

Hello Leaders and Learners!

Thank you so much for taking the time to function as an instructor for this “Child Abuse Prevention” course.

It’s important for you to realize that this course is in three segments:

HEAD

The Head section is all about teaching the signs, symptoms, and statistics associated with Child Abuse. Please encourage those who are participating in this course to take notes for they will be tested at the end. See below for an overview of information you can use to help individuals in note taking and review.

HEART

The Heart section is all about creating space to process. During this time, we’d encourage small group discussion to help go over how the content affects current students and existing policies. Below are suggested questions to go over together.

1. Are there any students in our care that show any of these signs or symptoms?
2. Are there any policies or procedures we need to change to ensure our adult one-on-one interaction never occurs?
3. Is there any personal instances that you’d like to share right now as a place of help, hope and healing?

HANDS

Once completed with the other two sections, have each individuals take the online test. They must score 70% or higher to qualify as passing. The certificate of completion will be emailed as a sign of completion.

Head Section Notes :

Definitions :

- Physical Abuse - Deliberate injury of a child by a person responsible for child's care.
- Neglect - Basic needs are deliberately withheld, not because the parent or caregiver is poor.
- Emotional Abuse - A series of repeated instances, whether intentional or not, that insults, threatens, isolates, degrades, humiliates, and/or controls another person.
- Sexual Abuse - When an adult or an older child uses his or her authority over a child to the child in sexual activity.

Statistics

- Child sexual abuse occurs to as many as 25 percent of girls (1 in 4) and 14 percent of boys (1 in 7) before they reach the age of 18.
- Children can be abused at any age; however, most sexual abuse occurs averagely at 9, between the ages of 7 and 13.
- Students are most likely to be molested by someone they know and trust.
- Adults who have been sexually abused as a child, have a difficulty in forming long-term relationships; lead to sexual risk-taking that may lead to contracting sexually transmitted diseases; have depression, suicidal thoughts, and suicide; have links to failure of the immune system and to increases in illnesses, hospitalizations, & even early deaths.

Symptoms a Student may be abused

- Statement - if the student implies he/she has been sexual abused with their words.
- Seductive or provocative behavior—acting out adult sexual behavior or using sexual language a child his or her age is unlikely to know.
- Self-destructive behavior—deliberately harming himself, running away, thoughts of or attempting suicide, or sexual recklessness or promiscuity.
- Unhappiness—undue anxiety and crying or loss of appetite
- Regression—behaving like a younger child, thumb sucking, or bed-wetting
- Sleep disorders—nightmares or difficulty either going to sleep or sleeping through the night.
- Avoidant types of behaviors, fears or phobias—some kind of concern about being in a particular place or with a particular person.

Signs of a Molester

- Grooming is a process used that uses seduction, trickery, and force. Typically grooming will be a varied combination of the following:
 - **Bribery.** Giving of gifts or favors.
 - **Secrecy.** Asking the student to keep something “Just between them.”

- **Blame.** The student feels it's their fault that the abuse happened.
- **Embarrassment.** During the molestation, the children realize that what is taking place is wrong and want to hide the fact it actually took place.
- **Loss of affection.** Ninety-eight percent of the time, the molester is a wonderful person in a child's life. It is that other two percent of the time that he is molesting the child.
- **Threat and Force.** The molester may actually threaten the child with physical harm.

Safe- Adult Policies

- **Avoid One-On-One Contact.** If a student approaches you when you are alone, move quickly to an area where there are others or ask the student to meet you somewhere else *in a public area* in a few minutes.
- **Respect Minors' Privacy.** Adult leaders must respect the privacy of student/campers in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers at camp, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require.
- **Constructive Discipline.** Discipline used should be positive and constructive. Corporal and physical punishment is NEVER permitted. If behavioral problems escalate, involve another adult worker as soon as possible in the process from camp.
- Any signs or symptoms need to be reported to leadership. Leadership will report to local authorities and through a submitted form through https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/contact_us/report_abuse.asp.

Statement Follow Up :

If a student comes to you with any statement of abuse, use the following steps:

- **Listen** – Don't panic or overreact. Don't ask questions or interrupt. Just listen.
- **Believe** – Never criticize the child or claim that the child has misunderstood what happened. Support the child for disclosing. It is not your responsibility to determine whether the allegation is true.
- **Protect** – Along with another trusted adult, take the child to a private place. Discuss the situation only with these individuals.
- **Affirm** – Children who have been victimized may feel sad, angry, fearful, anxious, and depressed. Accept and understand the child's feelings. Praise him/her for courage and honesty, and promise you will get help.
- **Refer** – DO NOT attempt to handle the problem alone. This is important for the well-being of the child as well as for your own protection. As a childcare custodian, you are mandated by the law to report child abuse. You should report it to the higher leadership in your context. If you are leadership, report to local authorities and fill out an online form at https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact_Us/report_abuse.asp
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NOTE: Permission is granted for other organizations to utilize this material. Thank you to the Boy Scouts of America for permission to use material from their training course for this document.