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Student Sexual Abuse Awareness



Texas House Bill 1041 requires every public school district to provide training for staff on how to recognize the symptoms of child abuse.

Why is awareness and warning important?

The statistics of sexual abuse are staggering. For instance:

- One in four girls and one in six boys are sexually abused before the age of eighteen.
- One in five children are solicited sexually while on the Internet.
- Nearly 70% of all reported sexual assaults (including assaults on adults) occur to children ages seventeen and under.

TAKE ACTION

It is the law that if you suspect child abuse, you must report it within 48 hours.

1. Report your suspicions to Child Protective Services (CPS) 1-800-252-5400. If danger is imminent, call 911. If the child is not in immediate danger, use the reporting website, <https://www.txabusehotline.org>.
2. Report that you have called CPS to your counselor and principal, or director of your department.

Sexual abuse can occur at all ages, probably younger than you think.

- The median age for reported abuse is nine years old.
- More than 20% of children are sexually abused before the age of eight.
- Nearly 50% of all victims of forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, and forcible fondling are children under twelve.



Most children don't tell, even when they are asked.

- Evidence that a child has been sexually abused is not always obvious, and many children do not report that they have been abused.
- Abusers often threaten to do bodily harm to victims or their families if they tell anyone of the abuse.
- Over 30% of victims never disclose the experience to ANYONE.
- Young victims may not recognize their victimization as sexual abuse.
- Almost 80% initially deny abuse or are tentative in disclosing. Of those who do disclose, approximately 75% disclose accidentally. Additionally, of those who do disclose, more than 20% eventually recant even though the abuse occurred.
- Fabricated sexual abuse reports constitute only 1% to 4% of all reported cases. Of these reports, 75% are falsely reported by adults and 25% are reported by children. Children only fabricate .05% of the time.

Most abusers don't molest only one child if they are not reported and stopped.

- Nearly 70% of child sex offenders have between one and nine victims; at least 20% have ten to forty victims.
- An average serial child molester may have as many as 400 victims in his lifetime.

Consequences of child sexual abuse begin affecting children and families immediately. They also affect society in innumerable negative ways. These effects can continue throughout the life of the survivor so the impact on society for just one survivor continues over multiple decades. Try to imagine the impact of 39 million survivors.

Even within the walls of their own homes, children are at risk for sexual abuse.

- 30-40% of victims are abused by a family member.
- Another 50% are abused by someone outside of the family whom they know and trust.
- Approximately 40% are abused by older or larger children whom they know.
- Therefore, only 10% are abused by strangers.

Health and/or Behavioral Problems:

- The way a victim's family responds to abuse plays an important role in how the incident affects the victim.
- Sexually abused children who keep it a secret or who "tell" and are not believed are at greater risk than the general population for psychological, emotional, social, and physical problems, often lasting into adulthood.
- Children who have been victims of sexual abuse are more likely to experience physical health problems (e.g., headaches).
- Victims of child sexual abuse report more symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), more sadness, and more school problems than non-victims.
- Victims of child sexual abuse are more likely to experience major depressive disorder as adults.
- Young girls who are sexually abused are more likely to develop eating disorders as adolescents.
- Adolescent victims of violent crime have difficulty in the transition to adulthood, are more likely to suffer financial failure and physical injury, and are at risk to fail in other areas due to problem behaviors and outcomes of the victimization.

Drug and/or Alcohol Problems:

- 70-80% of sexual abuse survivors report excessive drug and alcohol use.
- Young girls who are sexually abused are three times more likely to develop psychiatric disorders or alcohol and drug abuse in adulthood, than girls who are not sexually abused.
- Among male survivors, more than 70% seek psychological treatment for issues such as substance abuse, suicidal thoughts and attempted suicide. Males who have been sexually abused are more likely to violently victimize others.

Teenage Pregnancy and Promiscuity:

- Children who have been victims of sexual abuse exhibit long-term and more frequent behavioral problems, particularly inappropriate sexual behaviors.
- Women who report childhood rape are three times more likely to become pregnant before age eighteen.
- An estimated 60% of teen first pregnancies are preceded by experiences of molestation, rape, or attempted rape. The average age of their offenders is twenty-seven.
- Victims of child sexual abuse are more likely to be sexually promiscuous.
- More than 75% of teenage prostitutes have been sexually abused.

Crime:

- Adolescents who suffer violent victimization are at risk for being victims or perpetrators of felony assault, domestic violence, and property offense as adults.
- Nearly 50% of women in prison state that they were abused as children.
- Over 75% of serial rapists report they were sexually abused as youngsters.



Symptoms of Sexual Child Abuse

Behavioral Symptoms:

- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Bedwetting
- Nightmares or bad dreams
- Depression, irritability, or anger
- Low self-esteem, guilt, shame
- Avoidance of people or places
- Sexual advances or “touching” inappropriately
- Sexual drawings
- Changes in socialization (social withdrawal or social isolation)

Possible Physical Symptoms:

- Pregnancy
- Venereal Disease
- Trauma to the mouth or genitals
- Rectal bleeding
- Pain around the genital area
- Poor appetite
- Weight loss or weight gain

Online Risks:

- Your child spends large amounts of time online, especially at night, and may turn the computer monitor off or quickly change the screen on the monitor when you come into the room.
- You find pornography on your child’s computer.
- Your child receives phone calls or mail from people you don’t know, or makes calls to numbers that you don’t recognize.
- Your child becomes withdrawn from the family.



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It's the law...if you suspect it, you report it!