



Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Training Guide

University of San Diego and Safely Ever After, Inc.
A Prevention and Education Program Training Guide

safely ever after, inc.

University of San Diego
Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Training Guide

Definitions:

Child/Minor – Any person under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse/Neglect - defined by California Penal Code Section 11165.6

- 1) Includes physical injury or death inflicted by other than accidental means upon a child by another person, sexual abuse, negligent treatment or the maltreatment of a child by a person responsible for the child's welfare.
- 2) The willful harming or injuring of a child, endangering the health of a child, and unlawful corporal punishment or injury.

What Is Child Sexual Abuse?

Childhood sexual abuse is defined as any form of sexual contact or interaction with a minor for another's gratification. It can include:

- Fondling or direct physical contact of a sexual nature,
- Asking a child to touch the abuser
- Any sexual act between an adult and a minor, or between two minors when one exerts power over the other
- Exposing a child to pornography, or involving a child to participate in pornography
- Involving a child in prostitution or trafficking
- Non-contact sexual acts such as exhibitionism, voyeurism, and/or communicating in a sexual manner by phone or internet

Child sexual abuse under any circumstance is a crime, punishable by law.

The University of San Diego's prevention training is intended to help employees and volunteers:

- Prevent sexual abuse before it happens
- Recognize signs of sexual abuse in children
- Recognize unsafe behaviors by adults who interact with children
- React responsibly if a child discloses or there is reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse

Protecting children from sexual abuse is an ADULT RESPONSIBILITY.

Four Steps to Prevent Childhood Sexual Abuse
There are over 39 million survivors of sexual abuse in America today.

STEP 1 – Learn the facts and myths.

Facts:

- 90% of sexual abuse happens to children by someone they know and have an established relationship with and NOT by a stranger. Do not focus solely on the outdated and ineffective concept of stranger-danger.
- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will experience sexual abuse by the age of 18.
- Children with disabilities are 4 times more vulnerable to sexual exploitation.
- Child sexual abuse is one of the most under-reported crimes.
- 89% of sexual offenders gain access to children through “grooming”... a process of using excessive charm, attention, flattery, gift giving, and other types of manipulation to create opportunities for private, alone-time with the child.
- Sex offenders go out of their way to appear trustworthy and reliable.
- Child sexual abuse occurs among all socioeconomic, cultural, racial and educational groups throughout the United States and the world.
- Sexual abuse escalates over time, in a long-term relationship, lasting an average of 4 years.
- The most vulnerable age for sexual abuse is between the ages of 9 and 12 years old.
- Boys are less likely to disclose their abuse.

Myths: Sexual predators count on the public to believe certain myths so they can continue to gain access to children. Predators want you to believe that those who sexually abuse children are:

- Only strangers or registered sex offenders
- Never the older brother/nephew/teen relative/neighbor
- Never the coach, religious leader, or pillar of the community
- Only of a certain ethnicity or race
- Only a “weird” looking person, a “loser”, or someone with a weapon
- Someone without children of their own
- Mentally incapacitated or have obvious emotional challenges

Don't fall for these myths!

STEP 2 – Minimize Opportunity

Two elements must be present for an abuser to victimize a child: **ACCESS & PRIVACY.**

More than 80% of sexual abuse incidents occur in a secluded or isolated environment, usually with one adult/one child.

While it may not be possible to completely eliminate occasional one-on-one situations, parents and caretakers should be mindful and alert to anyone who continually seeks “alone-time” with one child, often removing the child from a larger group or presenting special favors that isolate the child from others.

Reduce the risk of sexual abuse:

- Group situations should have multiple adults supervising children.
- Assess the physical environment, where minors are involved... doors should remain open, curtains and/or shades should not be drawn or covering windows.

- Make sure that all interactions can be observed.
- Older youth should not be in isolated areas with younger children.
- Recognize “grooming tricks” of a potential predator.
- Report reasonable suspicion immediately, particularly if you are a mandated reporter.

STEP 3 – Don’t Expect Obvious Signs in a Child Molester

Child molesters are experts at hiding their true selves. For this reason, it is important that adults working with children are trained to recognize the blurry boundaries, grooming techniques and tricks that a predator will often use.

Grooming is a calculated means with the aim of establishing a special bond with a vulnerable child, eventually leading to more access and privacy. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Special attention, outings, or gifts for no apparent reason
- Isolating a child from others while in a group setting
- Offers of assistance to “help” a parent or relieve a parent of their parental duties
- Treating a child as if they are older, more mature than is developmentally appropriate
- Creating a more special or secretive type of relationship that excludes others
- Sharing inappropriate sexual language or behavior that should only be shared with adults
- Excessive physical attention especially when the child has asked them stop
- Appearing too good to be true

In addition, a child molester will often blur appropriate boundaries as they interact with their intended target. These include physical boundaries, personal boundaries, and/or relationship boundaries. This overstepping of boundaries is used as a way to test, not only the child, but also other caretakers and parents, etc. to determine if their actions will go unnoticed.

****Boundary descriptions and additional grooming red flags/warning signs are listed on the following pages.***

STEP 4 – Intervention: Awareness and Report Suspicions

- Physical signs of abuse may or may not be obvious in a child. There are emotional and/or behavioral signs to be aware of, which may also indicate abuse.
- Child molesters are rarely “caught in the act,” but they are often seen pushing boundaries, breaking rules, and using various grooming tricks.
- You can prevent child sexual abuse by understanding appropriate boundaries and by reporting any good faith suspicions you may have.
- Anyone can report suspected child abuse, and the University of San Diego requires all of its employees and volunteers to report known or suspected child abuse in any form.
- However, some employees are considered legally mandated reporters and have specific obligations by law. (See Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect, pp. 8-9 below.)

**Lastly, if you discover child pornography, you have discovered sexual abuse.
It must be reported to law enforcement immediately.**

Red Flag Warning Signs and Grooming Tricks

Red flags can be early signs of a sex offender's grooming process. One red flag does not immediately indicate that someone is an offender, but may suggest that this person's behavior should be monitored more closely. More than one red flag should be taken seriously, as reasonable suspicion, and steps should be taken to protect the child. The following are examples of red flags:

- Someone who continually tries to arrange alone time with one child, often using many different reasons or excuses for this behavior
- Someone who repeatedly befriends one "extra special" child, singling them out and lavishing them with an extraordinary amount of praise and attention
- Someone who appears excessively generous, buys expensive/extravagant gifts or gives money to a child for no apparent reason
- Someone who insists on being physical with a child (excessive hugging, touching, kissing, wrestling, horseplay or other accidental touching games)
- Someone who refuses to let a child set any of his/her own limits or who uses teasing or belittling language to make a child feel guilty, embarrassed or otherwise uncomfortable
- Someone who continually invites children to spend time alone at their home, enticing them with the latest video/computer games, toys, gadgets, etc. – especially an adult who does not have children of their own
- Someone who turns to a child for emotional or physical comfort by sharing personal or private information/activities, normally shared only with adults
- Someone who exposes a child to adult sexual interactions without apparent concern
- Someone who repeatedly makes others uncomfortable by ignoring social, emotional, or physical boundaries or limits (not only with children but with adults as well)
- Someone who frequently enters a bathroom, locker room or changing area while children are changing or showering and doesn't respect a child's need for privacy
- Someone who frequently offers to "help out" or relieve a parent of his or her parental duties, i.e. babysitting for free, transporting a child to or from activities, taking kids on overnight trips and outings
- Someone who prefers to spend most of his or her free time with children and seems to have no interest in relationships with individuals their own age
- Someone who seems especially preoccupied with one child
- Someone who has secret interactions with children, or spends an excessive amount of time emailing, texting, messaging, or calling children
- Someone who frequently points out sexual images or tells sexually suggestive jokes or stories with children present
- Someone who allows children or teens to consistently get away with inappropriate behaviors
- Someone who seems "just too good to be true"

Red flag warning signs may be displayed by an adult or even by an older youth who interacts frequently with children.

Boundaries

When it comes to child safety, there are three different types of boundaries that a predator will attempt to “blur” during the grooming process.

Physical Boundaries

Personal Boundaries

Relationship Boundaries

Blurry boundaries indicate an overstepping of appropriate behavior with a child.

As employees or volunteers at USD, it is important for you to maintain certain boundaries with children and also to recognize a boundary violation, which may place a child in a vulnerable situation.

Signs of Overstepping Boundaries

Physical: Defined as “ownership” of our own body.

- Anyone who invades a child’s physical space with excessive touching games, hugs, tickles, lap sitting, etc.
- An occasional pat on the back or quick hug under certain circumstances may be fine, but does the physical attention seem to go “overboard,” especially when the child appears uncomfortable or has asked the person to stop?
- A child molester looks for reasons to frequently be physical... massaging shoulders, horseplay, accidental touching or sharing affection.

You may notice a physical boundary being blurred *or* a child may mention it to you for a number of different reasons. Excessive physical attention is often a molester’s first attempt to groom their target, by trying to get the child to feel comfortable with a lot of touching. Do not ignore this warning sign.

Most people who are safe do not want to lavish excessive physical attention on children. In fact, most adults who work with kids are careful *not* to blur this physical boundary.

Personal: Defined as inappropriate comments, suggestions, or sexual language shared with a child OR about a certain child.

- Asking a child to pose in a certain way
- Creating a secretive relationship to “bond”
- Using guilt tactics or teasing to get a child to let down their guard
- Sharing inappropriate photographs or sexual jokes with a child

An offender will blur a personal boundary in order to desensitize a child to certain words or actions.

Relationship:

1. Every person who interacts with a child has specific duties or roles that outline that relationship
2. Determine what that role is with a child
3. The relationship between an adult and child should be limited to the scope of that person’s duties or job description.

EXAMPLES:

Sports Coach – Instructs on the basics of the game, including skills such as running, scoring, etc.

- Encourages sportsmanship and team spirit
- Does not provide transportation for one child
- Does not take one child out to celebrate a victory
- Does not suggest special outings with one child to see other games, tournaments, etc.
- Does not take one child on an overnight trip
- Does not shower with the team

Camp Counselor – Insures a safe environment for kids while facilitating group activities.

- Teaches a skill, sport, or game
- Ensures all camping and social activities are monitored
- Does not provide free babysitting for one child as a favor to parents
- Does not remove one child from the group in order to do something special together
- Does not play inappropriate games or allow inappropriate behavior/touching among children

Music Teacher – Teaches music skills for fee.

- Fosters a student’s musical education
- Is supportive, patient, and encouraging
- Does not take one student to concerts or outings
- Does not offer extra free lessons as a special favor
- Does not offer extra free lessons as a special favor
- Does not insist on certain lesson times which are inconvenient to the student or to which a parent cannot provide transportation

Neighbor/Friend/Relative – Their “job” is to respect a child’s physical and personal boundaries, even if they disagree with them. It is not their job to make a child or family feel guilty for establishing boundaries that are comfortable or appropriate for the child, or to encourage secrets from family members.

A boundary has a physical, personal or relationship limit.

You can still trust others, provided they are within the limits that should be respected with a child or family.

A child predator counts on an undefined or limitless boundary as means to grooming.

By understanding boundaries and being alert to blurs or violations, we can take steps to protect a child.

Other grooming behaviors include:

- * Using their authority or status in the community to create doubt in their victim or the family
- * Threatening a child to keep secrets, using intimidation, bribes, or by telling the child they would not be believed
- * Rescuing a single parent with offers of assistance or providing special attention away from the parent
- * Undermining a parent's authority by allowing children certain freedom or activities that parents don't allow
- * Convincing a child: *"I'm just like you"*... knowing which games, videos, TV shows, music, jargon, etc. are popular among kids
- * Persuading a child that they are more mature and that this special attention/affection between an adult and child is "normal"

In some instances if you witness a blurry boundary, you can intervene in a positive way and say something to the person who has crossed it.

1. **Label the inappropriate behavior** to the person who has blurred the boundary. *"It looks like you're forcing Melissa to sit on your lap. It's clear she's uncomfortable."*
2. **Set a limit** with that person. *"Please stop. It's important that Melissa knows she can say No."*
3. **Move on/redirect:** *"Melissa, let's go see what the other children are up to."*

GUIDELINES FOR THOSE WORKING WITH OR AROUND MINORS

The University of San Diego welcomes minors on campus for a variety of reasons:

- As prospective students
- As enrollees in a University-sponsored program or camp
- As guests of faculty or staff
- To participate in or enjoy a sporting event, concert, or other special program

The following guidelines are intended to provide information about your conduct in order to prevent abuse or unfounded allegations of abuse. You have a duty to the children with whom you work, but also a duty to the University and yourself to prevent any accusations of abuse or improper behavior.

- Never engage in any aggressive horseplay or sexually provocative games with children, even as a joke.
- Do not ask kids to sit in your lap.
- Do not engage in any physical activity if the child has asked you to stop.
- Allow children to express affection on their own terms; do not request a hug or kiss from a child.
- Never use any form of physical or emotional punishment to discipline a child or to tease a child.
- Respect the child's need for privacy, especially in restrooms or changing rooms.
- Don't swear around children or make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun.
- Don't ask children, particularly teens or preteens, about their sexuality.

- Do not appear to favor one child over the others in your care.
- Don't give special gifts or trinkets to just one child.
- Do not offer to take the child home or on any special outings.
- Never tell a child to keep any type of secret from their parents.
- Don't say things like "This is just between us..."
- Avoid being alone with one child away from the others, particularly in a restroom, shower, or changing area.
- Follow the rule of 3: It is preferable to take another person with you if you must accompany a child to the restroom.
- Should you ever need to be alone with a minor in a changing or shower area, by no means should you ever be unclothed with a minor. Showering or bathing with minors, even when you are not alone, is never acceptable or allowed.
- Activities with children should be conducted in as public an environment as possible in order that all behavior can be readily observed.
- Keep classroom doors open and windows should remain uncovered by drapes or shades.
- Be aware of situations which could be misinterpreted, including being alone with the last child to leave an activity.
- Don't tease children or use guilt tactics if they are setting their own personal or physical boundary with you.
- Do not give any child a ride in a car or van unless you have express permission from the parents.
- Children should always use the "buddy system" or otherwise be encouraged to stay together when going to the bathroom, on field trips, or when leaving a classroom or activity area.
- Be professional and maintain the highest standard of personal behavior at all times; do not smoke or drink alcohol when working with minors.
- Remain alert to any inappropriate actions of others.
- Trust your instincts.
- Report any suspicions or criminal action as required by the law and by USD policy.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Policy

It is the policy of the University of San Diego to comply with the California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (the "Act"), Penal Code Sections 11164 *et seq.*, and to require all University employees who are Mandated Reporters under the Act to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Act and this policy.

It is also the policy of the University to require all employees (without regard to Mandated Reporter status) and volunteers to immediately report any known or suspected child abuse or neglect that occurs on campus, in any off-campus University building or property, or in connection with any University-related program or activity in a manner consistent with this policy.

Definitions

A "child" is a person under the age of 18 years

“**Child abuse or neglect**” is defined in [California Penal Code Section 11165.6](#) and includes physical injury or death inflicted by other than accidental means upon a child by another person, sexual abuse, negligent treatment, or the maltreatment of a child by a person responsible for the child’s welfare, the willful harming or injuring of a child or the endangering of the person or health of a child, and unlawful corporal punishment or injury.

A “**Mandated Reporter**” is any University employee who is required by the Act to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect. For a complete list of those categories of employees who are Mandated Reporters under the Act, please see [California Penal Code Section 11165.7](#).

Reporting Requirements for Mandated Reporters

A Mandated Reporter must make a report whenever he or she, in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment, has knowledge of or observes a child whom the Mandated Reporter knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse and neglect. The report shall be made as follows:

- Immediately, or as soon as is practicably possible, a report must be made by telephone to the County of San Diego Child Welfare Services at: (800) 344-6000.
- Immediately, or as soon as is practicably possible, a report must be made to the University of San Diego Dept. of Public Safety at (619) 260-7777.
- Within 36 hours of receiving information concerning the incident, a written report on [California Form SS8572](#) (Suspected Child Abuse Report) must be made to the County of San Diego Child Welfare Services.

While the reporting duties are the responsibility of the Mandated Reporter, the Department of Public Safety is available to assist the Mandated Reporter with making the required telephonic and written reports. Note that making a report to the University is not a substitute for making the reports mandated by the Act.

Reporting Requirements for University Employees and Volunteers (Regardless of Mandated Reporter Status)

In addition, the University expects all employees (regardless of Mandated Reporter status) and volunteers to report any known or suspected child abuse or neglect that occurs on campus, at any off-campus University building or property, or in connection with any University-related program or activity. The report shall be made immediately, or as soon as is practicably possible, to the Department of Public Safety at (610) 260-7777.

While this policy requires that a report be made to the Department of Public Safety, an individual who makes a report under this policy (regardless of Mandated Reporter status) is not required to disclose his/her identity to the Department of Public Safety.

No Retaliation

The University prohibits and will not tolerate retaliation against any person who reports known or suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Act or this policy.

Failure to Comply

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. If termination of a faculty member is contemplated, the applicable rules governing dismissal for serious cause will be followed. A Mandated Reporter who fails to comply with the requirements of the Act also may be subject to criminal penalties.

Q. WHAT DO I NEED TO REPORT?

- A. Under California law, a Mandated Reporter must report any knowledge or known abuse of a minor, as soon as it becomes known. A mandated reporter is also required to report any reasonable suspicion of abuse. This means you don't need to have absolute proof only a reasonable suspicion that abuse may have occurred. If you are at all concerned about the possibility, you should report. Investigations will then be conducted by either law enforcement or by the county child welfare department.

Q. CAN'T I SIMPLY ALERT MY SUPERVISOR AND HAVE THEM MAKE THE REPORT?

- A. No. Simply telling your supervisor does not meet your legal obligation as a Mandated Reporter. You cannot pass the responsibility for reporting onto any other person. While you should definitely tell your supervisor about your concerns, it is mandatory for you to make the report yourself.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T REPORT?

- A. In California, a Mandated Reporter who fails to report known abuse or even their reasonable suspicion can be held criminally liable for failing to report. The penalty is up to 6 months in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine, or both. Mandated reporters can also be subject to civil lawsuits and found liable for damages if the victim or another child is further victimized because of a failure to report.

In addition, a failure to comply with the requirements of the University of San Diego policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Q. WHAT IF I'M MISTAKEN? CAN I BE SUED FOR MAKING A REPORT?

- A. By law, a Mandated Reporter is protected from civil or criminal lawsuits as long as your report was made in good faith. You have immunity. In addition, you cannot be dismissed or disciplined for reporting suspected abuse. The University of San Diego policy expressly prohibits and will not tolerate retaliation against any person who reports known or suspected abuse as required by California law or USD policy.

If A Child Discloses...

There may be times when a child feels safer speaking to you rather than someone in their own family, such as a parent or caretaker. Please remember how difficult it is for a child to speak up about abuse. Your initial response is extremely critical.

Remember: Your first responsibility is to believe the child. Children rarely lie about acts of sexual abuse or exploitation.

DO's and DON'Ts

DO... listen calmly and carefully. Give the child your undivided attention.

DO... provide a safe environment for the child to talk to you.

DO... be supportive and not judgmental

DO... document the child's exact words

DO... reassure the child it was not their fault and they are not to blame

DO... tell the child you are glad they spoke up; affirm their courage

DO... keep to 4 specific questions:

1. What happened?
2. Who did this?
3. Where did this happen?
4. When did this happen?

DO... be honest with the child. Let them know you cannot keep this a secret but that you will help them.

DO... call in the mandated report as soon as practicably possible and follow up with the written report within 36 hours

DON'T... overreact with panic, anger, or disgust

DON'T... underreact or minimize the information

DON'T... ask leading questions, press for more details or investigate

DON'T... fill in the gaps, make assumptions, or rush to "get to the bottom of it"

DON'T... make promises or guarantee that you will keep it a secret

DON'T... criticize the child or blame them for any part of the abuse

DON'T... ask the child to remove any clothing to check for bruises

DON'T... contact the alleged perpetrator

DON'T... assume the crises or abuse has passed because time has passed since the last incident

DON'T... rely on a supervisor or colleague to make the mandated report – be sure to do it yourself

The topic of child sexual abuse can be difficult and emotionally-charged. However, awareness and prevention education are key to intervention and protecting children.

This training guide is intended to provide information regarding appropriate conduct for University employees and volunteers in order to prevent abuse and/or unfounded allegations, recognize signs of possible abuse, and direction in responding to and reporting suspicion of abuse.

By refusing to turn a blind eye, we stay true to the requirements of the law, our ethical commitments, and the highest values of the University of San Diego.

For questions or additional support or information, please contact the Department of Human Resources at (619) 260-4594.