

# **GENOA SCHOOL DISTRICT: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION**

**By Safe Passage,  
DeKalb County's Rape Crisis Center and  
Domestic Violence Shelter**

# WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THIS?

- 1 in 10 children will experience sexual abuse before the age of 18.
- 93% of children are sexually abused by someone they know and trust.
  - 60% of the time the abuser is someone the family knows.
- 30% of abusers are family members.
- 1 out of 4 abusers are under the age of 18.
- Only 1 in 10 sexually abused children will tell someone right away.

# WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THIS?

## BECAUSE:

- Sexual abuse affects a child's performance in school.
- Child victims of sexual abuse routinely experience feelings of fear, anger, hostility, guilt and shame, low self-esteem, anxiety, early overt sexual behavior, and behavioral issues.
- Sexually abused children are at dramatically increased risk of being victimized again later in childhood or adulthood;
  - Sexually abused children are often further exploited by others in emotionally and physically dangerous ways. One study indicated that 10% of sexually abused adolescents exchanged sex for money, 9% for shelter, and 7% for drugs or alcohol.
- As parents, counselors, teachers, and staff working with kids– you are our first line of defense.

# WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?

- Sexual abuse can includes non-touching & touching behaviors.
  - Non-touching behaviors can include trying to look at a child's naked body, or asking them to look at an adults, or exposing the child to pornography.
  - Touching behaviors may involve any touching of private parts, including the mouth.
- Abusers often do not use physical force.
  - Abusers sometimes use sneaky efforts to keep the young person from telling.
    - These often include buying gifts or arranging special activities.

# RELIABILITY OF CHILDREN

- Young children's memories for certain events—especially ones with their own bodies, like child sexual abuse, are very accurate.
- For younger children, the telling of the abuse may happen accidentally. But for many children, the disclosure is painfully deliberate.
  - Children are likely to feel embarrassed about disclosing sexual abuse and may say the abuse happened to a friend or sibling.

# GROOMING

- Perpetrators of child sexual abuse (CSA) may gain the trust of child victims and their caregivers by “grooming” them.
- Includes:
  - Identifying and targeting the victim
  - Gaining trust and access
  - Playing a role in the child’s life
  - Isolating the child
  - Creating secrecy around the relationship
  - Initiating sexual contact
  - Controlling the relationship

# HOW TO HANDLE A DISCLOSURE

## Helpful Phrases:

- This is not your fault.
- I believe you.
- I'm here for you.
- You are not to blame.
- You didn't do anything wrong.
- You did what you had to do.
- I'm sorry this happened.
- Thank you for telling me about this.
- You are very brave.

# DO

# DO NOT

- Remain calm
- Let the child talk
- Believe them
- Tell them they did the right thing
- Validate what they are feeling
- Tell them it isn't their fault
- Be mindful of your presentation

- Do not panic
- Do not tell them they are lying or making up stories
- Do not dig for more information
- Do not make promises you can't keep
- Do not react in shock or disgust

# SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION EDUCATION

Erin's Law –  
[www.erinslawillinois.org](http://www.erinslawillinois.org)

# ERIN'S LAW REQUIRES AND RECOMMENDS

- Annual, age-appropriate sexual abuse prevention education for all IL students k-12.
- Skills-based education to help students recognize child sexual abuse, equip them with skills to reduce their vulnerability and encourage them to report the abuse.
- Programs should include more than one session, ideally, at least four.
- Programs should involve children as active learning participants and should to be the most effective, include discussion, modeling and role playing.

# ERIN'S LAW REQUIRES AND RECOMMENDS

- Programs should include a component that encourages parental involvement within the child sexual abuse prevention program. This component should inform parents about child sexual abuse topics including but not limited to characteristics of offenders, grooming behaviors and how to discuss this topic with their children.

# REFERRALS

## ■ Safe Passage

- Hotline: 815 756 5228
- Website: [www.safepassagedv.org](http://www.safepassagedv.org)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/safepassagedv](http://www.facebook.com/safepassagedv)