

Education and In-Service for a Safe Environment

Diocese of Providence

Rhode Island

Standards of Conduct

- Positive Catholic Christian role model
- Establish clear boundaries
- Discretion concerning settings
- Discretion concerning physical contact
- Self-awareness and prudent behavior

Physical Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained bruises and welts:
 - Face, lips, mouth
 - Torso, back, buttocks, thighs
 - Various stages of healing
 - clustered; regular patterns
- On several different areas
- Regularly appear after absence, weekend, vacation
- Unexplained Burns:
 - Cigar, cigarette burns especially on soles, palms, back, buttocks

Behavioral Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Wary of adult contacts
- Apprehensive when others cry
- Pain or itching in genital area
- Behavioral extremes
 - Aggressiveness
 - Withdrawal
- Frightened of parents
- Afraid to go home
- Reports injury by parents

Physical Indicators of Physical Neglect

- Constant hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress
- Consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous situations or long periods
- Unattended physical problems and/or medical and/or dental needs
- Abandonment

Behavioral Indicators of Physical Neglect

- Begging, stealing food
- Extended stays at school (early arrival and late departure)
- Constant fatigue, restlessness
- Falling asleep in class
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Delinquency
- Child says there is no caretaker

Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Torn, stained, bloody underwear
- Pain or itching in genital area
- Bruises or bleeding of external genitalia, vaginal, anal areas
- Venereal disease, especially in pre-teen
- Pregnancy

Behavioral Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Unwilling to change for physical education
- Withdrawal, fantasy or infantile behavior
- Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
- Poor peer relationships
- Delinquent: runaways
- Reports sexual assault by caretaker

Indicators of Possible Predatory Behavior in Adults

- Persistent inappropriate displays of affection
- Inappropriate interest in the sexuality of a child
- Insistence on obtaining time alone with child
- Consistent preference for spending free time with children vs. adults
- Providing children with gifts and money for no apparent reason
- Violations of privacy

*40-11-3. Duty to Report

- Any person who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that any child has been abused or neglected as defined herein or has been a victim of sexual abuse by another child shall within 24 hours, transfer information to DCYF or its agent who shall cause the report to be investigated immediately.

*A complete copy of RI Laws cited in this presentation are available at www.rilin.state.ri.us.

Mandated Reporting Law

- Those who suspect abuse or neglect are obligated to make verbal report to the DCYF Hotline at 1-800-RI-Child.

40-11-4. Immunity from Liability

- Any person participating in good faith in making a report pursuant to this chapter shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed. Any such participant shall have the same immunity with respect to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from such report.

40-11-6.1 Penalty for failure to report or perform required act

- Any person, official, physician or institution required by this chapter to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect or to perform any other act who knowingly fails to do so or who knowingly prevents any person acting reasonably from doing so shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment for not more than 1 year or both. In addition, any person, official, physician or institution who knowingly fails to perform any act required by this chapter or who knowingly prevents another person from performing a required act shall be civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by such failure.

Who is a Caretaker?

- Child's parent, guardian, foster parent, an employee of a public or private residential home or facility, or any staff person providing out-of-home care (out-of-home care means child day care to include family day care, group day care and center-based day care).

Person Responsible for Child's Welfare Expanded to Include:

- Any individual, eighteen (18) years of age or older, who resides in the home of a parent or guardian and has unsupervised access to a child.

Diocesan Guidelines for the Prevention of Child Abuse

- Standards of conduct
- Accountability and duty to report
- Office of Education and Compliance
- Advisory Board for the Protection of Children and Young People
- In-service and education for a safe environment
- Reference and criminal background checks

Pastoral Outreach to Those Violated and to Their Families

- Assistance coordinator role
- Attentive listening and expressions of compassion and support
- Acknowledgement and statement of apology
- Spiritual assistance
- Personal meetings with the Bishop
- Counseling assistance and other forms of support
- Outreach to parishes

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SAFE ENVIRONMENT CURRICULUM

I.) Students will learn appropriate standards of behavior for children and youth emphasizing personal dignity and respect for others and for themselves that their bodies are a special gift of God.

■ Codes of Conduct

- 1.) Students will be able to discuss the common good which is related to the good of each individual
- 2.) Students will be able to explain the essentials of the common good:
 - Respect for the person
 - Social well being & development
 - Stability & security of a just order

■ Catholic Teaching

- 1.) Students will be able to discuss the role of Baptism uniting them to Christ and the dignity and equality of each person created by God.
- 2.) Students will demonstrate a respect for others and for themselves seen in the Gospels through the teachings of Jesus.

II.) Students will develop an understanding of personal safety and the necessary skills to remain safe.

■ A.) Students will recognize internal cues regarding safety

- recognize stress cues and interrupt one's own internal process that compounds stress.
- identify the feelings and body sensations that indicate the feelings that they are uncomfortable or in danger (physically or psychologically)

■ B.) Students will be able to recognize the impact of gender role stereotypes.

- recognize gender stereotypes: origins, effects and alternatives. Students will be able to recognize and cite examples of TV violence and gender stereotypes.
- to comprehend the impact of stereotypes on women.
- comprehend the impact of male stereotypes in initiations.
- recognize how objectification through pornography and repetition of violence can affect behavior and attitudes
- understand the role of stereotypes in relationships.

- C.) Student will be able to understand the perception of “normal” is based on personal experience
 - Explain the effect of dysfunction and gender stereotypes on choice of dates and the dating process
 - Identify the additional effect of negative peer pressure on the choice to date and what is acceptable
 - Discuss the impact of television , magazine ads, and music lyrics on the attitude of the culture regarding relationships
 - Examine how exposure to violence is desensitizing
 - Respect that “NO” means “NO”
- D.) Students will be able to understand how sexism leads to violence.
 - Describe how teen dating violence can lead to domestic violence.

III.) Students will learn socially acceptable boundaries and appropriate/inappropriate physical contact with others.

- A.) Students will be able to use critical thinking skills to make healthy lifestyle choices
 - Identify warning signs of date rape
 - Relate how sexist attitudes can lead to harmful behaviors
 - Employ the refusal skill of how to say “NO”
 - Distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors at school and in public
 - Distinguish between appropriate and harmful/risky touch
- B.) Students will have a stronger self-awareness and self-esteem (internalized locus of control)
 - Assert personal values in relationships
 - Protect and assert one’s own boundaries effectively
 - Affirm and assert their own psychological boundaries

IV.) Students will learn how to assertively respond in unwanted situations

- A.) Students will be able to learn how to deal with aggression
 - Understand the “nuts & bolts” of aggression
 - Understand three ways that people deal with anger
 - Understand the power dynamics between “bully” and “innocent victim”
 - Understand the power dynamics of domestic abuse
 - Identify anger as the secondary emotion and that the primary feeling is being covered up
 - Recognize anger cues
- B.) Students will be able to improve prosocial skills and social competence
 - Use “I” statements and employ assertive responses in a variety of situation
 - Practice conflict resolution skills
 - Interpret other’s emotions by their facial expression
 - Express anger and other emotions constructively
 - Select passive, aggressive and assertive responses

- C.) Students will be able to feel a sense of personal power and belonging
 - Value assertive choices and methods when expressing emotions
 - Accept responsibility for their feelings
 - Appreciate the value of sharing vs. competing
 - Conclude that we can make a difference when we work together
- D.) Students will learn effective communication skills
 - Experience the difference between the way males and females view a topic
 - Practice positive emotional expression
 - Select strategies for dealing with problem-solving and conflict situations
 - Differentiate between helpful, unhelpful and harmful communication

V.) Students will learn ways to identify trusting adults in whom they can confide

- Students will be aware of resources
 - At home
 - At school
 - In the community

VI.) Students will come to understand that abusive situations are not their fault

- Students will be able to put abusive relationships into a proper context
 - Explain the indications and consequences of physical, emotional/psychological, and sexual violence
 - Describe the different types of violence
 - Understand the facts and myths about violence in relationships and sexual harassment
 - Appreciate the differences between flirting and sexual harassment

The End