

GEARING UP FOR CHILD ADVOCACY & PREVENTION

Sept. 20, 2016

Kat Monusky & Sarah Murray / WCSAP

Who's Here?

- Please choose one of the following as your primary role:
 - ▣ Sexual assault advocate (general)
 - ▣ Child sexual assault/youth advocate
 - ▣ Sexual assault preventionist
 - ▣ Other at a sexual assault agency
 - ▣ Other family/DV or crime victim staff
 - ▣ Other

Child Advocacy



- What is it?
- Common barriers
- Child advocacy vs. therapy
- In practice
- Structuring appointments

Core Values of Child Advocacy

- Self determination
- Honesty and respect
- Confidentiality
- Validating and believing
- Benefits of play
- Child advocacy vs. therapy

Prevention with Children



- Shift focus from awareness and early reporting of abuse; not for children to protect themselves or prevent their own abuse
- Goal is to encourage healthy development of children and bolster protective factors

Putting it into Practice



Advocacy Appointments



- Flexibility
- Developmental & Cognitive Information
- Multifaceted Abuse
- Trauma Informed Services

Designing a Prevention Plan

- Best practices for delivering: The 9 Principles
- A comprehensive plan promotes healthy children, empowered families, and engaged communities
- Aligning with adult-focused child sexual abuse prevention efforts

About the Guide

- Purpose
- Children ages 5-12
- Some activities designed exclusively for advocacy, others for prevention, and some can be used in both settings



Sections of this Guide

- Icebreaker & Fun Activities
- Reflection & Self-Esteem
- Emotional Identification
- Emotional Regulation & Safety
- Empathy
- Boundaries & Consent
- Gender Expectations
- Relationships
- Sexual Development & Bodies
- Additional Resources

Section Format

Each section includes:

- Purpose of the section
- Any research or field knowledge that informs this section
- Advocacy or prevention considerations
- List of included activities

REFLECTION AND SELF-ESTEEM

The purpose of this section of the Activity Guide is to help children reflect on their experiences and develop healthy self-esteem.

The Developmental Assets Framework has identified positive identity traits as essential building blocks to healthy development. These traits are characteristics of young people who are caring and responsible. This is a promising area for research on violence perpetration throughout the lifespan.

A common result of sexual trauma is disconnection with one's self, not knowing the basics of yourself, your likes and dislikes, and not feeling connected with yourself. Additionally, research from the CDC has documented that children who experience violence often experience several long-lasting psychological consequences, including low self-esteem and self-blame. Advocacy can provide a safe space for children to reconnect with themselves again. We know that some negative outcomes are avoidable as children are resilient. Some researchers suggest sexual assault recovery involves reconnecting one's self with compassion¹. This is connected to self-esteem and

Included in this section:

- 'I Am' Poem
- Journaling
- Coloring Sheets: Heart & Star
- Bill of Rights
- Be The Solution Game & Discussion Guide, Kids Edition

Activity Format

Each activity includes:

- Audience/age range
- Time needed
- Advocacy and/or prevention
- Goal
- Materials
- Instructions
- Facilitator Notes
- Advocacy or prevention considerations
- Applicable worksheets

BILL OF RIGHTS

Audience: Children ages 5-12

Setting: Can be used in prevention groups or in one-on-one advocacy

Goals: Explore issues of autonomy, boundaries, safety, and respect. Depending on developmental stage, the underlying message should be: "You have choice and voice!"

Advocacy Considerations:

- This is a tool that the child can refer back to in situations that are unsafe, or unfamiliar.
- If the child's caregiver is also working with an advocate, it could be helpful for the caregiver and child fill out another Bill of Rights that is specific to their home.

Prevention Considerations

- You can adjust how personal this activity gets depending on the child's age and comfort level.
- To keep this a light activity, focus on establishing the rights of the child or classroom together. In this case everyone may share or discuss their rights.
- If making it more introspective and personal, consider dedicating time to this following a more directed conversation about autonomy and the option of not sharing their Bill of Rights.

Materials:

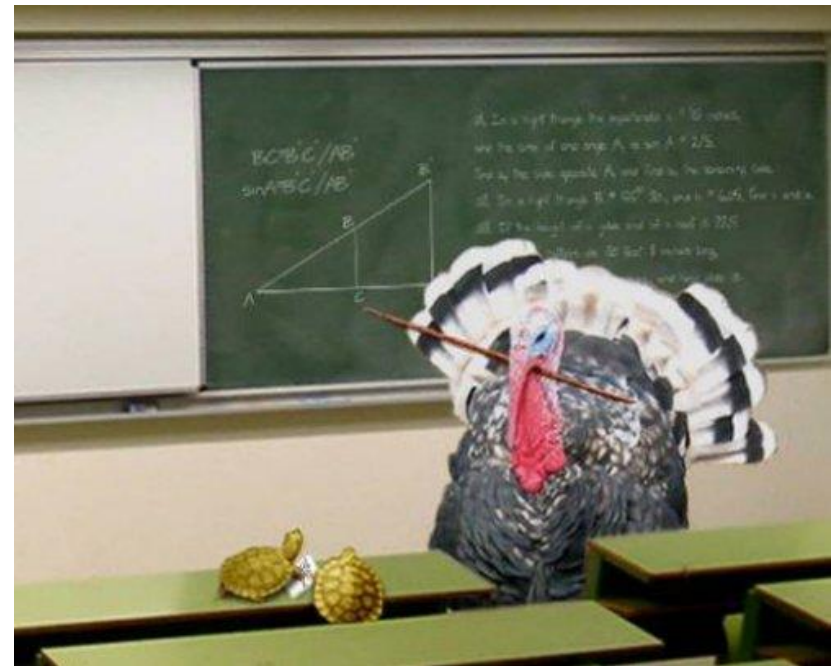
- A copy of the worksheet

Activity Instructions:

- With the child or children, create a list of the rights they have in their interactions with others.
 - For example, "You have a right to be safe" or "You have a right to be heard."

Tips!

- Practice activities & conversations ahead of time.
- Get comfortable talking about these topics.
- Verbal & nonverbal cues.
- Not exhaustive!
- Order and time spent in each sections are flexible.



Icebreakers & Fun Activities

- Build rapport
- Meant to be light and fun
- Supports meaningful on-going relationship between advocate and client
- More than just fun – strategically align with learning objectives in a prevention program

Reflection & Self-Esteem



- Explore the concept of identity
- Develop healthy self-esteem
- Differences of promoting self determination with child clients
- Emotional health and connectedness is a perpetration protective factor

Self Affirmation Art



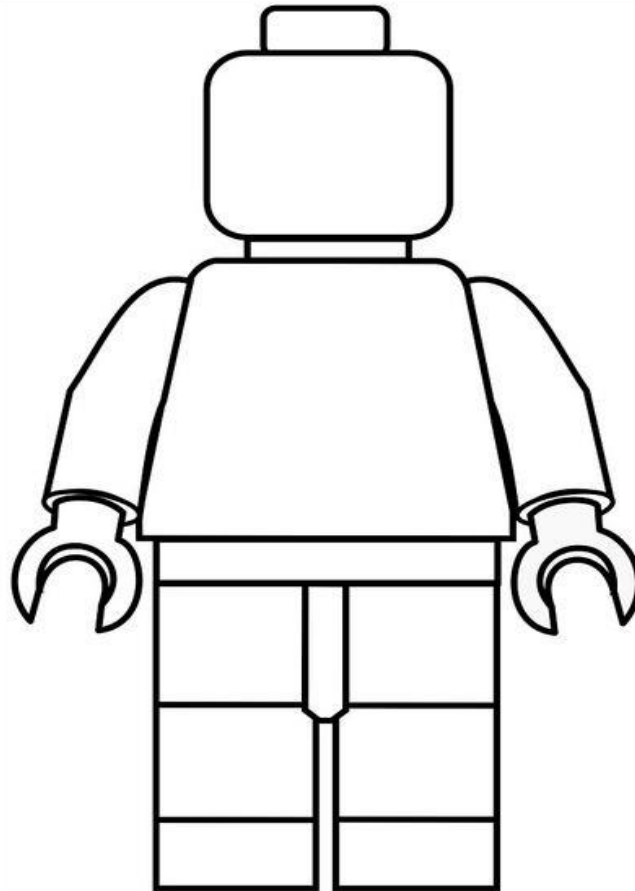
stones

Emotional Identification

- Reconnect & recognize emotional experiences
- Understanding impact of trauma of emotionally expression and interpretation
- Emotional health/connectedness and ability to empathize with others are protective factors against perpetration

Tab title: feelings

“Where Do I Feel” Coloring Activity



Emotional Regulation & Safety

- Coping with feelings
- Build skills to manage emotions
- Promote self soothing
- Increase ability to communicate nonviolently

Tab title: Coping

Empathy

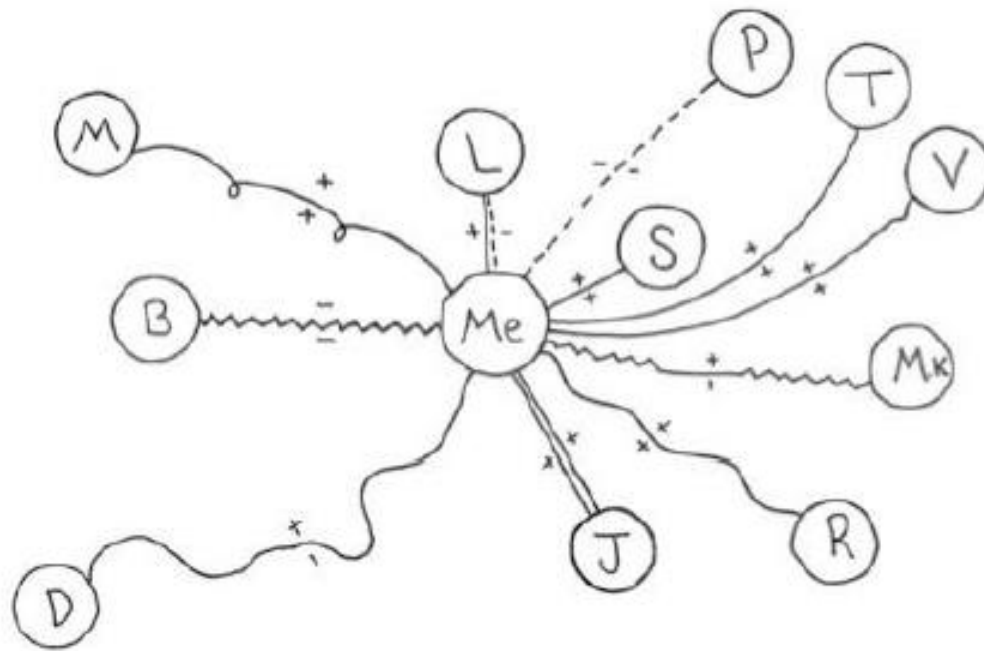
- Connect to the feelings and experiences of others
- Survivors may experience distrust, focusing on empathy helps connectivity with others
- Risk factors for sexual violence perpetration include empathic deficits.
- A protective factors for sexual violence perpetration is empathy and concern for how one's actions affect others.

Boundaries & Consent

- Develop healthy boundaries and communication strategies
- Consent is a skill that requires practice
- Survivors may need support reconnecting to or establishing usable boundaries
- There are age appropriate ways to include consent in prevention work with kids

Solar System

HOME ALIVE



Gender Expectations

- Expand cultural and gender norms, challenge stereotypes, and support non-binary expression
- Explore the impact of cultural and gender expectations on survivors' experience
- Rigid gender norms and hypermasculinity are considered to be risk factors for perpetration

Relationships

- Promote healthy and supportive relationships with peers, future dating partners, and adults
- Even one supportive adult relationship can greatly resiliency for child survivors
- Social change requires peer and community influence in addition to individual education
- Aggressive, unsupportive, and violent relationship exposure is a risk factor for perpetration

Sexual Development & Bodies

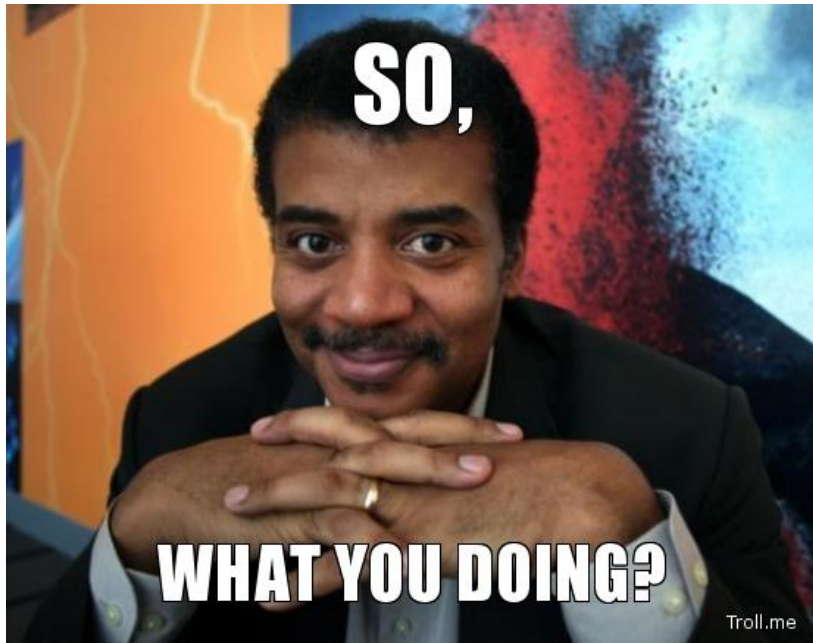
- Accurate information and critical skills to think about sexual development and social norms
- Support a survivor's relationship with their own bodies
- Risk factors for perpetration are connected to coercive sexual attitudes and material
- Individual education, media literacy, and cultural norms all play a role in promoting healthy or unhealthy sexuality

Additional Resources/ Appendix

- Childhood Developmental Stages chart (WCSAP)
- “[40 Developmental Assets](#)” for ages 5-12 (Search Institute)
- “10 Core Concepts for Child Sexual Abuse Prevention” (Wisconsin CASA)
- “[Overview of Healthy Childhood Sexual Development](#)” (NSVRC)
- “[In Practice: Child Advocacy](#)” (WCSAP)

Share with us?

Questions?



Thanks!

kat@wcsap.org

sarah@wcsap.org

360-754-7583

