



Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Training

Discussion Questions for Staff Training

The following resource was developed to accompany the Child Sexual Abuse Prevention training on The Redwoods Institute. Child abuse prevention cannot just stop at one training. It needs to be a continual conversation that is reinforced every day. This resource is intended to be a tool that you can refer back to and use during your ongoing staff trainings.

Included in the resource are two things:

- **Key Takeaways:** These were included in the training and can be used as a reminder of what takeaways your staff should have walked away with after the training.
- **Discussion Questions:** These additional questions can be used with your staff to reinforce and apply the takeaways to your organization's unique programs and day-to-day realities.

Defining Abuse

Key Takeaways

1. Child sexual abuse is defined as any sexual activity with a minor
2. Child sexual abuse does not need to be physical, it can be any activity of a sexual nature
3. 1 in 10 children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday
4. The scope of child sexual abuse is ultimately unknown as many children will never disclose what happened to them

Discussion Questions

The Definition of Abuse

- When you thought about child sexual abuse before this training, what came to mind? How has that changed after taking the training?
- Are there any scenarios that come to mind that you may be doubting if it's considered abuse or not?

Preventing Peer-to-Peer Abuse

Key Takeaways

1. Peer abuse is a form of abuse, it is not 'kids being kids' or 'natural curiosity'
2. Peer abuse often begins as bullying, and is not driven by sexual desire
3. There is often a power imbalance in peer abuse
4. Peer abuse often happens during less structured programs, unsupervised times or in locations where there is privacy
5. Active supervision is the key to preventing peer abuse

Discussion Questions

Defining Peer-to-Peer Abuse

- Are there any scenarios that come to mind that you may be doubting if it's considered peer-to-peer abuse or not (ex. staff member who is a minor dating another staff member who is an adult)?

Power Imbalances

- What power imbalances between youth do you find to be present in our programs?

- What strategies can we implement during our programs to intervene and stop bullying behavior immediately before it escalates into something worse?

Where Abuse Happens

- Where do you think youth might believe there is less supervision at our organization or in our programs? How can we supervise those differently?
- What physical obstructions or environmental challenges might make it hard to spot abuse in our organization? How can we supervise those differently?
- How can we structure transition times so that youth are supervised 100% of the time?
- How can you intervene if you see another staff member or volunteer 'sittervising'?

Bathroom Supervision

- What challenges do you currently face when supervising bathrooms?
- What gaps do we currently have in our bathroom policy that may lead to situations where abuse could occur?
- What strategies can you implement to make sure that our bathrooms are supervised 100% of the time?

Grooming

Key Takeaways

1. Grooming's overall objective is to lower a child's inhibitions
2. Grooming is a long, psychological process that has deep, lasting effects on the child
3. Grooming usually follows a similar pattern: selection, desensitization, sexual activity
4. Abusers don't just groom the child, they also groom parents, caretakers, staff, even entire communities

Discussion Questions

Grooming

- What was your biggest takeaway on how the grooming process occurs?
- What are some examples of tactics abusers could use in our organization to groom a child?
- What dynamics may make you and our community susceptible to being groomed (ex. always think the best in people, tight-knit community)? What strategies can we implement to make sure that doesn't occur?
- How can we intervene when we see grooming behaviors?

Recognizing Rule Breaking

Key Takeaways

1. Inappropriate touch is any unwanted, unwelcome or sexual touch
2. Alone time is any private, one-on-one time between an adult and a minor that is not observable or interruptible
3. Favoritism is isolating attention on one child or a group of children
4. Outside contact is any contact with youth outside of your programs
5. Inappropriate language is using curse words, sexual language or discussing topics that are meant for adults around youth

Discussion Questions

Culture of Accountability

- Who do you struggle to keep accountable within our organization?

- What role can you play to create a culture of accountability in our organization?

No Inappropriate Touch

- How can we show children in our programs attention and care in non-physical ways?
- Are there any situations where you may need to touch a child (ex. swim lessons, diapering a baby)? What strategies can you take to make sure that those touches are appropriate?
- What steps can you take to intervene if you see another staff member or volunteer inappropriately touching a minor (ex. youth is on a staff member's lap)?

No Alone Time

- What situations may occur that could put you in a one-on-one situation (ex. only one youth left at pick-up)? What strategies can you take to make sure you are not alone with that youth?
- What steps can you take to intervene if you see another staff member or volunteer in a one-on-one situation with a child?

No Favoritism

- How can we build a culture in our programming where no child is given favoritism?
- How can we balance being fair and equal while also recognizing and praising youth in certain situations?

No Outside Contact

- What situations may occur that could put you in contact with a child outside of our programs?
- How can you respond to a guardian if they ask you to babysit their child?
- How can you respond to a guardian if they ask you to drive their child somewhere?
- How can you respond to a child if they ask you to hang out outside of programming?
- How can you respond to a child if they try to contact you via text, over social media, etc.?

No Inappropriate Language

- What steps can you take to intervene if another staff member or volunteer is using inappropriate language around youth?

Responding to Rule Breaking

Key Takeaways

1. The majority of disclosures of child sexual abuse by a child are not false
2. When reporting rule breaking, you are not accusing someone of abuse
3. Mandated reporter laws require all adult professionals who work with youth to report disclosures or reasonable suspicions of abuse
4. When a child discloses that they have been abused, it is important that you say: I believe you, it's not your fault and I will help you

Discussion Questions

Rule Breaking

- How confident are you in our procedures to report rule breaking?
- How can you respond in the moment if you identify rule breaking?
- What challenges may prevent you from reporting rule breaking?
- How can we build a culture at our organization where all rule breaking is reported?

Responding to Disclosures

- What challenges do you foresee in responding if someone does disclose abuse to you?

Reporting Abuse

- How confident are you in our procedures to report disclosed or suspected abuse?
- How confident are you in your role as a mandated reporter?