Abuse? Not Our Kids!
Protecting Children from Abuse by Empowering Early Educators

Our Presenters

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Presentation Goals

- Understand the prevalence of child maltreatment, including child sexual abuse
- Explain why educators play a key role in child protection
- Identify the four research-based elements of child protection
- Understand how to implement these elements in an early learning setting
- Understand how to train and empower educators to protect children
Reality of Maltreatment

- **9.5% INCREASE**
  - CPS investigations since 2012
  - Total = 3,472,000

- **3.0% INCREASE**
  - Number of victims since 2012
  - Total = 676,000

Types of Maltreatment

- **74.8% NEGLECTED**
- **18.2% PHYSICALLY ABUSED**
- **8.5% SEXUALLY ABUSED**

Victims of Maltreatment

- **Youngest children are the most vulnerable**
- **28.5% of victims were younger than 3 years old**
But who is best able to protect them?  
Research points to the parents.

Where do young children spend their time when not at home?  
In early learning settings, including preschools and childcare centers

These settings can be sanctuaries where ALL children experience safety and support.
Researchers Agree:

Schools, including preschools, offer an optimal environment for child protection programs designed to prevent or intervene in cases of child abuse and neglect.

Educators Play a Key Role

- See children every day
- Can spot changes in behavior
- Know the children well
- May see indicators of maltreatment
- Often are trusted adults
- More likely to receive disclosures

You Can Make a Difference!
And There’s More!

Early Learning educators can actively work to create an environment that is safe and supportive.

Children can learn skills in preschool that are protective and promote resilience.

Preschools can establish policies, procedures, and practices to help protect children.

Administrators can engage families and other caregivers in protection and prevention efforts.

Four Components of Child Protection

- Implement Policies and Procedures
- Train All Staff
- Teach Children
- Educate Families
Center Directors

**Policies**
- Safe Environment
- Code of Conduct

**Procedures**
- Screening and Hiring
- Reporting

Four Components of Child Protection

- Implement Policies and Procedures
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All Center Staff

- Recognize common indicators of child abuse and neglect
- Recognize violations of child protection policies
- Respond to behaviors in a supportive way
- Respond appropriately to a child who discloses abuse or neglect
- Report child abuse or neglect and violations of child protection policies according to the school’s procedures
Important Information for Staff

1. Indicators of abuse and neglect
2. Facts about staff sexual misconduct
3. How to respond to behaviors
4. How to create a safe and supportive classroom

Responding in a Supportive Way

Child Check: Reframing Behavior

Corrective Frame
- This child is a problem.
- What's wrong with this child?
- I need to correct this child's behavior.

Supportive Frame
- What is this child experiencing in his or her life?
- What is this child trying to say with his or her behavior?
- I need to support this child.
**Support Plan for Child**

- Safety
- Relationships
- Skills
- Accommodations

**Support Plan for Family**

- Safety
- Relationships
- Understanding Social-emotional Development
- Concrete Supports

**Four Components of Child Protection**

- Implement Policies and Procedures
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Importance of Teaching Children

Helping Staff Feel Comfortable

• Support for teachers to feel at ease with the content of personal-safety education and communicate with families about physical and sexual abuse
• Resources to help facilitate conversations with families that focus on safety vs. sexuality

Typical Content for Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Safety Rules</th>
<th>Safe and Unsafe Touch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rules about Touching</td>
<td>Recognizing When Rules Are Broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting to an Adult</td>
<td>Refusing Touch if Possible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ways to Stay Safe

Never-Never Rules

Touching Rule
Four Components of Child Protection

- Implement Policies and Procedures
- Train All Staff
- Teach Children
- Educate Families

What Families Need to Know . . .

- How often CSA happens and to whom
- How to talk to their children about personal safety
- Why to use correct names for private body parts
- How to respond to disclosure
- How to get help if needed

EarlyOpenOften.org

How to Talk with Kids About Sexual Abuse

More Videos

- Talking About Your Body
- Why Your Body Is Private
- How to Treat Your Body
- How to Tell When Your Body Needs Help
- What to Do If You Feel Scared
- How to Get Help If You Need It
Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program

- Snohomish County Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) serves over 15,000 Snohomish County children and their families each year. We work with 15 contractors at 22 sites.
- ECEAP provides the following services to low-income children (3–5 years old) and their families:
  - Educational services utilizing research- and evidence-based curricula
  - Family support and development services
  - Parent partnership and leadership opportunities to assist
  - Health and nutrition screenings and referrals

Snohomish County ECEAP Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of ECEAP Children Who Have:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A primary language other than English</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A parent/guardian experiencing mental health issues</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been homeless in the last year</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An incarcerated parent</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived in foster care</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of ECEAP Families Who Have:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experienced domestic violence</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been involved with CPS/FAR/ICW</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struggled with drugs or alcohol</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Child Protection Strategies

- Snohomish County ECEAP provides Educational Services utilizing research- and evidence-based curricula
- We chose Committee for Children’s Child Protection Unit to:
  - Build on our success of using Second Step Social-Emotional Program for Early Learning
  - Mitigate teacher discomfort with teaching touching safety lessons
  - Meet staff’s need for in-depth training
  - Provide comprehensive resources for parents

How We Support Staff with the Implementation of CPU

- Administer CPU implementation at the site level and monitor for quality assurance
- Provide training and coaching to teachers for implementation in the classroom
- Provide guidance and support for site staff to partner with families

Second Step Child Protection Unit (CPU)

Online Training:
- For administrators
- For all school staff
- For classroom teachers who will implement the weekly theme activities

Weekly Theme Activities for Children:
- 5-7 minute activities for each weekday
- Songs
- Puppets
- Posters
- Animated video to review skills

Online Resources and Dedicated Website for Families
Online Training for Staff

Module 1
Helps School Leaders:
• Assess current child protection policies, procedures, and practices
• Begin to develop a Child Protection Strategy

Module 2
Prepares All Staff to:
• Recognize indicators
• Respond in a supportive way
• Report abuse or school policy violations

Module 3
Prepares Teachers to:
• Deliver Weekly Themes
• Overcome discomfort with topic
• Engage and support families

Administrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Module I</th>
<th>Module II</th>
<th>Module III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete Module I and review corresponding resources at the end of Module I</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Module II and review corresponding resources at the end of Module II</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Module III and review corresponding resources at the end of Module III</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review CPU Resources for Families</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review CPU Resources for Teachers</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review CPU Resources for Program Managers</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarize yourself with CPU Notebook: Unit Cards, Home Links, Family Letters, CD &amp; DVD, Posters, and Rule Cards</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Using The Skills Every Day Process</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Sample Weekly Theme Implementation Schedule</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Video Library for staff and parents</td>
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<td>M</td>
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</table>

M Mandatory  R-Recommended

Training Each Sites’ Staff to Recognize, Respond, and Report Child Abuse

• Online modules
• Yearly in-person training for new staff
In-person Training for New Teachers and Family Support Staff

- Child Sexual Abuse risk factors
- Appropriate ways to respond to disclosures
- Reporting child abuse
- Demonstration of the “Rules about Touching” or “Recognizing When Rules Are Broken” Weekly Themes
- Resiliency resources for the staff

Statistics on Child Abuse by Darkness to Light

Immediate Consequences of the Sexual Abuse:
- Emotional and health problems
- Problematic sexual behaviors
- Academic problems

Long-term Consequences:
- Mental health problems
- Obesity and eating disorders
- Physical health problems in adulthood

Child maltreatment is a public health problem

CDC recently estimated the lifetime burden of a new, substantiated child maltreatment to be $210,012 per victim

Responding to Disclosure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protect the child's environment of trust.</td>
<td>Don’t make it a big deal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the child to keep saying, “Tell me more.”</td>
<td>Tell the child to keep it to themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell the child she is not alone, that others have gone through this too.</td>
<td>Tell the child she is not alone, but this is the first time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell the child she has a right to her body</td>
<td>Tell the child she has a right to her body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgive the child for not telling.</td>
<td>Don’t make assumptions about the child or suggest consequences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remember the child who will happen some way or another, child will tell.</td>
<td>Don’t be the child, but don’t make promises that things will get better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect the child who will happen some way or another, the child will tell.</td>
<td>Respect the child who will happen some way or another, the child will tell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect the child who will happen some way or another, the child will tell.</td>
<td>Respect the child who will happen some way or another, the child will tell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage with child protects service about alcohol.</td>
<td>Don’t make promises or say anything about alcohol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage with child protects service about alcohol.</td>
<td>Encourage with child protects service about alcohol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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Reporting Child Abuse

- WA State definition of the responsibilities of Mandated Reporters
- Scenarios of the incidents and reflection on the steps to report

Modeling the Lesson

Demonstration of the “Touching Safety Rules” by the Teacher-Mentor received positive feedback from the staff

Resiliency Resources for Staff

- Signs of Compassion Fatigue
- Reflection on the tools to build the resiliency
Resiliency Resources for Staff

“To be resilient means to go through life’s daily ups and downs and be able to feel strong, experience enjoyment in school and family, and maintain overall positive outlook in life.” (Barrett & Cook, 2011) (https://depts.washington.edu/cqel/coaching)

ACHIEVER’s Strategies:
- A: Awareness and empowerment through mindfulness practices
- C: Choosing your attention and practicing gratitude
- H: Helping and doing good deeds for others
- I: Identifying unhelpful thoughts and adjusting them to be true
- E: Establishing good role-model and social supports
- V: Valuing clarification and commitment
- E: Exercising, eating well, and engaging in good sleep
- R: Rewarding yourself through relaxation and recreation

How We Partner with Families:

- A foundational tenet of ECEAP is the recognition of, and support for, a parent’s role as the first and most important teacher of their child.
- We facilitate Policy Advisory Council training on the program’s curricula, including the training on CPU.
- Parent-leaders share information at their site PAC meetings and empower other parents to get involved in the educational process

How We Partner with Families:

- On the site level, the staff provides ongoing communication with families before and during the introduction of the Weekly Themes
- Mini-posters
How We Partner with Families:

▪ Family Services are the foundational component of the ECEAP program.
▪ Partnership between teaching team and family support-staff provides opportunities to share if a family needs additional intervention or resources in the safety domain and to create a plan of how to support the family.

Our Wish List

▪ Implement bi-yearly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings for all staff to share experiences to enhance the practice of teaching the curriculum and partnering with families.
▪ Strengthen the sites’ work with families by experimenting with having a parent education event dedicated to the Safety Rules and Strategies in CPU.

Q&A

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Join Our Awareness & Prevention Efforts

- Follow Committee for Children:
  - Twitter @cfchildren
  - Facebook @cfchildren

- Learn about our programs and connect with other Second Step educators:
  - Twitter @2ndStepProgram
  - Facebook @2ndStepProgram

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month
EarlyOpenOften.org
AbiertoyaMenudo.org
HotChocolateTalk.org - debuting next week!
Look for resources to share with staff, parents, and your network!

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Thank You!