



Preventing all forms of child victimization by teaching families, professionals and community members how to recognize, interrupt and report inappropriate situations before abuse occurs.

Organizational Checklist:

Ensuring Effective Implementation of

Think First & Stay Safe and Teen Lures TV Newscast School Programs

Please consider the following items prior to teaching personal safety educational programs to children:

I. Primary Prevention

- Acknowledge that child sexual abuse is a national problem.
- Commit, as an organization, to safeguarding children.
- Set and implement organizational Policies and Procedures.
- Outline specific Roles & Responsibilities – everyone has a part to play in protecting children.
- Provide training/resources for professionals, staff, volunteers (including adolescents) & ancillary personnel.
- Inform parents about organizational Policies and Procedures.
- Provide parents with an overview of the *Think First & Stay Safe (TF&SS) and/or Teen Lures TV Newscast (TLTVN) School Programs* for children and youth.
- Present age-appropriate *TF&SS* and/or *TLTVN* health and safety lessons to children.

II. Initial Steps in Program Implementation

- Recognize that some people within your organization may have a hard time dealing with the topic of child sexual abuse/ sexual misconduct.

They may:

- have been victimized,
- know someone who has been victimized,
- be uncomfortable talking about sex or sexuality,
- know or suspect a perpetrator,
- be a sexual offender.

- Be aware of, and responsive to, their feelings. Understand if they don't want to be program presenters.

III. Recognize Relationship Dynamics

- Monitor Relationships.
Sometimes the dynamics of a caring, nurturing relationship that can help protect youth from sexual abuse...
...are the same dynamics that can provide the opportunity for abuse to occur, especially with emotionally insecure, needy and unsupported youth.
- Be familiar with grooming behaviors and model healthy relationships for children under your care.

IV. Clearly Define Child Sexual Abuse (CSA):

- Have a clear definition of Child Sexual Abuse for your organization.
- Define Youth as any person between the ages of zero and 17.
- CSA definition varies from state to state. For each state-specific definition, visit:
http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/state/
- Include non-contact sexual acts in CSA Definition, such as exposure, voyeurism, public indecency, exposure to pornography, and communicating in a sexual manner by phone or Internet.

V. Organizational Policies and Procedures

- Set and maintain Policies and Procedures, which help protect children, personnel and the organization's reputation and resources. Policies & Procedures ensure a unified effort, from top, down.

- Communicate policies and procedures to all professionals, personnel, parents and children/youth (age appropriately).
- Revisit annually to ensure Policies & Procedures are current, relevant and fully implemented.
- Template available at:
<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/PreventingChildSexualAbuse-a.pdf#page=1>

VI. Provide Training for Professionals and Staff

Training should include:

- Organization's commitment to health & safety of each child
- Outline and explain all Policies and Procedures
- Each employee's specific roles and responsibilities in protecting children and youth
- Review Background Checks/References
- Bystander Roles & Mandated Reporters
- Responding to CSA/Reporting
- Overview of the *TF&SS* and/or *TLTVN* School Programs training for children and youth.

VII. Mandated Reporters of CSA

- Review State Standards for Reporting CSA.
Mandated reporters and standards for reporting vary by state.
Visit www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/state/ for state standards.
- Don't hesitate to make a report when there is reasonable suspicion.
'Reasonable suspicion' does not require certainty that child abuse or neglect has occurred, nor does it require a specific medical indication of child abuse or neglect; any reasonable suspicion is sufficient.
- While a single incident may not seem significant enough to report, when aggregated with other reports on the same individual, it may be the tipping point for an investigation to be opened.

VIII. Collaborate with Local Community Resources

- Invite local community partners in to familiarize them with the *TF&SS* and/or *TLTVN* safety curricula.
- Identify local law enforcement/advocacy team or units specially trained to interview victims of sexual abuse.
- Be prepared to call upon them should a student disclose abuse.

Most communities have specially-trained units for reported sexual crimes committed against adults and children. Local law enforcement/advocacy centers, and their specialized teams or units, should be called immediately upon disclosure. This helps ensure the information obtained in interviews with a child disclosing abuse is not compromised, and the investigation is not contaminated.

IX. Visible Evidence of Commitment to CSA Prevention

It is vital that youth-serving organizations create a culture where sexual exploitation is discussed, addressed, and prevented.

Visible evidence includes:

- Posters for children and teens (age-appropriate)
- Posters for Parents/Guardians
- Open-door policies posted in high traffic areas
- Resources for parents/caregivers
- Newsletter articles, web presence and links

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