain development</td>
<td>Low I.Q.</td>
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<td>General poor health, including decreased cardiovascular function, asthma, hypertension, obesity, and malnutrition</td>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
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<td>Relationship difficulties in adulthood</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Increased likelihood for psychiatric disorders such as borderline personality, anxiety disorder, and depression</td>
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<td>Increased likelihood to develop antisocial traits</td>
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<td><strong>Behavioral</strong></td>
<td><strong>Societal</strong></td>
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<td>Difficulties during adolescence, including grade repetition, substance abuse, truancy, delinquency, and pregnancy</td>
<td>Child maltreatment is more costly annually than the two leading health concerns, stroke and type 2 diabetes</td>
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<td>More likely to engage in sexual risk-taking</td>
<td>Indirect costs associated with increased use of health care facilities, criminal activity, mental illness, substance abuse, and violence</td>
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<td>More likely to smoke cigarettes, abuse alcohol, and engage in illicit drug use</td>
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<td>Increased likelihood to engage in youth and interpersonal violence</td>
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Walden West Policies

Child sexual abuse policies protect youth from sexual abuse, adults and youth from allegations of sexual abuse, and organizations from being accused of not doing enough to prevent child sexual abuse.
Protecting Yourself

Staff should always abide by the following:

- Actively avoid being alone with a child.
- Always stay within view of other people.
- Never pat, brush against or touch a child anywhere near a private area.
- Never physically punish a child, even by ordering strenuous activity (such as push-ups).
- Never allow a child in a private staff area, including personal vehicles.
- Never discuss romantic life with a child (yours or theirs).
- Report ANY suspicious, inappropriate or uncomfortable activity immediately.
No Secrets
Be knowledgeable

This training has presented a great deal of important and useful information related to child abuse and molestation. It is your responsibility to put this knowledge into action in order to effectively prevent and address child sexual abuse and molestation.

In addition to this information, it is highly recommended that you take the time to familiarize yourself with the typical behavior patterns of the children with whom you will be interacting and supervising. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides a comprehensive list of facts about child development.

(http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/factors/knowledge.cfm)
Minimize the opportunities for child abuse and molestation

The following rules will help you to ensure:

- Appropriate interaction between program staff/volunteers and children, and

- Provide for a safe environment.

The following rules serve to not only protect youth participants, but also adult counselors from being placed in potentially compromising situations or false accusations of abuse.
Rules and Procedures for Walden West

• Rules for interactions between program staff/volunteers and children

  – One-on-one interactions between program staff/volunteers and children are not allowed (rule of three). No volunteer or staff member should ever be alone with a camper in an isolated place. In situations that require personal conferences, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other program staff/volunteers.

  – No child or teenager should ever sit on the lap of a program staff or volunteers. No adult is to allow a child or teenager to sit on his/her lap or lie in his/her bed. The only exception would be the parent/caregiver of the child.

  – No frontal hugs. An adult from time to time may feel a child’s need for a hug in order to support or comfort the child. The adult must use a shoulder to shoulder hug.
Rules and Procedures for Walden West

– **Contact between program staff/volunteers and youth is restricted to organization-sanctioned activities and times.** Program staff/volunteers should not contact youth outside of program activities or program specific needs. Counselors should never serve as babysitters for camp participants during a camp session.

– **Rough housing or hazing is prohibited.** Program staff/volunteers will not wrestle, tickle, or in any way engage a child or teenager in an activity where the adult’s hands might come in contact with the breasts or genital area of the camper. Staff and volunteers must be particularly careful about physical contact with campers while in the swimming area. No counselor or camper is to participate in any kind of hazing or initiation activity.

– **Wear appropriate attire.** Adults will at all times be dressed modestly. Clothes such as swimsuits, shorts, and tops are not to be revealing or in any way draw attention to the breasts, buttocks, or genital area. Equally important, program staff/volunteers should monitor the clothing worn by children. Youth clothing should follow the same guidelines above and should be appropriate for the weather and program activities.
Rules and Procedures for Walden West

- Rules for providing a safe environment

  - *Respect privacy:* Adults must respect the privacy of campers in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers. Only in emergency situations should an adult enter an area where children are unclothed. An adult would only intrude to the extent that the health and or safety of the camper would be in question. In the case of safety, one adult may enter the private area, but whenever possible two adults should be present. Campers must also respect the privacy of the adults in these situations. Therefore, it is not permissible for campers or adults to move about in the housing area unclothed.

  - *Counselor(s) sleeping accommodations:* Adults should sleep in an area where they can exercise the highest level of child supervision, but not isolate themselves from general view. When wilderness camping, adults are prohibited from sleeping in pup-type tents with campers, unless it is a parent and his or her child.
Rules and Procedures for Walden West

- **Rules for providing a safe environment (cont.)**
  
  - *Control access to children:* Limit contact between children and individuals not associated with the program while youth are under your care. Monitor the comings and goings of all youth and adults who enter and leave the facility. Be particularly alert to opportunities that are presented when activities occur in public spaces.

  - *Conduct activities in spaces that are open and visible to multiple people.* Ensure there are clear sight lines throughout the activity spaces. Secure areas not used for programmatic purposes (i.e. closets, storerooms) to prevent youth from being isolated.
Rules and Procedures for Walden West

Be alert!

- Counselor-to-counselor monitoring is critical to the health and protection of children and to each other. An environment of heightened awareness and accountability is essential to preventing and addressing sexual abuse and molestation. To this end, all program staff and volunteers are expected to monitor their own behavior, as well as the behavior of other staff/volunteers.

- Camp staff/volunteers should model appropriate interpersonal behaviors. Be aware of a child’s comfort level with activities, situations, and physical and emotional affection, and respond in an appropriate and consistent manner to child behaviors. Use discretion in what personal or private experiences you share with a child, and never discuss or ask children questions about sexual experiences.
Report it

– For reporting child abuse, all the state requires is that you have reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred.

– If the suspected abuse occurs at Walden West, the suspected abuse must be reported to Social Services Agency of Santa Clara county.
  - Twenty-four hour hotline (408) 683-0601
  - http://www.sccgov.org/sites/ssa/Pages/ssa.aspx

– Local authorities (County Sheriff’s office) should also be contacted about the suspected abuse.
RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR WALDEN WEST

IMMEDIATE DANGER. When a child appears to be in immediate danger of serious harm, call 9-1-1 (where that service is available) or the nearest law enforcement department to ensure the fastest possible response time to protect the child. The person reporting should provide, whenever possible:

- The child's name, description, age and address
- The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody or welfare of the child
- Any other information to help authorities assist the child (who, what, when, where)

TIMING. It is critical that the report be made as soon as possible. The more time that elapses between the incident and the report, the more difficult it is for authorities to investigate and to get the child the needed and necessary care.
Rules and Procedures for Walden West

TELL THE CAMP/PROGRAM DIRECTOR. Once the incident is reported to law enforcement, notification must be given to the camp or program director (unless he/she is the source of the abuse or law enforcement directs you not to). Provide the director (a) the name of the law enforcement official who took the report, (b) the time of the report, (c) a brief summary of your discussion with law enforcement and (d) provide this information to the program director.

- Unless instructed by law enforcement to not contact the parents/guardians, the program director will immediately notify the parents/guardians of the children.

CONFIDENTIALITY. Due to the sensitive nature of this type of report, it is important to maintain the highest level of confidentiality and professionalism when reporting.
Rules and Procedures for Walden West

We all have the responsibility to protect our children. If you take nothing else from this training, remember that you have the power to intervene and prevent these heinous acts from occurring.

If you witness or suspect abuse is occurring, or if you receive a report of possible abuse:

REPORT IT !!
Where to Report Child Abuse/Child Sexual Abuse

• In the event of a life threatening emergency, a report of child abuse or child sexual abuse should be made **immediately** by calling 911.
• In other cases, a report of child abuse or child sexual abuse must be made **immediately** to one of the following authorities **outside of Walden West**:
  – Social Services Agency of Santa Clara county.
    • Twenty-four hour hotline (408) 683-0601
    • [http://www.sccgov.org/sites/ssaqPages/ssaq.aspx](http://www.sccgov.org/sites/ssaqPages/ssaq.aspx)
  – Santa Clara County Sheriff
    • (408)808-4555
Beyond Reporting: How to Respond

Reporting is just one element of proper response to child abuse and child sexual abuse. Your reaction is very important; it is often difficult for a child to talk about abuse.

When a child tells you he/she has been abused:
- Choose your words carefully—don’t be judgmental about the child or the alleged abuser
- Do not interrogate the child
- Listen and let the child tell his/her own story
- Be calm—your reactions can confuse or scare the child
- Assure the child that you believe what he/she says
Ways to respond, continued:

• Find out what the child wants and be honest about what you can do – the child may want you to promise that you won’t tell others – tell the truth and do not make promises

• Assess whether the child is in immediate danger

• Let the child know his/her feelings are okay

• Assure the child that you care and that it’s not his/her fault

• Tell the child that you’re glad he/she told you and that you will get help
Do’s and Don’ts of Responding

**DO**

- Immediately tell the child you believe them.
- Tell them they were right to tell you, and were brave to do so.
- Acknowledge that it is difficult talk about this.
- Tell the child that they are not responsible and did not deserve it.
- Ensure that the child feels safe following disclosure.

**DON’T**

- Panic or show that you are shocked. REMAIN CALM!
- Never give the impression that you might blame the child. Don’t ask: “Why did you let him?”, “what were you doing there anyways?” or “why didn’t you tell me before?”.
- Don’t promise that you won’t tell anyone if the child asks you to keep it a secret.
- Don’t ask intrusive questions. Listen but don’t push for more answers.
Safe Touch Guidelines

Teach children the following safety rules:

• It is not okay to touch someone else's private body parts.
• It is not okay for someone to touch his or her own private body parts in front of you.
• It is not okay for someone to ask you to touch his or her private body parts.
• It is not okay for someone to ask you to take your clothes off except if they are a doctor helping to see if you are hurt or sick.
• It is not okay for someone to take photos or videos of you with your clothes off.
• It is not okay for someone to show you photos or videos of people without their clothes on.
• You can decide who can touch you, who can kiss you, or who can give you a hug.
• You have the right to say, "no."
Safe Touch Guidelines

- What do you do when someone touches you in the wrong way?
- Say no! Tell the person that you don't like it and you don't want to be touched.
- Get away fast! Run away from the person whose touch you don't like. Never stay alone with that person ever again.
- Call for help. You can scream.
- Believe in yourself. You did nothing wrong.
• If someone touches you in the wrong way, tell someone you trust what has happened. Don't let threats scare you into running away or keeping quiet. When a person touches you and asks you to keep it a secret between the two of you, ask yourself, “Does the secret bother me?"

• Don't keep secrets that make you feel uncomfortable. Go to a person you trust—a parent, a relative, a teacher, or your doctor. If the person you go to doesn't believe you, go to someone else you trust until someone believes you and helps you.
- Safety is my right!
- I am valuable, and so are you!
- I can get help!
- My body belongs to me!
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